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1. BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to illustrate in greater detail research that has been undertaken into a particular land conflict. The report also demonstrates the potential value of research, not only in discovering the position in the rural areas but also in helping to facilitate progress on land reform. This material has been passed, in greater detail, to the regional government and has fed into the Border Rural Committee's attempts to broker land transfers. The reader is also referred to Appendices 3 and 5 of this Report (see references), as well as Chapter 6 of the Eastern Cape Regional Overview)

Isidenge (also known as Upper Kubusi) is the area to the south west of Stutterheim between the town, the King William's Town road, the former Ciskei boundary and the Amatola mountains (See Map No. 1). We will use these two terms interchangeably to refer to the whole valley area, outside municipal boundaries. Kubusi itself is the area within municipal boundaries, immediately to the south west of the town and now effectively a suburb of Stutterheim. The area is not large: under 20,000 ha. of which more than half is afforested (see Map No 2 and No 3).

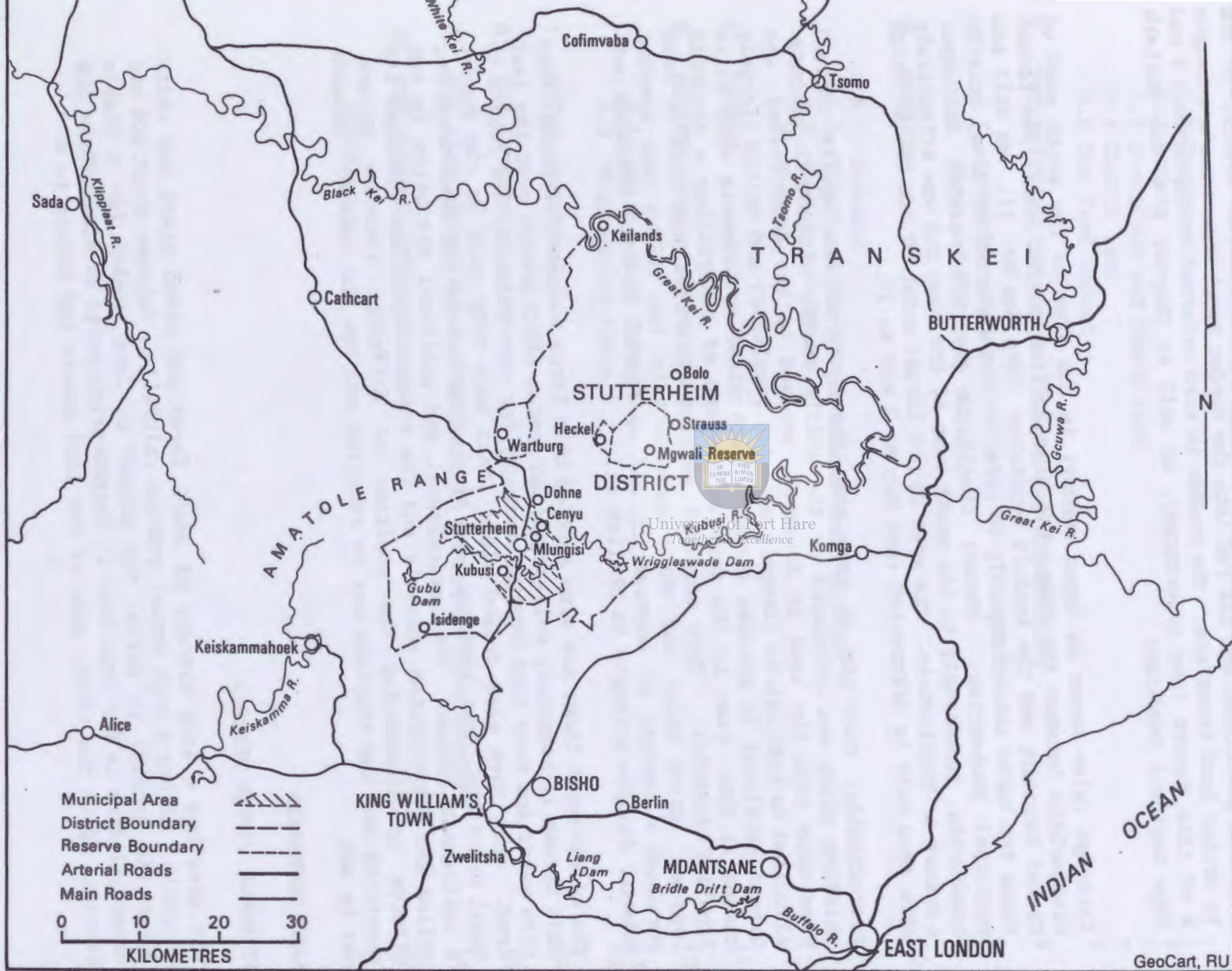
Historically, this was an area near the heart of the Ngqika (Xhosa) chiefdom which was conquered by the middle of the nineteenth century. From this time the land in Isidenge, annexed to the Cape Colony, was allocated to both blacks (largely colonial loyalists) and whites (largely German settlers) in private tenure. Such mixed settlements were quite common at the time in the Cape as a means of controlling a troubled frontier district. This original settlement scheme has left a long legacy. Mixed black and white ownership in the valley has somehow survived a century of segregation and apartheid in both Isidenge and Kubusi, despite attempts to abolish it.

The black-owned farms are also settled by a large number of tenants. They have become increasingly well-organised into a SANCO branch over the last five years and have been arguing strongly for resettlement, and rights to land. They have also formed close links with NGOs such as the Border Rural Committee. Some land has been offered to them by the government for a settlement scheme. The agricultural and political situation in the valley has deteriorated recently and the research team has directed its efforts to discovering the position of different interest groups, examining how the tensions may be resolved and how the tenants' demands may be met.

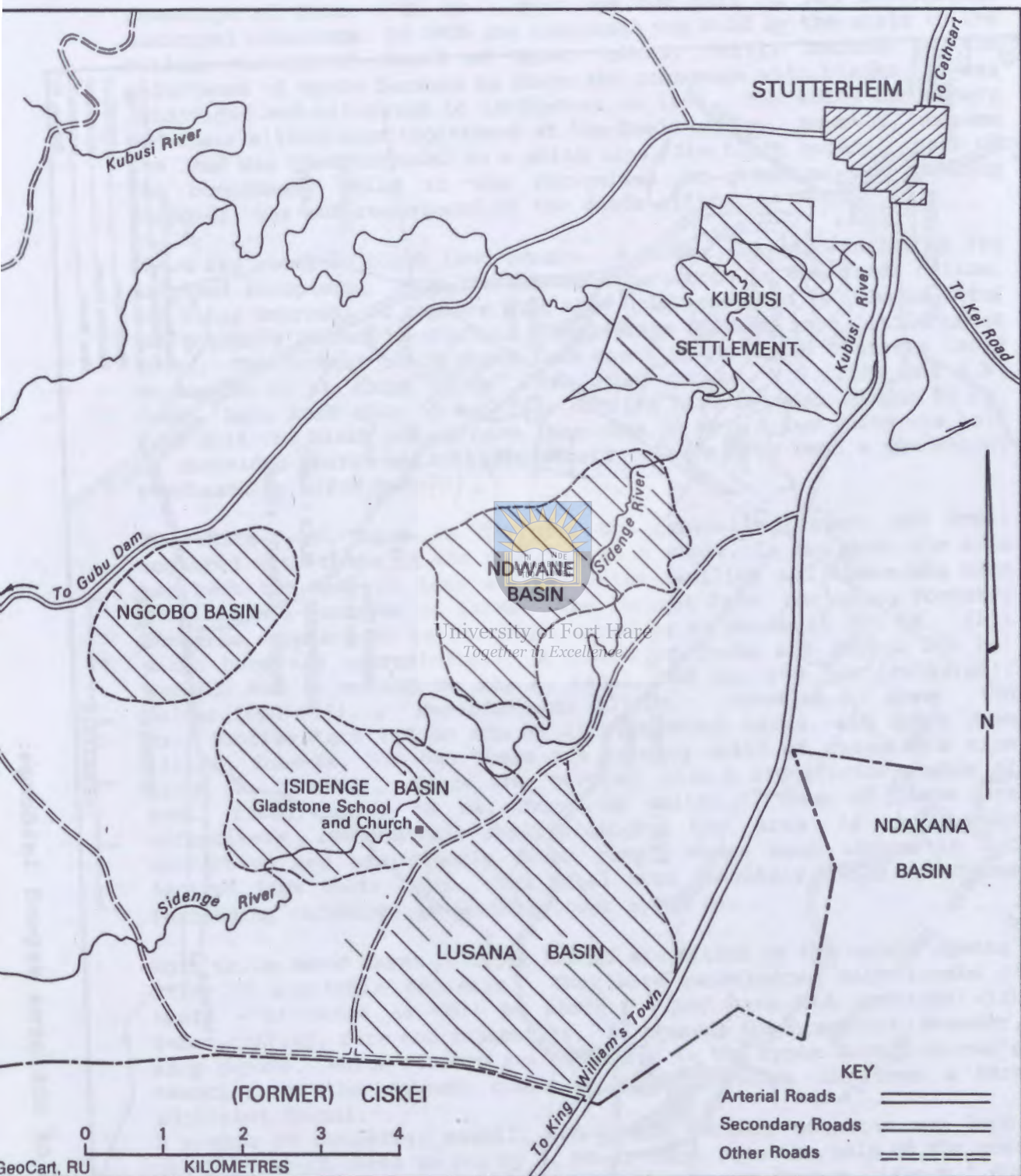
2. LAND OWNERSHIP

2.1 ISIDENGE (UPPER KUBUSI)

This area has a long history of small farms and mixed black and white ownership. It has a high annual average rainfall - between about 600 and 1000mm (40 inches) in parts. The amount of land needed for a viable commercial farm is far less than in neighbouring parts of Stutterheim and Cathcart. Up to the 1960s, many of the land owners had access to a



Map No. 1: Location of Isidenge within the context of the district of Stutterheim.



Map No. 2: Detailed map of the Isidenge.

commonage of about 1730 ha. This was not part of the Stutterheim municipal commonage. In 1955 the commonage was sold by the state to the Village Management Board of Upper Kubusi. Partly because of the reluctance of white farmers to share the commonage with blacks, it was subdivided and allocated to landowners in 1965. The white landowners had their allocations registered at the deeds office. However, because the land was then intended as a white area, the black owners' share of the commonage, while it was recognised in practice for grazing purposes, was not registered in the deeds office.

There are about 30 black land owners. A number are descendants of the original occupiers. From the incomplete records in the deeds office, and other sources, it appears that they hold less than 1000 ha in total and probably closer to 800 ha. The average holding is a little under 30 ha. The largest black-owned farm seems to be Taylor's estate (no.9 on map No 2) at about 90 ha. Two other owners, V.S. Bobo and A.N. Cwati, have more than 50 ha; four or five have between 40 and 50 ha. Over half the black owners have less than 20 ha. A few farms are held in undivided shares by multiple owners. There have been a few recent purchases by black owners.

The white-owned farms in the area are generally bigger, but small compared with those in the district as a whole. In the past the area has been the home of less wealthy white families and there has been considerable turnover of farms. The largest farm, excluding forestry concerns, appears to be Stanhope, owned by P. North at 356 ha. (All sizes here are approximate.) A number of farms are around 200 ha: Morning Sun (6 on map No 2), E. Pagel, 168 ha. (64 ha. irrigated); Welverdiend (13), J. Bezuidenhout, 237 ha.: Oakvale, L. Howe, 178 ha.; Sunrise farm (10 on map No 2) with about 240ha. and Indwe Hope (4), G. Roberts, 220 ha. These are farming units of reasonable size given the rainfall. There are, however, also a significant number of small farms, under 50 ha, owned by whites. Some of these are effectively residential smallholdings; the area is scenically attractive and has clearly drawn people whose main income is not derived from their farm. The total area privately owned by whites (excluding forestry) is probably over 6,000 ha.

Most white-owned farms in Upper Kubusi are either in the estate agents' files or available for sale. They have experienced high levels of theft - of crops as well as stock - and have had problems with fence-cutting, fire and insecurity. At present there are not, however, many buyers. White farmers are organised in the Upper Kubusi Farmer's Association; the current chair is Mr. G. Godden who owns a farm adjoining Kubusi.

A number of forestry, sawmill and timber factory concerns own land. The biggest of these is run by J. Lentz which owns the bulk of the area to the south of the valley, bordering the former Ciskei. (About 1,600 ha.) This is mostly under timber. The property, which has been registered in various names, is now mostly in the name of the Lentz company. Because of its large holdings in the valley, the Lentz family and company was allocated a substantial portion of the old Upper Kubusi commonage; they have also purchased additional land since. Not all of this land, some of which is in scattered small blocks, is forested. Rance Timber, with about 770 ha. of land adjoining the state plantations near the Gubu dam, is the next biggest owner.

2.2 KUBUSI

Kubusi lies within the municipal boundary of Stutterheim. In the nineteenth century, the land there was divided into smallholdings rather than farms. During this century, black plot holders have been in the majority (in 1894, there were 76 black owners and 48 white; in 1990, 64 black owners and 51 white.) Most of the plots are less than 2 ha., but about 20 are in the region of 10 ha. each. The bigger plots were largely owned by whites when the last detailed survey was done in 1991. Some land is owned by the state and by churches.

Until the 1960s, Kubusi was surrounded by Stutterheim town commonage, which was used for grazing, water and firewood by the inhabitants. But much of the municipal commonage bordering the Kubusi smallholdings, was then sold and subdivided into a few farms (numbers 1,2,3 and 11 on map No 2). These were all bought by white owners. Black stockowners had to reduce the number of animals they could keep.

In 1967, Kubusi was declared a white Group Area. The government intended to resettle black landowners and tenants in Frankfort area within the Ciskei near Kingwilliamstown. Black landowners were asked to sell but most refused to do so. For various reasons, the removal was not enforced and some white members of Stutterheim Municipal council opposed it. However, blacks could not buy plots in Kubusi between 1967 and 1990.

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Intense politicisation in the 1980s, initially to resist removal, culminated in a consumer boycott. White titleholders, including traders, moved out of the area and have not returned; to our knowledge they still however own the land. The land was deproclaimed as a white Group Area in 1990 and since then there have been some transfers from white to black. As in the case of Isidenge, most of the black plots and now some of the white are tenanted so that a survey in 1991 found there were about 44 plot owner households and about 920 tenant households. There are almost certainly over 1000 households and over 6,500 people in Kubusi now - an area of about 550 ha. It is effectively a suburb of Stutterheim.

Some additional land was acquired for Kubusi residents by the CPA in 1991/2 and sites have been demarcated. Some of these have been occupied and paid for. Others were illegally occupied and the situation remains to be resolved.

2.3 COMMONAGE AND STATE LAND

Not all the municipal commonage around Kubusi was privatised. About 300 ha. remains available for use as grazing land by Kubusi residents. They keep about 390 cattle and 200 small stock (mostly goats). The commonage available to them includes the shooting range and animals are moved off this section when it is in use. A section to the northwest of Stutterheim town, adjoining the municipal plantation, is rented out by the municipality to commercial farmers for grazing. This is not strictly speaking within the Isidenge area but it could be assessed for farmland potential and more intensive use. (Conservation criterion should also be addressed.)

There is a considerable amount of land belonging to the Public Works Department next to the main road from Kingwilliamstown to Stutterheim. This includes farms 523/41 - 26 ha; 523/54 - 55 ha; 523/55 - 50 ha; 523/56 - 29 ha; 523/57 - 40 ha. There is also a portion of farm 562 - 68 ha (the rest appears to have been incorporated into the former Ciskei); and a portion of farm 561 - 10 ha. The land, totalling about 268 ha, is mostly contiguous in one block. At least the first five sections mentioned were formerly owned by the SA Development Trust or Bantu Trust and must at one time have been considered for incorporation in the Ciskei. They were sold to the PWD, either because they bordered the main road which was being improved or because they include an important watershed with an area of swampland.

Some of this land (about 50 ha.) was offered to the Isidenge community as part of the Sunrise settlement scheme (see below). The remaining area is now being investigated by the Department of Agriculture and the Provincial Local Government ministry as a potential extension to the scheme. The land is mostly steep and ecologically sensitive, so that it is unlikely to be available for settlement; it is probably more suitable for grazing. Part of this area falls within the danger zone of the shooting range, mentioned above, on neighbouring municipal property.



2.4 CHURCH LAND

Three denominations own land in the Isidenge valley. The Congregational Church has a central site on which the main school is located. There are additional church sites in Kubusi.

2.5 THE LAND MARKET

A large amount of private land is for sale in Isidenge: prices being asked vary from over R1,500 per ha. in the case of highly developed farms with irrigation to about R800 per ha. In view of this, the problem in Stutterheim district at present is not land availability, but finding the means by which new owners of different kinds can purchase land. (But see concluding sections on white farmers and the Isidenge settlement scheme.)

The primary reason for the glut on the land market is not because the quality of the farms is low, but because of insecurity and unfarmability. Farmers also fear that if black occupation extends around their farms, they will never be able to sell their land. The price of farms is reasonable at present and it seems that a few new black owners are taking the risk and purchasing because of this. Farm 8,155 ha. (see map No 2) was recently bought by a black purchaser for R50,000, nearly R1,000 per ha., even though it has no house and is hardly developed. One white family has recently purchased a substantial area of over 300 ha. at a price closer to R800 per ha. The top price recorded in a recent transaction was R2310 per ha. but this involved an internal transfer of land within the Lentz company and probably represents the value of afforested land.

There is an argument for allowing the market to work because in a situation of social instability, low land prices might facilitate

transfers. If the state attempts to become involved in extensive purchases, there may well be an inflationary effect on land prices, as happened in the Border during the 1970s and 1980s, when land was being purchased for the Ciskei and Transkei. The prospects of state involvement might also lead landowners to hold onto their property. Strategies for the transfer of private farms should therefore be developed involving subsidy and assistance, but not purchase, by the state.

Clearly, however, a limited state involvement around, for example, the Isidenge scheme (where the tenants could not purchase land by themselves) is desirable.

The following list (by no means complete) gives some sense of the prices being asked by estate agents and the type of farm available. Whereas the price of larger farms which are commercial units relates largely to their productive potential, the price of smaller farms near to town, which may be residential and trading rather than farming properties, can be more affected by the value of their buildings.

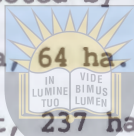
Morning Sun, E. Pagel, 168 ha, **64 ha.** irrigated, R300,000 or R1,785 per ha.

Welverdiend, J. Bezuidenhout, 237 ha. R375,000. R1582 per ha. N. Moore, 32 ha. house/water, R90,000. R2,812 per ha. D. Heitmann, 35 ha. with house near Gladstone school. R100,000. R2857 per ha.

Excelsior, M. Warren, 40 ha., no house. R55,000. R1,375 per ha.

Oakvale, L. Howe, 178 ha. R140,000. R787 per ha.

Stanhope, P. North, 356 ha. 30 ha potentially irrigable, R300,000. R842 per ha.



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3. THE ISIDENGE COMMUNITY: TENANTS AND FARMWORKERS

3.1 ISIDENGE TENANTS

The great majority of Isidenge tenants are presently settled on black-owned farms. Although some Isidenge farms were tenanted by the late nineteenth century, research suggests that these were a smaller number of agricultural tenants. Since the late 1950s there has been a large new inflow of former agricultural workers from white-owned farms and of people from within the Ciskei who wished to be closer to work opportunities. About 750 tenant households, varying from extended families to individuals, live on the black-owned farms. There is little more than 1 ha. on average per household.

Approximately 23 black landowners are presently residing on their farms, mostly with tenants; 7 landlords are absent. The central Isidenge farms (see map No 2), which lie adjacent to each other, have approximately 224 tenant households, 71 of them mainly extended families on the land of absent landlords. Properties near the Congregational Church and the school accommodate about 140 households. Landlords at Ngcobo house about 180 households. The Lusana basin is exceptional in having settlement not only on the main farm sites but also on their portions of the commonage, including the lands of a group of farmers who operate a joint grazing scheme on their amalgamated commonage portions. These portions of commonage have about 129 tenant households. There are probably over 290 households in all in the Lusana

basin. Ndwane area has the lowest tenant population figure. Besides Malusi and Taylor's farms which are settled by 36 tenant households, the basin is mainly occupied by white farmers.

The road from Stutterheim to King William's Town separates Isidenge from the Ndakana basin. Originally this was part of Isidenge but the area was handed to the Ciskei during the 1970s. Up to 1992, the former Ciskei government ran an agricultural scheme under Ulimocor in the area. The management allowed a few tenants to settle and the inflow has increased since the land was sold to a black owner. At present there are 15 households in the area.

Most of these tenants throughout the valley would seek to establish rights to land in any new settlement, although some may also try to retain their tenancies.

There is no standardized form of tenancy; they are governed by verbal contracts, sometimes of long standing. Three main categories can be identified. Cultivating tenants, largely early arrivals, who lease a residential site plus a few hectares of arable land. (Five acres was mentioned in an interview.) Most of the mission tenants are in this group. Rents are uneven but seem to have increased to about R10 per acre per annum. Most of these tenants now cultivate little because of shortage capital and oxen. It is not worth their while to cultivate such small areas of land and they are unhappy that they have to continue paying rent without reaping much produce.

Labour tenants have access to a more limited piece of arable land and residential site in return for labour supplied to the landowners. Now that both landowners and tenants are unable to farm effectively, the labour tenancy arrangements have generally soured and become inoperable.

The majority of Isidenge tenants, including most recent arrivals, are rent-paying tenants who simply pay rent for a residential site and possibly a small garden. Rents vary considerable from about R6 per household per month to as high as R20 per household.

Some landowners have found it more profitable to abandon their farming efforts in favour of this mode of securing income. Others felt that they had no choice but to take on tenants who had no other residential land. But some landlords, including new owners, are keen to regain their lands. And some tenants are no longer paying rents. A number of eviction threats are being made and tenants express an urgent need for alternative residential sites.

3.2 FARM AND FORESTWORKERS

Some farmworkers have been tenants and vice versa. There appears to be a high turnover of farmworkers on small white-owned farms of the valley whose owners also employ casual workers from the tenant communities to meet peak labour demands. Our information on the numbers of relatively permanent farmworker households is not complete. But research suggests there are about 20 households on five farms: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 (the last two farmed as a unit (see map No 2). The composition of the households varies greatly: on one farm, there is one family and four

single mothers. The total number in the valley is likely to be at least forty households. It appears that most farmworker households identify themselves with the Isidenge resettlement.

A far larger number is employed in sawmills and timber factories. Lentz alone employs about 360 people. Some of these employees are from tenants settled on black-owned land. About 1,000 people (250 households) are settled in a village of largely wooden construction adjacent to the main factory. About 20 per cent go home to Ciskei villages every weekend, and the rest are settled more permanently. The majority of the latter group, perhaps 200 households, identifies with the wider Isidenge community.

The other sawmills also employ a considerable number of workers, many settled on these private properties. Out of approximately 90 households enumerated, 65 are likely to join Isidenge tenants. In total, taking into account tenant, farmworker and forest workers households, over 1,000 households might seek residential plots in any new settlement.



4. SERVICES

4.1 SCHOOLS

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There are only primary schools in the Isidenge area. Gladstone or Isidenge Primary School on the Congregational Church site has about 450 pupils; Toise Farm School near the Lentz factory about 190; and Ngcobo farm school about 160.

A number of pupils attend senior schools in Kubusi and Mlungisi. The Gladstone school facilities are inadequate: a number of the buildings are of mudbrick or wattle and daub. The Congregational church is very keen to have the use of its site back. In fact, some of the pressure for a new settlement began when the Church and the headmaster applied for a new school site. The government has not been prepared to upgrade facilities because of the location of the school and the uncertainty about its future.

There is no doubt that educational provision and a new school site are central requirements for a new Isidenge community settlement. The Stutterheim Development Forum has a pre-school programme and there is also strong demand in the Isidenge tenant community for this facility to be included in the implementation of any settlement.

4.2 WATER, ELECTRICITY, TIMBER, FIREWOOD

Most of the black-owned farms do not have running water or electricity. Most of the white-owned farms do have these services. Electricity supply lines are close at hand.


People are largely dependent on wood for energy. (A few own batteries and generators.) Wood is collected by women; apart from the physical effort that this requires, it is also a time-consuming exercise. While there is a reasonable supply of dead wood because of the proximity of forests, the size of the population is such that women do chop live wood near settlements. Isidenge residents depend on the Lusana,

Isidenge and other streams for water. As with wood, the collection of water is a task undertaken principally by women and girls. Again, the concentration of population is leading to problems with these natural supplies.

Water and electricity provision are essential in a new settlement.

Tenants have been expected to provide their own materials and to undertake the building of their houses. There is no sewerage infrastructure on the black properties, so almost all people construct pit toilets. In one area, Drayini, there are two toilets for 11 households.

4.3 HEALTH SERVICES

The hub of health care in the region is the Frere Hospital in East London (about 90 kms. away). The relatively successful provision of health care in other parts of Stutterheim has not been fully extended to Isidenge. While the valley is officially visited fortnightly by mobile clinics, under the administration of the Amatola Regional Services, transport or other  problems tend to make these visits more irregular.

4.4 GENERAL

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Transport is largely provided by privately owned minibuses. Except for a shop on a white-owned farm near the school, all commercial services as well as the Post Office etc. are in Stutterheim town which is between about 8 and 15 kilometres away from the various settlements.

There are few leisure or sporting facilities in the valley. A couple of landowners have sacrificed portions of their farm sites to serve as football fields for the youth. However, better facilities are important as it appears that there are high levels of theft and reports of youth gangs.

5. INCOME

Aside from local employment in forests and sawmills, Stutterheim town is the major source of employment. There seem to be a decreasing number of migrant workers. A few are engaged in the Eastern Cape industrial areas such as Port Elizabeth, East London and King Williams Town. The closure of some Dimbaza factories has added to the high rate of unemployment. A small number of families, especially but not only landowners, have professional jobs - such as teaching.

The bulk of the Isidenge tenant population is unemployed. The major source of income in the community is the government pension. About 670 individuals draw disability grants, maintenance and old age pensions. (The total population of the valley is probably about 5,000 people with more than 4,500 in tenant and farmworker households.)

6. AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

6.1 WHITE-OWNED FARMS

Although Isidenge is potentially a rich agricultural area, social problems are inhibiting agricultural production. By no means all the white-owned farms were successful in earlier years, but there have been some long-established farming families. Most of the white-owned farms are now for sale and farmers are reluctant to invest in the land. Sheep are not kept because of theft. Vegetable growing, which used to be a significant activity, has largely ceased.

Agricultural activities in the area around Sunrise farm, and near the municipal boundary, have been particularly constrained. Some maize was planted last year (1993/4), especially in the irrigated lands near the Isidenge river (farms 4, 5 and 6 (see map No 2). But the largest grower in this area, Pagel, planted very little in 1994, because of the risk from fire and theft. Most farmers restrict their activities to cattle. There are a couple of small dairy herds, but their development has also been constrained by economic difficulty and insecurity.

6.2 BLACK-OWNED FARMS



The rate of cultivation has dropped during the past few years. Few landowners or tenants are able to command sufficient land, capital and labour to produce significant amounts. The largest arable sites are between 5 and 7 hectares; those tenants that have arable land have at most a few hectares. Crop production is mainly for domestic consumption: mealies, beans, peas, pumpkins, ntyabontyi (watermelon), potatoes, hay. There are considerable problems with stock trampling cultivated lands. They have also lacked access to extension services. A number of tenants and some black farmers do own stock in some quantity. One tenant family has 16 cows and 37 goats, but this is unusual. It is estimated that the tenants as a whole have about 500 livestock, though we have no breakdown of their holdings.

Black landowners see the division of the Isidenge/Upper Kubusi commonage in the 1960s as unfair as they have not attained full ownership rights of their portions. Many tenant stock owners have access to portions of grazing with the approval of landowners. Over the past five years or so a number of black farmers have amalgamated their private portions of former commonage and, together with their tenants, graze their animals jointly. There is strong demand for additional grazing land. Stock continue to graze on the roadsides, between homesteads, and in the forests - usually with the approval of forest companies. White farmers complain that their boundaries are disregarded, and even that their fences are cut. Both black landowners and tenants are grazing animals on Sunrise farm, although settlement here is still very limited. Largely because of insecurity, social problems and overcrowding, neither white farmers nor black landowners and tenants can get the best from their resources. The only successful enterprise in the valley is forestry. There is clearly a danger that the forestry firms might buy up an increasing amount of land in the valley which will remove it from community use. However, it may be possible to explore joint ventures between communities and forestry firms. Lentz responded positively to such a suggestion.

7. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In Stutterheim district, black settlements like Mgwali and Wartburg were administered by the Native Affairs Department under a headman and later by a tribal authority structure until the 1980s. Kubusi, Cenyu and Mlungisi township have been under the authority of the municipality. The local authority structure for the black community in Isidenge has, however, been unclear in recent years. For many years they fell under the Upper Kubusi Village Management Board and the Divisional Council. In 1955 the Divisional Council was segregated and the Farmers Association, which since the turn of the century developed as a racially integrated body, followed suit. The Isidenge black community was unrepresented and because of their anomalous position suffered from lack of services, in an area designated for whites.

Unsuccessful attempts were made to link the landowners and tenants of Isidenge to a tribal authority, as a prelude to their proposed incorporation into the Ciskei. In the mid-1980s, the Amatola Regional Services Council took over the administrative responsibilities of the Divisional Council. This change coincided with the national state of emergency when the Isidenge Residents Association was formed. This UDF-oriented body included both landowners and their tenants and provided a united voice for the black residents of the valley. In the late 1980s, the Cape Provincial Administration again unsuccessfully tried to relocate Isidenge farmers to land within the municipal boundary (farms 1, 2, 3 on map No 2). Isidenge farmers did not want to move onto this land, not least because Kubusi residents still claimed it as part of their former commonage. Indeed, soon afterwards in 1991, Kubusi residents occupied farms 1 and 2 without authority and now use them as grazing.

At the same time Isidenge tenants, who felt that the Residents Association was prioritising the defence of landowners, started their own approaches to the authorities for land. The Isidenge Residents Association split during 1989/90, resulting in the present tenant leadership which affiliated to the Stutterheim branch of SANCO. In theory at least, the organization is representative of all the tenant settlements in the valley.

In addition to its role as a representative body, the Isidenge SANCO tries to resolve minor civil cases. It is deeply involved in the planned settlement scheme and may become the basis for a new democratic local government structure. At present, however, SANCO is very largely dominated by men.

The black landowners have given an indication of their farming ambition by forming the Isidenge Farmers Union under the guidance of Profusa. This is not an attempt to institute an administrative body as in the case of SANCO. Talks are under way to connect landowners to the extension services.

8. THE SETTLEMENT PLAN

The Isidenge tenants have been pressing for land since the late 1980s and their problems were recognised by the last government. The Border

Rural Committee became involved in the issue more fully in 1992. In 1993 the Isidenge SANCO, impatient with the lack of progress, organized a symbolic occupation of farm 8 (see map No 2) which was their preferred settlement site; they also occupied the municipal offices in Stutterheim. They were soon persuaded to move but, as an attempt to resolve the position, the farm Sunrise (no. 10, about 240 ha.) which was already in the process of being sold to a black private owner, was offered to the Cape Provincial Administration for purchase. This together with a small section of state land (c. 50 ha.) was offered to the Isidenge SANCO as new land for settlement.

Setplan (a private development consultancy) was commissioned to plan the land for a settlement of up to 600 families. The scheme was extensively discussed with the community and other local groups at a series of meetings in the first few months of 1994. The community was informed by Setplan and the CPA that implementation of the settlement plan on Sunrise would begin in June 1994 and that the first settlers would be able to move then. Three separate villages with about 200 plots of 1,000 sq. metres. (60 ha. in all) were planned, as well as a school and a range of services. Plots were to be allocated by the SANCO committee acting together with the CPA and Setplan. Roughly 60 ha. of arable land, already developed and contoured, was to be retained for smallholdings. This left about 140ha. for grazing.

The local white farmers had not initially been included in discussions about the purchase of Sunrise farm. In April 1994, they succeeded in blocking the promised settlement by putting pressure on the Transitional Executive Council. They argued that it was not the best site for dense settlement. They also argued that it was too small for the number of sites envisaged and that dense settlement on the farm would threaten water catchment areas and the supply of water to their farms. They felt that if another dense settlement was situated near their land, their farms would become even more unfarmable. Already vulnerable, they demanded to be bought out if the settlement was to go ahead. A Department of Agriculture survey also raised alarm bells about the scheme and emphasised that the carrying capacity of the land was limited. Even though this is a high rainfall area, the report felt that the land could carry at most only 1 large stock unit on 2 ha. They suggested a maximum of 50 families could be catered for if there was to be significant agricultural activity or stockholding. The grazing land available would not be adequate for more than 70 large stock units.

9. THE LAPC RESEARCH AND BORDER RURAL COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT

The Border Rural Committee, an initiator and participant in the larger Land and Agricultural Policy Centre research programme, directed the research team to Isidenge as an area deserving special attention as part of the district study of Stutterheim/Keiskammahoek. In July 1994, researchers from the BRC, ARDRI (Fort Hare) and the ISER (Rhodes) began work; it soon became clear that the impasse reached was causing resentment by tenants and was increasing pressure on white farmers. Communications between white farmers and the SANCO had broken down. After interviewing many local people, the BRC section of the research team attempted to suggest some solutions which took into account the various interests at stake.

Not only the farmers and the Department of Agriculture, but also the tenant community itself, recognised that Sunrise was inadequate for a settlement of this size. The SANCO committee had accepted Sunrise because it was all that was available and they hoped to use the farm as a base from which to acquire agricultural land. Some tenants call Sunrise 'Taiwan' - a reference to its limited size. While it was clear that not every tenant family wanted to, or would be able to, have agricultural land, nevertheless, the Sunrise plan was essentially designed as a rural denser settlement. The CPA acknowledged that it saw its duty stopping at the provision of residential sites.

BRC researchers soon also realised that the figure of 600 families, initially felt by the CPA to be an overestimate of tenant numbers, was in fact an underestimate of the likely total demand for sites. The BRC argued that the settlement should be adequate for at least 1000 households. Even if some tenants retained their leases - some landlords who depended on income from tenants might encourage this - they were likely to try to get new plots in any settlement as well. Moreover, in view of the location of the settlement and the provision of services, it was likely that it would attract people from further afield.

The Transitional Executive Council had promised that a facilitator would be appointed to resolve the deadlock but this was not immediately done. The Border Rural Committee tried to act informally in this way by liaising with all the parties involved. On the basis of these meetings - and after considering various options - the BRC made a number of recommendations favoured by the tenants but which appeared to receive broad approval. These were presented to the regional government at a large meeting in Bisho on 17th August, 1994.

The BRC argued that there should be a two stage scheme. The most urgent need articulated by the tenants was for secure and serviced residential sites where they would not have to pay rent. This would require only a limited land purchase. The problems of the valley, however, would best be resolved by a significant land transfer - including as many as possible of the white-owned farms numbered on the map.

The strategy advocated included the following:

The purchase of Sunrise farm (10) should be expedited and some limited settlement permitted. Immediate grazing needs could be met on the farm. There was urgent need for some land in view of the threat of eviction standing over some tenants. (This has now been done and there are about twenty households on the farm around the old farmhouse.)

Farms 1-3 should be purchased by the state and made available for the many Kubusi tenants who are keen for residential sites and smallholdings where they would not have to pay rent. The remaining land could be added to the existing grazing commonage.

First National Bank is repossessing farm 1 from the farmer who was burnt out there in 1991. He was unable to continue paying the interest on his bond. The Bank should be requested to donate it. Farms 1 and 2 were already effectively occupied. Farm 11, already purchased, forms part of the expansion of Kubusi settlement and grazing lands. When farm 11 was purchased in 1991, a sum of R300 was charged for sites,

although not all who occupy land have paid. An agreed rate of payment should be decided.

Farms 7 and 8 should be immediately purchased as priority areas for the new Isidenge settlement; services should be arranged in consultation with the municipality and the Stutterheim Forum. These farms are more suited to a settlement than Sunrise: they have less arable land, are closer to town, near the road, flatter and easier to service. They total over 150 ha. and should be sufficient for settlement needs, schools etc. with plots of 1,000 sq.m. Tenants seem to prefer that the bulk of the village settlement and services should be concentrated rather than in three different residential areas as planned at Sunrise. There seems to be agreement, resulting from Setplan and CPA's previous meetings with the community, that residential plots be privately owned, although the issue of payment was not resolved.

While it is true that these farms are not actually within the municipal boundary, they fall immediately adjacent to it. It was agreed by the Isidenge SANCO that any attempt to find land within the boundary which was claimed by Kubusi landowners would lead to conflict.

Grazing commonage could be provided on Sunrise and surrounding state land. The tenants already have as much stock as could be absorbed by these two areas.

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The second stage of the project would involve acquisition of farms 4, 5 and 6 (a total of 600 ha. and available for sale at that time) which, together with Sunrise, would be developed as an agricultural settlement where productive farming may be possible. The farms marked 13 are also for sale and could be considered as part of the scheme.

The Department of Agriculture and other interested parties should be drawn into agricultural planning from the outset. Some members of the community have indicated a keen desire to farm. The details of any agricultural venture would need considerable further discussion involving experts.

Existing cultivating tenants favoured small farms where residential sites would be located next to arable allotments as one unit. Such a strategy would benefit relatively few tenant households. But it would enable landowners/occupiers to develop control over their farms, which is probably essential for successful smallholder agriculture in the valley. Some other tenants, however, tended to prefer a large area of demarcated agricultural land, run by a trust, separate from residential sites, to which there would be more general access. The details of tenure would have to be worked out with the community.

The BRC argued that a major, high profile settlement and development scheme would be an exciting option for the valley. While their report cautioned against too much optimism in view of the complex social relationships in the area, such a scheme could go some way to resolving acute tensions and providing a basis for social stability and economic advance.

The scheme would be of great benefit to the tenants, to the black landowners who wanted to use their land, and to the government's RDP

programme. The scheme might also contribute to alleviating the problems of white farmers, who are unlikely to be able to continue farming if nothing is done in Isidenge. Many perceived their major difficulty to be large tenant settlements next to their boundaries. If most tenants moved to secure sites in the new settlements, there might be less conflict on the boundaries of private land and there would be some chance that the land in the valley could be used for productive agriculture.

The community, especially if it has additional powers under new local government systems, could police the area in co-operation with the state. Agriculture of any kind is difficult without such policing.

The Regional government is already publicly committed to action in the area. At the meeting on 17th August 1994 it was suggested that Mr N. Matebese of the BRC act formally as facilitator; this was confirmed by the Regional government in September. He succeeded in initiating a new forum in the valley which brought all parties together to discuss the scheme and various other issues of mutual interest.



10. THE PRESENT POSITION

Three major problems arose late in 1994, and the various parties have been working towards resolving them.

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The Regional Ministry of Land Affairs could not commit itself to further land purchase in the area. This is not an obvious case of restitution, and officials felt that the Border area, which is already likely to be the main site for the pilot land programme, was getting a disproportionate amount of development funding. Land purchase for both phases of the scheme, including purchases for Kubusi, would cost about R2 million. There was no budgetary provision even for the R200,000 (roughly) needed for the purchase of farms 7 and 8. A number of solutions have been suggested. First, the 268 ha. of PWD land is being investigated as an alternative settlement site. This is unlikely to be suitable, but the land has been secured in principle from the government for the settlement project and will provide much needed grazing.

Second, it has been agreed in principle by the Local Government ministry to make a sum of R200,000, budgeted for development work on Sunrise, available for purchase of farms 7 and 8. The suitability of these farms for residential development is being investigated and new funding for development is being sought under the housing subsidy provisions. The question of how these farms are to be administered (once they have been purchased and services installed) has yet to be determined.

Thirdly, the central government has been approached to make budgetary provision for the larger land purchase in 1995/96. While the scheme could possibly be part of the land reform pilots, these are being prioritised around Queenstown which is some way to the north. The BRC and others are also looking at the possibility of using Act 126 of 1993.

Farm 8 was sold by a white to a black owner. However the new black owner has been approached and is prepared to resell the farm.

The Upper Kubusi Farmers Association, under the chairmanship of Mr G. Godden, formally announced its opposition to the scheme at a meeting of the Isidenge forum on 5th December 1994. They felt that even if some tenants were to move to the settlement, many would stay where they were. The farmers would therefore have to contend with an additional large settlement near to their properties. Mr Godden presented an alternative scheme, which was far more comprehensive in its approach. He suggested that all the white landowners of the valley, except for the forestry companies, be bought out by the government. This would involve an area of about 6-7,000 ha. at a probable cost of over R7 million. This land could then be subdivided into units of around 10 ha. to provide small farms for most of those who wanted to be resettled in the valley. The Farmers Association had made a direct approach to the central government and felt that there may be funds available for a major purchase of this kind. They also felt that individual farmers should not be encouraged to sell in order to facilitate the smaller settlement scheme being pursued by the SANCO committee.

The tenant representatives at the meeting saw this proposal as a delaying tactic. But they recognised the security difficulties which farmers were experiencing and undertook to do their best to resolve the conflict. Both parties pointed to the fact that some of the thefts, including theft of corrugated iron, fencing and stock, were by outsiders, probably from East London, with motor transport. In response, BRC researchers approached the individual farmers on the small number of properties involved in Phase 1 and found that they were still prepared to sell as individuals.

They also arranged a separate meeting with the Upper Kubusi Farmers Association where the farmers' position was made more explicit. Farmers argued that in view of the proximity of densely settled Ciskeian districts, and the build up of population around Stutterheim and Isidenge, there was not a future for white commercial farmers in the area. They believed that the tenants and others were trying to drive them out of the valley and the new government was not prepared to protect them. Many instances of theft and vandalism were cited. They thought that there was likely to be a continuity with the former government's policies and that large land purchases for African settlement were on the cards. The farmers failed to see any value, from their point of view, in the proposed settlement on farms 7 and 8 - even if some of the tenant families moved there. They also felt that the scheme would further undermine the value of their property and that they were more likely to secure a good price for their land if they stuck together and sold as a group to the government.

The BRC researchers suggested that it was unlikely that any major new purchases would take place - at least in the short term - outside of the pilot land reform areas. They advised farmers who wished to move to sell as individuals and suggested that this was the articulated policy of the new Ministry of Land Affairs. (From the point of view of the future, such a development would be likely to lead to purchases by individual black owners with capital.)

The farmers do not appear to have the power to stop the settlement although they can discourage individual sales.

In view of these difficulties it is important that issues of local government, protection of property, policing and security be addressed by the government in trying to solve the problems of the valley. The problems are unlikely to go away even if most of the land is purchased by new black landowners.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This study is concerned with land related issues affecting Kubusi residents. Kubusi is situated in close proximity to the town of Stutterheim and forms part of the Stutterheim District (see Map No 1). Kubusi enjoys a sub-humid climate with the incidence of frost being the major climatic limitation in terms of crop production. Kubusi covers an area of about 530 ha. The land is of moderate quality, with three-quarter of the area being potentially arable. For a more detailed account of the physical and socio-economic environment of Kubusi the reader is referred to Ward, Nompozolo, Van Averbeke and Mokolobate, 1992.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Kubusi became a farming area towards the end of the 19th century, after the wars fought between the British and Xhosa. A number of British war veterans, including Germans and Mfengu, were settled at Kubusi. This area was earmarked for farming purposes. Both black and white farmers were allowed to buy land, on which they were granted title deeds after having paid for it in full. For decades, both black and white farmers lived in harmony in Kubusi. Problems started during the 1950s, when the South African Government introduced separate development, which also affected Kubusi. Black farmers were told to sell their land and give way to white farmers, the area having been proclaimed "white" land. They were threatened that if they did not sell the land voluntarily, they would have to forfeit the land later on anyway and be faced with forced removal. In the mean time, the land around Kubusi was subdivided into several sections. Sections which formed part of the area of land where black farmers grazed their cattle was allocated to white farmers. The black land owners were allocated a section of commonage to graze their livestock. Restrictions on livestock numbers kept by black farmers were imposed. Each black farmer was allowed to keep only three head of cattle. Small stock and donkeys were absolutely not permitted on the commonage. The Kubusi landowners strongly rejected these new laws, and nobody was prepared to leave Kubusi. A certain attorney called Mr Pickerton came to Kubusi and asked the land owners to hand over their title deeds to him, so that they could be updated. Some landowners decided not to do so, but some did. Those who surrendered their title deeds were then issued with a deed of transfer. This means that at present some black land owners are in possession of a deed of transfer document instead of their original title deeds.

During these times of social upheaval there was an influx of people into Kubusi. Most of the immigrants came from neighbouring white farms. Some were threatened with forced removal from white farms, whilst others were no longer happy with life on the farms and decided to come to Kubusi. These immigrants attached themselves as tenants to black land owners in Kubusi. They rented land (mainly a residential site) from the landowners and thus increased the total population of Kubusi. Whereas Kubusi was intended to be a farming area it ended up being more of a residential settlement.

In the early 1980s, the residents of Kubusi embarked on a resistance campaign against forced removals and forced all the white farmers in



Map No. 1: Location of Kubusi within the context of the district of Stutterheim.

the area to forsake their land by burning down their properties, which also included some businesses in the village. It was due to this resistance campaign that Kubusi was deproclaimed a white area in 1991. The fleeing of white farmers from the area as a result of the violent resistance campaign and the increasing pressure on the land caused by immigration of black, landless people compelled the Government to purchase farms neighbouring Kubusi from their white owners. Most of the white farmers were happy to sell their land. At present, there are still white owned farms which are lying unused in the periphery of Kubusi. Those farms form part of the land which the community was dispossessed of, when the Group Areas Act was introduced.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study were to investigate land related issues affecting the community of Kubusi at present. Special attention was given to land claims. An assessment was made of the utilisation of the different types of land uses, namely residential, arable and grazing. An attempt was made to identify constraints which limit optimum utilization of the land for these various purposes. Where possible the local community was encouraged to formulate solutions which could serve to remove these constraints.



4. THE RESEARCH PROCESS

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4.1 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE STUDY

In order to introduce the aims of the research into land reform to the Kubusi community, the research team from ARDRI visited the area. A member of the executive of the Residents Association, who plays the role of chairman and who is a driving force behind the affairs of this community was the first person to be contacted. He was met on the 28th of July 1994 and this visit was followed up by an official letter from ARDRI dated the 2nd of August 1994 stating the objectives of the study. This letter was accompanied by documents which explained the LAPC project on Land Reform. The team was informed that these documents would be tabled before the next executive meeting of the Residents Association and that the decision of this committee with respect to the proposed research project would be available towards the end of that week.

The researchers suggested that one of them should attend the executive meeting and explain the matter to the committee. This suggestion was rejected. Instead the researchers were told that they would be invited to come and explain the project if and when there was a need for them to do so. During a follow-up visit the researchers were told by the same contact person that the community was busy preparing for the official opening of the school, which was to be held on the 13th of August 1994. He then suggested that the researchers should come after this date, so that arrangements could be made for the research project. There was no clear indication of whether this decision was taken in a joint committee meeting or it was taken by the contact person alone.

Later on it was learnt that the contact person was not informing the committee about the study.

Thereafter, several additional trips were made, but the response was always the same, namely the executive was scattered and, therefore, they could not discuss the issue of the research programme. Fortunately one of the researchers had worked in the area before, conducting a study of which the report had been well received by the community (Ward et al, 1992). Approached by some of the residents he explained the purpose of his frequent visits to the area. The residents themselves then arranged a general meeting to discuss the matter at hand. The researchers were asked to brief a community meeting, which was held at the school. It became clear that the proposed research programme was news to both the community and to some of the executive members of the residents committee. The meeting was followed by another community meeting which was held on the 11th of September 1994. It was in this meeting that the researchers were asked to leave Kubusi for the time being, in order to give the community time to discuss the matter amongst themselves. The researchers were contacted by telephone on the 12th of September 1994 and were invited to come and start with the project. Work commenced on the 14th of September 1994.

The delays had been so discouraging that ARDRI was on the verge of giving up because of time constraints. Time constraints were responsible for some of the data being approximations only.

4.2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data were collected during group meetings and household visits. For the group interviews the area was subdivided into sections. PRA methods were found to be most suitable for these gatherings. Most of the meetings took place during the evenings from 6-9pm and later. When collecting data from individual house holds, interviews were used.

The village of Kubusi is divided into five wards namely:-

- | | | |
|-----------|-------------|------------|
| 1. Lepile | 2. Mqukwana | 5. Mngxuma |
| 3. Goniwe | 4. Biko | |

Each of these wards, which are indicated on Map No 2, is supposed to have a subcommittee which works under the Kubusi Residents Association committee. The "chairperson" elected a subcommittee, which was responsible for taking us around the village. All the information that was gathered from the various wards was then combined and reported to a general meeting for appraisal by the community. We were welcomed by all the wards, and during our house visits and group interviews we did not have any problems.

The community of Kubusi can be subdivided into two broad groupings, namely land owners and tenants. The majority of the population consists of tenants, who immigrated from the neighbouring farms. However, the children of the tenants were born at Kubusi. Due to the recent developments at Kubusi, most of those who were tenants have now been granted land rights and have residential sites registered in their names. This situation has brought relief to the tenants because they

are now proud owners of land. Land is regarded as the most important asset by the people and therefore, it was essential that the sample had to cover both tenants and land owners. For the individual interviews we also had to cover those who own livestock and those who have arable lands. We interviewed 47 households of which 10 were still tenants and the rest land owners.

5. THE COMMUNITY OF KUBUSI

5.1 POPULATION

The total number of people living in Kubusi was not easily established. We had to rely on counting the number of household-residences and on counting the number of people in houses that we visited. Based on the number of residential sites the number of households was estimated to be 887 and our visits to individual households indicated an average of 8 members per household. The population at home of Kubusi was therefore estimated at being 5270.

5.2 INFRASTRUCTURE

5.2.1 Housing: Almost 95% of the houses at Kubusi are made of wattle and daub and, on average, consist of four rooms. The roofs are made of corrugated iron. There are also a few rondavels with thatched roofs. The rest of the houses are made of cement blocks or clay bricks.



The main reason given by landowners for using wattle and daub is that the Group Areas Act (with its associated forced removals) has always been a threat to them and so they avoided building houses with bricks. The tenants who have been allocated sites also use the same cheap building materials. Their reason is that they want to build a structure that does not take long to erect and does not require much money so that they can move from where they are staying to proper residential sites.

It must be noted that the relations between the land owners and their former tenants are still very cordial, in spite of the allocation of sites to most of the tenants. Although the new sites have been surveyed and allocated to people by the municipality, there are no plans for the provision of better or subsidised housing from the Local Authority for this community.

5.2.2 Water: Water as the basic need is regarded as forming top of the priority of needs. Kubusi has already been provided with piped running water. The new residential sites have no running water and the community across the Isidenge river is also still without water. The community has mentioned that it is prepared to pay for this commodity if the service is brought to their households.

5.2.3 Electricity: The installation of electricity at Kubusi is already in progress and the community is looking forward to the use of this commodity, because it has been one of the needs that was requested for sometime ago.

- 5.2.4 Health centre: The present health centre is in a good condition but the community is in the process of building a second centre next to the new school to cater for the people living at the new residential sites.
- 5.2.5 Schools: There is a newly built school, which, at present, goes up to standard seven. By 1997 the school will cater for standard 10 pupils. There is also a modern preschool structure that has been donated by the Micro Projects Programme.
- 5.2.6 Roads: The roads in Kubusi are in fairly good condition and they make the community easily accessible except for the one crossing of the Isidenge river to the north eastern side of Kubusi.
- 5.2.7 Telecommunication: The telephones are linked to an automatic exchange. For those who are interested in putting telephones in their houses, this service is available.
- 5.2.8 Bridges: The bridge which crosses the Kubusi river is in a good condition. The community has expressed a need for a bridge that crosses the Isidenge river. The community across this river cannot be accessed easily by car even if it does not rain. The construction of a new bridge has been approved.
- 5.2.9 Dipping tank: There is no dipping tank at Kubusi, but there is an old dipping tank which is situated at site No 2358 and which the community suggested that it should be renovated, because it is still in good order. At present it forms part of a white owned farm.

5.3 SOCIAL ORGANISATION

From its very inception, Kubusi fell under the jurisdiction of the Stutterheim municipality for the management of its affairs. There is no history of either a chief or headman at any stage forming part of the local authority. The present community leadership rests with the Residents Association, although the community could not exactly identify who the members of this committee were. It was mentioned that the residents committee is not well organised and that at the moment it is run by three members only. The rest of the committee has effectively stopped functioning. One of the factors that has contributed to the frequent delays, which hampered this study has been the absence of an active community structure.

The residents of Kubusi have stated that they prefer a rural life style, but that they do not want a chief or headman system at Kubusi. They prefer to be under the municipal local authority. The main reason why they want a rural lifestyle is that they want to farm. Agriculture is regarded as an important aspect of their lifestyle. They will have a Residents Committee which has been unanimously elected by them and it is out of this committee that they will elect somebody to represent them in the Transitional Local Authority. This committee will take care of issues related to the needs of this community and discuss them with the relevant authorities.

6. AGRICULTURE

6.1 LIVESTOCK

6.1.1 Livestock numbers: The data presented here reflect the numbers of livestock counted during the survey. Every effort was made to visit all the households that keep livestock. The data relate to total numbers covering livestock owned by both land owners and tenants.

Cattle	:	389
Sheep	:	23
Goats	:	181
Donkeys	:	32

Most of the cattle are what could be called an indigenous breed. There are also a few Brahman cattle. The bulls are selected by the stock owner on the basis of features which are perceived to be those of a good quality bull. Livestock numbers appear to be low. When this was put to the community, several reasons for the low numbers were provided. The Stutterheim municipality is the controller of camp No. 5, which is the commonage utilized by the livestock owners. The municipality ruled that each landowner should keep not more than three head of cattle. All large stock units (LSU) are subject to an annual fee of R5/head for the utilisation of the commonage. An additional R5/head is levied for utilizing the dipping facilities. The community does not like these taxes and sees these as a way of discouraging people from keeping livestock.

According to the municipal ruling, small stock are not allowed on the commonage, but there are people who keep goats and sheep. There are a few donkeys which are used as draught animals. The low livestock numbers are also the result of the limited area available for grazing. It needs mentioning again that the original Kubusi commonage was transferred to white farmers.

6.1.2 The commonage: The status of the vegetation on the Kubusi commonage was assessed and the results were as follows:

The total area of the veld is approximately 305 ha. This commonage has been divided into two camps, which will be referred to as Camp 1, which covers an area of 189 ha and Camp 2, covering an area of 116 ha. At the time of the survey, camp 1 was divided into 5 homogenous vegetation units (HVU) represented by sample sites 8, 9, 10, 11 & 12. Camp 2 was subdivided into 7 HVU's, represented by sample sites 1-7.

The veld condition score of sample sites 1-7 (Camp 2) ranged between 64.1% and 100%, which is considered as good to excellent. In Camp 1 the score ranged between 81 and 100% and this condition is rated as being excellent. The veld condition score, however, represents the general condition only. When the veld was surveyed almost 75% of the veld was burnt and animals had very little forage available to them. Burning, if applied correctly, is an important management tool, especially in sourveld areas (like Kubusi) where, because of high rainfall, the rate of dry matter accumulation is high. This results in grass becoming moribund and less acceptable to livestock. Burning may therefore be

necessary to "clean" the veld. However, it may not be wise to burn more than a 1/3 of the camp at any given time. Because there are only two camps at Kubusi, burning may not be advisable at all.

6.1.3 Livestock diseases: There have not been any livestock epidemics for the past five years. The most common diseases are gallsickness and redwater, but incidences of these two diseases were few. Kubusi residents use a product called "Deadline" which they buy and administer themselves. This is to avoid the payment of the dipping fee. The application of "Deadline" is only done by those who can afford it. For the rest of the community, tick control is a thing of the past and will be resumed only when the question of the R5 levy at the dipping tank is addressed.

6.2 CROP PRODUCTION

6.2.1 Arable land: Most land owners control arable plots of 4 acres. Usually they have divided their plots into an arable area and a residential area. The influx of tenants into Kubusi has contributed to this situation. More attention has been given to the development of residential sites than to that of the arable land. The majority of land owners interviewed indicated that their arable land is 4 acres in size and, in the same plot, a piece of land, enough to build a house, is always set aside. The size of this residential section varies from plot to plot. Their arable areas are not always properly fenced in, so the intrusion by livestock into the cultivated land is one of the factors which negatively affects crop production and which has contributed to a decline in the intensity of use of arable land.

6.2.2 Crops and crop production practices: Maize and potatoes are the two major crops for those land owners who are still involved in crop production. Crops such as beans, pumpkins and melons are also grown occasionally. Some people grow vegetables, but this is done on a very small scale (3m x 10m plots).

The farming community has not been harvesting much from their fields. For example, over the past ten years yields of maize have been ranging between 3 and 5 bags (on the cob) per acre, excluding that part of the harvest that is eaten fresh from the field. Maize yields at Kubusi are very similar to those obtained by small farmers in Ciskei where yields ranging between 0,2 and 0,5 ton per ha are typical. These yield levels are indicative of a cropping system in which very little is returned to the soil in terms of nutrients and of management levels. This leaves a lot to be desired. There is no doubt that the application of fertilizers and the adoption of improved practices with respect to soil preparation, choice of seed, planting methods and weed and pest control, could result in substantial increases in the yields of crops.

Our investigation confirmed that the application of chemical fertilizers is rare. Out of the 37 farmers interviewed, only 7 have ever used chemical fertilizers (of the 2:3:2 type). The rest of the farmers rely on the occasional application of kraal manure to replenish the nutrient status of the soil. Weeding is mostly done by hand hoeing. Those who have donkeys may use an animal drawn cultivator to control weeds. As far as could be established none of the farmers

applies pesticides. Farmers indicated that cropping in the area has suffered as a result of several factors, namely,

- a) social and political instability which created conditions in which vandalism was rife and which affected tractor services in particular;
- b) the threat of forced removals contributed to the low use intensity use of cropped land;
- c) restrictions on livestock numbers resulted in a general scarcity of draught power;
- d) absence of adequate fencing enabling livestock to invade cropped land;
- e) theft of produce from the fields.

6.3 MATTERS OF CONCERN

The community expressed concern about the underutilization of agricultural land. These concerns are listed here.

- a) The municipal laws which restrict livestock numbers to three per owner has played a major role in regard to the absence of draught power.
- b) The livestock levy imposed by the municipality discourages people from rearing livestock, which, in turn, reduces the availability of draught animals.
- c) The livestock levies imposed by the municipality were never discussed with them, but were simply imposed on them.
- d) Inadequate fencing of the commonage enables livestock to roam the area and invade arable land, causing damage to the crops.
- e) The lack of riparian rights of farmers, who have land along the banks of the Kubusi river, has prevented farmers from irrigating their fields. Farmers feel that they are entitled to riparian rights just like the farmers across the river.
- f) The scarcity and sometimes the late arrival of tractors during the ploughing season discourages farmers or results in planting after the optimum planting date has expired, late planting contributing to low yields.
- g) Agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilizers and pesticides are not easily obtainable. It is the same with tractors for ploughing purposes.
- h) The absence of a resident or a visiting extension officer, who advises farmers on farming matters has prevented farmers from improving on their usual ways of doing things.

- i) The absence of a farmers' organisation is also a matter of concern.
- j) The unavailability of credit facilities to black farmers is a factor preventing the advancement of local agriculture.

6.4 SOLUTIONS PROPOSED BY THE COMMUNITY

- a) Those farmers interested in irrigation farming should be granted riparian rights.
- b) Soils should be analyzed and tested to identify major nutrient deficiencies.
- c) Agriculture should be improved by making use of certified seeds and the livestock farmers should be encouraged to keep improved breeds that are adaptable to the area.
- d) The local authority must be prepared to negotiate with the community the levies and restrictions imposed on livestock and camps should be fenced to improve control on stray livestock.
- e) There is a need for more grazing land to enable the farmers to keep more livestock.
- f) The Municipal ruling prohibiting the keeping of small stock at Kubusi should be scrapped, because these animals form an essential part of the customary and social life of this community.
- g) When more grazing land has been secured, rotational grazing must form an integral part of grazing management.
- h) The government should provide the Kubusi farmers with a resident or a visiting extension officer to advise the farming community.
- i) Markets should be established for the sale of all agricultural produce.
- j) The government should help small farmers financially and credit facilities should be made available to landowners.
- k) A farmer's cooperative should be established to supply farmers with the necessary inputs.
- l) To further these aims, all farmers are advised to join a farmers' union.
- m) If, after negotiations, additional land for cropping is secured, the fields should be subdivided amongst those residents, who at present do not own arable land. No title deeds should be issued. The land should be allocated to those individuals who are keen on utilising it effectively. A committee responsible for the

allocation of land should be established to monitor effective and efficient utilization of land. Those individuals who have been allocated arable land, but do not use their lands or leave the land lying fallow would have to hand over their plots to the land affairs committee for reallocation.

n) Three categories of land allocations should apply.

1. There should be communal land where plots will be allocated to women for vegetable production.
2. Arable land should be made available for intensive farming, preferably under irrigation to enable commercial production.
3. Arable land should be made available for subsistence farmers for production of crops for home consumption.

7. LAND RELATED ISSUES

7.1 RESIDENTIAL LAND



For several decades the Kubusi community has been fighting for land and land rights. The fight has been between the local authority (municipality), the white farmers and the black landowners. As explained in the historical background, some white farmers had to leave Kubusi and their land because of the political unrest. The Cape Provincial Government had to buy this land from these white farmers for resettlement of the tenants and for other development projects like the building of schools and clinics. The land which was purchased lies within the present boundaries of Kubusi. Nothing has been done about the land which used to be part of the old Kubusi.

The land that was purchased by the government was then made available for residential purposes and the municipality surveyed it and demarcated 600 sites. This land covers an area of approximately 90 ha and each tenant had to buy a 600 square metre site at a price of R300/site. During the process of site demarcation, there was a misunderstanding between the Residents Committee, the community and the surveyors. The community members felt that the sites were smaller than those agreed upon during an initial demonstration. The size of these sites was considered too small for members of the community staying on the western side of Kubusi (the Lepile ward). Other members of the community decided to accept the sites as they were, because they were desperately in need of residential sites and were tired of squatting on other people's land.

The Lepile community decided to defy the Residence Committee and demarcated sites themselves on CPA land, which was earmarked for crop production by the community. This area covers 31,9225 ha. Sites of about 1200 square metres were demarcated and are now being occupied illegally. This has contributed to the tension that exists between the Residents Association Committee and the people of Lepile.

The dissatisfaction amongst the community about both the size of the surveyed sites and the presence of unsurveyed sites has been addressed for the first time by the community during the process of the LAPC research. For almost a year now, nobody was prepared to face this problem, but through discussions the community came with the following suggestions to break the existing tension.

7.1.1 Surveyed sites: The feeling of the residents is that these sites (600m²) are too small for accommodating their interests, which are housing, a vegetable garden large enough to supply a family with vegetable produce, and a kraal. The community suggested, however, that the present situation must be accepted because it can not be altered now. In future, when other residential sites are demarcated they should be of the same size (600m²), but if the buyer has enough funds he or she should be allowed to purchase two sites which would then be consolidated into one.

7.1.2 Unsurveyed sites: The Lepile ward members proposed that these sites (1200m²) should be accepted by the greater Kubusi community, because they have already built houses on these sites. In return they are prepared to purchase these sites at current market price (R300/600m²), but the whole process of paying has to be discussed with them. They also proposed that the Kubusi Residents Association should handle this matter and discuss it with the relevant authorities. They wish to become legal occupants of their sites and to be issued with title deeds like the occupants of the surveyed sites. They agreed that a list of all occupants of these sites be compiled to prevent dual ownership of residential sites. As the process of illegally demarcating residential sites on land purchased by CPA is still continuing, it was agreed that a moratorium should be called on this activity until such time that the issue has been resolved to the satisfaction of all concerned.

7.2 AGRICULTURAL LAND

The land that is being claimed by the Kubusi residents did not belong to this community previously, except that it forms part of what was the old commonage, which was shared by both white farmers and the Kubusi black land owners before the 1950s. Kubusi people feel that the grazing land, even if it was rented or sold to these farmers - some of them have deserted their lands - should be returned or bought back for use by Kubusi. When handed to Kubusi this land should be used for the purpose of grazing, settlement and crop production. Most of the land being claimed has been abandoned and it is for this reason that the community suggests that it should be made available to them. The community feels that they are operating in a congested environment and that the 530 ha of land, which they are occupying at present, should be increased by reincorporating the old commonage. They also feel that the area that they presently occupy is insufficiently large to enable development to take place. This also justifies the claim for more land.

7.2.1 Land claimed by Kubusi: The numbers of the plots claimed by the Kubusi community are shown on Map No 2.

GRAZING LAND

ERF NO.	LAND SIZE(ha)
2364	23
924	7,2408
928	17,6568
929	16,6307
928-929	17,6174
2354	132,0772
2358	67,7338
2359	76,1979
2229	3,7697
TOTAL	361,9243

ARABLE LAND

ERF NO.	LAND SIZE(ha)
966-969	50
970-973	44
2363	122,5455
2357	110,5342
2359	76,1979
2358	135,4675
2364	10,5582
931-939	35,6453
TOTAL	584,9486



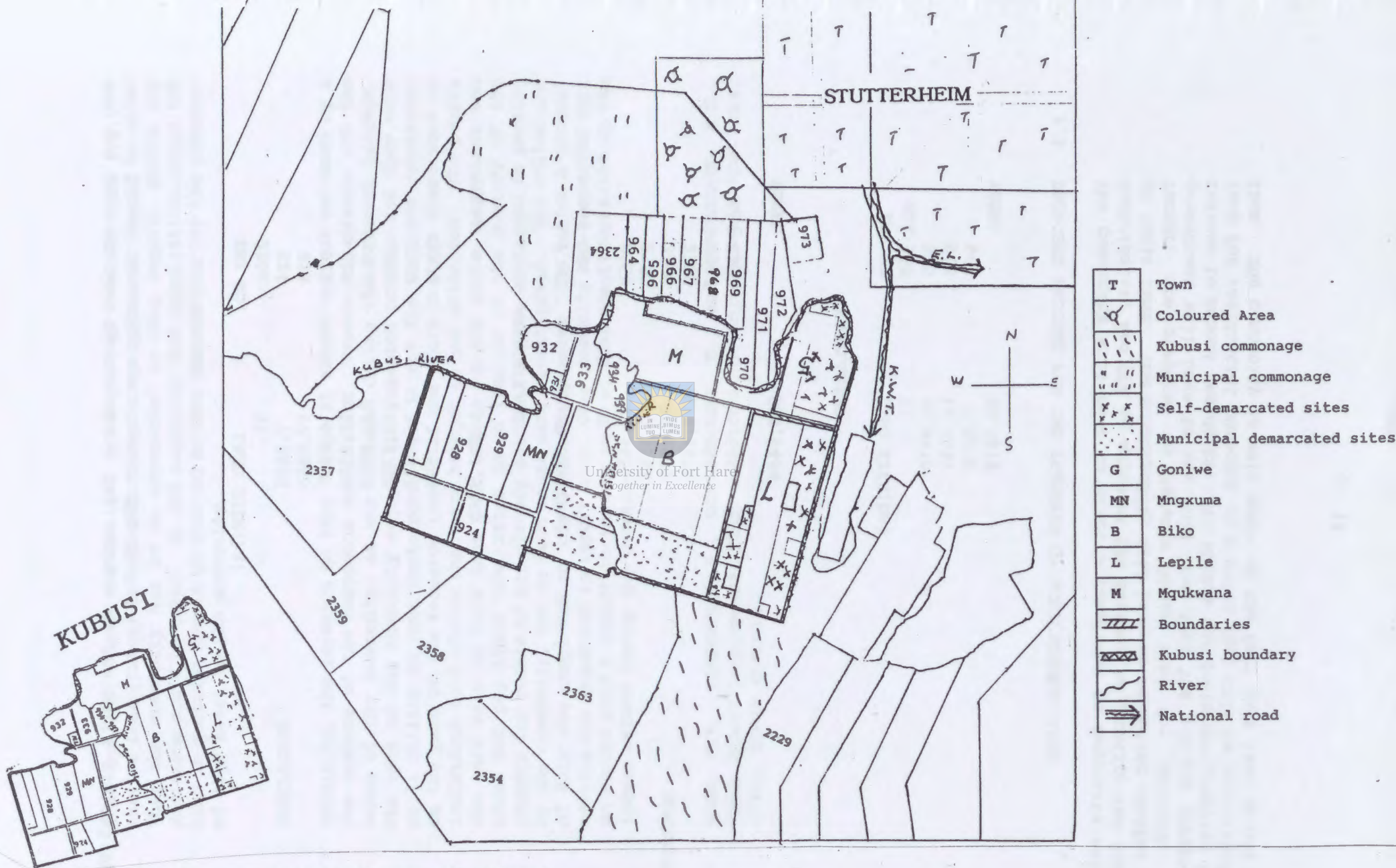
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SETTLEMENT

ERF NO.	LAND SIZE(ha)
964-965	23
925	18,9910
964	15,7831
965	7,3278
TOTAL	65,1019

7.3 PROPOSED PROCESS FOR THE TRANSFER OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

The community will have to elect a committee to negotiate with the Municipality and CPA to approach the farmers in question for the sale of their land. The municipality will have to establish whether these farmers are prepared to release their land for purchase. The government will have to buy this land from the willing farmers for release to Kubusi residents. The Kubusi residents are prepared to buy land for residential purposes at a price that will be negotiated with them. The community is well aware of the fact that land is not for



Map No. 2: Detailed map of Kubusi.

free and that those who utilize grazing land will have to pay the service fees (rates) to maintain the grazing camps. It should be noted that the community has to be approached in this regard, before any decisions could be taken. It was suggested that negotiations about the land in question should be started as soon as possible for the transfer of this asset to the community.

8. CONCLUSION

Initially, the research on land reform at Kubusi was not welcomed by a few members of the Residents Association. However, they were not the voice of the community, as was revealed during the research process. The rest of the community enjoyed the research process and they were still willing to contribute more, were it not for the time constraint on the part of the research team. In the whole process there were no individual land claims that were brought to our attention. The people who were said to have lost land rights to the state, are those who could not pay their land rates (such land is in the custody of the lawyers for resale if not already sold). This was mentioned in passing by the community, but no such cases were investigated. The collection of data was completed on the 24th of September 1994, when a general meeting was organised to report back. The community has requested that we should send a report to them as well so that they can follow up the issues raised during the process.

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WARD, H.K., NOMPOZOLO, S., VAN AVERBEKE, W., and MOKOLOBATE, M.S., 1992. Kubusi Development: Final report. ARDRI, University of Fort Hare, Alice, South Africa.

BORDER-CISKEI DISTRICT STUDY ON LAND REFORM

FARMERS, FARMWORKERS AND NEIGHBOURING BLACK SETTLEMENTS

IN THE DRIER EASTERN SECTION OF THE STUTTERHEIM DISTRICT

Case study 3 and Appendix 3 of the Final Report

by

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and edited by

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BORDER RURAL COMMITTEE
East London, 27 February 1995

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1. INTRODUCTORY COMMENT

Although the circumstances, problems and needs of farmers and of farmworkers are interrelated to a significant degree, they will for analytical purposes also be considered separately in this study. Place names referred to in this text are shown on Map No. 1.

2. FARMERS

Stutterheim as a whole is largely a stock-farming district with about 26,000 cattle, 108,000 sheep and 13,000 goats (before the drought of late 1994). A local extension officer estimates that some 4700 ha of land is under cultivation, of which 1000 ha. is under irrigation. The latest figures from Dohne (December, 1994) give a total of 201 farmowners or farming units with an average area of 420 ha. This figure, which excludes the municipal zone and smallholdings, is a low average area for white owned farming districts of the Eastern Cape; only the wet East London coastal district has smaller average landholdings. However, there are two fairly distinct zones in the district (a drier eastern zone and a wetter western zone) in which landownership patterns differ greatly.

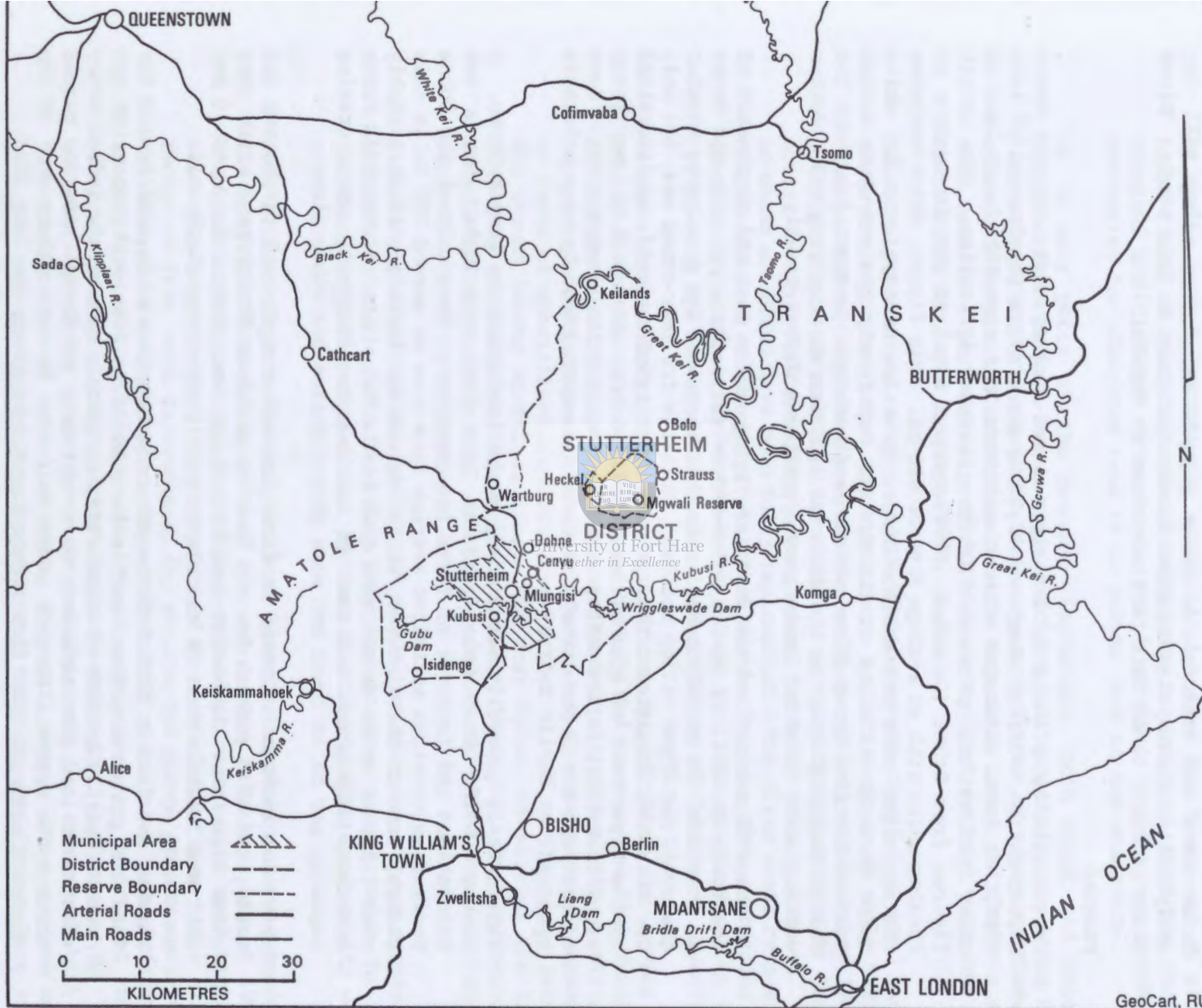
In about 80 per cent of the district, lying to the east and north-east of the town, rainfall is mostly under 600 mm (24 inches) per year and drops to less than 400 mm (15 inches) near the Kei. Here the grazing is sweeter grassveld and dryer valley bushveld, suitable for year-round use, but only for low stock densities. The carrying capacity of the veld, as determined by the Department of Agriculture, declines from about 2.5 ha. per large stock unit (lsu) in the wetter areas to 8 ha. per lsu along the Kei. Some of the veld has deteriorated and there is encroachment by less palatable species.

This area is generally occupied by white landowners on larger farms. A number of the farm-owning families have been established for a few generations and turnover of farms has been low. The chair of the Dohne Farmers Association estimated average farm size at around 700 ha in this central part of the district, while the average farming unit is probably over 1,500 ha in the driest zone next to the Kei river. Stutterheim farms are nevertheless smaller than in neighbouring Cathcart, where grazing capacity per ha is lower and more consolidation has taken place.

There has been an increase in farm size and a number of farmhouses are empty, but this process has not been as rapid in Stutterheim as in some other districts. Most white-owned farms are owner-occupied. About 10 per cent are leased. Rent is calculated at R10 per large stock unit.

Farmers now find it difficult to get either renters or buyers. Demand for land and prices are down, partly because of agricultural recession and drought, partly because of insecurity, and partly because the inflationary effects of land purchases made to consolidate the Ciskei have now passed through the system. Farmers in the Bolo area in the northern part of the district estimate that farm income has halved since the late 1980s.

Cattle and woolled sheep are the main livestock. Angora and boergoats are reasonably well-adapted to the eastern thornveld areas. Some farmers have



Map No. 1: The district of Stutterheim

reduced sheep numbers because of problems with fences, theft and low wool prices. There has been a move towards Dohne merino and other dual purpose sheep breeds in order to take advantage of higher prices for mutton. Much of the stock is sold locally, either direct from the farms, or at stock fairs (Bolo, Strauss and Dohne) where many buyers come from the former Transkei and Ciskei. Prices received from black traders and butchers purchasing for slaughter tend to be better than at the abattoirs.

As in many parts of the country, landowners, both black and white, perceive there to have been a major increase in stock theft. Few sheep are left at Mgwali and farms which have adjoining areas of black settlement seem to have particular difficulties. Dogs from these settlements are also seen as a particular problem, since they tend to kill a number of small stock during a single attack.

Relatively few crops are grown in these drier areas. Small irrigated lands or dryland are used for fodder-crops. A little maize is cultivated; cabbages and potatoes are produced in small quantities on irrigated land. Although there is some soil erosion and pasture deterioration in these areas, most of the farms have been planned for conservation farming. (By no means all plans have been fully implemented.) The drier areas have well developed stock watering systems. And whereas farmers were, according to government calculations, between 20 and 40 per cent overstocked in the 1980s, they are now generally understocked because of the recent droughts.

Farmers interviewed in the Bolo/Mgwali area suggest that the number of employees on their farms has dropped by half and more in the last decade. As elsewhere in the country, there is a tendency to manage with relatively few permanent families settled on the farms, and to employ casual workers, or teams of specialised shearers from further afield on the sheep farms. The casual labour market is limited on most farms, in view of the fact that they are largely stock farms. However, there is a bigger seasonal demand for workers on the relatively few farms which have irrigated vegetables such as cabbages.

Farmers perceive that they 'battled' to keep an adequate labour supply in the late 1980s and early 1990s, despite massive unemployment in the surrounding black settlements. Strikes as well as labour instability were a feature of this period.

Some farmers organised under the Bolo Farmers Association have attempted to apply the relevant aspects of the new Labour Relations Act of 1993. The most significant result has been the adoption of a 48 hour working week with overtime pay. Some aspects of the legislation have had a mixed reception from local farmworkers, for example the change from bonus pay to overtime pay and the daily signing-in and - out procedures. (The latter is already becoming moribund). Some farmworkers, however, expressed their desire for legislation-related service contracts. Farmers do not generally perceive training to be valuable and are concerned that if farmworkers acquire formal training they will move. However, one week courses, arranged by Boskop agricultural training institute, have been provided at Bolo.

2.1 FARMERS IN THE MGWALI AREA

A number of farmers in the area surrounding Mgwali were interviewed, and some of their views about their situation and their future are presented below.

Most of the farmowners around Mgwali are from long-established families and most seem to have quite large holdings. Some however are not uninterested in selling if the price is right. 'Farmers don't particularly want to move out but if the carrot is big enough then they would consider moving'.

Farmer A thinks that Mgwali has had some of the best grazing in the district and that his farm is essentially an extension of that good area, and therefore the best farm to start with if white farms are to be purchased for the extension of Mgwali. Basically, like most farmers, he believes that if Mgwali was enlarged, 'then farmers' days would be numbered'. He is worried that farms might be sold around him and that he would be left unable to sell or to farm - particularly if a number of farmers were to sell together. He mentioned a rumour about such a proposed sale of a large block of farms in the Bolo area to 'the ANC', financed by some foreign government or purchaser. Farmer B was apparently involved. A researcher checked this with Farmer B who confirmed that an Afrikaner agent had phoned at the beginning of 1994, apparently on behalf of the ANC and asked for 10 farms in Ex. Farmer B arranged this and very soon got 10 farmers to agree to sell around him, but the purchaser did not pursue it. There seem to have been problems with the price they were asking, and the whole thing fizzled out. Both Farmer A and B used this episode to illustrate that there were plenty of farms for sale.

There have however been few outside purchasers in recent years. Most land is bought by locals. So there is an historic slack in the market. Much of the land is not very good, and security is an issue. According to Farmer B, people see Bedford and Cradock as the last 'safe' districts to the west.

A number of farmers are spreading the risk, by either themselves or their wives taking on a second job. Thus Farmer A is also involved in the transport business, B's wife worked in a trading store, C's wife is an estate agent, and D has a number of non-agricultural business interests.

Farmer C had tried in the past to sell his farm; he had then resolved to stay and to make the best of things, and had done fairly well. His wife stressed that while they did not mind if commercial black farmers move in next door, they did not favour the establishment of a communal lands settlement next to them. She felt that the Isidenge side of the Stutterheim district was far more suitable for purchase by blacks.

Of the farmers interviewed, Farmer D was the most intent upon staying. His family has been there since about 1880. There is no doubt that the propinquity of a number of farming relatives, particularly brothers, is a

factor in his determination to stay. Family skills, shared knowledge, equipment and even capital, are very important for successful farming. But the key factor for him is that their major income now seems to be from trading in Transkei.

Now he is not only building up the business at his farm, but is thinking hard about taking over a Transkeian station in Tsomo which he has been offered. He already runs trucks into the Transkei, supplying stations there owned by blacks, despite the state of the road. There is a particularly large demand for building materials. He has run into some difficulties, but obtained the backing of the headman, magistrate, police and even the Transkei 'embassy' in Port Elizabeth. He purchases a range of goods, such as building materials, dry goods, milk and cabbages from sources in the Stutterheim district, which he then sells in the Transkei. He also has a small brick-making business.

2.2 FARMERS' RELATIONSHIPS WITH MGWALI

Farmer D does not trade directly with Mgwali as he is some way off. The trading store on the main road, on Farmer B's farm, was open until a few years ago. He hired it out to someone else and it is now closed. Villages 4 and 5 in Mgwali would like it opened again, but the other local traders at Mgwali and Bolo prefer it to remain shut. Farmer B offered it as a craft centre, but this has now been superceded by the market.

Farmer A tries to maintain a strong relationship with Mgwali. He finds stock theft is a relatively minor problem as he receives co-operation from Mgwali residents in this area. In turn, he allows people to chop some wattle for free. He suggested that the worst period in relations with Mgwali was when it fell under Ciskei. Before that, and to a certain extent afterwards, the older more established families and landowners were able to contain the community and to provide contact points within the Mgwali community to resolve stock theft and other issues. He and Farmer B agreed that dogs from Mgwali destroying livestock was a much more serious problem. They suggested that dog-tax should be reimposed and non-licensed dogs destroyed. Jackals were seen as a problem, but not as bad as dogs. The farmers do not have jackal proof fencing, but do have a pack of dogs for jackal hunting.

Fire seems less of a difficulty here than for example along the Queenstown/Ciskei border. Farmers with fields bordering Mgwali clear breaks and Mgwali also has a graded boundary in places. There was a fire in 1994 on Farmer E's land, and for the first time in some years, Mgwali residents came to help put it out.

Shearers tend to come from outside the district. Casual labour is taken from Mgwali, although preference is usually given to women already on the farms.

Many farmers sell animals in Mgwali. There is also some exchange through the local stock sales, although the great majority of animals go across the Kei.

The Agricultural Department is involved in repairing the external fences which both helps in fire control and in stock trespass. Trespass also seems to be a limited problem, although Farmer B said he would not impound because of the threat of retaliation.

It is to deal with the above-mentioned problems such as theft, fence-cutting, fire and trespass that farmers want to re-establish the liaison committee, but they don't think that they can take the initiative in that it was the community which broke it off. No government department or even the Regional Services Council has been prepared to take responsibility for this issue over the last few years.

3. FARMWORKERS

Farmworkers in this area generally have very strong links with the nearby black settlements of Mgwali, Wartburg and Heckel, with several regarding these areas as their homes. The number of farmworker households on farms has declined in recent years, partly a voluntary move away from farm work and onto black settlements where secure sites could be acquired, and partly a rationalisation by farmers in response to recession, drought and concern about labour legislation.

Cash wages certainly are low, usually less than R150 per month. But most farmers allow their staff to run cattle with the owner's herd and there are very substantial payments in kind. Farmers maintain that women members of the farmworker household are becoming more oriented towards a cash income, and a recent trend has been for young women to enter domestic employment with black families in Mdantsane and Zwelitsha. Educational facilities are certainly seen as a major factor by many rural families in choosing where to settle. While there is no longer a major difficulty with labour supply and worker action, farmworkers still have sufficient grievances to have approached the Anglican Church in June 1994 to help them with their problems. The Rural Foundation does not operate in the district.

Housing, water and electricity were identified as the most pressing needs by farmworkers. In most parts of Stutterheim they have in the past been expected to build their own dwellings, generally wattle and daub. They are beginning to reject this practise, and have expectations, expressed with some urgency, that housing should be provided either by the state or by the farmers themselves. Farmers maintain that in the past efforts to capture state subsidies for housing were foiled by red tape. Few farmworkers have electricity or piped water, although ESCOM has extended electricity supplies to the Mgwali/Bolo area. Farmers are required to pay an annual service fee for 25 years, and feel that it is unfair that they have to pay additional costs for cables to the farmworker dwellings, especially because they perceive themselves to be subsidising lines to Mgwali, where electricity runs on the coupon system.

Farmworkers also have limited access to other services. Primary schooling for children and youths on outlying farms is always a problem, although

perhaps less so in Stutterheim than in some other agricultural districts, because of the existence of black settlements scattered around the district. Social facilities are lacking for farmworkers, and even the popular rugby club matches are threatened by lack of transport.

Aside from Stutterheim and the black settlements, there is also a small village centre at Bolo. It has few residents, but provides a significant range of services for the surrounding farming community. Bolo has a police station, a post office with a postal service (which is however being wound down) and a pay telephone, a mobile and a stationery clinic, two farm schools up to Std 5, a church, a public library, a civic hall, shop and bottle store.

4. A RECOMMENDATION: SECURITY THROUGH STRUCTURED INTERACTION

While it is clearly desirable that the lot of farmworkers on many farms should be improved, this raises issues around the payment for services and facilities. Clarity needs to be obtained as to the extent to which the state is prepared to subsidize them, and to what extent farmers and farmworkers respectively are to contribute towards the costs. Payment for services raises the question of security of tenure of farmworkers: if the state subsidizes services, then who is to decide who has the right to stay on a farm - the farmer or the state? Clarity needs to be obtained on these and other matters regarding the relative rights of, and the relationship between, farmers and farmworkers. To this end, some kind of negotiating forum needs to be established at local level, with participation by farmers, farmworkers, the state or regional government, and any other direct stakeholders.

The interaction between white-owned farms and neighbouring black settlements in recent years has given rise to economic insecurity on the part of white farmers. This has led to farms being abandoned, or to farmers seeking to sell up, with a resultant loss in skills and job provision. This again points to the need for the development of a new form of local liaison and local decision-making forum that involves representatives from both the local black settlement concerned, and the surrounding farmers. Once such a forum achieves some basic legitimacy, it will need to explore ways of establishing community based rural policing structures. As such fora achieve legitimacy, they could then provide the enabling context to start establishing closer integration between these settlements and adjacent white farms in terms of practical ways, such as co-ordination around trade in animals at stock-fairs, tractor loan schemes, dipping of animals, breeding programmes for livestock, etc.

For both farmers and farmworkers, and for farmers and neighbouring settlements, such fora would be an important step towards the clarification of rights and obligations, the resolution of disputes, and the resultant security necessary for mutually beneficial relationships. While such fora would be locality-specific (i.e. a specific black settlement and surrounding farms) or task-specific (i.e. focussing on farmers and farmworkers), they would need to link up with wider, district-

level local government groupings and initiatives, such as the Stutterheim Forum, and SANCO. Such bodies have their own political dynamics, and it may take some time for the different local and wider level interests to reach a working arrangement.



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BORDER-CISKEI DISTRICT STUDY ON LAND REFORM

LAND RELATED ISSUES AT MGWALI

(Stutterheim District - Eastern Cape Province)

Case study 4 and Appendix 4 of the Final Report

by
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with contributions from
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and based on field work conducted
by

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Border Rural Committee
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SUMMARY

Mgwali is the largest of several black rural settlements in the Stutterheim district. It is situated on fertile land surrounded by white farmland in the dryer reaches of the district. It was established around a mission and rights to land were based on the principles of private tenure in the form of quitrent title. As elsewhere, some quitrenters took on tenants. In recent decades a large number of evicted or displaced farmworkers have found their way to these pockets of land controlled by black communities. There are now an estimated 10 000 people in Mgwali. Mgwali did once house some successful farming families. But high population densities, together with many other factors, have made it impossible for families to live off the land, and very difficult to farm at all.

Despite the successful campaign against forced removal in the 1980s, co-ordinated by the Residents Association, conflicts have emerged subsequently which make it difficult to plan the future of Mgwali. In response to the demand for permanent residential rights by large numbers of former tenants and farmworkers, the Cape Provincial Administration (now the Eastern Cape Regional Department of Local Government) recently decided to survey additional sites on the commonage, an action strongly opposed by the landowners and older tenants who are anxious to maintain their access/rights to the commonage.

White farmers surrounding Mgwali are vigorously opposed to the expansion of the settlement into commercial farmland, and would prefer a policy favouring black commercial farmers moving into the land market. They will sell if sufficient pressure is brought to bear and their prices can be met, but seek protection through block buy outs which will be expensive. If this were to become an option, there would be plenty of land available for purchase. Unlike other areas in the Border Corridor, however, they are a relatively settled farming community and most would prefer to remain where they are, especially if agriculture stabilises.

The resolution of the land rights question in Mgwali and its reintegration into the social and economic fabric of the district is the major challenge facing the new government in relation to Mgwali. Solutions need to be found which take into account the legal rights of landowners, the need for shelter and security by the non-landowners and the economic stability of the entire district. Developments which address the narrower sectarian interests of one or other group tend to lead to lasting tension and often fail to address the broader problem.

1. INTRODUCTORY COMMENT

This report is based on field work conducted by Luvuyo Wotshela, William Beinart and Rosalie Kingwill for the Border Rural Committee - LAPC, 1994, and field work conducted by Tony Buckle, Sue Middleton, Maura Andrew, Bev Taylor and Siyabulela Manona of the Border Rural Committee in the course of development and institutional support work in 1992/93. For an in-depth analysis of the early history of Mgwali the reader is referred to Wotshela (1994). The report also used information supplied by Buckle (1993). It should be read in conjunction with Appendices 1, 3 and 5 of the final report.

2. HISTORY OF MGWALI

2.1 EARLY HISTORY

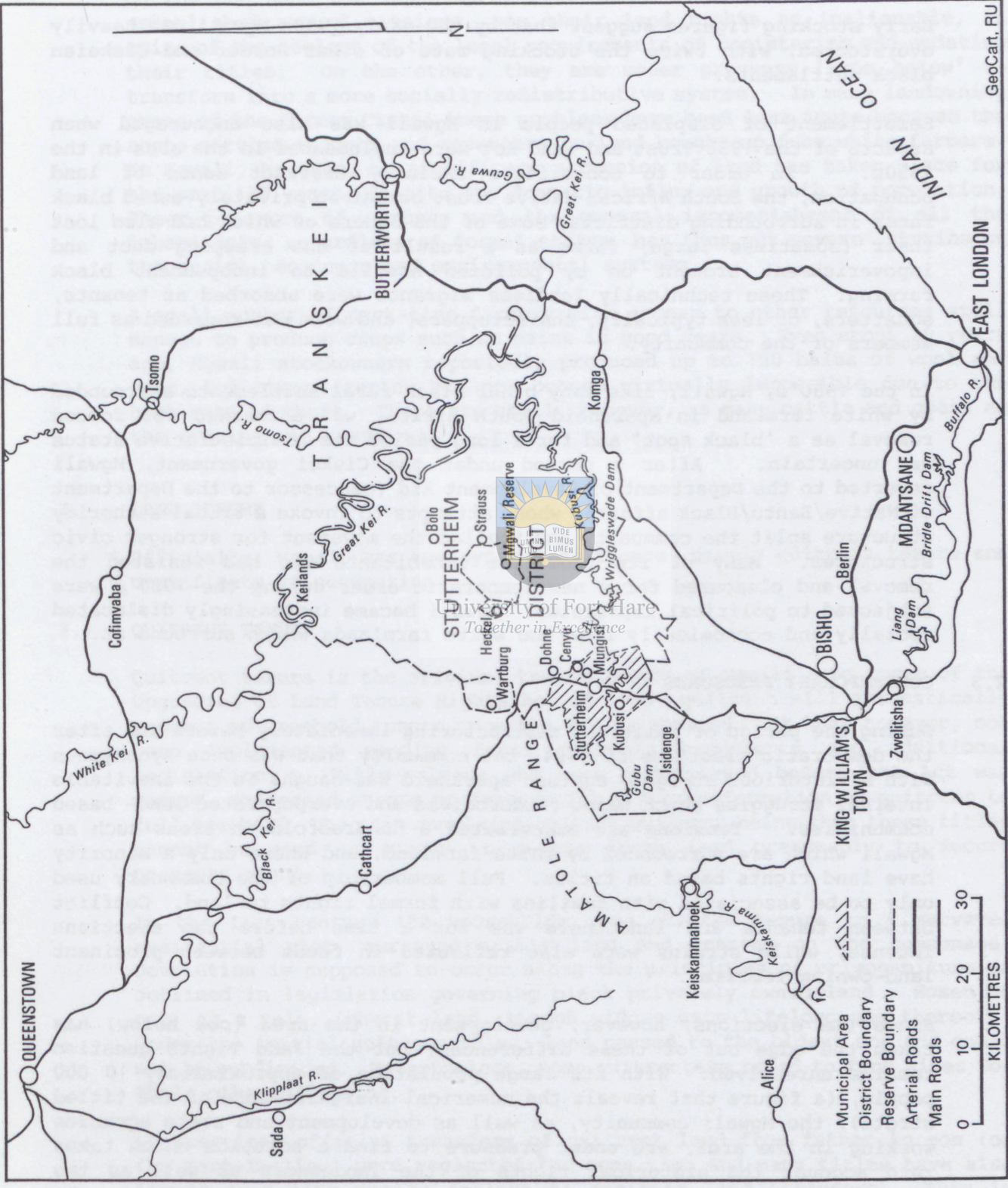
Mgwali was established as a mission of the Church of Scotland in 1857 on nearly 5 000 ha of fertile land 30 km from Stutterheim in the Eastern Cape (See Map No. 1). It is currently occupied by approximately 10 000 residents in six villages, a small proportion of whom own titles to the land.

Mgwali's history is inextricably bound up with the assimilationist thrust of mid-nineteenth century Cape policy and the "civilising mission" of the Christian churches, both of which were premised on individual land ownership and individual endeavour. Mgwali's history is distinguished by the fact that it was established on land granted to Tiyo Soga, the first fully ordained Xhosa missionary, by the Ngqika Xhosa chief Sandile, for a mission, in the wake of the great Cattle-Killing of 1856-7. Sir George Grey readily agreed to the establishment of a mission, which formed part of an overall policy of pacifying the turbulent border with so-called "civilised communities". Mgwali was formally incorporated into the Cape Colony as a subsection of Stutterheim magisterial district in 1879, following the 1877-78 frontier war, after the promulgation of the 1879 Native Locations Act. One hundred and fifty-two residents and congregants were granted quitrent titles on 10-acre lots, which were subsequently surveyed in the 1880s.

Early reports on Mgwali indicate that mission residents rapidly adapted farming techniques towards production for personal profit. Along with material prosperity, went the establishment of prominent educational institutions, notably a private school for girls. By all accounts, Mgwali typified the prosperous Eastern Cape African peasantry documented by Colin Bundy in his book, 'The Rise and Fall of the African Peasantry'.

2.2 SEGREGATION AND APARTHEID

Along with other such areas, the material basis for Mgwali's prosperity declined during this century. The natural population increase of the area was exacerbated by the affects of anti-squatting legislation and the influx of evicted tenants and farmworkers from neighbouring areas following the introduction of the Private Locations Act of 1899. This Act, modified over time, aimed to regulate the number of tenants on privately owned farms.



Map No. 1: The location of Mgwali within the context of the district of Stutterheim.

Early stocking figures suggest that by the early 1930s Mgwali was heavily overstocked, with twice the stocking rate of other Border and Ciskeian black settlements.

Resettlement of displaced people in Mgwali was also encouraged when aspects of the 1936 Trust and Land Act were implemented in the area in the 1950s. In order to consolidate racially distinct zones of land occupation, the South African Native Trust bought up privately-owned black farms in surrounding districts, some of the owners of which had also lost their (sometimes large) farms as a result of the creeping debt and impoverishment brought on by policies hostile to independent black farming. These technically landless migrants were absorbed as tenants, squatters, or less typically, sharecroppers, and were not regarded as full members of the community.

In the 1980's, Mgwali, like many other black rural settlements surrounded by white farmland in apartheid South Africa, was earmarked for forced removal as a 'black spot' and for a long period its administrative status was uncertain. After a period under the Ciskei government, Mgwali reverted to the Department of Development Aid (successor to the Department of Native/Bantu/Black affairs) whose attempts to invoke a tribal authority structure split the community and fuelled the movement for stronger civic structures. Many of its prominent inhabitants who had resisted the removal and clamoured for a new democratic order during the 1980's were subjected to political repression. Mgwali became increasingly dislocated socially and economically from the white farmlands which surround it.

2.3 CONTEMPORARY PRESSURES

During the period of political restructuring immediately before and after the democratic elections of 1994, the community that was once synonymous with a victorious struggle against apartheid was caught in the inevitable internal struggles which beset resourceless and overpopulated land-based communities. Tensions are exacerbated a hundredfold in areas such as Mgwali which are surrounded by white farmland, and where only a minority have land rights based on titles. Full membership of the community used only to be associated with families with formal rights to land. Conflict between tenants and landowners was for a time before the elections intense, while strains were also reflected in feuds between prominent land-owning families.

Since the elections, however, development in the area (see below) has taken the edge out of these differences, but the land rights question remains unresolved. With its large population of approximately 10 000 people, (a figure that reveals the numerical insignificance of the titled strata), the Mgwali community, as well as development and state agencies working in the area, are under pressure to find a solution which takes into account the historical rights of the landowners as well as the growing demands for land, security and equality in local affairs by the technically landless majority.

On the one hand the landowners, like those in other landed communities established around missions, see their land rights as inalienable, in spite of the neglect of the legal requirements of registering and updating their titles. On the other, they are under pressure 'from below' to transform into a more socially redistributive system. In many landowning areas of the former Ciskei these problems have been less acute because the state settled tenants and squatters on land bought up from white farmers. In Mgwali, however, no significant expansion of land has taken place for the past 135 years, despite the dramatic influx and growth of population. Sheer pressure of numbers and the general impoverishment of all the inhabitants, regardless of formal status, has thus put severe strains on the social, economic and environmental systems.

A small number of part-time farmers with access to other resources still manage to produce crops such as maize in good years. Even about 20 years ago, Mgwali stockowners reportedly produced up to 150 bales of wool per year, but sheep farming has now become virtually impossible due to the high rate of theft. There are still, however, as many cattle and goats as the grazing can sustain.

3. LAND TENURE

Officially, Mgwali has two systems of tenure: namely quitrent tenure and certificate of occupation



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3.1 QUITRENT TENURE

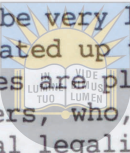
Quitrent tenure is the original tenure system of Mgwali. In terms of the Upgrading of Land Tenure Rights Act of 1993, quitrent will automatically convert to freehold tenure once the Act is applied. It has, however, not been implemented pending final possible amendments and additional legislation. Title-holders who were interviewed before the Act was passed, expressed strong preference for the transformation of quitrent to full freehold, the main complaint against quitrent being that these titles cannot be used as surety to secure loans (and presumably to secure property rights).

In the last century 152 households were granted tenure to a surveyed residential plot, surveyed arable land and grazing on the commonage. Devolution is supposed to occur along the principles of primogeniture as outlined in legislation governing black privately owned land. Women do not, as a rule, inherit land, though widows gain lifelong use thereof. Under the initial quitrent rules, land passed to the oldest son and could not be subdivided. Nevertheless, some quitrenters tried to find sites for their other offspring.

In practice, official transfers of quitrent land from father to son (or the next-in-line) were neglected for some time and many titles have also lapsed over time due to failure to register land transfers. This is partly explained by the perception of the land as family property rather than individual property.

There is reportedly a small but growing trend, however, to re- invoke legal transfer in order to solidify landowners' claims to the land in the face of the mounting pressure by non- landowners to moral and social claims to land rights in the overall context of land reform. It is not known precisely how many titles could be legally defended at this time, though it has been estimated that 28 families believe that their claims to title have been formalised, whereas about 60 families have recognised but not necessarily registered/updated claims to titles. The latter could be legally formalised in terms of the Land Titles Adjustment Act No. 111 of 1993.

Within landowning families, there is strong pressure for all children, and not just the heir, to acquire land. Some families of original titleholders have, through legal or informal land sales over the years, been able to accumulate additional plots to accommodate descendants. Under quitrent, this was possible if a previous owner defaulted on any of the conditions of tenure, principally non-payment of rent over successive years. Additional land is also acquired through leasing arrangements on church land or on land of absentee owners. The development of an internal market in land thus appears to be very limited, but there is evidence that some titleholders have accumulated up to three titles. Tenants complain of cases where landless families are placed on land purchased or reserved for the children of titleholders, who, once the latter take occupation, are forced to leave. The actual legality of these transfers, is however, not clear.


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Although women get the use of land on the death of a husband, there are reports where in practise such women are placed under the authority of their brother-in-law or eldest son.

Since titles confer status, prestige and power in the community, titleholders were once in a strong position to defend their rights. The rise of the popular expression for land and security by the tenants in recent years, however, has challenged the notion of private property in these communities, and the absence of many landowner families has diminished their power. Some quitrenters left Mgwali for Frankfort when the authorities attempted to apply the policy of forced removals, some surprisingly after winning the fight against forced removals. These families were compensated, and their land became available for re-allocation. Landowners are thus easily outvoted in community meetings today, since they are given no special privileges in such fora.

It will be a challenge for the new government to clarify just how far the constitutional provisions protecting the right to private property actually go. Until now, it has been hailed by white farmers as a manifestation of the government's intentions to secure their land against expropriation, but the constitution has not so far been invoked by black landowners who have lost control of land due to spontaneous resettlement or "squatting".

3.2 CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPATION

In addition to the quitrent titles, some 300 or more households have Certificates of Occupation which were acquired during the 1960s and 1970s.

In the 1960s the expansion of land rights came about as a by-product of betterment planning. Agricultural officers and/or betterment officials and headmen were charged with implementing betterment, including the survey, demarcation and allocation of small residential/garden lots.

In the 1970s, when Mgwali was transferred to the administration of the Ciskei pending the removal of the whole community, the Ciskei government, through its headmen residing in Mgwali, undertook further allocations of residential sites on the commonage.

Certificate of Occupation, in addition to residential rights, confer grazing rights for pasturing stock on the commonage, but no rights are granted for arable lots, surveyed or otherwise.

3.3 TENANTRY

The majority of residents in Mgwali are immigrant families, mainly farm evictees, who live outside both the official forms of tenure. They live as tenants on the sites of the legal landholders, or on empty or abandoned sites of landholders, or as squatters on abandoned land, particularly land formerly owned by those families who heeded the forced removal and departed to Frankfort. A limited number pay an annual rental for the use of the land. Within the tenant grouping, there is also a distinction between those tenants and landless households who have been in Mgwali a long time (some entered Mgwali at the turn of the century), and those considered "newcomers" who have acquired sites in more recent times. The former enjoy more rights within the community than the latter.

Limited and diminishing sharecropping arrangements used to exist, but over the last 10 years this relationship has virtually died out. Where it was practised, arrangements varied from the use of land with the sharecroppers' own equipment in return for a percentage of the crop the use of land with the help of labour provided by the owner in return for a share of the crop. Among the reasons cited for its demise was that sharecroppers lacked the equipment to cultivate land, and furthermore that crops were destroyed by animals in the absence of fencing. Rare cases of labour obligations (such as tenants' obligations to perform functions at certain times of the year) have been reported, but it is not clear that this is labour tenancy.

Tenants on landowners' properties have been in an extremely insecure position. Most tenants have tenuous arrangements for the use of land, and therefore have minimal rights both informally and legally: they can be evicted (and indeed some are evicted) at short notice. (One landless household head who had lived in Mgwali for 20 years reported that he had moved 12 times.) There is mounting pressure from this group for a more egalitarian distribution of land, with full legal formal ownership.

Most tenants and sharecroppers see tenancy arrangements as a temporary stop gap in anticipation of future land allocations taking place on the commonage or elsewhere. For although tenants have no formal rights to land, they constitute a powerful lobby - through sheer weight of numbers - for the extension of residential rights on land formerly regarded as commonage, and in this they appear to have the support and sympathy of many agents of the state, and also within the NGO sector.

The Church also has a stake in the land, and owns Village 6 land, which it leases to tenants whose qualifications must include full church membership and marriage status, at an annual rate of R4 to R10. Mission land does not easily pass out of the hands of families born in the village; furthermore, it was seen as private land, not qualifying for the services, however inadequate, offered by the provincial authorities.

Leasing is not common. Land is leased either from the Mission at about R10 per ha. per annum, or, until recently, from the Mgwali Residents Association (MRA). In practice, it is the landholders with a special relationship with the church who gain access to this land, though landless people were occasionally able to hire abandoned land from the MRA. Ability to lease land, including Mission land, depends on the family's position in the community, making it difficult for non land-holders to gain access to such land. It was reported that the Mgwali Residents Association used to rent out one-acre plots for around R10 per annum, and the practice of leasing land from the landowners for a cash rental appears to be increasing, though it still occurs on a limited scale. Tenants are not averse to the principle of hiring land if they cannot secure their own, but most landless people are not in a position to pay high fees for this limited security. A system of leasing abandoned land on a formal basis via the Magistrate, which briefly gained recognition after the introduction of betterment, collapsed when Ciskei took control of administration in Mgwali.

The influx of people into Mgwali over time - and the general poverty in the community - has thus fundamentally changed the way in which quitrent works in practice. It has brought about new sets of relations between the original landowners and the immigrants. Land relations dominate social processes in Mgwali, with all members of the community acutely aware of their own land relation vis-a-vis the rest of the community. Many social tensions spiral out from core tenurial relations, and issues such as the rise in crime - blamed on tenants - political affiliations, and the church as landowner, are all influenced by, and in turn feed into, the land pressures. It would now appear that the notion of private rights in land is under threat, but that it has not broken down.

4. BETTERMENT

Betterment was introduced in Mgwali in the 1960s by the South African Government. An additional 600 sites were allocated, grouping all tenants and other residents in the original villages. The Ciskei administration also demarcated new residential sites when it controlled these areas in

the 1980s, land being taken from the commonages for this purpose. Dog taxes were introduced, grazing camps were fenced, rotational grazing introduced and people were resettled in closer settlements. The main beneficiaries of newly allocated land were the offspring of landowners and the older established tenantry, some of whom had been in Mgwali for between 50 and 90 years. Potential opposition to betterment was thus diluted due to the accommodation of the families of established residents, but in principle landowners did not support betterment.

Before betterment, tenants were often accommodated alongside arable fields, and sharecropping was common. After betterment, many tenants were left without access to any land whatsoever. Sharecropping virtually came to an end. Some were able to arrange for the leasing of arable land via the Magistrate, but this system of formal leasing collapsed after the transferral of administration to the Ciskeian authorities.

When betterment was introduced, owners had to keep tenants in their residential sites, whereas previously they were able to keep them on the commonage next to their sites. Betterment also discouraged the use of arable lands which are too distant for easy access by owners or sharecroppers. Most arable lands are in fact fallow, with virtually no production taking place. Title-holders complain that lack of security against theft makes farming risky, while non title-holders complain that lack of access to arable land prevents them gaining the recognition needed to become a full member of the community, and thus to access to social security.

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5. GRAZING LAND

Landowners have attempted to extend private property relations to resources seen as common resources in the communal areas. Their view is that grazing land or commonage is private property owned collectively by the title holders, and that theoretically grazing rights and thatching grass have to be purchased. This is a common perception in quitrent areas. It can be traced to the original cornerstone legal regulations governing private land tenure, where the sole use and control of commonage was conferred on the titleholders and controlled by local authorities such as the Village Management Boards. With official policy moving away from private tenure for blacks after the 1920s, legislation extended grazing rights to all residents with legal occupational rights. In large parts of the Eastern Cape where livestock farming predominates, grazing rights are in fact of equal or even greater value to arable rights, so it is not surprising that this intervention into the original landowners' rights was met with fierce resistance in some areas, or that the issue continues to dominate thinking over land rights in landowning communities today. Failure on the part of officials and planners to take this into account also leads to deadlocks in resolving processes of mediation and land reform.

In practise, title-holders and certificate holders have only nominal control over access to the commonage. Up to about the early 1960s quitrenters were still able to regulate use thereof, but since then they

have been unable to resist the demands for grazing from non-titleholders. In spite of a host of informal rules, such as that tenants may not construct cattle kraals on the land of a landholder, and may only erect temporary byres for ceremonial uses and for ritual purposes, landowners have effectively lost control over the commonages. Title holders stress that grazing rights for residents without legal land rights are a privilege granted by the title holders, and not an automatic right, but with the growing reality of the permanence of the non-titleholders, it is clear that landowners have little power to enforce this view.

The commonage has been overgrazed over the years (though the recent drought has reduced stock numbers and improved the veld): there is no mutually accepted system of livestock control. Although rotational grazing with fenced camps was introduced under betterment during the 1960s, the fences - and the system - have collapsed. Whatever systems of common property management might have existed previously have been crushed under the weight of population pressure, and the lack of a legitimate local authority and a consensually accepted land tenure system.

Water and wood are seen as common resources, but there is little or no management of the woodlots, now virtually depleted. The recent erection of standpipes and the extension of electricity to Mgwali will change the way in which these resources are used.

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6. LOCAL AUTHORITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Mgwali originally had a Village Management Board in terms of legislation applying to white and black (and often mixed) villages in the Cape in the nineteenth century (the Villages Management Act of 1881). Representation was based on property rights, and certain local powers were conferred on representative landowners. The Village Management Board continued to operate in Mgwali until it was abolished when official policy governing black administration switched towards segregation, and later to tribal authorities, chiefs and headmen.

The Tribal Authorities system (in terms of the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951) of the Nationalist government was designed for bantustans and not for black settlements in so-called white areas. In anticipation, therefore, of its eventual incorporation into the Ciskei, Mgwali was duly furnished with a Tribal Authority (TA). The newly imposed system conflicted sharply with the older principle of local governance by the title-holders and the newer civic awareness of local democracy.

The TA was short-lived, but following the successful campaign against removal, the Department of Development Aid (DDA), under whose administration Mgwali now fell, persisted in its attempts to enforce the system of bantu authorities. Co-inciding with the States of Emergency in the country in the late 1980s, when most of Mgwali's leadership was in detention, the DDA organised elections for a Community Council (similar to a tribal authority). This body too was largely rejected as an apartheid creation and after a prolonged struggle for recognition, the civic

structure, the Mgwali Residents Association, eventually won official recognition and remained the mouthpiece of the community until it was discredited in 1993.

The policy of forced removals, and the subsequent resistance campaign, gave the title-holders a chance to re-establish their authority in Mgwali, and the MRA, initially at least, was dominated by titleholders (if not by all of them). The MRA's legitimacy originally arose from its own roots in leading the civic struggle against the forced removal of Mgwali residents to the Ciskei. Operating as it did, however, outside of consensually derived rules governing land practises, and without significant services to administer - or land to allocate - it became seen as nothing but a watchdog organisation for (some of) the landowners. It lost much of its authority with the dramatic increase in landless people whose legitimate grievances, particularly around the need for independent access to land, it could not accommodate. Furthermore, when it took up the cudgels on behalf of the landless and began to allocate land, it was accused of many of the practises of patronage conventionally directed against chiefs and headmen: a major grievance against it was maladministration of community funds, including the pocketing of payments for sites. Its critics were mainly derived from the youth and the former supporters of the Tribal Authority (including landowners) and some prominent Church officials.

For a period before and after the April 1994 elections, land administration collapsed completely, with no land allocations taking place. Neither the interim SANCO executive nor the Mgwali Residents Association had the legitimacy and authority to allocate land. Some landholders argued that decision-making should vest in a body representing all quitrent titleholders, while others supported an 'outside' government agency such as the CPA or some other government authority being given power to allocate land.

A new broadly representative interim committee, which incorporates the ANC youth and parts of SANCO (and includes at least one landowner) began filling the vacuum in 1994, working with groups like the Stutterheim Development Foundation and the Independent Development Trust to facilitate development projects such as a new high school and electrification. Power is now available through the coupon system. A market place has recently been constructed - one of six planned for the area in the belief that they might stimulate the production and exchange of crafts and produce by rural families, and also bring down prices. Stalls will reputedly cost R10 for hire, which may be a deterrent: as one observer put it, there may be more activity directly outside the market place than inside it.

A building committee is in place and a black contractor is building a new school and community hall and offices. The policy of employing local labour on the building sites has been adopted, although this leads to problems of inexperienced workers continually coming on site when the more popular system of rotating employment around the villages is adopted. A wage dispute between the contractor and the employees was resolved by negotiation.

The Department of Agriculture is co-ordinating the repair of the boundary and internal fences. Agricultural training has begun; there have been successful applications for production loans from the Agricultural Credit Board and a Mgwali Farmers Association with 60 members has been founded.

The supply of standpipes for domestic water supply has had the side-effect of stimulating residential garden production, with a number doing well under vegetables. This system (large residential sites with taps) clearly has a lot of potential for peri-urban or denser rural settlements.

Structures for future rural local government are still uncertain in spite of the pending October 1995 elections - the likely model is a large district council (serving roughly three magisterial districts, such as current Regional Services Councils) with Mgwali and places like it linked closely to the nearest town - in this case Stutterheim. Farmers argue that rural concerns and urban municipal concerns should be kept separate, whereas there is a counter argument that rural people link more closely with urban areas to obtain better services and to reap the benefits of their economic contribution to the towns. While rural councils will almost certainly be built into future local government structures, it is not clear how large rural settlements will relate to these, but there are strong arguments for places like Mgwali to be recognised as de facto 'peri urban' areas.

Attempts by the government contractors, Jar Setplan, to proceed with the demarcation of sites on the commonage (for which purposes a member of the interim committee reputedly signed on behalf of the community) in February 1995 has again ignited tensions in the area, prompting a deputation of quitrenters to the MEC for Land Affairs in Bisho to demand protection of their land rights. The MEC is reportedly in favour of referring the issue of quitrenter claims to the Eastern Cape Commissioner of the Land Claims Commission.

7. THE RELATIONSHIP WITH SURROUNDING WHITE COMMERCIAL FARMERS

The relationship between the residents of Mgwali and the neighbouring white farmers has varied over time, and a Liaison Committee established between Mgwali leadership and farmers in the 1980s faltered in the wake of popular political organisation and the breakdown of legitimate structures within Mgwali. One farmer said that before the Ciskei took control of Mgwali, the local landowners were able to contain the community and to provide contact points within it to resolve stock theft and other issues. Farmers would like to re-establish a liaison committee, and a few efforts have been made to get it going. They feel however, that the local community should take the initiative. It will be difficult for any committee or forum to operate before local government structures and land rights are clarified.

Some residents of Mgwali see a potential resolution to the land problem in the expansion of its boundaries, but do not consider purchase (including subsidised purchase) of land as a serious option. Some say that the

original Ngqika kingdom should be restored to blacks (which would in effect include the whole of the Stutterheim district). Farmers on the other hand see any further expansion of Mgwali as the "death knell" for commercial farming. They favour individual purchase of farms by blacks as a more serious option. There is a pool of farms available for purchase in the area, and should the government opt for a major land acquisition, farmers are anxious to be bought out as a block, in spite of their in-principle opposition to any further "communalisation" of the land.

Neighbourhood problems cited by farmers include environmental concerns - and there is no doubt that Mgwali, once offering excellent grazing in the dryer part of the district, is suffering stock pressure with only a little good grazing left; stock losses from attacks by uncontrolled dogs and from theft; and general insecurity with regard to the future of agriculture. Most farmers said that the dog problem was by far the worst problem, as dogs make multiple killings and/or maimings in one spree, and some felt that theft, while irksome, was not beyond control. Dog tax is currently evaded by Mgwali residents and farmers alike, and all farmers are keen to see it re-imposed.

Most of the white farming community is settled on long-established inter-generational farming units, where practises such as the development of sheep breeds from a "ewe pool" of 15 000 ewes shared by up to 15 farmers have led to genetic improvement of stock through close co-operative arrangements. There has been a slow turn-over of land with few 'outsiders' buying in. Farmers have developed techniques over several generations for more conservation-conscious farming methods.

Farmers recognise some positive factors in the proximity of a settlement in the district, for example, farmers market some of their stock either at a bordering stock fair locality, or directly in Mgwali (the bulk is marketed to former Transkeians). Mgwali recently tendered for the hire of farmers' tractors. Future co-operation on agricultural matters could be explored to a much greater extent if farmers were included in the general planning of the area.

One farmer suggested a shearing and sorting training course for wool, as currently farmers prefer shearing teams from elsewhere, who are seen to be more professional in their approach to the job, as well as in the work itself. Otherwise, employment by farmers is limited to low-paid casual labour on farms, though even here farmers give preference to workers' families.

Most farmers cut their permanent staff down to a minimum during the 1970s and 1980s. Farmworkers on the surrounding farms see Mgwali as their 'home' and most have relations who live there permanently. Farm strikes in the 1980s were seen by farmers to have been encouraged by relations in Mgwali with urban connections. Farmworkers' salaries are minimal, though some farmers allow workers to graze up to 10 head of cattle alongside their own, and salaries are supplemented with food rations, including sheep for slaughter.

Employment options for Mgwali residents are therefore minimal, with most

Mgwali residents living off pensions.

Smallholder agriculture is not an option to be taken seriously in this part of the district, where extensive livestock agriculture is the only viable form of farming. Potential buyers of smaller farms from Mgwali are likely to be pointed to the wetter western part of the district (near Isidenge - see Appendix No 1). The agricultural extension officer in Stutterheim sees a potential outlet for production and trade in intensive activities such as pigs, poultry and cabbages if enough domestic water could be secured. Private tenure, he feels, would be important to achieve efficiency.

Ideas of land reform which include the purchase of farms by individuals or trusts are not, however, taken seriously by any section of the community in Mgwali, though it is possible that some may consider individual or group purchase if this became a definite option. Much depends on the immediate future of Mgwali, and should plans move definitely in the direction of a peri-urban settlement with secure residential sites, small gardens and good services, which is indeed the most likely route, opportunities may open up for those who wish to farm elsewhere. In the meantime, however, the debate on land reform is still caught within the limits of landholders trying to defend their right to land within Mgwali and many others arguing for the redistribution of land to blacks in the district, starting with "open farms" (ie farms that appear to be unoccupied).

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8. POSSIBILITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a strong demand for land of different kinds in all settlements such as Mgwali. Some of the quitrenters want to reassert what they see as rights they have lost to agricultural land and commonage; former farmworkers and tenants want secure residential sites, and some would like a chance to run stock or cultivate. There is little possibility of finding additional agricultural land within these very stressed areas.

Soil erosion has been a significant problem at Mgwali, and while it is being addressed by agricultural officers working with communities, means have to be found to control the number of animals. There is an argument for encouraging any smallholder developments in the less fragile sourveld grasslands, with higher carrying capacity, in the west of the district.

While some of the demand for land might be met by cementing stronger rights to existing allocations, landowners in particular are unlikely to be able to claw back control of the commonage and it might be wisest for them to pursue a case for compensation or restitution elsewhere. The donation of additional farmland to Mgwali is unlikely to solve its problems. Surrounding land is mostly suitable for grazing and should only be sparsely settled if it is to generate any significant income through agriculture. Unless a significant proportion of the population decides voluntarily to go to larger urban centres where there may be better job opportunities, it is likely that the population of Mgwali in

particular will grow.

In view of this, there is a strong argument for development of the central settlements of Mgwali, in particular, as an urban area, a satellite to Stutterheim, rather than as the series of betterment-type villages which has informed planning up to now. This would be greatly facilitated by pursuing existing initiatives in the market and retail sphere as well as (eg.): placing more central government services at Mgwali, such as the police station and Post Office currently situated north of Mgwali in the commercial area of Bolo; expanding educational institutions such as the high school and projected teacher training college; tarring the road from Stutterheim through to the Transkei. It would also involve demarcating further residential sites along the lines planned by the Local Government ministry near to the central market, clinic and school site.

Further efforts should be made to integrate the surrounding commercial farms and Mgwali. The existing trade in animals could be developed through the market; the Stutterheim Foundation's scheme of tractor loan contracts to farmers in Mgwali could also be expanded. Farmers and farmworkers have many skills which might be valuable in the community. A major priority may be to develop a forum (which might later become part of the new local government structure) which can address problems that have arisen because of the juxtaposition of an impoverished settlement and large farms: stock theft, attacks on sheep by dogs, maintenance of fences, water. The liaison committee established during the 1980s was undermined by the intense political conflict at the end of the decade but there are new opportunities in the post-apartheid dispensation.

In many other parts of the Border, land adjoining a black settlement is seen as insufficiently secure for commercial farming, and is thus often unfarmable and also unsaleable. While commercial farming around Mgwali has not reached a crisis point, it is affected by this. The perception of instability is not merely paranoia on the part of farmers. Relationships which were manageable up to about a decade ago have everywhere deteriorated. Black landowners are affected as much as white, and indeed black stockowners on communal lands also sometimes find control of their animals very difficult. There is a widespread perception that rural social order is breaking down. It is essential that the government, as well as local communities, explore the issue of policing in an inventive and constructive way. This applies particularly at the meeting point of communally owned or densely settled land and commercial farms.

9. LEGAL ISSUES

Under 1993 legislation, and in particular the Upgrading of Land Tenure Rights Act, quitrent plots can be upgraded to freehold. In terms of this Act, the upgrading is automatic once quitrenters have produced their documentation. In fact, quitrent as a sub- category of land tenure falls

away completely in South Africa if the Act is applied. The Act does not, however, protect the quitrenters' access to the commonage which is now effectively open access for all those settled in Mgwali. The upgrading Act is not being pushed by the new government in view of the possibility that people with weaker rights might face displacement. New legislation is being planned to protect all rights in land which may help to pave the way for a more comprehensive restructuring.

The quitrenters probably could make a case for some kind of restitution if the upgrading goes ahead in view of the fact that they have not been able to upgrade and protect their property in the past. But claims which privilege them, as opposed to those with only rights of occupation, are likely to be divisive, at least in the short run. On the other hand, upgrading titles could have the effect of creating a proper market in land in Mgwali, and some landowners may choose to sell out and leave. At this stage, however, many argue that their close connections with the church in Mgwali make it impossible to leave, even if they received restitution.

The case for a claim by all former quitrenters to compensation for loss of land in the Border area is likely to be put before the Land Claims Commission at the start of its proceedings, though it may not be seen as a priority since the right to make claims to the Land Claims Court and the Land Claims Commission was originally formulated to benefit victims of forced removals, and hardly black landowners who never moved. Forced removals in the urban and rural areas will almost certainly warrant prior attention, but it is unlikely that quitrenters' claims will simply default over time. The historical land rights of the black landowning class have proved to be extremely resilient and the government is likely to be challenged if property rights for whites in rural areas are seen to carry more weight than those in black communities. If taken up, however, such claims are likely to spill over into the other areas that were overtaken by settlers, and place strains on the state machinery for settling claims. This will necessitate the setting of limits within which such claims can be made as speedily as possible.

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BORDER-CISKEI DISTRICT STUDY ON LAND REFORM

LAND RELATED ISSUES AT RABULA

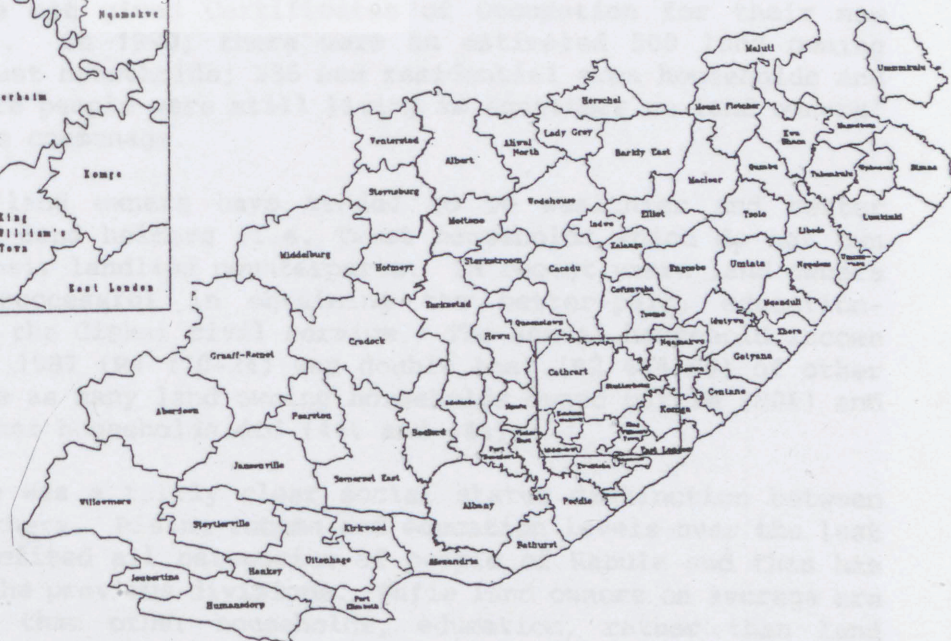
(Keiskammahoek District - Eastern Cape Province)

Case study 6 and Appendix 7 of the Final Report

by T. Orie



University of Fort Hare
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Commissioned by the Land & Agriculture Policy Centre (L&APC), Johannesburg
and funded by the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA)

Institute for Social and Economic Research
Grahamstown, 27 February 1995

LAND RELATED ISSUES AT RABALA

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1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Rabula forms part of the Keiskammahoek district (see Map No. 1) Rabula is shown in detail on Map No. 2. Rabula village in the Keiskammahoek district is one of the relatively few areas in rural Ciskei where land is held under a freehold tenure system. Since 1865, black people have been able to buy and sell land in Rabula. A limited number of white people also purchased land in the village, living scattered among the black land owners. An area of land was set aside as grazing commonage, which belonged to the government, and to which all land owners had rights of access for their livestock. A number of landless people have moved into Rabula over the years. Initially they attached themselves to land owners as labour tenants, performing certain services in return for the right to cultivate a portion of land. Many of these tenants later moved onto the commonage, and hired land from, or share-cropped with, land owners. The Native Trust and Land Act of 1936 required the white land owners to leave Rabula. They were bought out by the South African Native Trust, and their farms were converted into Trust Areas, on which a number of the landless people on the commonage were awarded arable holdings with an average of 3.5 acres.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, Betterment Planning was implemented in Rabula. It effectively only applied to the non freehold areas, i.e. to the government - owned Trust and commonage areas. Its major consequence was that the landless people on the commonage had to move to several newly established concentrated residential areas. Oral evidence suggests that these people were not given Certificates of Occupation for their new residential sites. In 1990, there were an estimated 500 land owning households; 59 Trust households; 236 new residential area households and 40 households where people were still living as squatters on land owners' holdings or on the commonage.

Over the years, land owners have tended to be wealthier and better educated than the land holders (i.e. Trust households which do not own their land) and their landless counterparts. In recent years land owners have been more successful in obtaining the better-paid, education-demanding jobs in the Ciskei civil service. The annual household income of land owners in 1987 (R4 770-24) was double that (R2 444-80) of other households. Twice as many land owning households owned cattle (80%) and goats (80%) as other households did (44% and 44%).

In the past there was a fairly clear social status distinction between land owners and others. Rising income and education levels over the last 40 years have benefited all categories of people of Rabula and this has served to soften the previous divisions. While land owners on average are still better off than other households, education, rather than land ownership per se, seems to be the criterion of status and social differentiation in Rabula.

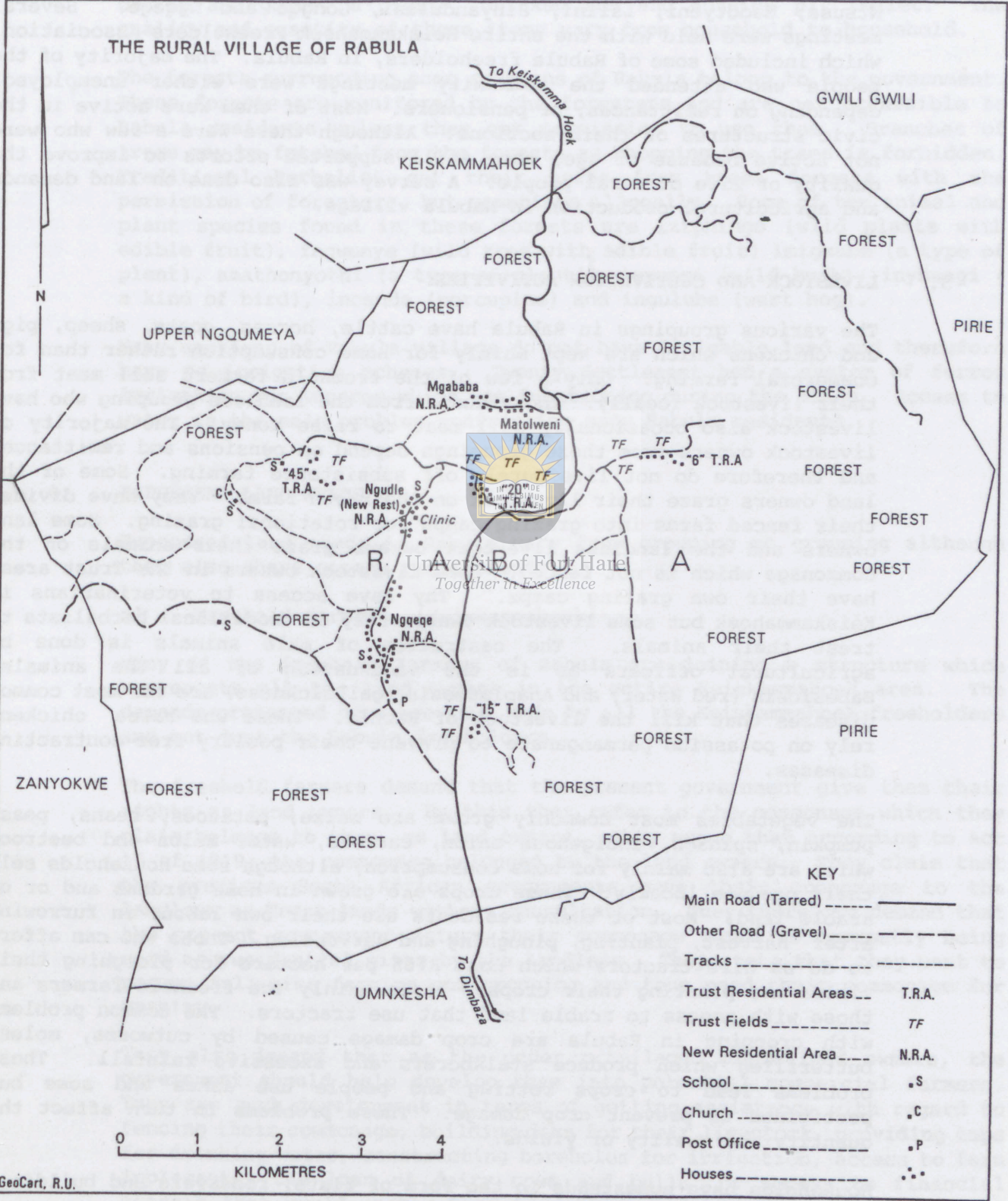
2. METHODOLOGY

Community meetings and individual interviews were held and conducted with residents from the freehold and the trust areas, as well as from the new residential settlements, and with squatters living on the commonage and land owners' holdings. The meetings were held at EMatolweni, Fifteen



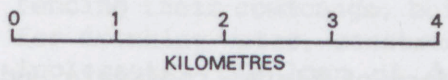
Map No. 1: Location of Rabula within the context of the district of Keiskammahoek.

THE RURAL VILLAGE OF RABULA



KEY

Main Road (Tarred)	—————
Other Road (Gravel)	- - - - -
Tracks	· · · · ·
Trust Residential Areas	T.R.A.
Trust Fields	TF
New Residential Area	N.R.A.
School	· S
Church	· C
Post Office	· P
Houses	· · ·



GeoCart, R.U.

Map No. 2: Detailed map of Rabula.

Trust Settlement, Twenty Trust Settlement, New Rest, EMagcumeni, Noxolo, Ntsusa, Madotyeni, Lalini, Sinyanduleni, Gonggo and Ngqeqe. Several meetings were held with the entire Keiskammahoek Freeholders Association, which included some of Rabula freeholders, in Rabula. The majority of the people who attended the community meetings were either unemployed, depending on remittances, or pensioners. Most of them were active in the civic structures of their sections. Although there were a few who were not active because of age, they still supported efforts to improve the quality of life of rural people. A survey was also done on land demands and agricultural production in Rabula village.

3. LIVESTOCK AND CULTIVATION ACTIVITIES

The various groupings in Rabula have cattle, horses, goats, sheep, pigs and chickens which are kept mainly for home consumption rather than for commercial farming. Only a few of the freehold farmers sell meat from their livestock locally. Individuals from the landless grouping who have livestock also occasionally sell meat to raise money. The majority of livestock owners from these groupings depend on pensions and remittances and therefore do not live purely off subsistence farming. Some of the land owners graze their livestock on their own farms. They have divided their fenced farms into grazing camps for rotational grazing. Some land owners and the landless livestock owners graze their animals on the commonage which is not fenced. Some livestock owners in the Trust areas have their own grazing camps. They have access to veterinarians in Keiskammahoek but some livestock owners rely on traditional herbalists to treat their animals. The castration of male animals is done by agricultural officers as is the vaccination of all the animals. Babesiosis (red water) and Anaplasmosis (gallsickness) are the most common diseases that kill the livestock of Rabula. Those who raise chickens rely on potassium permanganate to prevent their poultry from contracting diseases.

The vegetables most commonly grown are maize, potatoes, beans, peas, pumpkin, spinach, indigenous onion, carrots, water melon and beetroot which are also mainly for home consumption, although some households sell their produce locally. These crops are grown in home gardens and or on arable land. Most of these residents use their own labour in furrowing after harvest, planting, ploughing and harvesting. Those who can afford to do so hire tractors which cost R165 per hectare for ploughing their fields and planting their crops. It is mainly the freehold farmers and those with access to arable land that use tractors. The common problems with cropping in Rabula are crop damage caused by cutworms, moles, butterflies which produce stalkborers and excessive rainfall. These problems lead to crops rotting and people use ashes and some buy pesticides to prevent crop damage. These problems in turn affect the quantity and quality of yields.

Households have homesteads in the form of flats, rondavels and buildings

¹ I cannot tell what percentage of households own livestock as I was working alone conducting community meetings which could not give me that information and conducting individual interviews with one person per settlement/section.

with pitched roofs. These are used as bedrooms, dining rooms, pantries and kitchens. Most of the households have a seed bed, a kraal for the cattle and goats, a pigsty, chicken run and outside pit toilet. The quality and quantity of these items vary from household to household.

The forests surrounding some sections of Rabula belong to the government. These forests are monitored by the foresters and are not accessible to Rabula residents unless they get permission to use them. Branches of trees may be fetched from the forests as chopping the trees is forbidden. Traditional herbalist get their herbs from these forests with the permission of foresters, but sometimes illegally. Some of the animal and plant species found in these forests are iziphingo (wild plants with edible fruit), ingwenye (wild tree with edible fruit) imigxube (a type of plant), amathonyothi (a type of plant)², impunzi (wild buck), inhwagi (a kind of bird), incanda (porcupine) and ingulube (wart hog).

Many sections of Rabula village do not have irrigable land and therefore have no irrigation schemes. Twenty Settlement had a system of furrow irrigation for lucerne which was functioning during the 1960s. Access to water is the main problem confronting many Rabula residents.



4. EXPRESSED LAND NEEDS

Expressed land needs in Rabula vary from grouping to grouping although they also share common requirements.

a) Freehold farmers, (Keiskammahoek)

Many of the freehold farmers of Rabula are joining a structure which represents all the land owners in the entire Keiskammahoek area. The demands presented here are thus made by all the Keiskammahoek freeholders and not just the Rabula freeholders.

The freehold farmers demand that the present government give them their rights as land owners. By this they refer to the commonage which they claim belongs to them, as land owners. They argue that according to Act 17 of 1919, the commonage belonged to the land owners. They claim that the previous South African governments gave their commonage to the landless as Trust lands without consultation. They therefore demand that the present government return their commonage which is currently being used as residential sites by the landless. They state that they want to pursue full-time farming and cropping and thus need their commonage for grazing.

They also demand that as the under privileged black land owners, the government should help develop them into potential commercial farmers. They see such development in terms of getting assistance with regard to fencing their commonage, building dams for their livestock, providing taps for drinking water, constructing boreholes for irrigation, access to farm implements, the loan of dairy cows and bulls, or access to financial schemes that would enable them to develop and boost their agricultural productivity as commercial farmers.

² I do not know what characteristics these plants have.

b) Trust farmers (Twenty and Fifteen)

Twenty: Residents of the Ngudle Trust, also known as Twenty settlement, regard themselves as farmers. They assert that their settlement was created specifically for agricultural development. The previous governments had dairy and lucerne projects running at Twenty from the 1950s up until the late 1970s. The droughts of the 1970s led to the decline of the furrow system for the irrigation of lucerne which was functioning during the 1960s. The irrigation scheme was also vandalised. The standard of cream produced by the dairy project deteriorated and there was theft of the produce and some of their farm implements. As a result these projects ceased to function. They thus want the government to assist them so that they can revive these agricultural projects.

They want water in the form of a reservoir, boreholes and taps for irrigation purposes, for their livestock and for drinking purposes. They have already sent their request for water to the provincial government and are waiting for a response on this matter.

They want equipment in the form of tractors for ploughing, mowers to cut the lucerne, rakes, balers and trailers for their lucerne project. As a scheme, they have formed the Nontuthuzelo Farmers' Association, through which they have made an application to the provincial government to provide them with this equipment. They also want more information about the Progressive Farmers Union of South Africa.

They want the government to help them renovate and extend their lucerne storage facility which is now dilapidated. They want it to be built with cement and to be burgler proofed for security reasons. They also want the garage for the tractors to be burgler proofed so as to prevent theft.

They are willing to pay towards the costs of all their requests so as to pursue their desired agricultural projects.

This grouping of farmers at Twenty Trust prefer to have their own representation rather than fall under one umbrella civic structure. Their greatest fear is to be marginalised as farmers in the pursuit of rural development. They therefore want separate representation in the local structures of the Keiskammahoek Reconstruction and Development endeavour.

Fifteen: The Fifteen Trust settlement has never been as developed as the Twenty Trust settlement. It does not have a history of agricultural projects such as lucerne or dairy and residents there regard themselves as "squatters" on the land owned by the government. Land is their lowest priority need, instead they urgently need service provision, the detail of which will be elaborated upon later. They want residential sites for their children and those who own livestock need more grazing land. Two interviewees of a younger generation, interested in fulltime farming, stated that they did not have the resources to pursue this. They do not have arable lands but have home gardens and thus want a loan scheme that would assist them financially to establish their careers in commercial farming. They are willing to move to any place where land would be made

available for farming.³ The two individuals were active members of the local SANCO branch.

c) New Residential Areas (N.R.A)

EMatolweni: Several community meetings were held with a few freehold farmers and many residents of this N.R.A who regard themselves as squatters as they do not own the land they reside on. However, they made the point that they were attending these meetings as residents (not as the landless or landed) of EMatolweni.

After keen debate and discussion about their basic needs regarding land reform and development as a community, they agreed that arable and grazing land were the lowest needs in their order of priorities. Services provision was a matter of urgency. This prioritisation was influenced by the fact that the majority of residents who attended the meetings were the landless and that the few freehold farmers were in the minority. The latter were outvoted in their expressed for arable and grazing land. The majority of EMatolweni residents prefer employment in the envisaged factories to tilling the soil.

New Rest: Community meetings at New Rest were mainly held with the youth grouping, which was male dominated. They want projects in the following: chicken farming, tractor ploughing, brick laying, and hand work (which includes cooking, baking, knitting, sewing, shoe and bag making).

Both of the individuals interviewed at New Rest were pensioners who want more grazing land for their sons whom they claim have interest in full time farming, but do not have the resources. Both these pensioners are not active in civic structures as they were too old to attend meetings although they supported reconstruction and development of their locality.

d) Lower Rabula settlements with new residential areas, freehold settlements, and people living on the commonage.

Lower Rabula consists of Noxolo, Sinyanduleni, Ntsusa, Madotyeni, Mmangweni/Lalini, Gongqo and Ngqege sections.⁴ Out of several community meetings held by lower Rabula sections, it emerged that services provision is their main priority and land their lowest priority. Attendance at meetings ranged from thirty to forty people with a representative cross-section by gender and age, as well as a combination of the landless and the landed. Some of the landed also attended separate meetings of the Keiskammahoe Farmers Association. These residents stressed unity amongst themselves rather than to be seen as distinct groupings as it is known that there is tension between the landed and the landless in Rabula around

³ It is not clear whether other people would also be prepared to move. The time for the participatory research on this project was short; there was a lack of person power and the survey done was not representative.

⁴ Lower Rabula sections are a combination of New Residential Areas, freehold settlement and people living on the commonage, e.g. Ngqege settlement. Meetings were held by all the sections together as one area or bigger community and decisions about their land demands were therefore common.

the question of arable and grazing lands. Residents did not want to disclose their disagreements on this matter. One of the things that came out of their meetings was that some of the land owners who attend the Keiskammahoek Farmers' Association meetings want the commonage back in order to pursue full time livestock farming for commercial purposes. Some of the landowners who are not affiliated to the Farmers' Association do not express any concern about the commonage. The landless on the other hand want plots to be demarcated on the commonage, where each landless household would receive one or two acres for cultivation. The landless people also suggest that the government should clear the forests so that they can use that land for cultivation.

An individual at Noxolo who comes from a landed family even though she is now a resident in the new residential area, indicated that she is interested in full time farming. She is a full time housewife and her husband is working in Port Elizabeth. She states that her husband is hoping to accumulate enough money in the city in order to buy more livestock and ultimately come back to settle as a farmer. They are interested in dairy and beef cattle, raising chickens for eggs and meat, as well as sheep and goats for their meat and skins. They therefore need grazing land. They do not have the resources at the moment to purchase livestock, but have been buying the odd animal whenever they can afford it. They would appreciate any kind of assistance like a loan scheme to buy livestock and also to obtain grazing land. This would enable them to realise their dream of becoming commercial farmers. The individual and her husband are in their early forties. She is quite active in the civic structures and demonstrates commitment and determination to achieve things for herself, her family and her community at large.

An individual who is a pensioner at Sinyanduleni indicated that he is too old for full time cultivation and livestock farming. He does not need land; he rather needs financial assistance to fence the piece of land he owns. He anticipates having to sell or hire his land in future as his sons do not seem interested in farming. He is not very active in civic structures although his wife is.

An individual freehold farmer at Ntsusa indicated that she is interested in full time cultivation and livestock farming. However, the land she owns is adequate for herself. She is only interested in commercial farming on a small scale as she is fifty eight, although she still looks very strong. Her urgent need is for assistance with farm implements and she wants the government to help them as farmers. She is active in civic structures.

A resident who is a pensioner at Madotyeni indicated that she is too old for full time cultivation and livestock farming. She is satisfied with cropping in her large garden for home consumption. Her few livestock are not kept for commercial purposes. She is more interested in obtaining services such as taps, electricity and so on. She is active in the civic structure of her section.

An interview with a freehold farmer who is a pensioner indicated his contentment with the land he owns. Although he is old, he is still very strong and healthy and expressed a strong interest in full time cultivation and livestock farming with his family. He is not very active in the civic structure and his interest in commercial farming is shared by

some members of his section.

An interview with a resident who depends on sharecropping indicated a desire for independent full time cropping if an opportunity arose. The individual is unemployed and wants to be a commercial farmer. His special interest is in producing mealie meal and germinating seeds for consumption by people, livestock and poultry. He is quite active in the civic structure and he is in his early-mid forties.

An interview with a resident who lives on the Ngqeqe commonage indicated that there is no need expressed for more land but rather that the government should concentrate on providing them with services. The individual who is a pensioner is happy with his large home garden and with subsistence farming. He is still active in the civic structure even though he is old. He is hopeful that there will be an improvement of their quality of life with the Reconstruction and Development programme.

e) **EMagcumeni Settlement, a freehold settlement**

The community meeting in this settlement was mainly attended by freehold farmers who were all men. They did not attend any of the Keiskammahoek Farmers Association meetings. It was clear from the meeting that service provision rather than obtaining more land, is their main priority. All those who attended the meeting are active in the local civic structure and political organisations.

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Talking to individuals at EMagcumeni, one freehold farmer indicated that the land he owns is adequate for the full time cultivation and livestock farming he is interested in, but that he does not have the necessary resources. He therefore needs assistance with regard to farm implements and the service provision identified in the general meeting. It seems that this is the general attitude among the EMagcumeni land owners, who are of the older generation.

One individual who is a resident on his fathers' farm wants his own farm for full time cultivation and livestock farming. He is presently unemployed, is middle aged and is active in the civic structures. He wants access to a loan scheme that would enable him to pursue his career in commercial farming and is willing to move to any place for this.

5. **SERVICES**

Residents of Rabula village, across the various tenure groupings, want services such as taps for drinking water, dams for their livestock, reservoirs, boreholes and sprinklers for irrigation purposes. They want schools, clinics, creches, post offices and public telephones, electricity, improved roads and transport facilities, community halls and dipping tanks. They want employment and training centres, as well as farm implements such as tractors, mowers, rakes, balers and trailers. Sites have already been identified to build the schools, creches, clinics and other services required. Committees to organise for these services have also already been started. Residents are prepared to pay towards all the services and are also keen to help with building them where appropriate.

6. CONCLUSION

The research done with both the landed and the landless groupings of Rabula tells us that there is not so much demand for more land, but rather for services provision, such as taps, schools, clinics, electricity, roads and so on, and for development for those individuals who are interested in small scale commercial farming. The latter want training such as livestock management, book keeping and other developmental skills in commercial farming.

Some sections of the landless majority are particularly interested in job opportunities while others are more interested in commercial farming.⁵ The youth is also attracted to projects such as chicken farming, tractor ploughing, brick laying and handwork.

Some farmers from the Trust are particularly interested in agricultural projects such as growing lucerne.

Some of the Rabula freehold farmers who are not members of Keiskammahoek Freehold Farmers' Association, are happy to continue with subsistence farming while others are interested in commercial farming on a small scale. They are content with their own farms and do not need more land for cultivation and livestock farming, but need farm implements.

The Keiskammahoek Freehold Farmers' Association on the other hand want their commonage back so that they can pursue full time cultivation and livestock farming on a large scale.⁶

The tension between the landed and the landless is pronounced in some sections and not in others. For example, at Noxolo, some (not all) of the freehold farmers attend the meetings of the Keiskammahoek Freehold Farmers' Association. These are the landowners that want the commonage back from the landless. In other sections such as EMagcumeni, Ntsusa, Gongqo, there seems to be harmony between the landed and the landless. It is however not clear how much recruitment the Keiskammahoek Freehold Farmers Association has done among all the Rabula sections, as the association is fairly new.

Lastly, there is a lack of co-ordination regarding their demands of the government as the landed and landless residents of the Rabula. The Keiskammahoek Freehold Farmers Association does not support the civic structure which is supposed to be the democratic channel for liaison between the government and Rabula community. The farmers at Twenty Trust

⁵ It is difficult to say whether more people within the landless grouping want job opportunities or commercial farming. Expressed preferences varied from section to section of Rabula.

⁶ These land owners had not yet elaborated on how they will divide the commonage they demand among themselves, as they were in the process of formulating their problems and seeking solutions for those problems. The time for the research was limited, and the land owners were suspicious of researchers who in their terms have done research in their communities without giving anything back other than earning higher degrees for themselves.

BORDER-CROSSING DISTRICT STUDY ON LAND REFORM

want their own separate representation, outside of the civic structure. The rest of the community are happy to be represented through SANCO in communicating with the government about development in Rabula.

LAND RELATED ISSUES AT UPPER LEVELS

LIST II OF THE ZEMKAMNIBERK DRAGGATIN SCHEME

(Kainjumbek District - Eastern Cape Province)

Case study I and appendix B of the Zirel Report

Field work by:

A. Sponchi and T. Lomstad



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Co-financed by the Land & Agriculture Policy Centre (LAPC), Johannesburg and funded by the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA)

Agricultural and Rural Development Research Institute
Alice, 27 February 1999

BORDER-CISKEI DISTRICT STUDY ON LAND REFORM

LAND RELATED ISSUES AT UPPER GXULU:

UNIT 11 OF THE KEISKAMMAHOEK IRRIGATION SCHEME

(Keiskammahoek District - Eastern Cape Province)

Case study 7 and appendix 8 of the Final Report

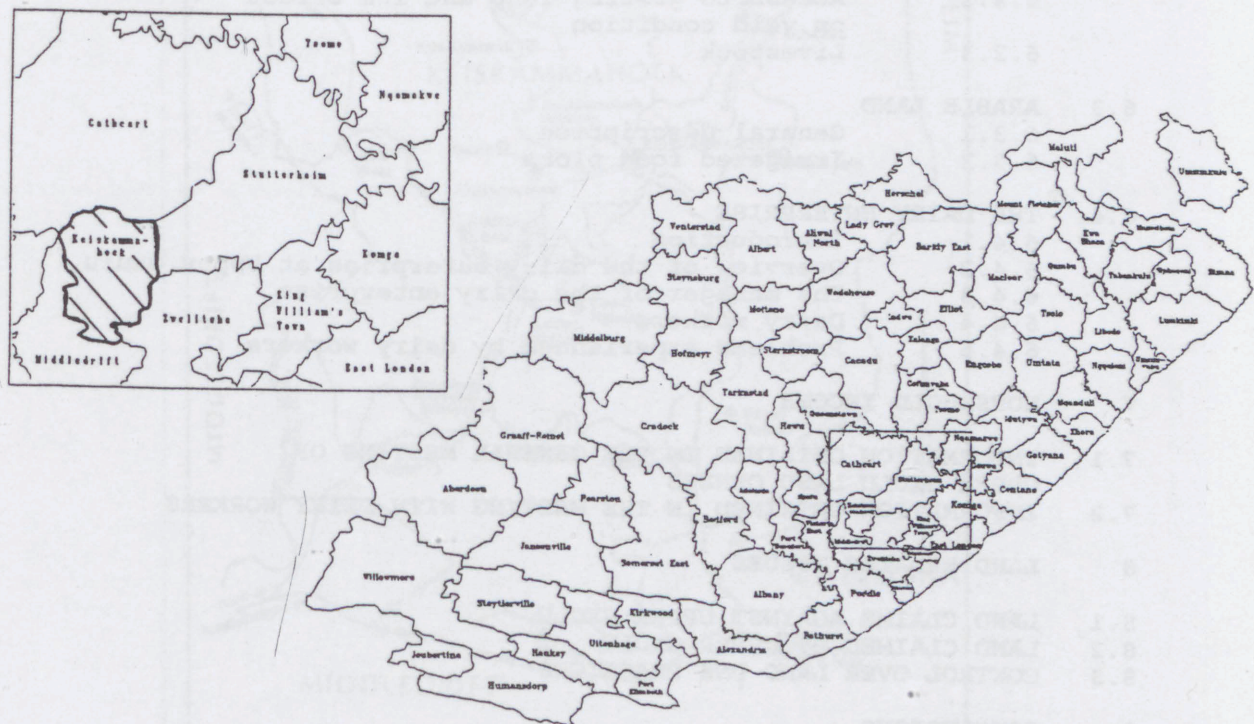
Field work by:

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Agricultural and Rural Development Research Institute
Alice, 27 February 1995

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1. INTRODUCTION

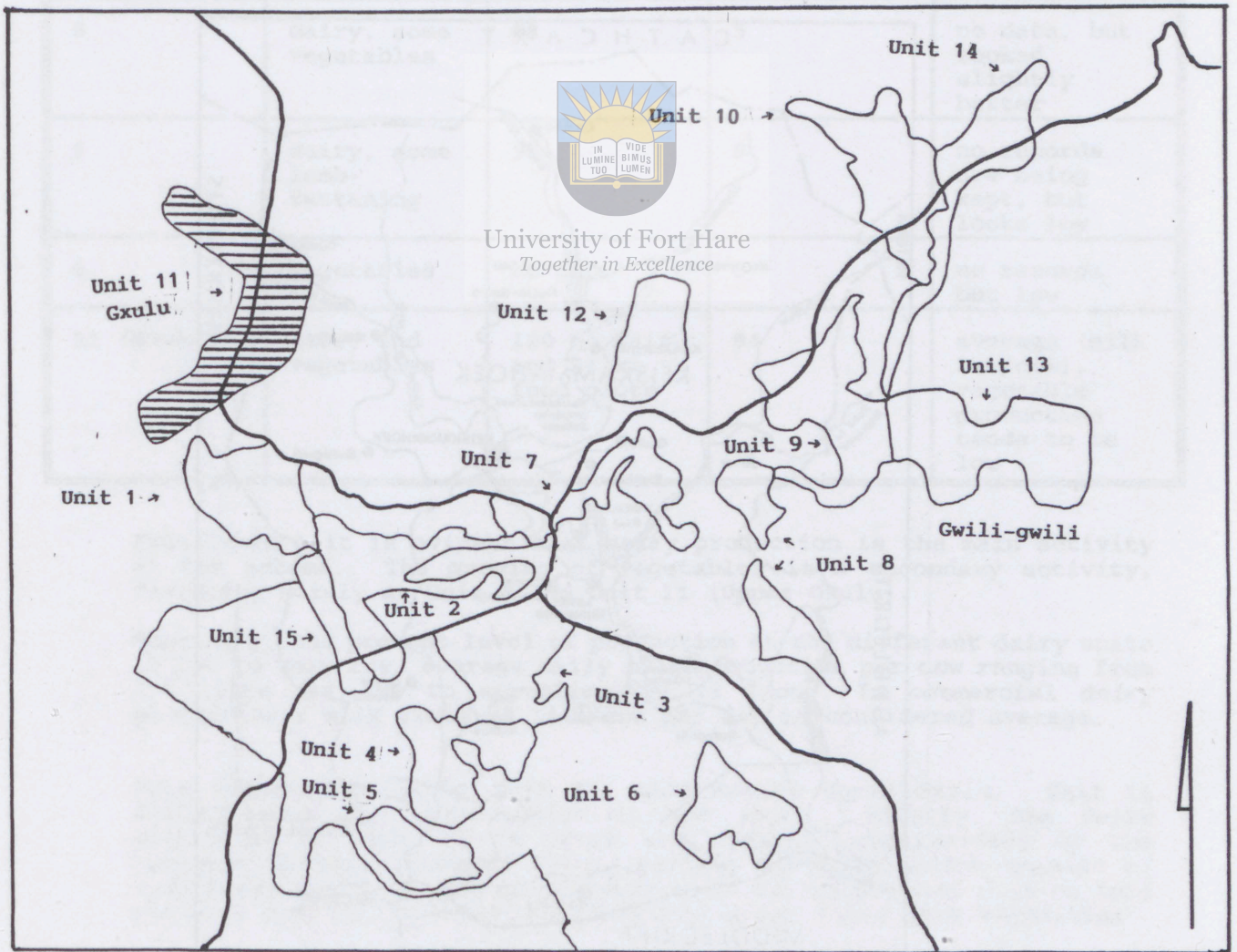
The Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme was established in 1976. The scheme formed part of the Ciskei Government's new strategy aimed at developing the homeland. Government and its advisers identified agriculture as one of the vehicles which could be used to improve the lives of people living in Ciskei. In the subsequent process of broadening access to agriculture and increasing agricultural production in Ciskei, irrigated agriculture was expected to play a major role and close to twenty schemes were planned for the region.

The Keiskamma irrigation scheme was planned and developed as a dairy scheme, where farmers were to be involved mainly with the production of milk from dairy herds feeding on irrigated pastures. The location of the scheme within the context of the district of Keiskammahoek is shown in Map No. 1.



Map No. 1: Location of the Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme within the district of Keiskammahoek.

According to the plans, the Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme was to consist of fourteen units, as shown in Map No. 2, but only eight units have been developed so far. These eight units are still in operation at present. A summary of the activities occurring at each of the functioning units is shown in Table 1.



Map No. 2: Lay-out of the Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme, as planned.

Table 1. Overview of the agricultural enterprises at the eight functioning units of the Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme.

Unit	Main activity	Size	No of farmers	Assessment of productivity at present
1	dairy	96 ha	7	very low (4l/cow)
2	dairy	87	5	low (7l/cow)
3 (Central)	dairy + central processing unit and implement depot	146	government owned and managed	low (9l/cow)
4	dairy	72	6	no data but expected to be similar to Units 1 & 2
5	dairy, some vegetables	68	5	no data, but looked slightly better
6	dairy, some lamb-fattening	96	9	no records are being kept, but looks low
8	vegetables	no data	5	no records but low
11 (Gxulu)	dairy and vegetables	120 ha dairy and 21 ha food plots	84	average (milk 14l/cow), vegetable production tends to be low

From Table 1 it is evident that dairy production is the main activity at the scheme. The growing of vegetables is a secondary activity, featuring mainly at Unit 8 and Unit 11 (Upper Gxulu).

Generally, the present level of production at the different dairy units is low to very low, average daily milk production per cow ranging from 1,5 litre per cow to approximately 15 l/cow. In commercial dairy production a milk yield of 15 l/cow per day is considered average.

This report focuses on Unit 11, also called Upper Gxulu. Unit 11 differs from the other units in two ways. Firstly, the dairy enterprise at Unit 11 is owned and managed cooperatively by the resident farmers of Upper Gxulu, whereas the other units consist of individual farms. A second difference is the presence of 0,25 ha food plots at Unit 11, on which the people of Upper Gxulu grow vegetables.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Following the war of Mlangeni, which was fought from 1850 until 1853, the Colonial Administration expelled the AmaNgqika from the Amatola Mountains. The vacated land was earmarked for resettlement by Mfengus who were rewarded for their loyalty towards the Colonial Powers. The area around Mnyameni was used to settle the AmaBhele clan, led by Chief Mdledle. Later on, part of the area was named Mdledle after this chief. The Amabhele clan formed part of the Mfengu group which moved from Peddie via Victoria East (Alice) to the Amatola mountains, where they settled permanently. The area around Chata was settled by the Amazizi clan, which also came from Peddie and which was under the leadership of Chief Jama. Shortly after the arrival of the Amabhele and Amazizi clans, the Amatola clan also moved into the area and settled around Lower Gxulu. This clan came from the district of Victoria East and was lead by Chief Ntontela, after whom part of the area was named.

After the second world war "Betterment schemes" were introduced in the Ciskeian region. These schemes were aimed at changing the settlement pattern of people from the traditional scattered clusters of kraals to that of concentrated villages. The objective of concentrating homesteads was to ease provision of services such as potable water and dipping tanks and to optimize land use practices. In 1947 Upper Gxulu was identified as a suitable site for the relocation of people living in the Mdledle and Ntontela areas. Prior to that Upper Gxulu was a settlement of white farmers, who were predominantly of German extraction. They used the land for the production of vegetables and beef. These white farmers had to make way for the planned betterment scheme. They left the area in 1958 and 1959.

By the mid-1960s, 84 families, most of them coming from the Mdledle and Ntontela areas, had moved to Upper Gxulu. Only families owning land in their areas of origin and being in possession of a certificate proving ownership, were eligible to move to Upper Gxulu. The main advantage of resettling at Upper Gxulu was the availability of high quality land and irrigation water. It is generally accepted that the move from Mdledle and Ntontela to Upper Gxulu was voluntary and was supported by the people. However, a minority of Upper Gxulu residents recall the move as being enforced.

The objective of this project was to find out how people at Upper Gxulu are utilizing the available land and resources. The study investigates the constraints preventing optimum use of these resources. The need for additional land and its intended use were studied as well. Upper Gxulu is an interesting case study, because it gives insight into the workings and problems of a cooperatively managed irrigation scheme occupied by small farmers, who are also the owners of the scheme. It is quite probable that cooperatively managed small scale irrigation projects will be considered as a model, when transferring irrigable land to landless people as part of the planned land reform programme. During our interaction with the village communities, individual and group perceptions on land related issues were recorded. These perceptions may help to guide the formulation of land reform policies. Guiding the formulation of land reform policies is the main objective of the Land Reform Reserach Project.

3. RESEARCH PROCEDURE

On our first visit to the site we explored the village, the foodplots and the dairy unit. A letter introducing the research team and the purpose of our visit was handed to the chairman of SANCO in the village and appointments were made for future meetings.

A week later the chairman called a village meeting at which we were introduced to the community. This meeting was attended by 11 people. When we explained the objective of our study, namely land related

issues, some people in the meeting felt that the matter was too delicate and complicated to be discussed by the handful of people present. When we asked them to vote on the issue, all 11 people except for one woman decided that the meeting should be postponed, so that everybody would be able to attend. Although we felt that postponement of the meeting was not necessary we decided to yield to the wishes of the people present. The group of residents responded by resolving that residents who failed to attend the next meeting without a valid reason would be penalized. We noted that many of the people owning foodplots did not attend the meeting. We saw many of them passing the shed, where the meeting was held, heading towards their foodplots to work. At some stage the local dairy manager used his van to fetch them from the foodplots, but they refused to come, saying they were too busy to attend meetings.

We requested the people present in the second meeting to arrange for us a set of four meetings. We explained that we wanted to speak to groups of people sharing common concerns. Therefore we felt it appropriate to meet with the foodplot and dairy owners, the landless people, the dairy workers and also with the manager of the dairy on separate occasions. The meetings were scheduled for the next week. During our stay in the village we were able to meet with all of these groups except for the landless. Five attempts were made to set up a meeting with the landless people. Every time the meeting had to be cancelled, because no one turned up. We tried to convince the representative of the landless people of the importance of the research, particularly for the people he represented, but all was to no avail. The views of the landless people at Upper Gxulu are therefore not adequately represented in this study, which is a major shortcoming.

During the meetings PRA research methods used. We employed methods such as semi-structured interviews and interviews during the transect walk through the village, dairy and foodplots. Another helpful research tool, namely RUI (Rapid Updating of Information) was developed in the course of this project. This method entails reading before the community the main facts and conclusions of other reports describing local conditions. Where necessary, the community would update, explain or criticise the information presented by the researcher. Sometimes the researcher would present his or her perception on an issue, asking the community to give their views. The people at Upper Gxulu said they prefer the RUI tool over others, because it clearly separates issues that are adequately documented from those requiring further discussion.

Generally the attitude of many of the people we visited was friendly and welcoming. This was also evident from the words of thanks we received after the visits. Others were sceptical of the objectives of the project. They felt threatened by some of our questions, mainly because they no longer have physical ownership of title deeds to their foodplots and dairy, as these were burnt at some stage.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

4.1 GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF THE STUDY AREA

Upper Gxulu is situated in the valley of the Gxulu river, which is a tributary of the Keiskamma river. The village lies west of the town of Keiskammahoek at a distance of approximately 5 km as is shown in Map No. 1. Previous reports on the area indicate that fences separated the land belonging to Upper Gxulu from that of Mnyameni and Chata, but, presently, a clear boundary between the villages no longer exists, because the fences have been completely destroyed.

4.2 CLIMATE

The climate at Upper Gxulu is dry sub-humid and the annual rainfall is approximately 700 mm. Temperatures are mild relative to other areas in

Ciskei. Frost is experienced during the period June to August. The climate is generally well suited for irrigated crop production. The relatively humid and cool conditions cause the demand for irrigation water per unit area to be lower than in most other irrigation schemes in the region.

4.3 TOPOGRAPHY

Upper Gxulu is situated at an altitude of approximately 800 m above sea level. The irrigated lands are situated on gently sloping valley slopes and valley bottom of the Gxulu river.

4.4 SOILS

According to Hill, Kaplan, Scott & Partners (1977) the irrigation land of Upper Gxulu is characterized by soils of the Avalon type (Soil Classification Working Group, 1991). Locally, Avalon type soils are usually derived from mudstones and shales, which form part of the sedimentary rock deposits of the Beaufort group. These soils tend to be well suited for rainfed production, because drainage in the subsoil layers is impeded as evidenced by the Soft-plinthic-B-horizon occurring below the Yellow-brown apedal B-horizon. As a result the soil profile tends to hold water for long periods of time with the impeded drainage conditions in the lower layers preventing subsoil water from draining below the rooting zone. Under irrigated condition, however, the soils are prone to water logging, especially when water is applied in excess of field capacity.

5. SOCIAL ORGANISATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

5.1 SOCIAL ORGANISATION

Up until the early 1990's, Upper Gxulu was administered by a tribal authority under Chief Mgwabi Ujana, who resides in Gwili-gwili. The functions of the tribal authority are now taken care of by the local branch of SANCO. Farming matters are supposed to be controlled by the Upper Gxulu Farmers Association, but this body is no longer active. In the absence of a local authority dealing with farming matters, every land user makes decisions for him or herself. This may have contributed to a number of problems such as uncontrolled access to grazing land, removal of fences and the illegal harvesting of firewood.

5.2 INFRASTRUCTURE

5.2.1 Education: Upper Gxulu has a pre-school, a primary and a secondary school. All these schools are situated within the village, except for the secondary school, which is about 800 m away from the village. The pre-school and primary school are used mainly by children resident in Upper Gxulu. The Secondary School, on the other hand, serves a wider area, drawing its pupils from locations such as Chata, Mnyameni, Lower Gxulu and the town of Keiskammahoek. A small number of pupils from cities such as Port Elizabeth are also attending the school, most of them having failed to get admitted in the city schools as a result of overcrowding. These students usually stay with relatives or rent a room from one of the villagers.

5.2.2 Health: The village has a clinic which offers a very basic service. More sophisticated treatment is obtained from the hospital in Keiskammahoek, which is 4km away from Gxulu. From there patients may be referred to Cecilia Makiwane Hospital in Mdantsane.

5.2.3 Post and telephone: Schools and the two trading stores act as collection points for mail. The clinic, schools, shops, dairy parlour and a few private residences have a telephone.

- 5.2.4 **Roads and transport:** All the local roads in and around the village have a gravel surface. These are not in a very good condition, but do allow access by taxi, cars and animal drawn carts.
- 5.2.5 **Trading stores:** Two grocery stores operate within the village. The one store is relatively large and carries a stock of basic necessities. The other store is more like a "spaza shop". The village has at least four shebeens. Only one of the shebeens makes use of refrigerators to cool the beverages. At the others, the drinks are sold uncooled.
- 5.2.6 **Recreational facilities:** Sports meetings are held on the ground adjacent to the high school. The absence of a large piece of level land has prevented the people from developing a village ground.

6. LAND, LAND TENURE AND LAND USE

6.1 RESIDENTIAL LAND

6.1.1 **General description:** At inception Upper Gxulu consisted of 84 homesteads and had an estimated population of approximately 400 people (320 according to the residents). Lately there has been an influx of people from neighbouring areas. The newcomers are accommodated in dwellings erected on the residential sites of the 84 land owners. The size of the residential sites ranges between 30m X 20m and 50m X 30m.

6.1.2 **Tenure:** The village is occupied by the children and relatives of the land owners and their friends. The land is owned by freehold title, which is handed over to the first-borne male descendant. Other children have the right to stay on the family site and build a residence there, but they do not have ownership of the land on which they have built their house. Meanwhile, relatives and friends are allowed to reside in Upper Gxulu only when their request has been approved by a village meeting. These relatives or friends usually arrive at Upper Gxulu looking for residential land or for support from the land owners in terms of food and other basic needs. Unlike the land owners at Isidenge in Stutterheim, the land owners at Upper Gxulu do not charge rent to their tenants. In the long-term, the influx of people in the village may have adverse effects on the original community. The erection of dwellings on grazing land, a recent development, obviously reduces the grazing area. Some of the newcomers bring their own livestock, increasing the pressure on the limited grazing land available. But, so far, the people from Upper Gxulu appear not to be concerned about the influx of people and the resulting problems. The residents consider helping relatives and friends to be of greater importance than preserving their natural resources. In the PRA meeting a resident worded this as follows: "Together we fall or rise".

6.2. GRAZING LAND

6.2.1 **General description:** Those parts of Ntontela and Mdledle where the Upper Gxulu residents resided before their move to Upper Gxulu, were converted to grazing camps. Initially there were only two camps, one at Ntontela and another at the former Mdledle residential area. Later government officials subdivided each of these camps into two camps, bringing the total to four. The aim of subdividing the camps was to implement a rotational grazing programme. The areas of the four grazing camps are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Areas of the grazing camps at Upper Gxulu.

Camp number	Size of camp	
	(morgen)	(ha)
1	245	209.8
2	244	209.0
3	250	214.1
4	252	215.8
TOTAL	991	848.7

From the 1960s until the early 1980s, a four-camp rotational grazing system was applied at Upper Gxulu. This system was enforced by the extension officers, employed by the South African government. The rotational grazing system is explained in Table 3.

Table 3: The four-camp rotational grazing system used at Upper Gxulu from the 1960s until the early 1980s.

YEAR	CAMP No.1	CAMP No.2	CAMP No.3	CAMP No.4
1	Rest	Graze	Graze	Graze
2	Graze	Rest	Graze	Graze
3	Graze	Graze	Rest	Graze
4	Graze	Graze	Graze	Rest

When Ciskei took over control of the area the four-camp rotational grazing system was abandoned, being replaced by continuous grazing system in all camps simultaneously. In the mid 1980s, a portion of one camp was subject to informal settlement of people coming from surrounding areas in search of residential land. The Ciskei government formalized this settlement and withdrew the area from the control of Upper Gxulu. The loss of grazing was compensated for by adding another camp to the Upper Gxulu grazing land. Previously this new camp formed part of the Keiskammahoek municipal commonage.

In the late 1980s some of the grazing land was used as a site for the erection of a high school. Nearly all the people present in the meeting felt that the government should compensate Upper Gxulu for the land lost to the school, by adding some of the undeveloped land adjacent to the Keiskamma river to the grazing land of Upper Gxulu, at present, the land in question falls under the control of the Keiskammahoek municipality. In the meeting, one resident tried to convince the other people that the school is their property, so there is no need for compensation. He said: "There is nothing for mahala. For the education of your children you had to give up your grazing camp. If you insist that you want the camp back, then the school must be changed back to grazing camp". Some women shared his views and this led to an argument between men and women.

6.2.2 Access to grazing land and its effect on veld condition: Every resident including friends and relatives, who have moved to Upper Gxulu, have access to grazing. Also livestock belonging to nearby villages (Chatha, Mnyameni and Lower Gxulu) make use of Upper Gxulu grazing, because there is no fence separating Upper Gxulu camps from those of other villages. The residents do not see any benefit in chasing away stray animals from other villages, because these animals

will come back anyway. Moreover, it would be unfair to chase away animals belonging to other villages when their cattle were behaving in a similar fashion, invading land belonging to other villages. At present there is no authority controlling access to grazing, neither is there a perceived need for such an authority amongst residents. The removal of the authority over access to grazing, which occurred when Ciskei became independent in 1981, resulted in the destruction of the fences separating the camps. The residents stated that they were not involved in the destruction of the fences. Most claimed that the fences were broken down by people from nearby villages, in order to enable their livestock to graze on the Upper Gxulu grazing area. General wear and tear was also identified as a reason for the fences having disappeared. One man stood up and explained it as follows: "That my overall is losing its bright blue colour and is tearing apart cannot be blamed on me. The blame lies with its manufacturers. Like this overall, fences rot and rust over time".

Continuous grazing and unplanned burning of the veld since 1981 have caused a change in vegetation. Desirable species have been replaced by undesirable ones. *Themeda triandra* (Rooi gras), a desirable grass, which used to be dominant in the area, has largely been replaced by *Hyperthermia hirta*, an unpalatable long thatching grass. One resident called this change in dominant grass species a blessing in disguise, because *H. hirta* is used for roof thatching and the building of shelter for boys attending initiation school. Some endangered tree species such as "Umquma" have disappeared from the area since the collapse of access control and veld management. Before Ciskei independence it was illegal to go to the veld with an axe, we were told by the residents meeting. It was also illegal to harvest firewood without permission from the extension officer. Now access to firewood is free for all. Another consequence of the lack of an authority controlling use of the veld is the increase in soil erosion, not only in the veld, but also around the residential area. At night, the eroded areas pose great danger to the lives of humans and animals. During winter time or during drought periods, when most cattle are in a bad condition, many of them plunge into dongas and die. Attempts by government to halt erosion by building stone walls and by planting hedges using Aloe Vera in the eroded areas have failed, because run-off water during rain storms sweeps these constructions into the river.

6.2.3 Livestock: In addition to the dairy herd, which is owned by the cooperative of 84 Upper Gxulu land owners, several individual residents own other livestock. These animals feed on natural veld and do not have access to the irrigated pastures. The number and kind of livestock owned by the various livestock owners is shown in Table 4. The data were supplied by the District Office of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry at Keiskammahoek. According to these records 49 people (58% of the land owners) own livestock. It is almost certain that the livestock owned by the relatives and friends of a landowner are registered in the name of the land owner.

Table 4: Livestock ownership in Upper Gxulu.

Livestock owner	Cattle*	Goats	Sheep	Donkeys	Horses
1		4	17	3	2
2		3	21	*	2
3		3	31	2	3
4		18	*	*	*
5		4	18	*	5
6		7	4	4	2
7		2	*	2	*
8		9	4	1	5
9		15	*	2	2
10		3	*	*	1
11		9	*	*	1
12		10	*	3	4
13		7	*	*	3
14		10	5	*	2
15		7			*
16		*	10	3	*
17		*	12	*	1
18		15	9	*	*
19		14	1	*	*
20		11	*	*	1
21		4	2	1	2
22		4	*	2	4
23		11	*	*	5

Contd...

Table 4 continued..

Livestock owner	Cattle	Goats	Sheep	Donkeys	Horses
24		11	2	*	3
25		8	8	*	2
26		45	33	5	*
27		5	2	4	*
28		5	1	*	*
29		19	*	*	*
30		9	2	*	*
31		4	14	*	*
32		7	*	1	1
33		5	*	2	*
34		*	10	1	*
35		5	*	1	2
36		4	*	1	3
37		5	*	*	1
38		7	*	5	*
39		14	*	1	*
40		20	*	*	2
41		15	*	*	3
42		6	*	1	1
43		10	*	2	*
44		9	*	*	1
45		11	*	*	*
46		11	*	*	1
47		*	42	2	*
48		*	10	3	3
49		*	2	*	2
Total	244	382	260	51	70

No data on individual ownership.

Using a ratio of 6 small animal units (SAU) (goats or sheep) to 1 large animal unit (LAU) (cattle) and counting a horse and a donkey as 1 LAU, the stocking rate on natural veld is estimated at 1,8 ha per LAU, which is much higher than the recommended rate for local veld in a good condition which ranges between 2,8 and 3 ha per LAU. Obviously overstocking has contributed and still is contributing to the deterioration of the veld. This is clearly evident from the acceleration of soil erosion and an undesirable shift in species composition of the veld.

6.3 ARABLE LAND

6.3.1 General description: At present, the arable land at Upper Gxulu consists entirely of irrigable foodplots. These were apparently taken into production in 1959. When the Ciskei government convinced the Upper Gxulu community to join the dairy enterprise, which was to dominate the Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme, the foodplots were reduced in size from 1,5 morgen (1,28 ha) to 0,25 ha. The reduction in area of the food plots made land available for the establishment of pastures to feed the dairy herd.

6.3.2 Irrigated food plots: Over the years, production on the foodplots has declined. Before 1981, production was market oriented, at least in part, but presently production is aimed at home consumption mainly. Several factors appeared to have contributed to the decline in the productivity of the food plots. According to the respondents, production on the foodplots was very successful during the first twelve years, namely from 1959 until 1981. During this period most men in the village were working in the cities and women were managing the foodplots. Money from crop sales was used to buy food, while income generated by those employed in the cities was used to buy cattle, build houses and pay lobola. Each of the 84 families owned 1.5 morgen of arable land on which lucerne, maize and vegetables was grown. Lucerne was either sold or fed to cows in milk. Maize was grown mainly for home consumption and vegetables were marketed in Keiskammahoek. At that time, there appeared to be easy access to the market. Agricultural implements and machinery, such as ploughs, tractors, balers, rakes, irrigation pipes, were hired from the government. These were stored in sheds that were built in the village. Paying for the hired machinery was done on the spot. Seeds, pesticides, fertilizers and expert advice were also readily available. Individual farmers were able to hire lorries or tractors, to transport produce to the market place and this at affordable prices. Produce was easily sold and money to pay for hired transport would be available after marketing.

When Ciskei became independent in 1981 many things changed. The size of the foodplots was reduced from 1.5 morgen to 0.25 ha for each of the 84 families. Four extra foodplots became available, increasing the total number of plots to 88. The rest of the land - approximately 120 ha - which was once arable land was converted to pastures. Some land was used as a site for the erection of a dairy parlour. The planners of the dairy scheme convinced the food plot owners that by sacrificing some of the area used for growing crops, they would earn extra income from the sale of milk. The first few years following the independence of Ciskei everything went well. Marketing was extended to places such as King William's Town. Sometimes trucks from nearby towns would come to buy vegetables at the irrigation scheme. Towards the beginning of the 90's there was increased competition at their chief market place, Keiskammahoek Town. A white commercial farmer running a nursery started selling seedlings and better quality vegetables at a lower price. Trucks coming from King William's Town started to shift their business away from Upper Gxulu, trading mainly with this commercial farmer. Conditions worsened when the government transferred its tractors, trucks and many of its implements from Upper Gxulu to Unit 3 (the Central Unit of the KKH irrigation scheme). In order to make use of the government's equipment, Upper Gxulu farmers had to file an application with the administrative personnel of Unit 3. This system

made it difficult to plough and plant at the correct time. In vegetable production planting at the right time is essential, if marketing opportunities are to be exploited fully. The new tractor scheme made such kind of planning very difficult. Furthermore, seeds, fertilizers and pesticides, which used to be offered for sale at Upper Gxulu, were now available at the Ulimocor depot in Keiskammahoek town only, adding to the deterioration in the quality of the farmers support services. All these factors have contributed to the Upper Gxulu vegetable enterprise losing its competitive edge. At present most of the vegetables being produced are for home consumption. Cabbage is by far the most popular crop. Others crops being planted are maize, oats, peas, beans, potatoes, spinach, carrots and beetroot.

6.4 THE DAIRY ENTERPRISE

6.4.1 Introduction: In Upper Gxulu, the dairy enterprise was established following the independence of Ciskei in 1981. A large tract of irrigated cropping land was converted to irrigated pastures. Until 1993 the dairy enterprise was managed by Ulimocor. In 1993 management was transferred to the Department of Agriculture and Forestry of Ciskei. The objectives of Ciskei government's introduction of a dairy enterprise in Upper Gxulu were multiple, namely:

- 1) To generate a supply of milk to residents of the surrounding area.
- 2) To train Upper Gxulu residents in order for them to become independent dairy farmers.
- 3) To generate extra income from milk sales for the foodplot owners.

At present, the first objective is being achieved, some 1200 litre of milk being offered for sale to local people on a daily basis. The second objective has not been reached at all. Upper Gxulu farmers have not developed into independent dairy farmers, despite being the owners of the land. Instead, they act as a kind of share holders of the dairy enterprise. The dairy itself is managed by a dairy manager. This manager has to consult the owners before making a decision regarding the dairy. Once approved, decisions are executed by a team of 12 workers. Considering that there are 84 land owners and some 120 ha of land and that this year the annual dividend was R200 per owner, the performance of the enterprise is not very impressive. Calculated on a per ha basis, the returns are approximately R150 per ha of irrigated land, which is really extremely low. One would expect the land owners to intervene in an attempt to increase the profitability of the scheme. In fact the land owners are not at all happy with the dairy manager who is in their employ. This issue was put to the land owners. From their reply it was clear that the Upper Gxulu landowners are reluctant to push the issue of scheme management, mainly out of fear of losing possible future benefits to be derived from the involvement of the government. The third objective, namely the generation of income from milk sales for Gxulu residents is not achieved fully either, residents being presented with a small annual dividend, which amounted to R150 in 1993 and R200 in 1994.

6.4.2 Overview of the dairy enterprise at Upper Gxulu: The infrastructure on which the dairy enterprise is based consists of 120 ha of irrigated pastures and 2 ha of dairy related structures including a milking parlour and various kraals. Land use on the various dairy plots is shown in Table 5. The milking parlour building accommodates an office, toilets, a room from which milk is sold, a room for the storage of milk, a feed store and sufficient space to enable milking of 26 cows simultaneously. The dairy owns a van, which was donated by ULIMOCOR. All the costs of running and maintaining the vehicle are carried by the dairy enterprise. In November 1993 the cooperative purchased a tractor (Massey Fergusson 290) for R87 000 by means of a loan received by the CAB (Ciskei Agricultural Bank). The cooperative pays a monthly

instalment of R1 200 over 5 years. The tractor is used mainly for soil preparation of pasture land. Foodplot owners or people from nearby villages have to hire the tractor when wanting to prepare their foodplots. A rate of R167/ha is charged. It is also hired by individuals to transport bulky materials such as firewood and bricks. The fact that the owners of the tractor have to pay for its use is a contentious issue. Members of the cooperative are reluctant to pay the user charges saying that the tractor is theirs and should, therefore, not try to make business out of them.

The milking herd at Upper Gxulu consists of 150 mature cows, 120 of which are lactating the rest being heifers. All the cattle are of Friesland breed. The cattle, which were originally owned by ULIMOCOR, were transferred to the cooperative consisting of the 84 Upper Gxulu land owners. Annually 20% of the cattle (30 out of a total of 150) are culled and replaced by young home-reared animals. Cows are milked twice daily, namely at 5am and 3pm. Average milk production for each cow ranges between 10 and 14l/cow/day. Daily minimum milk production is 1 200 l. The targeted production level is 2 000 l per day. Milk is sold from the local milking parlour directly to the public, including the Upper Gxulu residents and owners of the herd. A large quantity of milk is sold to hawkers who supply customers in other villages. The on-farm sale of milk minimizes transport costs. The sale price of milk depends on the quantity bought. Small quantities are sold for R1,20 per litre, but when bought in large quantities the price is reduced to R1,05 per litre. The average monthly gross income from the sale of milk is R30 000. According to the dairy manager, the average monthly gross margin is about 33% of the gross income, i.e. R10 000 per month. In winter, when supplementary feed has to be purchased, the gross margin may drop below 33% of gross income.

Table 5: Land use on the Upper Gxulu dairy plots in September 1994.

PLOT No.	SIZE (ha)	PASTURES
1101	4.0	Under preparation for lucerne planting
1102	3.5	Under preparation for lucerne planting
1103	2.0	Lucerne
1104	3.2	Lucerne
1105	4.0	Lucerne
1106	6.0	Green grazer
1107	3.4	Green grazer
1108	4.1	Kikuyu
1109	5.5	Italian Rye grass
1110	8.5	Green grazer
1111	6.0	Green grazer
1112	3.5	Kikuyu
1113	2.0	Kikuyu
1114	4.0	kikuyu
1115	2.2	Kikuyu
1116	1.0	Green gold
1117	5.5	Fescue/Italian Rye grass
1118	2.0	Italian Rye/Clover
1119	2.7	Italian Rye/Clover
1120	3.5	Oats/Rye
1121	2.5	Italian Rye/Clover
1122	7.6	Italian Rye
1123	8.1	Kikuyu
1124	4.4	Kikuyu
1125	3.2	Oats
1126 - 1132	21.5	Land claimed by Lower Gxulu residents



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The dairy employs 12 workers and a dairy manager. This team is responsible for all the daily activities related to the dairy enterprise. The wages of the workers and the salary of the manager are generated by the sale of milk. In addition, the Department of Agriculture and Forestry employs an independent consultancy firm (ACS), which advises the work team at Upper Gxulu as well as the other units of the scheme. The dairy manager earns R1 500 per month. The consultant is reported to cost the Department about R12 000 per month. This figure was not officially confirmed. During the time when the dairy was supervised by ULIMOCOR, the dairy enterprise employed 16 workers. At the end of 1993, when the Department of Agriculture and Forestry of Ciskei took over the role of supervisor, four workers were retrenched, because the enterprise was not generating enough money to maintain 16 workers.

6.4.3 The manager of the dairy enterprise: Interviewing the dairy manager, we gained the impression that he knows the dairy business well and that his knowledge is practical, being based on more than 10 years in the field. He was born at Zeleni near King William's Town. According to him, coming from elsewhere is the root cause of his problems with the dairy owners and other members of the local community. Given the choice he would quit his job, because the working conditions created by the conflicts with the community are just too much to bear. Some of the problems he is confronted with are:

- * **Transport:** He is accused of using the dairy bakkie to attend to his personal business.
- * **Corruption and fraud:** He is accused of misappropriating dairy monies. His side of the story is that the dairy owners do not know much about the running of a dairy and the costs associated with such an enterprise. The dairy owners claim that the reason why they are earning only R200 per annum from the enterprise is that most of the money from the dairy gets stolen by the manager.
- * **Jealousy:** Compared to most residents at Upper Gxulu the dairy manager has a nice residence, which is well furnished. The dairy owners and other people in the village believe that the manager is using money from the dairy to improve his own standard of living.

According to the dairy owners the solution to the above problems is to replace the dairy manager with one of the unemployed matriculated young men from Upper Gxulu. They expect a person born locally to be more reliable than a foreigner when dealing with the financial matters of the enterprise.

6.4.4 Dairy workers: When ULIMOCOR supervised the dairy a total of 16 workers were employed. This number was maintained up until the end of 1993, when four workers were retrenched, because the dairy owners could not be up with the high labour cost. Twelve workers are remaining. All are from Upper Gxulu. Their ages range between 24 and 55. The meeting of dairy workers was attended by ten of the twelve workers, six men and four women.

6.4.5 Problems experienced by the dairy workers: During the interviews it was clear that some of the workers did not feel comfortable to speak about their personal problems or problems pertaining to the scheme in public. Since there were no employers or dairy manager present during the interviews, it was difficult to understand why the workers were feeling uneasy about discussing problems. Fortunately, an informant told us that one of the employees, a 55 year-old man, is very close to the management committee of the dairy and it was feared that he could tell the employers all the issues discussed during the interviews. Furthermore, it may have scared many workers to learn that this man was taking minutes of every issue discussed. When asked a question, the

workers would first look at each other before giving an answer. Out of the 10 participants, only 3 helped to reveal the problems they are faced with. The people suggested solutions to their problems as well. We have included these in the text under the heading "suggested solution". This does not mean that the research team is in support of these suggestions. Many are even considered to be totally unrealistic by the team. But the suggestions do illustrate how the involvement by the state in the scheme have resulted in people looking at the state for assistance, irrespective of the economic realities.

Poor salaries. As mentioned earlier the salaries range between R300 - R350 and one worker earns as little as R150. They informed us that their salaries are hardly adequate to meet basic food requirements, school fees and uniforms for their children and lunch while they are at work.

Suggested solution

(a) The woman earning R150 per month suggested that salaries should be increased to R600 per month. Everybody supported her proposal. However, they realized that the proposed monthly salary is thrice that earned by the dairy owners in a whole year. They also realized that the proposed increase in salary could harm the dairy financially and might cause bankruptcy. To avoid this, one worker suggested that the dairy should be returned to ULIMOCOR. ULIMOCOR paying the salary bill would avoid the increase in personnel compensation to affect the viability of the enterprise.

Long working hours. Working 7 days a week from 5 am until 5 pm is exploitation, they said. One woman said: "The number of hours we spend on this dairy do not match the salaries we are earning. These rigid working hours barr us from attending to urgent domestic issues. Attending to the foodplots is impossible as we are usually tired after work".

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Suggested solution

(a) The number of workers at the dairy must be increased so that the workers can completed earlier allowing workers some time to attend to personal business. They could not give the exact number of extra people that was required. One suggested that the 4 retrenched workers must be brought back to make things easier.

(b) The dairy must be owned by the government again because government working hours are more flexible.

No recognition of experience. The treasurer who has been employed on a casual basis since 1989 voiced this grievance. Her employment in the dairy was endorsed in 1989 by the dairy committee. Thereafter she spent 2 years working without pay because she was employed as a volunteer worker. She never received a salary increase since her first payment at the end of 1990.

Suggested solution

(a) The dairy owners should employ her permanently and adjust here salary.

No recognition of educational qualifications

The dairy treasurer is in possession of a standard 10 certificate. She said it frustrates her when she considers that she is the most educated of all other workers in the dairy, but also the most poorly paid of all.

Suggested solution

(a) The dairy must be taken over by government or ULIMOCOR so that she can earn a better salary.

Multiple duties

Each of the 10 workers suggested that they would like to be assigned to specific duties instead of proceeding from one duty to the other. One man explained as follows: "It makes no sense to work fast while you are irrigating the pastures, because after completing the irrigation the dairy manager will assign you another duty. These working conditions make us so tired that after work we go straight to bed."

Suggested solution

Employ more workers in the dairy and assign to each worker a specific set of duties.

7. HOUSEHOLD INCOME

7.1 INFORMATION OBTAINED IN THE GENERAL MEETING OF UPPER GXULU LAND OWNERS

The main meeting stated that not a single person residing at Upper Gxulu is employed. Another source, also residing at Upper Gxulu and present at the meeting, estimated the number of people employed at approximately 30. According to this source about 15 people are employed outside the Keiskammahoek district. Twelve people are employed in the Upper Gxulu dairy parlour and a few others are working at Unit 3 (the central dairy parlour). The manager of the local dairy confirmed the employment of 12 residents and, one evening after a village meeting, we observed more than 10 people, predominantly women, coming home from work. The following day we were informed that some of the people we saw coming to the village the previous evening are working at Unit 3. Others are some of the former employees who were retrenched in 1993, but are now seeking reinstatement at Unit 3 (see Case Study 8 and Appendix 9 in this series by Sonandi and Van Averbeke, 1995). The research team is also aware of two male residents who are employed, one working for Stellenbosch Wineries and the other in a mine in Johannesburg.

According to the residents the main source of income in the village comes in the form of a bi-monthly old age pension of R684. There is also a small annual income for each of the 84 dairy owners, which is paid out by the local dairy manager. Last year the farmers received R150, and this year R200. These moneys from the dairy are too small to be called an income, and are referred to as "umunca wonyaka" meaning "the annual lick". The income derived from the sale of vegetables is difficult to estimate since most of the vegetables are used for home-consumption. However, one of the foodplot owners, whom we ranked as being the second most progressive farmer, said his earnings from the sale of vegetables are sufficient for him to afford milk, cigarettes

7.2 INFORMATION OBTAINED IN THE MEETING WITH THE DAIRY WORKERS

Ten of the twelve workers are employed on a permanent basis. The remaining two are considered to be casuals. The permanent workers receive salaries ranging between R300 and R350 per month, which is all they get. No further benefits, such as free milk, are received as part of the compensation package. One of the casual workers, who is a tractor driver, earns R300 a month, while the other, who is a treasurer, earns R150 a month. These casual workers have been employed in the dairy since 1989.

Income is also derived from other sources such as livestock, foodplots, old age pensions and remittances from family members working elsewhere (see Table 6). These household incomes have to support families with an average size of 8 people (see Table 7).

Table 6: Other bread winners in the families of the dairy workers.

Dairy worker	Other bread winners
1	None
2	None
3	Husband working at Unit 3.
4	Husband a domestic worker at Gwiligwili.
5	
6	Two brothers; working in KKH town and the other in Cape Town.
7	
8	Pensioner
9	
10	

Table 7: Size of the families of dairy workers.

Dairy worker	Number of family members
1	9
2	7
3	9
4	11
5	6
6	9
7	10
8	9
9	4
10	8

Most of the dairy workers own livestock (see Table 8). These graze on natural veld only and are primarily kept for milk production. The livestock owners could not quantify the amount of milk produced, but they said the amounts were enough to provide milk for coffee only. Goat milk is also used in coffee.

Table 8: Number of cattle and goats owned by the dairy workers

Dairy worker	Number of cattle	Number of goats
1	2	1
2	0	0
3	0	0
4	0	3
5	0	0
6	0	1
7	0	0
8	0	2
9	0	0
10	1	8

Nine of the ten workers interviewed have foodplots. Crops that are grown are maize, oats, peas, beans, potatoes, cabbage, spinach, carrots and beetroots. These crops are grown mainly for home consumption. If there was a way in which they could sell their crops, they would do so. Unfortunately, difficulties in reaching the market place (Keiskammahoek town) and strong competition in the market place are limiting factors.

8. LAND RELATED ISSUES

8.1 LAND CLAIMS AGAINST UPPER GXULU

According to the residents meeting a area totalling 21.5 ha, which forms part of the dairy is claimed by three people of Lower Gxulu. The numbers of the plots being claimed by these people are shown in Table 9. There are several versions of the events leading to the incorporation of these particular plots into the dairy unit. The first version goes as follows: "During the establishment of the dairy each of the three land owners was asked by the government to relinquish the land to the dairy. In return they were each paid R100 compensation." The other version is that the government forcibly took the lands without compensation. However, the government made a mistake by not taking the title deeds from these people, because they are now using these title deeds to claim back the lands. They have been seeking legal advice from lawyers and senior government officials in Bisho.

One of the people from Lower Gxulu claiming land denies having received compensation for the lost land. He said if he could get the land back he would use it for vegetable production. He said he would never consider selling or leasing the land to the dairy, because they - the Lower Gxulu people - have long been looking for an irrigation scheme of their own. He was not sure whether he still had the title deed for the land he was claiming back. A third version was related to us by one of the Government employees of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry of Ciskei. That person indicated that there were actually 16 people of Lower Gxulu and 2 people from Elukhanyweni who were owners of land now occupied by the dairy enterprise. For a while these 18 land owners were paid monthly sums of R100 each, but now payments have stopped and, as a result, they now want their land back. Interestingly, there are no serious signs of hostility between Upper Gxulu residents occupying the land in question and the people who have a claim to it. In fact, a large proportion of the Upper Gxulu residents feel that the claimed land should be returned to its true owners. The dairy manager feels the same way too. Actually many people feel that they have no grounds to fight for the land because they do not have the title deed. Moreover, they feel that losing 21.5 ha would not have a significant effect on the dairy business. Nevertheless, a few individuals of Upper Gxulu insisted that the land is theirs to keep.

8.2 LAND CLAIMED BY UPPER GXULU

An area of veld of approximately 3 ha on which the high school was built is the only land that was lost by Upper Gxulu without compensation. However, some people from the village do not regard this as a loss of land, because the school is theirs and is of benefit to their children. In fact, the said land is still under the control of the villagers, but is being used for a purpose, which is of greater importance than grazing, namely the education of the local youth. Some residents would like to see a grazing camp of about 248 morgens (212,4 ha) being added to the Upper Gxulu common in compensation for the land lost to the school. The proposed camp is near the village and is presently under the control of Keiskammahoek municipality. Two people suggested that it would be a good idea if the sizes of the food plots could be doubled. They said that this could be achieved by allowing them to use some of the fallow foodplots in the scheme. They are hesitant to suggest this to the owners of foodplots which are left unattended. They would prefer this task to be conducted by government officials or by the research team. It is unfortunate that the landless people in the village did not attend any of the five meetings that were specifically arranged for them. Most likely they would have demanded land for residential purpose and for food plots.

8.3 CONTROL OVER ACCESS TO LAND AND LAND USE PRACTICES

Structures monitoring safe utilization of land are ineffective or totally missing. This issue requires urgent attention. For example, uncontrolled access to grazing land and poor control over the building of houses on grazing land are issues that need to be addressed. If the situation is left as is, one of the grazing camps closest to the village will end up being a residential area. Whilst researching the location, six new shacks were built in this grazing camp. The way in which the dairy unit is being managed also requires attention. The group of people working and managing the unit are dissatisfied and so are the owners.

9. CONCLUSIONS

Upper Gxulu also referred to as Unit 11 of the Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme is an example of land transfer from white farmers to a black community, which took place some decades ago. Initially conceived as a settlement of independent crop and vegetable farmers on irrigated land, it was transformed into a cooperatively owned and managed dairy scheme complemented with food plots as a result of government planning and interference. Initially government took responsibility for the consequences of its interference and supported the cooperative financially and also by means of providing farmer support services. When the cost of its support was considered too high to warrant continuation, government started to withdraw that support. In the mean time the community of farmers had developed a large degree of dependency on government help. When this help was withdrawn, the effects on the productivity of the vegetable and dairy enterprise were quite devastating. Vegetable production became directed at home consumption instead of being market oriented. The dairy operation is riddled with problems and dissatisfied role players to the extent that not a single partner in the dairy enterprise is of the opinion that he or she is benefitting from this activity. At present, Upper Gxulu and most of the irrigation scheme (see Sonandi and Van Averbeke, 1995) is a good example of the most powerful argument made by the anti-land-reform lobby against the transfer of agricultural land to black people, namely that such reform leads to the under-utilisation of high potential land and in the end to a decline in the food security of the nation. It is, therefore, important that the new government learns from the mistakes made by homeland governments and avoids making the same mistakes when implementing land reform. In terms of the development of land reform policy, this investigation clearly shows that:

- * Farmer participation must be central from the onset of the planning process and must remain central in all subsequent activities.
- * Decision making rights coupled to financial responsibility by the farmer must be a key element from the onset.
- * Farmer support services and information provision systems must suit the farmer's needs and must be directed at empowering the farmer to make rational decisions with respect to his or her enterprise.

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BORDER-CISKEI DISTRICT STUDY ON LAND REFORM

LAND RELATED ISSUES AT STATE-OWNED UNIT 3

OF THE KEISKAMMAHOEK IRRIGATION SCHEME

(Keiskammahoek District - Eastern Cape Province)

Case study 8 and Appendix 9 of the Final Report

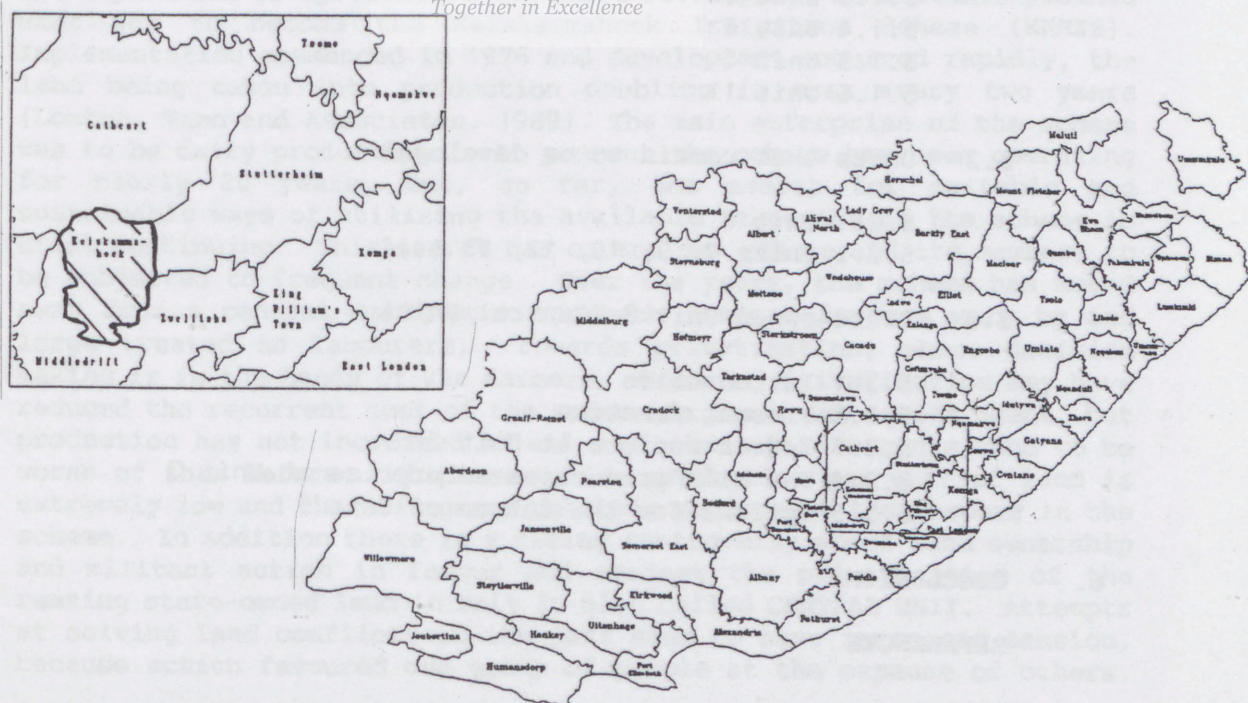
Field work by:

A. Sonandi and T. Lesoetsa



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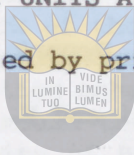


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1. INTRODUCTION

In the 60's and early 70's the emphasis of the agricultural policy in the former Ciskei was on the re-organization of land use (betterment schemes) and soil conservation. In spite of this restructuring process, agricultural production and income derived from this activity remained modest in most of the rural areas. The main reasons for the relatively small contribution of agriculture to the household income of rural people were adverse climatic conditions and farming systems aimed at subsistence rather than commercial production.

In 1976 the former Ciskei Government reviewed its policy on agriculture and rural development. The new policy placed emphasis on job and wealth creation using agriculture as a vehicle to achieve this goal. A start was made by compiling an inventory of the available natural resources in Ciskei and an assessment of their productive potential for various forms of land use. The region was subdivided into three large basins, namely the Keiskamma river basin, the Buffalo river basin and the Fish-Kat river basin. On the basis of this inventory a number of agricultural development projects were identified, amongst which 18 irrigation schemes. For each of these schemes preliminary plans were prepared and costed. In the Keiskamma basin the largest potential for the development of an irrigation scheme was found in the upper parts of the Keiskamma river basin around the town of Keiskammahoek and lower down the river in the vicinity of Burnshill. Under the direction of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development consultants planned what was to become the Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme (KKHIS). Implementation commenced in 1976 and development occurred rapidly, the land being taken into production doubling in area every two years (Loxton, Venn and Associates, 1989). The main enterprise of the scheme was to be dairy production. At present the scheme has been operating for nearly 20 years, but, so far, the search for suitable and sustainable ways of utilizing the available resources of the scheme is still continuing. This search has caused the scheme and its members to be subjected to frequent change. Over the years, the scheme has moved away from a central management approach, where farmers were by and large treated as labourers, towards privatisation, where decision making is in the hands of the farmers. However, privatisation may have reduced the recurrent cost of the scheme to the state or its agent, but production has not increased at all and scheme participants tend to be worse off than before. At present, the production per unit of land is extremely low and there is great unhappiness amongst the farmers in the scheme. In addition there is a rising controversy about land ownership and militant action in favour and against the privatisation of the remaining state-owned land in Unit 3, also called CENTRAL UNIT. Attempts at solving land conflicts in the past seem to have increased tension, because action favoured one group of people at the expense of others.

The main objective of this study was to investigate possible options for the future of UNIT 3. We assessed the current production methods employed at Unit 3 and also its level of productivity. We also consulted the various sections of the greater Keiskammahoek community who have an interest in the future of Unit 3. During our investigation it soon became clear that the future of Unit 3 may influence that of other units and, therefore, all functioning irrigation units were visited. During these visits we tried to obtain for each of the units

a comprehensive understanding of the production (and marketing) practices being employed, to assess the levels of productivity and to determine the main factors limiting productivity. We also enquired about the role that is played by Unit 3 in production and marketing at the other units. As a result, the report gives an overview of the current state of affairs at the Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme with an emphasis on Unit 3. This overview is not complete and may contain inaccuracies. Data collection in this area is far from easy and many of the key players were reluctant or refused to divulge the information required by the researchers.

2. RESEARCH PROCEDURE

Information on the historical development of the scheme was obtained from previous management reports. Several reports on KKHIS have been compiled, but none of these reports gives a detailed account of the financial aspects of the scheme. Financial information was generally extremely difficult to come by. In fact the research team was left with the impression that many of the role players were deliberately hiding such information. It may have been that economic and financial data would raise serious questions about the sustainability of certain production and management practices. New data were collected by conducting semi-structured interviews and transect walks. Information on the production and management practices at Unit 3 and the problems encountered by the management and production teams were obtained by interviewing the dairy manager of the unit and the extension officers working there. Perceptions and views regarding the present and future of Unit 3 and the irrigation scheme as a whole were gathered from the Keiskammahoek Agricultural Office, the project manager of the scheme, agricultural officers who previously worked in the scheme, the Keiskammahoek Development Forum (KDF), the Keiskammahoek branch of SANCO and the residents of Lower Gxulu, one of the villages near the scheme. We also had a meeting with 17 private scheme farmers who belong to a local association called "Progressive Farmers". Our reception by the "Progressive Farmers" was rather hostile. The farmers did not trust us and a rather tense and defensive atmosphere persisted throughout the meeting. One of the farmers tried to block the meeting from taking place right from the very onset, by raising financial and political issues that were not exactly relevant to this project. When called to order by other farmers he blamed us for calling a meeting without revealing an agenda beforehand. Generally, the meeting was chaotic and it was clear that the farmers were not prepared to let us know what is happening on their farms. Instead, they persisted in telling us of the things that are important to them, not to us. All our attempts to ease tension failed. At the end of the meeting we asked the farmers to give us permission to visit them individually on their farms. They categorically rejected this request, saying that we were trying to use the same tactics used by the government to cheat them. The final word was: "If you have something to ask, ask it now". We decided to call off the meeting. Fortunately, informants gave us a list of names of moderate "Progressive Farmers" that we could interview individually. These farmers were residing in Units 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 8. The informants were agricultural officers working in these units. We did not experience any problems in conducting the individual interviews. Instead, some farmers apologized for the manner in which we were treated in the group meeting.

Countless attempts were made to interview an independent dairy consultant employed by the government. We even asked the officer in-charge to encourage the consultant to meet with us, but this was not successful either. We requested the consultant to leave information with the dairy manager of the scheme if he was too busy to meet with us. He did not do that despite promising to do so.

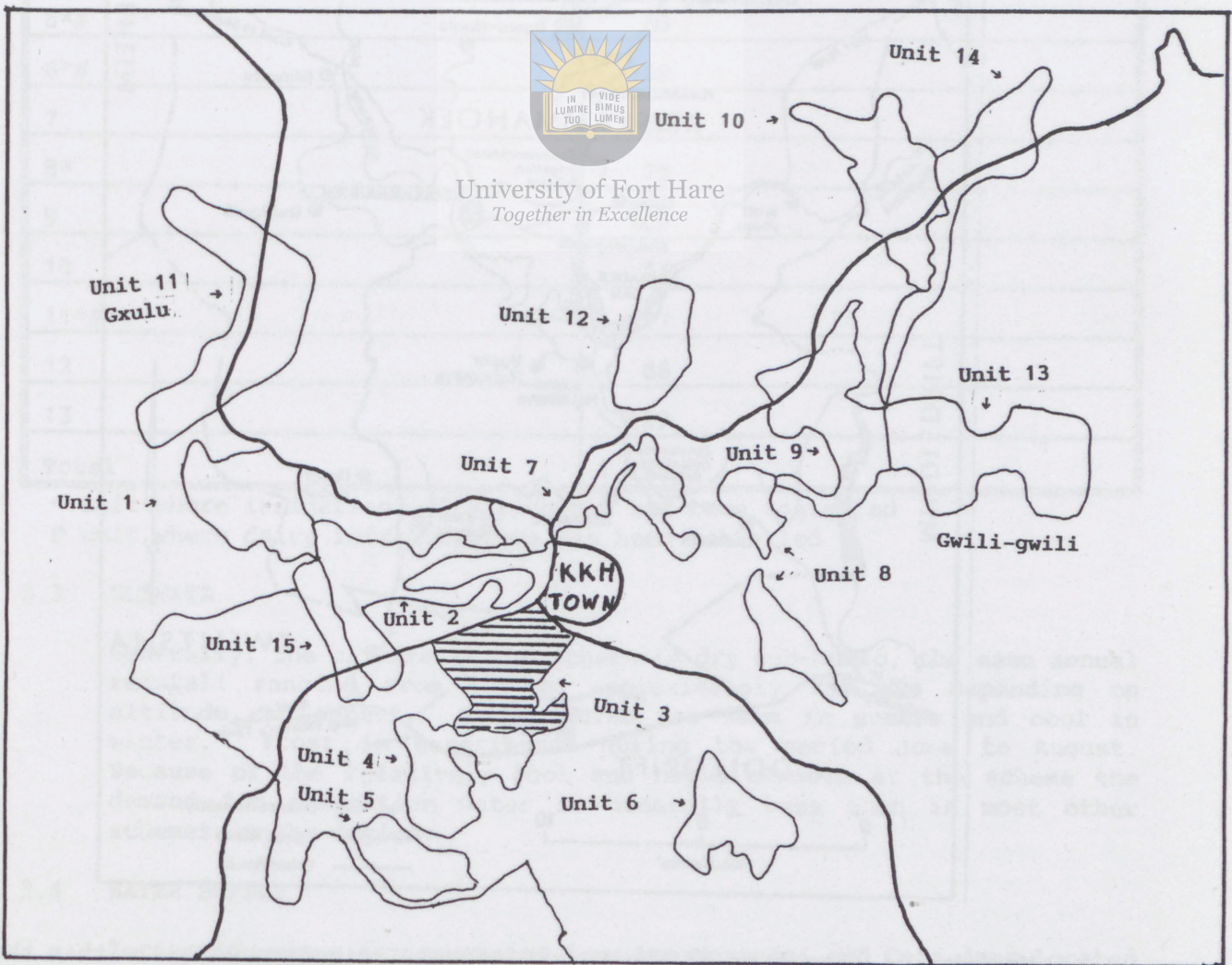


Map No. 1: Location of the Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme within the district of Keiskammahoek.

3. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHEME

3.1 LOCATION

The geographical location of the Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme within the district of Keiskammahoek is shown on Map 1. The Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme stretches along the valleys of the Keiskamma and Gxulu rivers (see Map 2) and in which the town of Keiskammahoek is centrally located.



Map No. 2: Lay-out of the Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme, as planned.

3.2 SIZE

According to the plans, the scheme was to cover an area of approximately 1 730 ha, but large parts of it have remained undeveloped. The size of the different units (as envisaged by the planning process) is shown in table 1.

Table 1: Size of the units of the Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme as planned.

UNIT	SIZE (ha)
1*#	111
2*#	76
3*#	142
4*#	85
5*#	63
6*#	109
7	46
8*	75
9	105
10	54
11*#	357
12	86
13	429
Total	1 738

* unit where irrigation infrastructure has been installed

unit where dairy infrastructure has been installed

3.3 CLIMATE

Generally, the climate at the scheme is dry sub-humid, the mean annual rainfall ranging from 600 to approximately 750 mm, depending on altitude and aspect. Temperatures are warm in summer and cool in winter. Frost is experienced during the period June to August. Because of the relatively cool and humid climate at the scheme the demand for irrigation water is generally less than in most other schemes in the region.

3.4 WATER SUPPLY

Irrigation water is gravitated from the Mnyameni and Cata dams located higher up in the valley. Bursts in the the bulk water supply pipe occur frequently. Experts ascribe these bursts primarily to the incorrect operation of the system. These bursts normally result in irrigation water being unavailable for long periods of time or in loss

of pressure at units situated furthest down the line, such as Unit 6. In the past, discussions have taken place with the Water Affairs Branch of the Department of Public Works to ensure correct operation of the system and to limit the Scheme's responsibility to that of in-field installations. Unfortunately, adequate reticulation of irrigation water to the various units in the scheme remains a problem.

4. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

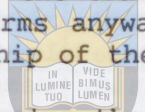
Being an agricultural project, the development of the KKHIS was the responsibility of the Ciskei Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Forestry. For a long time the management of the scheme was the responsibility of the Ciskei Agricultural Corporation (ULIMOCOR). ULIMOCOR developed and managed the scheme in accordance with programmes and budgets, which were prepared by Loxton, Venn and Associates (Ciskei) (Pty) Limited, a private consultancy firm. According to the Ciskei Marketing and Development Board (undated) the objectives of the scheme were the following:

- * To encourage efficient use of natural resources.
- * To enable 350 middle-class farmer families to derive a reasonable living from modern agriculture.
- * To create a further 750 jobs in addition to the 350 settler farmers resulting in a total of about 6 000 people relying on the scheme for their livelihood.
- * To obtain a gross return of about R2 300 per irrigated hectare, thereby increasing the local circulation of money.
- * To develop a valuable national (Ciskeian) dairy herd.
- * To obtain a gross return of 33 cents per cubic metre of water used.
- * To derive a modest annual monetary surplus contributing towards the budget of the Ciskei Government.
- * To develop a growth pole with beneficial multiplier effects.
- * To improve nutrition throughout Ciskei.
- * To enable human advancement in many levels.
- * To create goodwill towards the Ciskei government by developing a highly successful Ciskeian project for Ciskeians.
- * To become an example of positive rural development, which could be repeated in suitable areas elsewhere.

When the scheme was ready to take off, farmers were recruited by means of media advertisements. These advertisements encouraged people interested in and capable of dairy farming to apply for membership of the KKHIS. Successful applicants were to be trained in dairy and crop production for a period of one year, whereafter they would be settled on fully developed 4 ha irrigated mini-farms. Each mini-farm was provided with a 4-roomed house. Farmers were given a probationary period of three years during which they had to prove their worth as dairy farmers. Completing the probationary period successfully, the farmer would become the owner of the mini-farm.

During the training and probationary periods each farmer was given R50 per month to support his family. This R50 was a fixed monthly stipend and independent of the income generated by milk production by the

farmers. Income generated by the sale of milk remained unknown to the farmers. They were told that the moneys generated by sales were used to pay for the general costs of the scheme and for the cost of further developments. Although R50 was a meager income on which to support a family, the farmers did not complain, because they felt they were paying off the 4 ha farms. Reflecting back on the training and probationary period, the farmers in the scheme believe that they were trained to be farm labourers rather than to be independent farmers. Physically, the training was very demanding. For example, a farmer would spend a whole day planting maize or pastures on a 4 ha plot using a stick to make furrows, and a hoe or feet to cover the planted seed. Fertilization, harvesting and other operations were done manually. The trainee-farmers were told that they would be allowed to use machinery only after they had managed to perform these these tasks succesfully by hand. After the trainees had finished one year of training and three years of probation, ULIMOCOR did not surrender the 4 ha farms to the trainees as promised. These transfers were expected to commence in 1979. Instead, the trainees were informed that none of them met the requirements to become an independent farmer. This created a great deal of bad feeling amongst the trainees and pressure was exerted on ULIMOCOR to release the farms anyway. In 1984 the first group of trainees were handed ownership of their farms.

The farmers told us that during the interim period, from 1979 until 1984, ULIMOCOR managed the scheme using an instructive or top-down management approach.  There was no direct communication between the farmers and scheme management unless the farmer had done something wrong. In other words, it was management by criticism. Most decisions regarding dairy and crop production required approval of ULIMOCOR. Marketing of milk was done by ULIMOCOR. Basically, the relationship between ULIMOCOR and the "farmers to be" was very paternalistic. One farmer gave us an example of the situation by saying:

"Sometimes an Ulimocor tractor would plough one's plot without one's knowledge or invitation. Bags of fertilizers would be delivered to one's farm, irrespective of whether one had made an order or not."

Another farmer continued by saying:

"Ulimocor people used very good Rye grass seed. The grass from this seed would grow up to the length of my knees. We were never told the name (variety) of that seed. Even the extension officers do not know it".

The first group of farmers were given ownership of land located in Units 1, 2, 5, and 6. Instead of being given 4 ha mini-farms as was initially agreed, the farm size was increased to 12 ha. It is said that the increase in farm size was ULIMOCOR's way of apologizing for the delay in the fulfillment of promises. It is also reported that many farmers failed the probation period. As a result, many of the mini-farms were left without attendance. This may have been another reason why the farm size was increased from 4 to 12 ha. Successful trainees did not only get an extra 8 hectares of land, but also two additional 4-roomed houses. Over time occupation of these houses was taken by family or friends of the farmers.

Trainees who failed the probationary period were given a lump sum of R5000 and were asked to vacate the scheme. Some ten "failed" farmers refused to accept this "retrenchment package" of R 5000 and asked to be allowed to develop Unit 8, which was still undeveloped at that stage. This group of farmers remained at this unit until 1991. Then four of these farmers were offered 12 ha plots at Unit 4, whilst the remaining six farmers were told to settle in Unit 8. Three of the farmers at Unit 8 remained and the rest decided to give up and accept the R5 000 package.

Today it is clearly evident that using Unit 8 as a "waiting room" was not a wise decision, because the group of farmers who accepted the R5 000 retrenchment packages have come back to Unit 8 demanding to be given their plots back. They are now in conflict with the three farmers who refused the package and decided to remain at Unit 8.

The Central Unit (Unit 3) and Unit 4 remained in the hands of ULIMOCOR. Six of the planned units were never developed. These are Units 7, 9, 10, 12, 13 and 14. In Unit 8 some development took place, but, as yet, Unit 8 is not a fully operational dairy unit although all the land can be irrigated. Unit 11 was developed as a dairy cooperative, belonging to the owners of the land, namely 84 residents of Upper Gxulu. Following the privatisation of the mini-farms, the function of Unit 3 needed to be redefined, because it was no longer under the obligation of providing farmers with support services. The process of planning the future of the Central Unit has proven to be very controversial and this is the main focus of this report.

5. AN OVERVIEW OF THE DIFFERENT UNITS AT THE SCHEME

5.1 IRRIGATED UNITS OCCUPIED BY PRIVATE FARMERS

5.1.1 Unit 1: Unit 1 is approximately 96 ha in size and consists of 8 farms. Unit 1 farmers were recruited from different places in the Eastern Cape, namely two from Humansdorp, three from King William's Town, two from Graaff Reinet and one from Whittlesea. One farm is not occupied at the moment. It is said that the owner has stopped farming and is living on an income provided by a family member working in Dimbaza. It could not be established whether the farmer is intending to sell his farm or lease it out. The other 7 occupants of Unit 1 farm on a full time basis. Additional income is derived from other sources, such as family members working elsewhere. Three of the eight households have family members working at Dimbaza, Port Elizabeth and King William's Town. On average a family at Unit 8 consists of 8 members.

Dairy farming is the main enterprise at Unit 1. One farmer also runs a commercial broiler production unit. Some farmers grow maize, but produce is used for home consumption only. Milk production at Unit 1, which is shown in table 2, is generally not impressive when compared to other South African commercial dairy enterprises, where a daily production of 15 l milk per cow is considered to be average. Some of the farmers at Unit 1 indicated that they are more interested in commercial broiler production than in dairy farming. The dairy herds are feeding on pastures of Kikuyu, lucerne, annual and perennial Rye grass, Japanese radish, Star grass and oats. The general condition of

the pastures is poor, but two farmers have much better pastures than the others. Poor condition of the pastures is the most likely cause of the low milk yields at Unit 1. One could see that most of the pastures have not been irrigated for some time, despite a persistent drought. It is said that the supply of irrigation water is a recurrent problem in the scheme, because the water pipes are in a poor condition.

Table 2: Milk production at Unit 1 of the Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme.

Farmer	Number of cows in milk	Average total milk production (l per day)	Average milk production per cow (l)
A	4	13.0	3.25
B	9	94.0	10.40
C	4	8.5	2.13
D	5	15.1	3.02
E	7	10.3	1.47
F	9	*	*
G	2	*	*

* no data available

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5.1.2 Unit 2: Unit 2 consists of five farms and covers an area of 76 ha. Generally, conditions at Unit 2 resemble those at Unit 1. The farmers were recruited from elsewhere, namely Tyefu (Peddie), Keiskammahoek, Humansdorp, Stutterheim and Somerset East. Dairy production is the main enterprise and milk production is low when compared to standard commercial production levels (see table 3). The problems with the supply of irrigation water at Unit 2 is even greater than at Unit 1, severely limiting the pasture species that can be utilized. This explains the dominance of Kikuyu pasture at Unit 2. Farmers claim that the demand for water of Kikuyu is less than that of other pasture species suited to conditions at the scheme. A small area of Rye grass is also grown.

Table 3: Milk production at Unit 2 of the Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme

Farmer	Number of cows in milk	Average total milk production (l per day)	Average milk production per cow (l)
A	8	37.8	4.73
B	6	50.6	8.4
C	4	14.0	3.5
D	2	17.5	8.75
E	5	46.0	9.2

An interview with one of the farmers at Unit 1 shed some light on one of the fundamental problems at the scheme, namely the settlement of the scheme by people who lacked farming skills and a training programme which failed to provide the prospective farmers with the necessary skills and understanding required to make a success of commercial farming. In response to the inadequacies of the settling farmers, government or its agents adopted a paternalistic approach, whereby the specialists dictated to the farmers what to do. As a result, the settling farmers developed a relationship of dependency with whoever supported their enterprises. At this stage they continue to be poorly equipped to handle their farms independently. Over the years the farmers came to realize that it was necessary for them to unite in order to form a more powerful voice in negotiations with government and other bodies with an interest in the scheme. They formed a syndicate which goes by the name of "Nqubela Farmers" ("Progressive Farmers"). This syndicate acts mainly as a pressure group and appears to have been very effective at obtaining concessions from government or its agent in terms of financial help or donations in kind. So far, the organisation appears to be less interested in supporting and encouraging its members to adopt practices that would result in more effective farming. As a result, the formation of a syndicate may have empowered the farmers politically, but it has also increased their dependency on external help with respect to their farming enterprise. These are some of the statements made by the farmers:

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"If I had to be honest with you, I would have to say most of us in this irrigation scheme do not have a farming background, because we are coming from the townships. We came to Keiskammahoek, because it was announced on the radio that farms were available for free here. During the interviews they asked easy questions such as: Are you married? Will you manage to work hard on your farm?"

Even after being given our 12 ha farms we were still told what to do. At one stage I was in serious trouble for keeping a Brown Swiss dairy cow on my farm. Only friesland was allowed in those days.

Sometimes bags of fertilizer would be delivered to you without having made an order. A certain income from milk sales was deducted to pay for the fertilizer. Some of us would sell the bags of fertilizer in the villages, because most of the time we did not need fertilizers.

One farmer in this scheme has sold his farm worth R110 000 for R60 000 because he was desperate to get out of farming. Many farmers are going to sell their farms, especially now that the government has turned their back on us."

5.1.3 Unit 5: Unit 5 covers an area of 67 ha and is occupied by 5 farmers, all of them coming from outside the Keikammahoek district, namely Humansdorp, Colesberg, Keiskammahoek, Whittlesea and King William's Town. It was not possible to establish the exact number of dairy cows owned by each of the 5 farmers. All of them started off with 12 cows. At present, some are left with only 4 cows, the others having died. One farmers has increased his herd to 18 cows. Two farmers sell their milk to the parlour at Unit 3, because they do not have the means of transporting the milk to other markets. The other three sell their milk directly to customers in the surrounding villages. The price per

litre of milk ranges between R1.20 - R1.60, depending on the distance of the village from the farm. The farmers at Unit 5 want to increase the size of their land. They claim three areas of land adjacent to Unit 5. We will refer to these areas as areas A, B and C.

(a) Area A

Area A, situated along the north-western boundary of Unit 5, covers an area of approximately 10 ha and is claimed by one of the farmers at Unit 5. The land is part of a hill slope and is not used at present. The land falls within the fenced-in area that surrounds Unit 5. However, the farmers at Unit 5 are afraid to use it without permission from government. The area would be used to provide grazing for bulls and dry cows.

(b) Area B

Area B is found north of Unit 5 and covers an area of approximately 25 ha. Long ago it was used by "German" settlers for the production of lucerne. Farmers at Unit 5 would like to use it for the same purpose. At present the area forms part of the communal grazing of surrounding villages. People from these villages have broken down the fence to provide access for their livestock. Livestock from these villages has been known to infect the dairy cows with diseases, particularly red water. Apparently, this is the main reason for the high cattle mortality at Unit 5.

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(c) Area C

Area C is on the left side of the gravel road which links Middledrift with Keiskammahoek. In this area there is a small village and a primary school. Some 4 ha of land remains unused. The farmers are not complaining about the village or school because the school is used by their children and the village people come and work on their farms. In fact, there is a good relationship between the village and the farmers. What they are interested in is the 4 ha to which no use has been assigned as yet. They would like to use the land to make a playground for pupils, to make a school garden so that the pupils can be taught practical agriculture. They would also like to build an agricultural college specializing in dairy farming.

The researchers interviewed one of the most successful farmers at the scheme who operates a farm at Unit 5. He has 18 cows and his average daily milk yield is 15 l per cow, which, amongst commercial dairy farmers, is considered a reasonable yield for Friesland cows. In addition to his dairy enterprise he grows vegetables on a relatively large scale. Every year he plants cabbage, potatoes and carrots (1 ha each) and spinach and beetroot (0.5 ha each). He sells the vegetables in the villages. According to this farmer, dairy production is a very difficult enterprise. He uses vegetable production to reduce financial risk, both enterprises supporting each other. The farmer indicated, that in the past, scheme management would not have allowed him to practice mixed farming (dairy-vegetables). The withdrawal of government interference has created the opportunity for such individual initiatives.

5.1.4 Unit 6: Unit 6 is worked by 9 dairy farmers. These farmers originate from the Karoo, Whittlesea, Stutterheim, Cathcart, Somerset West, Colesberg, Humansdorp and Sterkspruit. There are also 5 families staying on the land that are not part of the irrigation scheme. The 9 farmers own an average of 11 cows. No records of milk production are kept. Milk is sold to the dairy parlour at Unit 3. Some 50 ha of land in this unit is not used. Indications are that in the past some of this land was used for crop production. At present the land is being settled by squatters and some shacks have been built over the last two months. The farmers at Unit 6 fear an increase in the rate of theft when the informal occupation of this land continues to be allowed. Already the farmers suffer from theft by residents of Joxa village. One farmer stated that:

"We do not want any village near our farms, because the people of Keiskammahoek do not like us. Together with SANCO they call us settlers. Even the Department of Agriculture is taking sides in favour of people from Keiskammahoek, because most of them (agricultural officers) are from here (Keiskammahoek). When an announcement was made over the radio for people to apply to become farmers, they never applied. But now they want our farms".

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We also met with another farmer busy planting maize on 2 ha land. He sadly told us that 1 ha of maize would be enough to feed his family. The additional ha is planted to accommodate for theft by people from Joxa. On the other hand, the presence of Joxa is also of benefit to the farmers, being an easily accessible source of labour. A further problem at Unit 6 is that the fences surrounding some of the sections of this unit are broken. Farmers claim this is the work of villagers living nearby. Cattle from these villages break into their pastures and mix with the dairy herd. This poses a high risk for tick-borne diseases. Some of the stray cattle come from as far as Rabula.

The use of irrigable land as informal and formal residential land is a particular cause for concern. In the district suitable land is more of a limitation than water. The use of irrigation land for residential purposes limits the potential for expansion of irrigated agriculture, one of the few options for economic development open to the district. Two women who have recently moved to Keiskammahoek and who occupy informal housing located in Unit 6 were interviewed. One of the ladies originates from Peddie and the other from Butterworth (Transkei). Both are married to men from Keiskammahoek. They were given residential plots by the "Keiskammahoek Tribal Authority" after paying R2 only. They claimed to have title deeds to their plots, but most probably these are certificates of occupation. Asked about the criteria used by the Tribal Authority when issuing "title deeds", they said that the most important thing is that one has to be married. The woman from Transkei has access to 7 acres of arable land (about 3 ha). The entire area was planted to maize this season. The lady from Peddie said she will use her 4-acre land only after the government has installed irrigation equipment. According to the women, there were no limitations on the size of residential or arable land that they could apply for.

the unit is occupied by 6 farmers. Three of the farmers originate from Keiskammahoek. The others come from Debe Nek, Peddie and Middledrift. Two of the farmers were given 12 ha farms after passing the probation period. The other four farmers failed the probation period. When they were given the retrenchment package of R5 000 they refused to accept it. They chose to continue farming at Unit 8, which is only partially developed. Since the dairy infrastructure at Unit 8 was incomplete, these farmers decided to start a vegetable scheme. Whilst farming at Unit 8 each of the farmers was granted a single amount of R400 to spend on their families. Later on they were given an additional R600 for the same purpose. They were also granted some funds for the purchase of production goods, such as fertilizers and seed, amounting, according to the farmers, to approximately R 2000. The farmers believe that these moneys they were getting from the government were taken from the R5 000 package that they refused to accept. Indeed, one person in a management position told them that the government was giving them their package in bits and pieces. This being true, the farmers claim they have only received R3000 of the R 5000 package. They do not worry much about the remaining R2 000 because what they want most is a 12 ha farm. The number of dairy animals on the farms in Unit 4 is shown in Table 4. We were unable to get milk yields for each farmer. One of the farmers, however, said that on a daily basis he produces 100 litres of milk from 8 dairy cows, which works out to about 12.5l/cow/day. Marketing of milk is a problem in this unit. All six farmers stopped selling their milk to the parlour at Central Unit, because of the low price (R0.80/l) and because they have been cheated many times by the single-channel selling system. None of these farmers has a vehicle for delivering milk to the villages. Instead they wait for customers to come to their parlour. They prefer the milk to remain unsold rather than delivering it to the parlour at Central Unit. According to the farmers cheating by the people at Central Unit has made them reach this hardline decision. Customers who buy milk directly from the dairy at Unit 4 pay R1 per litre. Economically the decision to refuse to deliver to Central Unit does not appear very wise. For example, when we were at this unit in the afternoon before the second milking, there remained a lot of morning-milk unsold. Some containers were full of "amasi". Possibly, this "amasi" resulted from the fermentation of the previous day's milk. Compared to other farmers in the scheme Unit 4 farmers sell milk R0.20 cheaper. Unfortunately, customers do not seem to respond positively to the lower prices.

One of the farmers told us that very soon there will be a 10 cents increase in the price of milk paid by Central Unit. He said that should this happen they would again consider selling milk to Central Unit.

Table 4: The number of dairy animals in Unit 4.

Farmer	Number of dairy cows owned	Number of calves owned
A	14	5
B	10	*
C	14	3
D	7	*
E	8	1
F	7	*

We held a long interview with a Unit 6 farmer, who originally comes from Peddie. His home is in Glenmore, one of the settlements in the Tyefu complex. Before settling in Keiskammahoek he was working as a farm labourer for one of the white farmers on the other side of the Fish River. During those days he would come to Keiskammahoek with his employer to sell farm produce. During one of those visits to Keiskammahoek he heard that the scheme was looking for potential black farmers to be trained in dairy farming and who thereafter would qualify for a farm. He applied but kept this secret from his employer. When he was called for an interview he pretended to be very sick and asked his employer for a few days off. He then used his "sick leave" to attend the interview, whereafter he left Glenmore for Keiskammahoek. After 14 years of hard work at the irrigation scheme he finally got a farm, which he values at R120 000. He said the rest of his family, including a wife still remain at Glenmore where they tend to an irrigated foodplot.

5.1.6 Unit 11: Unit 11 was developed as a dairy cooperative and belongs to the owners of the land, namely 84 residents of Upper Gxulu. This group of residents is also involved in vegetable production on food plots. Unit 11 is the topic of a report by Sonandi, Van Averbek, Lesoetsa and Mei (1995).

5.2 UNITS THAT REMAIN TO BE DEVELOPED

5.2.1 Unit 8: Unit 8 was planned to become a dairy unit but due to a lack of funds its development was never completed. Unit 8 remains state owned land. Farmers occupying Unit 8 produce vegetables for home consumption mainly. Some of the produce is sold. The unit has a partially completed milking parlour and seven 4-roomed residences. A large proportion of the land which is said to be part of this unit now serves as a residential settlement area for people from surrounding areas. Until two months ago, Unit 8 was used by three farmers who have been in a similar situation to the four farmers at Unit 4. These three farmers failed the probation period and refused to accept the take-home R5 000 package. They were allowed to stay on at Unit 8 and were promised to be allocated farms at a later stage. In 1991 four of the 10 farmers waiting at Unit 8 were offered farms at Unit 4, three gave up and left for home and the other three remained at Unit 8. Now, two months ago,

three of the farmers who left for home returned to Unit 8 and demanded their plots back. In the mean time these plots had been taken over by the three remaining farmers and other people from the nearby settlement areas. Informants say there was physical fighting between the two groups. The Department of Agriculture intervened and stopped the clashes, but the land dispute problem remains unresolved.

5.2.2 Units 7, 9, 10, 12, 13 and 14: Six of the 14 units were never developed as planned. These units are now mainly used for residential settlement providing also some dryland arable and some grazing land to new settlers. Most likely these units will remain settlement areas because many families consider their residence there as being permanent.

5.3 STATE OWNED UNIT 3 (Central unit)

5.3.1 Introduction: Unit 3, sometimes called Central Unit is the only fully developed unit at the scheme that is still owned by the state. This unit was established in 1976 and its purpose was to generate income, which was to be used to help developing Units 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 8. Another function of Unit 3 was to train farmers in becoming independent dairy farmers and to provide services to farmers in other units. These services included the marketing of milk produced by the farmers, providing farmers with mechanical implements and draught power and the rendering of expert advice to the farmers by employing extension officers and consultants.

5.3.2 Present functions and organisation of Unit 3: At present Unit 3 is a state-run dairy enterprise. Its only other function in the scheme is to buy and market milk supplied by some of the private farmers operating in the other units.

The management of Unit 3 rests with a team comprising of the general scheme manager, the manager of the dairy parlour, an independent consultant, an extension officer and an animal health officer. This team acts on behalf of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry of Ciskei. The dairy employs 17 casual labourers, 1 clerk, 3 milkers, 1 herder-feeder, 1 feeder responsible for rearing calves, 7 irrigators and 4 general farm workers, making a total of 34 employees. On average each worker is paid R35.50 per day. The monthly wage and salary bill is, therefore, estimated at approximately R30 000 per month. Workers are assigned specific duties and do not interfere or assist in any duties other than those assigned to them.

5.3.3 Infrastructure at Unit 3: The infrastructure at Unit 3 includes residential accommodation, administrative accommodation, a milking parlour, storage space and a milk processing plant. The residential accommodation consists of 5 houses with 6 rooms each and three wooden huts. These are occupied by government officers and some of the farm workers. The administrative complex houses a number of offices, a kitchen and a hall for meetings. Several open and closed sheds are used for the storage of feeds and implements. The milk processing plant is equipped to pasteurize, bottle and store milk. Unit 3 also has an extensive machinery, vehicle and implement pool, which consists of tractors, trailers, balers, planters, feed-mixers, rakers, ploughs and bakkies. Some of these implements eg. balers and feed-mixers are no

longer used because lucerne is no longer grown and feed is no longer home-mixed. Some time ago a substantial number of implements were sold to local farmers.

5.3.4 The milk production enterprise at Unit 3: At Unit 3 there are 90 cows in milk producing an average 9 l per cow per day. The total production per day amounts to 810 litres, which is sold at R1,20 per litre generating a income of R972 per day and R29 160 per month. Gross income, therefore covers more or less the labour bill. The cost of managing the unit and producing and marketing milk are at the expense of the state. We were unable to establish the actual cost to the state of producing milk at Unit 3, but there is no doubt that the cost is considerable.

In order to illustrate this point we made some simple calculations, bringing in known or estimable costs only. Using a conservative estimate of R3000 as the monthly salary of each of the five members of the management team, management costs amount to R15 000 per month. The feeding cost of cows in milk (4kg feed per cow per day at R1,29 per kg) amounts to R13 932 per month. Presently the dairy unit has eleven young calves (5 males and 6 females). The calves are fed 4 l of whole milk per calf per day, 2 l in the morning and 2 l in the afternoon and 2 kg of calf meal. The monthly cost of rearing a calf is R75.55 in feed and R144 in lost income from milk sales. This adds up to a total of R219.55 per month per calf, resulting, for the 11 calves being kept, to a total amount of R2 415.05 per month. This amount excludes the cost of other dry matter consumed and the cost of veterinary services.

Milk is marketed in Keiskammahoek. The milk is transported using a government vehicle. The cost of the transport is not known, but was estimated at R45 per day (30 km per day at R1,50 per km) adding R1350 to the total cost. The total monthly cost to the state of producing milk at Unit 3 is therefore estimated at being at least R32 697 per month or R1,35 per litre of milk produced, before depreciation of the capital equipment is brought into account.

5.3.5 Options for the future of Unit 3: The future of Unit 3 is in the balance. The state (Ciskei) represented by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry of Ciskei would like to see Unit 3 follow the same path as the other operational units and become privatised. Officials of this Department requested ARDRI to investigate the options for the future of Central Unit and, when possible, formulate recommendations.

In its investigation the research team concentrated on two important aspects related to Unit 3, namely:

The services provided by Unit 3 to the private scheme farmers,

The views on the future of Unit 3 of a wide range of interested parties.

The following interested parties were identified:

- a) the Department of Agriculture and Forestry of Ciskei,
- b) the "Progressive Farmers"
- c) NEHAWU, representing retrenched workers

- d) the Keiskammahoek branch of SANCO and the KDF (Keiskammahoek Development Forum)
- e) private farmers not associated to the "Progressive Farmers"
- e) residents of settlements surrounding the scheme
- f) individual agricultural extension officers who work or have worked at the scheme.

Of these interested parties, NEHAWU and KDF were not interviewed. We did approach the local branch of NEHAWU but they refused to speak to us.

- a) View of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry of Ciskei represented by the Keiskammahoek Officer in-charge

It is the view of the Officer in-charge that Unit 3 should be privatised by selling it to people interested in farming at the scheme.

- b) View of the "Progressive Farmers"

The "Progressive Farmers" want Unit 3 to be given to them, because, according to them, they have paid for the development of Unit 3 (see chapter 4). If Unit 3 is to be sold to other farmers, then the "Progressive Farmers" demand to be paid an amount equivalent to the monetary value of the infrastructure at Unit 3.

- c) View of NEHAWU

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The view of NEHAWU may not be an official one, but other parties informed us about NEHAWU's position. The main issue for NEHAWU is the reinstatement of 80 workers, who were retrenched in 1991. From about September 1994, the 80 retrenched workers have been staging a sit-in at Unit 3. We were told by informants that the retrenched workers claim that every day of the sit-in must be counted as a normal working day. We were interested to have interviews with the retrenched workers, but NEHAWU barred us from doing so. The sit-in has affected some of the daily operations at the dairy of Unit 3. For example, the extension officers are sometimes locked in their offices. Workers presently employed at the dairy would show solidarity with the former workers by joining the sit-in, thus sacrificing their duties. It is the unofficial view of NEHAWU that Unit 3 should remain in the hands of the State and that the 80 retrenched workers should be re-employed.

- d) View of SANCO (and KDF)

SANCO (and KDF) want Unit 3 to be of benefit to the residents of Keiskammahoek. They see the future of Unit 3 as an opportunity for the creation of jobs for residents of Keiskammahoek. They support NEHAWU in its action to have the 80 retrenched workers reinstated, because many of these workers are Keiskammahoek residents. As a result they are also in favour of Unit 3 remaining a state owned enterprise. SANCO (and KDF) is prepared to consider privatisation of Unit 3, but only if this is of direct benefit to the residents of Keiskammahoek. Thus far few people from Keiskammahoek are benefitting directly from the local irrigation scheme, most of the scheme farmers coming from elsewhere. SANCO (and KDF) feel that it is high time that local residents also benefit directly from this scheme, by becoming farmers themselves.

f) **View of private farmers not affiliated to the "Progressive Farmers"**

Two private dairy farmers were interviewed. They said that Unit 3 is not doing well because of mismanagement. They are convinced that government is not an efficient farmer and as long as Unit 3 remains under the control of the state it will continue losing money. According to them, the only solution is to privatize Unit 3. But whoever is to buy Unit 3 will inherit problems related to the history of the unit such as neighbours who claim to have a right of ownership to the land and an infrastructure that is poorly maintained. Before privatizing the unit the state should upgrade the farm and bring it to a standard that enables commercial exploitation the farmers said. "As it (Unit 3) is now, its is a ghost and it will need millions of rands and a couple of years before returns can be generated. They (the government) made a mess, they must clean it up."

g) **View of residents of settlements surrounding the scheme**

A group of young residents of Lower Gxulu were interviewed. We enquired about their views on the irrigation scheme. From the interview it became clear that residents of neighbouring villages have become interested in obtaining access to land in the scheme or in the expansion of the scheme onto their arable lands. In other words, the value of irrigation water is being realized and there is a growing demand for this commodity. The growing demand for irrigated land is closely linked to a growing realization amongst residents of the Keiskammahoek residents that so far few local people obtain direct benefit from the scheme.

h) **View of agricultural officers who work or have worked at the scheme**

Agricultural officers attending the annual Agricultural Show at Keiskammahoek were interviewed. All were of the opinion that Unit 3 should be privatized, but only after the state has renovated the infrastructure. Most felt that the way to privatize Unit 3 is to divide the unit into small farms that can be afforded by potential buyers. They felt that anybody should be allowed to purchase such a small farm, irrespective of where the person originates from.

It is evident that views differ considerably amongst the various interested parties. It is also clear that it will be impossible to come up with a solution that satisfies everybody. Retaining Unit 3, the state would have to continue subsidizing the dairy enterprise for the foreseeable future. This would mean that Unit 3 would continue to be a liability rather than an asset to the state. Furthermore, the ageing infrastructure will need to be upgraded or replaced soon and this will require considerable capital outlay.

Privatisation, therefore, appears to be the most sensible option, at least from the point of view of the state. The question that remains is how to privatize Unit 3. There is the issue of the "Progressive Farmers", who claim central unit because they paid for its development. This issue could be resolved by auditing the financial records. If it can be established that the "Progressive Farmers" indeed paid for some

or all of the infrastructure at Central Unit, then it would only be fair that they receive compensation, be it in the form of land, assets of money. If there is no evidence of the "Progresive Farmers" having paid for any infrastructure at Central Unit, then, in all fairness, their claim to the land or monetary compensation in lieu of the infrastructure should be dismissed.

With regard to the concerns of SANCO and KDF, demanding an increase in the involvement of local residents in the scheme, part of Unit 3 - ideally the more level section - could be developed into food plots for use by local people. The retrenched workers could also be accomodated in such a food plot scheme.

The other section could be sold to willing buyers, be it in the form of small holdings or one or more large farms. It should be the duty of the state to develop the food plots into workable units with readily accessible irrigation facilities. The issue of upgrading the land allocated to large farms or small holdings is less evident. If it is the intention of selling the land to "poor" people then upgrading or new developments are essential. Selling to buyers with access to capital should rather be done on an "as is" basis.



6. CONCLUSIONS

Where climatic conditions are too dry to ensure sustainable dryland production, irrigation is a suitable way of removing the risk of crop failure due to drought. In Ciskei, where drought often severely limits dryland production, several irrigation schemes have been established during the past two decades. These irrigation schemes have acted as laboratories in which government and its agents continuously searched for the best way in which to manage and develop such schemes. The Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme in particular has been subjected to a great deal of social experimentation. Over the years there has been a shift in the policy of the Ciskei government with respect to irrigation scheme management. For a long time the approach by government or its agent was paternalistic and the status of farmers was that of glorified labour. When this approach not only met with resistance from the farmers, but also proved to be economically unsustainable, government decided to privatize the schemes and transfer financial responsibility to the farmers or farmer groups themselves. In some of the schemes the implementation of this policy has succeeded reasonably well, but in Keiskammahoek privatisation has not been the success it was intended to be. There is no doubt that the process of social experimentation has had an effect on the attitude of farmers towards government and towards farming in general, leading to a great deal of dependency. This appears to be especially the case in the Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme. Farmers have learned from the process that the exertion of pressure on government is often a more lucrative activity than farming. Under these conditions, the withdrawal of support by government, as happened in the Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme, has had detrimental effects on the general level of production. Presently the Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme is producing way below capacity and there are few if any signs of improvement. Investment in fertilizers and other production inputs are at very low levels and basically farmers have resorted to what could be called a traditional way of

production, adopting a system in which production is seen to be risk free, i.e. no (monetary) inputs (except labour) and whatever is produced is net benefit.

Many of the private farmers may not be doing well at the scheme, but neither is government. The exploitation of Unit 3 is costing the state a lot of money and government is rightfully looking at possibilities of selling off the enterprise and the land. The privatisation of Unit 3 will be subject to a lot of dispute. When handled carefully, the sale could prove to be of benefit to several interested parties, including local residents interested in irrigated agriculture and workers that were recently retrenched.

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