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**Topic: The Contribution of Rural Non-Farm Economic Activities to the
livelihoods of Women in the Eastern Cape: The Case of Keiskamahoek and
Alice town in the Amathole District.**

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Republic of South Africa

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DECLARATION ON PLAGARISM

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Declaration

I, Amanda Masa, am stating clearly that this research paper, called "**The Contribution of rural Non-Farm Economic Activities to the Livelihoods of Women in the Eastern Cape: The Case of Keiskamahoeek and Alice town in the Amathole District,**" is my original creation. Everything in it is my own effort. Also, I want to confirm that I've properly credited and cited all the resources, materials, and ideas I've used, giving full details so anyone can find them.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amanda Masa', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dedication

With heartfelt gratitude, I, Amanda Masa, dedicate this project to my dear brother, my precious daughter, and my wonderful mother. Their joy and support throughout this journey have meant the world to me.

As Newton D. Baker wisely said, "The person who finishes school today and stops growing tomorrow is no longer truly educated." And in the words of Henry Ford, "Anyone who ceases to learn begins to age, no matter their years; but those who continue to learn remain youthful at heart."

Acknowledgement

First, I want to give thanks to God, as I believe it was always part of His plan for me to pursue learning throughout my life and achieve this accomplishment. Next, I'm deeply grateful to my supervisor, Mr. Maqubela, for his consistent help, motivation, and support throughout this entire process. I'm especially thankful to my mom, my mentor, for her prompt help and encouragement that kept me on track without setbacks.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

CGE	Commission Gender Equality
CRDP	Comprehensive Rural Development Programme
CWP	Community Works Programme
DTI	Department of Trade Industry
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Production
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IDC	Industrial Development Corporation
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
JMC	Joint Monitoring Committee
MERG	Macroeconomic Research Group
NPC	National Planning Commission
NEM	Normative Economic Model
NEPAD	New Partnership Africa Development
NPC	National Planning Commission
NFEA	Non-Farm Economic Activities

NIDS	Network Intrusion Detection System
NGO	Non-Profit Organization
OSW	Office Status Woman
OHS	October Household Survey
PICC	Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission
RDP	Reconstruction Development Programme
RNF	Rural Non-Farm
RNFE	Rural Non-Farm Economy
RNFS	Rural Non -Farm Sector
SLA	Sustainable Livelihoods Approach
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science Analysis
SADC	South Africa Development Community
SSA	Statistics South Africa
UIF	Unemployed Insurance Fund
WAD	Women and Development
WEGE	Women Empowerment and Gender Equality

Abstract

Women have often been left behind with limited to non-participation in development. These women are exposed to many injustices, and with limited security, many of them are reliant on their male counterparts for survival and security. Women are vulnerable more especially in marginalised communities where there's limited to non-education about women's rights. The study therefore seeks to assess the contribution of rural non-farm economic activities in the on the livelihoods of rural women of Keiskammahoek and Alice. Rural Non- Farm Economy has been practiced widely in the past decades as it came into prominence in the 1970s. developing economies are actively present in this sector but little attention and support have shown to women. The intention of the study is to examine the contributions of the rural non-farm economy as a sustainable tool for their livelihoods in Alice and Keiskammahoek under the Amathole District.

The study opted for a snowball sampling as women who are in this sector know one another, and it was convenient enough for the researcher. A sample of 40 participants was selected from both towns and divided in half, 20 in Alice and 20 in Keiskammahoek. The study used the mixed methods approach as the researcher felt that one method won't do justice to the topic. The study used SPSS version 20 and Excel for the numeric data. For the qualitative data the used thematic analysis and created themes from the research objectives. The sector has indeed proven that with support and monitoring it is a viable opportunity for these women. Even though faced with serious challenges these women are not fazed out by any. More dedication and visits from the office of the rural development and from local municipalities are needed, to educate about possible options to grow in this sector, introduce them to funding initiatives, monitor and advise in ways to grow in this while ensuring sustainability. It

is imperative that will not gain formal employment; therefore, the Rural Non-Farm Economy must be adopted as means to address the past and continuous injustices amongst women and ensure development. Even though this research was limited, it still offers valuable information, fresh perspectives, increased understanding, helpful ideas, and encourages positive conversations. All of this is meant to help create and put in place better plans and actions to support the Rural Non-Farm sector. This sector is important for Amathole, as it can help reduce poverty, improve access to food, and boost growth in other parts of the economy.

While this study only looked closely at Alice and Keiskammahoek, the results could serve as a useful model for other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa looking for ways to better support the progress of women in rural areas.

Keywords: *Rural Non- Farm Economic Activities, Rural women, Sustainable livelihoods.*

Chapter One – Introduction and Background

Introduction

This chapter starts by exploring the background specifically, how historical events have shaped the rural economy beyond farming, both worldwide and especially in Africa. We'll then look at existing research on the challenges women face and how they're working to improve their lives in these settings. From there, we'll clearly state the issue this study aims to address. Next, we'll lay out the specific goals of the research, why it matters, and give a preview of the research approach (which is explained in more detail in Chapter 3). In addition, delimitations and the chapter outline of the study are at the end of this chapter.

1.2 Background

There is a consensus amongst development authors that in recent years, low-income countries that rely heavily on farming seem to be struggling to improve their economies (Campos et al., 2025). Particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, which not only has the highest percentage of people working in agriculture worldwide but also many of the world's poorest individuals (World Bank, 2022). As the population involved in African farming grows, individual farms are getting smaller. This problem is made worse by poor soil and a lack of available water (Giller et al., 2021). Farmers also face a lot of unpredictable problems that they aren't protected against, and they often have trouble getting loans or other financial help, especially if they are small farmers (Christiaensen et al., 2021). small-scale producers (Christiaensen et al., 2021). In sub-Saharan Africa, agriculture remains a significant source of jobs, employing 40-65% of the working population, although this is a drop from the 70-80% it accounted for just ten years prior

(Jayne et al., 2018). Interestingly, countries with the fastest growth in farming efficiency have seen the biggest shifts of workers away from agriculture. Despite this, Africa continues to struggle with food security, marked by low farming yields, meager earnings in rural areas, widespread malnutrition, and a growing reliance on food imports. The continent also grapples with climate change, widespread poverty, and a pressing need for employment opportunities. In many nations, farming still drives the economy, contributing an average of 25% of the GDP in sub-Saharan Africa, and even more in certain countries (Jayne et al. 2018). While economic changes are happening across much of Africa, the pace and extent of these changes vary. Countries like Ghana, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Rwanda are showing promising signs of transformation, with more people working outside of agriculture, increasing individual incomes, families investing heavily in education and training, and notable reductions in poverty. However, other countries, such as Zambia and Malawi, haven't seen the same progress, with rural poverty remaining unchanged and farming growth remaining slow. Since the start of the millennium, there has been a fast decreased in the portion of the workforce primarily engaged in small-scale farming.

However, the study is looking into the contributions of the Rural Non-Farm Economic Activities into the livelihoods of women. It is said that the Rural non-farm economy (RNFE) rose in the 1970s; the sector comprises all nonfarm income-earning activities that are a part of the typically diversified rural livelihood. Rural livelihoods can earn income from both farm and non-farm sources (Dalu& Dalu, 2019). Non-farm refers to any activities outside of direct agricultural production, and thus includes also industry, manufacturing and commerce. It has been documented that non-farm income constitutes a huge portion of rural income on the continent (Dalu& Dalu, 2019).

According to Chakol (2024), women often handle the bulk of household chores. Things like preparing meals, getting water, gathering fuel, looking after kids, and tidying up the home frequently fall to them, representing a significant portion - roughly 90% - of household labour (Mmakola & Sithole, 2023). Ethiopian women are not financially free, especially in rural areas where they usually stand against the decisions of their male guardians because they are dependent on their husbands' earnings (Menelek Asfaw, 2022). Unfortunately, women face a shocking shortage of food supplies to feed their families and children because of traditional subsistence farming combined with the negative perception of women working from home (Adefris & Woldeyohannes, 2021; Thierno et al., 2021; Nagler & Naudé, 2017).

Nonetheless, women's participation in the labour force is shifting globally these days. According to Todaro and Smith (2012), they play three roles in society: reproductive, productive, and communal involvement. In all the above cases, women's participation in rural non-farm economic activities (RNFEA) can be extremely useful in reducing poverty, increasing farmer income, and utilizing surplus agricultural labour (Todaro & Smith, 2012; Van den Broeck & Kilic, 2019). Due to the risk and uncertainty involved with subsistence agriculture in Ethiopia, households that diversify their sources of income by engaging in non-farm activities are better able to withstand negative shocks (Chekol, Abetie, et al., 2023). The possibility of entering the off-farm workforce and one's capacity for employment will determine the ensuing repercussions for economic development (Dzanku, 2019; Van den Broeck & Kilic, 2019; Rijkers & Costa, 2012).

The non-farm sector can impact the rural economy in several ways (Fan & Xin, 2019). First, by creating jobs, non-farm work reduces the demand for land in underdeveloped areas (Adefris & Woldeyohannes, 2021). Second, the money earned from non-farm pursuits can boost household income overall and, as a result, increase the amount

that can be invested in agricultural activities (Dufera et al., 2023; Chekol, Tsegaye, et al., 2022). Third, non-farm revenue serves as a means of generating money, which is crucial for both present and future consumption and investment. As a result, the circumstances guaranteed the necessity of concurrent advancement in agricultural and non-agricultural economic activities to support one another and ultimately achieve sustainable rural development. Economic activity related to farms and non-farms goes hand in hand. As a result, rural women's involvement in non-farm enterprises is currently being acknowledged increasingly (Bor & Adan, 2023). The factors influencing rural women's participation in the non-farm sector must be rigorously examined for intervention to effectively boost women's involvement.

In rural Ethiopia, women's contributions to the economy are valued, but they are not acknowledged. Therefore, it is essential for women's growth and the achievement of their economic potential to recognise and assist women in overcoming their difficulties. Even though they are often unseen, unheard, and their contributions overlooked, women in rural areas represent a powerful and largely unused potential globally (Adejo et al., 2021). Ethiopia has a population that is over 50% female (Ahmed, 2021), and it is best to use all this human capital for long-term, sustainable economic growth (Chekol, 2019).

In South Africa, since the dawn of democracy in 1994, the country has undoubtedly seen a wave of transition, but a favourable environment must be further developed where women will be able to cater for themselves and possibly their children (Onuaku, 2020). South Africa's developing democracy needs to actively empower women, recognizing them as vital to the nation's progress. By doing so, it can create a society where women have genuine choices and aren't held back by financial or social constraints. This, in turn, strengthens families, the foundation of our society, leading

to a stronger economy overall as women realize their full potential. Getting more women involved in the workforce is key to reducing poverty and boosting South Africa's economic growth. Women who run their own businesses often invest their earnings in improving their families' lives, especially in their children's education, breaking the cycle of poverty.

Agenda 2030's Sustainable Development Goals are all about making sure women everywhere have the power to live full and equal lives. This means stopping all unfair treatment and prejudice against women and girls, no matter where they are. It also means putting an end to violence against them, whether it happens in public or behind closed doors, including things like trafficking and sexual abuse. We need to get rid of harmful traditions like child marriage, forced marriage, and female genital mutilation. We also need to acknowledge and appreciate the work women do at home, often without pay, by providing things like good public services, infrastructure, and social safety nets. Families should share responsibilities more fairly, in ways that make sense for each country. Ultimately, it's about making sure women have a real voice and equal chance to lead in politics, the economy, and in shaping our communities.

Guarantee comprehensive sexual and reproductive healthcare services and safeguard reproductive freedoms, consistent with the established principles of the International Conference on Population and Development's Programme of Action, the Beijing Platform for Action, and related review documents. Implement changes to secure women's equal economic entitlements, encompassing access to and ownership over land, diverse assets, monetary institutions, inherited wealth, and environmental assets, conforming to domestic regulations, to optimize the application of supportive technology, specifically information and communication technology, to advance female empowerment. Enact and reinforce robust governmental frameworks

and legally binding regulations that foster gender parity and promote the advancement of all women and girls across all sectors. Contrary to the above-mentioned targets to achieve in 2030, the world is trailing behind by a significant number of years in addressing such. Therefore, the Rural Non-Farm Sector must step in to try and address some of the problems.

1.3 Problem statement

Women play an integral part in overcoming poverty, enhancing food security, income generation, and development. For many decades, women were left behind in development, and this has negatively impacted their ability to provide and sustain their livelihood. This in turn deems women as invaluable and inactive members of society, whose sole responsibility tends to be reproduction and family making. Women are often left vulnerable, objectified, and subjected to all sorts of injustices in society. To this end, women in Alice and Keiskammahoek are not immune to these challenges, as they also live in rural areas, and they also depend on Agriculture and Government Schemes such as the Expanded Public Work Programme and the Community Work Programme for their own livelihood. such that unemployment under these municipalities is quite high. In Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, using the upper poverty line definition, 119,000 people were living in poverty in 2021. Across the Raymond Mhlaba municipality, this is 14.52% higher than the 104,000 in 2011. The percentage of people living in poverty has increased from 67.84% in 2011 to 73.66% in 2021, which indicates an increase of 5.83 percentage points. This improvement can be credited to a variety of factors, including governmental social assistance programs, temporary employment opportunities in the citrus sector, and municipal investments in infrastructure via initiatives like the Expanded Public Works Programme, Community Work Programmes, and municipally supported cooperatives. According to the

statistics provided by the Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, the poverty gap line has not improved; instead, it has recorded a high number from 2011, where it was sitting at 30, 2 % and in 2021, it is sitting at 31, 6%. In the Amahlathi municipality's population is predominantly female 51, 2% and male with a population of 48,8%. In Amahlathi Local Municipality, the unemployment rate has increased from 2013, when the recorded number was 31,2 % and has increased in 2023 to 46, 9 %. The poverty gap line in Amahlathi Municipality has increased from the recorded 69, 31% in 2013, and this number has increased gradually over the years to 74, 42% in 2023. Initial investigations indicate participation in off-farm rural enterprises among a subset of these women. Consequently, this study aims to evaluate the impact of these rural non-farm activities on the economic contributions to the livelihood of these women of rural women within the Alice and Keiskammahoek regions.

1.4 Research questions

1.4.1 Main research question

- What is the contribution of the Rural Non-Farm Economic Activities to the livelihoods of rural women of Keiskammahoek and Alice?

1.4.2 Sub research questions

- What is the contribution of the rural non-farm economy to the livelihoods of rural women in Alice and Keiskammahoek?
- What non-farm and farm activities are the rural women in Keiskammahoek and Alice involved in?
- What challenges are rural women facing as they pursue these activities in Alice and Keiskammahoek?

- What kind of support do rural women receive from the Department of Rural Development in Alice and Keiskammahoek?

1.5 Objectives

1.5.1 The main objective

- To examine the contribution of the rural non-farm economy in improving the livelihoods of women in Alice and Keiskammahoek.

1.5.2 Sub objectives

- To examine non-farm activities that rural women in Keiskammahoek and Alice are involved in.
- To assess the challenges that rural women face as they pursue non-farm activities in Alice and Keiskammahoek.
- To assess the role played by the Department of Rural Development in assisting rural women in Alice and Keiskammahoek.

1.6 Significance of the study

Since it has been shown that the agricultural sector cannot sustain the lives of the rural poor particularly women. women are found lacking in rural areas with no skills to look for proper employment, those with formal education have no working experience it is also very hard to find low entry positions. The farming sector is also diminishing in rural areas due to lack of funding, vacant land, and skills to take on farming. Some of these women maybe dis encourage to immense themselves in the farming sector due to its uncertainties and slow returns or profits.

Thus, this research seeks to contribute to the existing discourse surrounding the Rural Non-Farm Economy. Since the early years of 1970s, there has been a rise, or an

interest shown in the rural non-farm sector throughout the world. Several studies have been produced but none have shown interest in women. Finally, this research adds to the developing literature on RNFE with the aim of looking into the gains of RNFE to the livelihoods of women. Consequently, this study will generate, provide additional insights, raise awareness and understanding, and foster effective dialogue amongst women, civil societies, local government authorities, policy makers, and rural development. This may bring about making and applying powerful approaches and systems that would improve and promote the RNFE in improving the livelihoods of women in the Eastern Cape.

1.7 Delimitations of the study

The study is limited to farming women and those involved in the RNF in the Amathole district; other districts within the province of the Eastern Cape are not included in this study, due to limited resources to the researcher and the time allocated to the research. The researcher cannot travel the entire province for data collection. Hence, one area had to be chosen as the research must be finished within a period of two years, so it will be financially impossible for the researcher to go to other towns for research and time constraints, those are the limitations that will be faced by the researcher.

1.8 Ethical considerations

The importance of research is the development of direct data, and it is essential that this method is completed with trustworthiness and accuracy. O'Leary (2004) expounds that social specialists are in an incredible position of creating new data; this process involves close involvement, and duties are communicated as moral considerations. Research ethics fundamentally pertain to principles guiding researchers' appropriate

behaviour throughout the research process, encompassing study conceptualization, data acquisition, results interpretation, dissemination of findings, and the performance of related responsibilities (Mikkelsen, 2005). Urgent ethical measurements supporting this research incorporate the following:

Informed consent

In social research, guaranteeing that members have given educated assent is critical to respect human rights and avoid psychological harm to respondents. Members will be educated about the reason and nature of the research, how the information gathered will be utilized, the types of occasions required, and the time computation of the research. All members, both recorded and by methods for a composed and marked assent frame, will be requested to take notes and record the responses (Myers, 2009).

Harm to participants

The research does not expose members to mental, emotional, or physical harm. The researcher will ensure that no one is hurt, humiliated or undermined by family, work or companionship if such data is uncovered. The guideline of security wins in the moral contemplations of the research. This includes ensuring the personality of the members who give the researcher field information.

Confidentiality

The utilization of fake names to stay away from encroachment of mystery, privacy, and anonymity will be kept to the greatest degree possible throughout the research. The researcher knows about securing the interests, well-being, and character of the respondents. This is completed by ensuring that the researcher and the readers of the

finished research do not perceive a specific member's reaction. The researcher does not uncover data in a way that joins it to specific people; however, it shows results in a total shape, for example, subjects and classifications.

Plagiarism

Since copyright infringement can be an intense ethical offense, the researcher perceives the source and refers to the acquired data. The research utilizes the guidelines of validity with respect to information, discoveries, and research techniques concerning the cases to make unique information or to find imperative data. The researcher conforms to the all-inclusive code of regard and ethics of Fort Hare University. Thus, ethical clearance from the Ethics Committee of the University of Fort Hare is required before information gathering. The research likewise adheres to strict ethics in the handling and possible dissemination of the research results without consent from the respondents.

1.9 Chapter outline

The study has five chapters,

Chapter 1

This introductory section establishes the groundwork for the study. It articulates the background context of the research, the detailed objectives, the significance of the work, the limitations of the study, and the ethical principles informing the methodology.

Chapter 2

This section offers a thorough review of the current body of scholarly work and elaborates on the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings that inform the present study. Furthermore, it includes a detailed examination of the relevant empirical evidence.

Chapter 3

This chapter details the methodological framework underpinning the study. It provides a comprehensive account of the research processes and techniques implemented to gather and examine data. Specifically, this section elucidates the diverse strategies for data acquisition and analysis utilized within this investigation, offering a rationale for the selection and application of these chosen research approaches.

Chapter 4

Following the dissemination of research outcomes, the presentation will shift its focus to a rigorous examination and elucidation of the data and information presented. This subsequent analysis and interpretation will be conducted with specific reference to the guiding research aims and inquiries.

Chapter 5

The following discourse presents the deductions derived from the investigation. Furthermore, the chapter accentuates the salient proposals and advisements formulated throughout the research.

1.10 Summary

The chapter has shown clearly that the main concern in this study is the impact of the rural non-farm economy. It has explored the historical background of the rural non-farm economy. Efforts have been made by the government in addressing unemployment and poverty amongst women, but the battle is not yielding much. This chapter indicates that various issues or factors have contributed to defining and

shaping the rural non-farm economy. This section also emphasized that researchers have a real responsibility to act ethically throughout their work. There are many ethical guidelines they need to follow to make sure the people participating in the study are safe and well-protected. As a researcher, I'm committed to upholding the ethical standards and principles respected everywhere, including those of the University of Fort Hare. In short, the research methods were vital because they gave this whole project structure. Now, we'll move on to the next section, which creates a theoretical guide to help us collect the real-world and theoretical information we need to successfully answer our research questions.

Chapter Two- Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses concepts and theories used in this study. It begins by conceptualising rural non-farm economy, the importance of the rural non-farm economy in the African countries and its contribution, and subsequently in South Africa. The study also looks at all South African women empowerment policies and their involvement in development. The study chose two theoretical frameworks, the Women and Development approach and the Sustainable Livelihood approach. The study centres around the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach; the approach advocates for a livelihood that is sustainable, development, and economic growth that must be sustainable for future generations to benefit. The study then saw it fit that the second theory of the must be the Women and Development Approach.

The approach explains in detail that any form of development and economic growth must not only benefit. The study speaks of women who have been left out in development and economic growth. The study highlights the economic struggles of women in Africa as they are still the marginalised group in the continent. Women And Development is one of the feminist approaches that seek to address the challenges and advocates for equal opportunities for both genders. Women in the continent of Africa make up more than 50% of the population and yet they have limited opportunities to development. The approach mentions that for economic growth and development women must be afforded the opportunities as their male counter parts as they constitute a large number in the continent. However, Therefore, the study explores the Rural Non-Farm Economic Activities in the Villages of Alice and

Keiskammahoek in the Amathole District Eastern Cape as a viable opportunity in sustaining the livelihoods of these women.

2.1.1 Problems Associated with Heavy Reliance on Agriculture

Women's empowerment has fallen behind in Africa; for instance, men have more economic opportunities than women, which contributes negatively to their economic development and largely affects the local economy. Indeed, recent studies regarding this inequality reveal that a greater number of women in the population is unemployed. Emojong and Korir (2022) find evidence in South Africa, where the rate of unemployed women stood at 36.8 per cent in the second quarter of 2021, which was higher than the 32.4 per cent recorded for men (Statistics South Africa, 2021). It is based on such findings that most authors agree that African labour markets are indeed more in favour to men than it is for women (Emojong & Korir, 2022).

High population of women resides in rural areas where the farming sector in the rural areas and where the high population of women resides is known as one of the important tools in poverty alleviation. In farming and agriculture, women play a vital role, contributing in many ways. They're not just working the land; they're also running farms, providing labour, and selling the harvest (Osabohien, Oulinorola, Matthew, et al, 2021). In Africa, women play a multifaceted role, participating in domestic duties and childcare, and significantly bolstering the economy by contributing as much as 40% to the agricultural Gross Domestic Product (GDP). However, these activities are usually labour intensive and with less income, hence the need for diversification of economic activities.

The Food and Agricultural Organisation say, globally it is estimated that more than 50% of food productivity comes from women, however, this percentage constitutes about 80% of Africa's food production, Asia (60%), and South and North America (30% and 40%), respectively (Osabohien, Oulinorola, Matthew, et al, 2021). However, this sector is faced with many challenges, such as climate change, that sometimes result in low productivity. With a growing population in Sub-Saharan Africa, the estimated number of job seekers with hopes to enter the labour market between 2010 and 2020 was 170 million (Nagler and Naude 2017). This once again emphasises the need for alternative sources of income for rural women, and this is where the NRFE comes in.

Climate change has forced rural households in many rural communities in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) to seek new strategies to cope with the ever-changing climate and with its negative effects. A significant portion of the methods employed by farming households to adapt to climate change involve the application of existing knowledge and technologies (Leclere et al., 2013; Khan et al., 2020). Due to these uncertainties in this sector, according to Naugler (2017), many rural households in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) have not limited their dependency on agriculture, but they are partaking in the non-farm economy. Development economists in the 1960s and 1970s saw an increase in household incomes due to these non-farm economic activities. This highlights the inevitable reality about the role that NRFE plays in the livelihoods of rural women, especially considering threats such as climate change.

Moreover, this observation underscores the importance of non-farm work as a supplementary income source for families. Scholars like Davis et al. (2010), Abdulai and Huffman (2014), and Sarka et al. (2017) have enriched the knowledge base regarding trends, the relevance of non-farm activities in agricultural investment, and the promotion of engagement in market systems. Furthermore, it is said that the

income from non-farm work contributes significantly to total household income in many developing countries (Nagler and Naude 2017). In addition, the authors carefully looked at the share of non-farm income in rural incomes in Africa, Asia, and Latin America has increased to 40-60% (Davis et al., 2010) and 44% of rural households in Africa participate in non-farm economic activities (Davis et al., 2014).

The diversification of economic activities is increasingly recognized as an important approach to alleviating poverty in developing nations, especially through the creation of employment opportunities such as non-farm economic activities. In Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), economies are undergoing structural transformation, with labour gradually shifting from agriculture to other sectors. This transition supports poverty reduction by diversifying income sources, thereby reducing risk. Two main schools of thought explain the factors influencing this diversification: external push factors and internal pull factors (Viktoria et al., 2020). Both perspectives highlight the vulnerability of rural households, whose incomes and employment opportunities are often unstable and insufficient to meet ongoing consumption needs (Binayak et al., 2021). As a result, income diversification becomes a necessary coping strategy. It enables households to manage economic risks by relocating labor into non-agricultural income-generating activities (Silwal, 2016).

2.1.2 Livelihoods

Pour, Barati et al. (2018) note that the concept of “livelihood” has been defined in various ways by different scholars. Chambers (1989, p. 7) describes livelihood as “adequate stocks and flows of cash to meet basic needs.” Expanding on this, Chambers and Conway (1992) characterize livelihood as the skills, resources, and

activities essential for maintaining a way of life. Building upon these earlier definitions, Scoones (1998) introduced a more comprehensive understanding by linking livelihood explicitly to the concept of sustainability. This led to the development of the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, which integrates these ideas into a cohesive model for analysing and enhancing livelihoods. After a review of prevailing A livelihood, according to Ellis (2000, p. 10), encompasses the resources (environmental, infrastructural, individual capabilities, economic resources, and communal networks), the pursuits undertaken, and the accessibility to these resources (shaped by organizations and interpersonal dynamics) that collectively establish the sustenance obtained by a person or household.

Several international organizations, including the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Department for International Development (DFID), have developed various frameworks to clarify the concepts, components, and scope of livelihoods. Collectively, these definitions emphasize that livelihood is a multi-dimensional concept-encompassing both the activities people engage in and the outcomes they achieve. It reflects not only how people make a living but also the resources and strategies they use. According to Chambers and Conway (1992), a livelihood is considered sustainable when it can withstand and recover from shocks and stresses, sustain or improve its capabilities and assets, and do so without degrading the natural resource base. Closely tied to this is the concept of livelihood strategies, which is discussed at length below.

2.1.3 Livelihood Strategies

A livelihood strategy encompasses any activities individuals undertake to realize their desired living standards. Frequently, individuals employ a diverse range of such

activities to accomplish their goals, influenced by the resources at their disposal (DfID, 1999). Also, it can also be referred to “an organized set of lifestyle choices, goals, and values, and activities influenced by biophysical, political or legal, economic, social, cultural, and psychological components and designed to secure an optimum quality of life for individuals and their families or social groups” (Walker et al., 2001, p. 298). These strategies extend beyond merely income-generating activities, incorporating a broader range of decisions, such as cultural and social options, that collectively define the household unit. Ellis (1998) identifies the principal economic activity of a household as its primary occupation. While livelihood strategies have gained prominence in development approaches, the vast array of potential activity combinations pursued by households raises definitional challenges. Specifically, it can be difficult to differentiate a fundamentally unique livelihood from a mere variation in the allocation of resources across comparable economic pursuits.

2.1.3 Livelihood Diversification

Livelihood diversification refers to the procedure by which rural families develop a diverse array of activities and support systems to ensure their survival and improve their quality of life (Ellis, 1998). In Sub-Saharan Africa, rural households often face incomplete factor and product markets, making diversification a practical and necessary livelihood strategy (Musumba & Palm et al., 2020; Davis et al., 2017). Expanding livelihood activities beyond crop farming, such as engaging in livestock production and non-farm enterprises, plays a vital role in improving income levels and enhancing food security for rural communities in the region (Frelat et al., 2016).

While specialization in certain activities can lead to economies of scale and increased efficiency, at the household level, diversification plays a critical role in enhancing the resilience of livelihoods to climate-related risks. The motivations and consequences of

livelihood diversification are multifaceted. Generally, households diversify either in response to opportunities driven by pull factors or out of necessity driven by push factors (Musumba & Palm et al., 2020). The specific drivers and impacts of diversification vary depending on the local context. For instance, Nagler and Naudé (2017), in their study of non-farm enterprises across six Sub-Saharan African countries, found that the importance of monetary loan or access increased the likelihood of households starting non-farm businesses. Some of the factors that may influence livelihood diversity is drought or climate change in farming households. Low returns or income from farming may lead to livelihood diversification.

2.2 Theoretical frameworks

This study is going to use the Sustainable Livelihood Approach Women and Development Approach. The study is going to rely mainly on the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach and Women and Development Approach as the second theory, as it advocates for a development that is sustainable. The second theory, which is the Women and Development Approach, advocates for women's participation in the economy and development. Whereas the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach speaks to social redress, such as poverty reduction and access to key fundamental needs of humans in a sustainable manner.

2.2.1 Sustainable livelihoods approach

The approach was brought into light in the 1990s, it was formed to reduce poverty, to restore the dignity of the poor and their way of living. Enhancing the importance of policies and institutions to address such (Ellis, 2001:30; Ashley and Carney, 1999:6). The SLA actively argues for the change through and shifts debate on development theories that have been active theories that have been active since the early 1980s

(Long, 2001). “The concept of Sustainable Livelihoods (SL) is an attempt to go beyond the conventional definitions and approaches to poverty eradication.

These have been found to be too narrow because they focused only on certain aspects manifestations of poverty, such as low income, or did not consider other vital aspects of poverty such as vulnerability and social exclusion” (Krantz,2001:1). Krantz also mentions that plans and processes must focus on the betterment of the poor by making a meaningful and leaving in an economically, ecologically, a socially sustainable way. The SL approach shows a more stable and integrated way to reduce poverty.

Ian Scoones and Frank Ellis later contributed significantly to the development and expansion of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA). This discussion presents their interpretation of the sustainable livelihoods concept, drawing particularly on the work of Ian Scoones at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS). In 1998, Scoones offered a widely cited definition of sustainable livelihoods, stating: Scoones (1998) defines a means of sustenance as encompassing the skills, resources (both tangible and communal), and undertakings necessary for securing a way of life. A durable means of sustenance is characterized by its ability to withstand and recuperate from challenges and disturbances, preserve or augment its competencies and resources, and offer enduring opportunities for securing a way of life for current and subsequent generations, while safeguarding the environment. This definition highlights the critical need for all development initiatives to consider the well-being of future generations.

Building upon Scoones' (1998) definition of sustainable livelihoods, he and his team subsequently developed a framework for the analysis of sustainable livelihoods, referred to as the sustainable livelihood framework. The framework is described using the five key elements, namely contexts, conditions, and trends; livelihood strategies;

institutional processes and organisational structures; and livelihood outcomes. As demonstrated, important aspects of the context include policies, historical and political factors, climate and environment, and patterns of social differentiation. The socioeconomic environment significantly shapes how rural families develop their means of sustenance. In essence, past and current circumstances influence and, to some extent, restrict the livelihood choices available to these families. For instance, historical policies, infrastructure challenges, and administrative systems all have a considerable impact on the livelihood strategies accessible to different households. These elements can either broaden or limit the existing possibilities.

As highlighted in the established model, a household's livelihood is based on the resources or capital at its disposal. These resources, which are essential for building livelihoods, encompass a range of tangible and intangible assets, both material and social. These assets are typically categorized into human, social, economic/financial, and natural capital. It should be noted, however, that this classification is not exhaustive, and other forms of capital may also be relevant.

As the framework outlines, a household's livelihood is fundamentally based on the resources at its disposal, often referred to as capital assets. Krantz (2001:8) characterizes these resources as the essential tangible and intangible assets, both material and social, that individuals utilize to build their livelihoods. These assets are generally classified into four categories: human, social, economic/financial, and natural capital. However, Scoones (1998:8) clarifies that this categorization is not exhaustive and that additional forms of capital may be relevant in specific contexts.

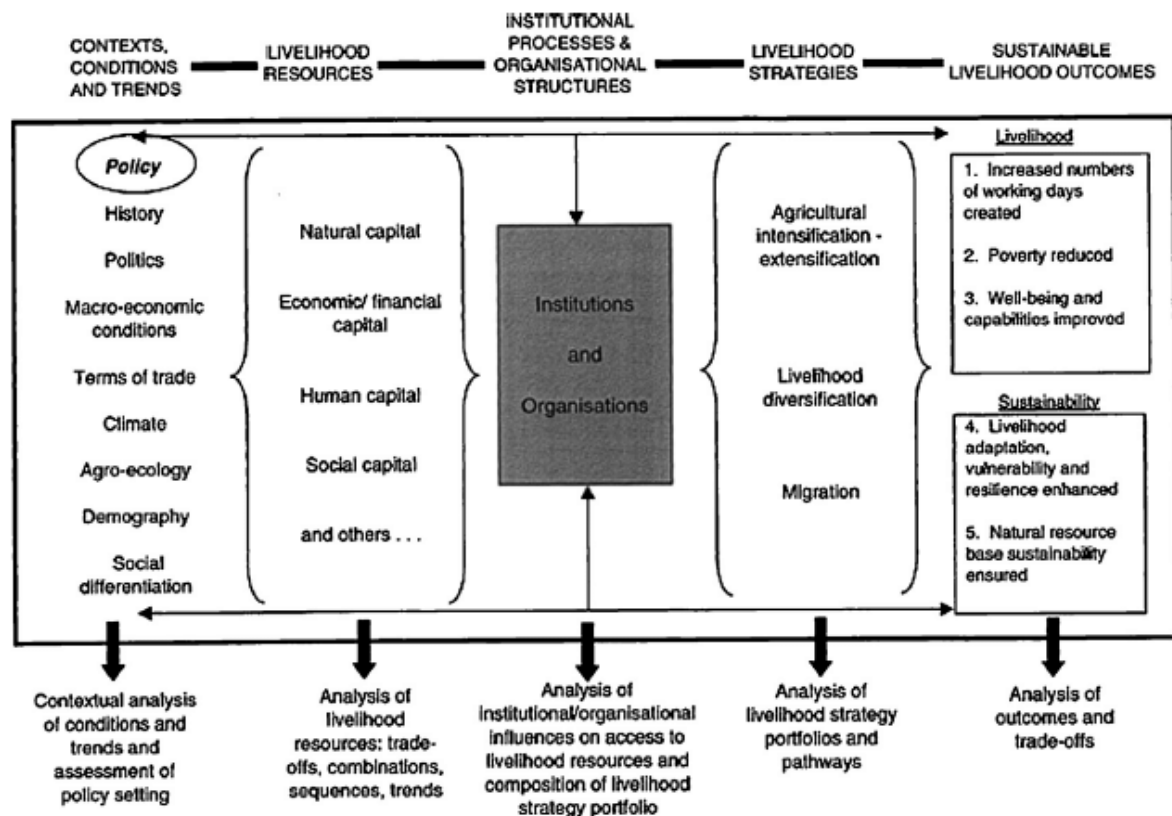


Figure 1: Sustainable Livelihoods Approach: Framework for Analysis

Source: by Scoones (1998)

To emphasize the problem of accessibility, Ellis presents his personal interpretation of a sustainable livelihood. In Ellis's view (2001:10), a livelihood encompasses the resources (environmental, infrastructural, communal, monetary, and personal capabilities), the endeavours undertaken, and the capacity to utilize these (governed by established structures and interpersonal dynamics) that collectively establish the sustenance acquired by an individual or family.

Secondly, it is increasingly understood that poverty, as defined by those experiencing it, encompasses not only inadequate financial resources, but also extends to encompass factors such as compromised well-being, limited education, insufficient social services, and various other deprivations. Moreover, it is now realized that there are important links between different dimensions of poverty such that improvements

in one have positive effects on another. When people get better access to learning, they tend to live healthier lives. And healthy people are often more able to contribute and produce things. Also, if we can make life a little safer and more secure for those struggling, they might feel braver about trying new things, such as more productive economic activities, and so on, maybe even starting a business or learning a skill that helps them earn more.

Ellis' approach focuses on three important elements: what resources people have (their assets), how things work that affect whether they can get to and use those resources (processes), and the ways poor people try to make a living to survive (strategies) (Ellis, 2001:51). He divides resources into five main types. First, there's human capital, basically, people's ability to work. This is especially important when there aren't many job opportunities. A large family can be helpful because it spreads the risk if someone gets sick and allows the family to try out different ways of earning a living (Ellis, 2001:33).

Second, there's financial capital, which is crucial in today's economy. Most people in rural areas work to earn money, which they use to secure their lives and/or simply survive (Ellis, 2001:34). Third, we have social capital. This is all about the connections and relationships people have. Looking at the systems and how things work within communities helps us understand this type of capital better. Fourth, there's natural capital. In rural areas, we're particularly interested in resources that can renew themselves, like fish or trees used for fuel. Ellis (2001:31) explains that these are things that naturally come back over time or are carefully managed to make sure they do, like the soil farmers use or the water in irrigation systems. Ellis further specifies

that natural capital includes finite resources which can be vital to rural economies in certain areas or through secondary channels; this primarily concerns mined materials such as minerals, metals, and oils.

Finally, we've come to understand that those experiencing poverty are often the most knowledgeable about their own circumstances and what they truly need. That's why it's crucial to include them when creating plans and initiatives aimed at improving their lives. When they have a voice in shaping these solutions, they're generally more invested in making them work. This involvement from people facing poverty leads to better results for projects. Several global aid organizations are now using this livelihoods approach in their practical development work. However, as we all see, there isn't one single way to do it. Each organization uses a slightly different version, from using it mainly to analyse situations or plan programs, to making it a specific type of program itself (Ellis, 2001:31).

Despite variations, most approaches share three basic features. First, they prioritize the economic activities of disadvantaged populations, as alleviating poverty is their central objective. Second, they deviate from conventional, sectoral entry points, such as farming, water, or health, and instead start with an evaluation of individuals' existing economic structures to determine a suitable intervention. Finally, these approaches highlight the importance of including individuals in the identification and execution of activities where they are needed. The objective is to adopt a comprehensive viewpoint when analysing economic circumstances to pinpoint the issues or domains where involvement could be strategically valuable for impactful poverty alleviation, whether locally or at the governmental level. This study therefore proposes for an alternative strategy for rural sustainability such as promoting and encouraging women to partake

in the RNFE to improve and as a much-needed sustainable approach for women in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape.

This research acknowledges that the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach isn't perfect. However, the approach is chosen because it puts the focus on rural communities, and it improves the understanding of their livelihoods. This perspective highlights the link between individuals and the broader context shaping livelihood outcomes. It emphasizes people's intrinsic capabilities, including their knowledge, relationships, access to assets, and capacity to affect key organizations. Essentially, the approach structures the elements that limit or expand livelihood prospects and illustrates their interdependencies.

A key strength of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) is its recognition of the multifaceted nature of survival strategies in rural contexts. Specifically, it highlights the significance of the Rural Non-Farm Economy (RNFE), the central focus of this investigation, which has historically been underappreciated as an active element in supporting rural livelihoods. Considering the growing recognition of the RNFE's importance, this study aims to evaluate its contributions to the livelihoods of women residing in the rural areas of the Amathole district in the Eastern Cape. A key strength of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) lies in its depiction of the intricate nature of subsistence in rural regions. Consequently, it highlights a facet of the rural economic system, the Rural Non-Farm Economy, that has historically been viewed as having a secondary influence on individuals' means of support.

At the time when the concept of the rural non-farm economy is gaining precedence, this study seeks to analyse the contributions of the RNFE to the livelihoods of women in the rural areas of the Amathole district in the Eastern Cape. Therefore, all this makes the SLA a worthy approach for use by the study. Therefore, the study is anchored in

the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach as it speaks of addressing poverty and in a manner that is sustainable, as it is mentioned above. While the Women and Development Approach speak for women's emancipation through development and active participation in the economy.

2.2.2 Women and Development Approach

The WAD approach stressed the importance of women's inclusion to ensure development for them during the 1970s. As far back as then different approaches have evolved to incorporate women. According to Kabeer (1994) and the United Nations Decade for Women, before 1975, short of what one percent of advancement focused unequivocally on women, and that improvement planning has been for men by men. The WAD perspectives surely expect that women's position will improve when universal structures become increasingly even-handed. In the meantime, the lack of economic involvement, political, and social structures is still seen as problematic.

This can be resolved by ensuring the inclusion and active participation of women in holistic development. This is seen as a universal problem and needs policy intervention.

Rogers (1980) contended that policy makers continue to disregard women's economic participation, access, and control of assets, for example, land, capital, and credit. The United Nations Development Program (1995) noticed that while progress was made, 66% of women in the world are uneducated, fewer who are employed in the market. In creating nations, women's circumstance is pushed by variables, including developing economies, increases in female-headed households, and family breakdown, as men leave rural areas for work as workers in towns and cities. The

United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985) accepted a fundamental role in promoting awareness of women's economic and social rights. It furthermore jogged thought on the profundity and reality of women's neediness and disparity. Progression programs for women focused on upgrading women's gainful commitment in the monetary market as techniques for achieving gender equality (Roger, 1980).

Consistently, women's advancement programs have been created through several hypotheses and organizing approaches, United Nations Development Program (1995). As explicitly explained in the introduction of the study, women have been marginalized for decades in all forms of development. Development has always been for men and by men. Since the 1970s, feminists have challenged this injustice towards women, who are the main producers of food and who form a large portion of farm labourers, but with no access to means of production and decision-making (Roger, 1980). Therefore, the Women and Development Approach stresses the significance of women's involvement holistically, as the study focuses on the contributions of the rural non-farm economy to the livelihoods of women. Women must be awarded opportunities to participate in development (Roger, 1980).

2.3 Empirical Literature Review

Research from Bandama (2016), Puplampu and Amenyah (2013), and Duncan (2004), along with the work of Agheneza (2009) and Seleti & Tlhompho (2014), indicates that the economic experience of women in African agricultural sectors is generally marked by ongoing hardship and limited financial resources. In the last two decades, many African countries have made substantial progress in promoting women's economic and social empowerment.

According to Freeman et al. (2020), when considering advancements in women's economic empowerment and the broadening of income prospects, South Africa, Ethiopia, Ghana, and Nigeria demonstrate relatively stronger performance compared to several other African nations. Despite women's significant contributions to agriculture in Africa, economic disparities between male and female farmers remain prevalent, leaving many women in precarious financial positions (Flato et al., 2017). Research indicates that in countries like South Africa, women in farming are met with numerous obstacles in obtaining financial resources, including limited financial knowledge, a lack of self-assurance in financial matters, and societal biases that perpetuate negative perceptions of women in agriculture (Flato et al., 2017). Flato et al. (2017) highlighted that female farmers across Africa generally experience worse economic outcomes than their male counterparts, contributing to their socio-economic vulnerability. Their constrained access to agricultural support services, education, land ownership, and credit facilities further exacerbates their marginal financial standing (Bandama, 2016).

Male migration for non-agricultural employment has significantly contributed to the African economy, yet women's increased involvement in agriculture hasn't translated into economic security. Their reduced production and unfavourable financial circumstances are often linked to inadequate access to advisory services and productive resources, further underscoring the disparity (Adebayo & Worth, 2024). Moreover, even with increased participation, many women haven't achieved financial stability or earned sufficient income to adequately support their families and ensure sustainable livelihoods (Adebayo & Worth, 2024).

Adebayo and Worth (2024) demonstrated the crucial role of female farmers in rural South Africa, highlighting their significance in agricultural production at the family and

local levels. In addition, the Food and Agriculture Organization (2019) noted that women comprise a substantial portion of smallholder farmers working within family units across numerous rural communities in South Africa. Research by Thaba-Nkadimene, Molotja, and Mafumo (2019) indicated that in the Limpopo province of South Africa, women participate in nearly all farm tasks, with the exceptions of preliminary land clearing and intensive tilling. Despite some progress, economic disparities between male and female farmers remain a persistent issue in many African nations, including those mentioned. Women farmers are often in precarious financial positions (Flato et al., 2017). Research indicates that in South Africa, for instance, female agriculturalists encounter challenges obtaining capital due to factors such as insufficient financial knowledge, a lack of assurance in managing finances, and societal biases against women in agriculture (Flato et al., 2017). Flato et al. (2017) demonstrated that female farmers across Africa generally experience inferior economic outcomes compared to their male counterparts, placing them at a socio-economic disadvantage. Restricted access to essential resources like agricultural support services, education, land ownership, and credit further contributes to their economically marginalized position (Bandama, 2016). To better understand the economic standing of women farmers, we will now examine their circumstances in four specific African countries.

Adebayo and Worth (2024) discovered that South African rural women farmers play a central role in household and community agricultural activities. Other studies (FAO, 2019) further show that women represent most smallholder farmers operating at the household level in most rural communities in South Africa. According to Thaba-Nkadimene, Molotja, and Mafumo (2019), women in Limpopo province of South Africa are engaged in all agricultural functions except initial land clearing and heavy

ploughing. Men migrating to work outside of agriculture contributed significantly to the African economy. Their low output and poor economic status are often associated with limited access to extension practitioners and a lack of access to productive resources, which increases women's participation in the agricultural sector (Adebayo & Worth, 2024). Despite increased female involvement, a significant portion has not achieved sufficient financial security or income to adequately provide for their families and maintain long-term self-sufficiency (Adebayo & Worth, 2024). Thaba-Nkadimene, Molotja, and Mafumo (2019) identify female smallholder farmers as particularly susceptible to poverty due to limitations on their engagement in the South.

Essentially, a study by Myeni and colleagues in 2019 found that almost none (a staggering 99%) of the small-scale farmers, including women, in a specific region of South Africa (Eastern Free State) were getting advice from agricultural experts. Instead, they relied mainly on traditional, local knowledge when deciding how to farm. The researchers emphasized that a tiny fraction, only 1% had any contact with advisors regarding how to grow their crops. Other research, like that by Maziya and team in 2020, hints that giving women farmers access to these expert services could really help them get important information and improve their financial situation.

Studies suggest that female entrepreneurs tend to receive less financial support than their male counterparts. This disparity is often attributed to women entrepreneurs having limited access to resources such as information, education, training, financing options, and networking channels. These limitations negatively influence economic progress and job creation. A commonly mentioned factor contributing to this disparity is the underrepresentation of women in financial investment and decision-making process (Groza et al., 2020; Handaragama & Kusakabe, 2021).

Despite various initiatives, women in developing economies, particularly in African nations, continue to face disempowerment and persistent gender inequalities (Lecoutere, 2017; Netnou & Strydom, 2020; The World Bank, 2012). Given that women constitute over half of Africa's population, many proponents of gender equality question the long-term sustainability of the continent's economic expansion if the marginalization of women remains prevalent. Failing to invest in female education, ensuring unrestricted access to political and economic prospects, and safeguarding fundamental social liberties, such as reproductive health rights, effectively excludes a significant portion of the population from Africa's developmental objectives, thereby hindering advancement and perpetuating economic hardship.

Even with all the work being done, women in developing economies, particularly in Africa, still face significant challenges and aren't truly equal to men (Lecoutere, 2017; Netnou & Strydom, 2020; The World Bank, 2012). It's hard to see how Africa can keep growing strong when women, who make up over half the population, still face so many challenges. People who believe in empowering women are asking an important question: How can Africa thrive if so, many women are held back? When girls don't get a good education, when women can't fully participate in politics and business, and when they don't have control over their own bodies and health, it's like leaving half the team on the sidelines. This hurts everyone's progress and keeps people stuck in poverty.

Joaquim Chissano, Mozambique's ex-President and a leader in global population and development efforts, passionately believes that helping African women thrive is the secret to a richer future for the continent. He emphasizes that women and girls are Africa's most valuable, yet often overlooked, assets. Forget precious stones or fuels; it's the strength and potential of these women that will truly build a lasting, fair, and

prosperous Africa (Fatton, 1989). Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma is one of the influential female leaders who rose and held one of the most important positions in politics, such as Minister of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, and as Chairperson of the African Union Commission, and a black woman to that position. She served in the AUC for a period from 2012 to 2017. During her tenure, she delivered Agenda 2063, where she highlighted the importance of women's emancipation and education as one of the most important tools in economic growth. Dr Nkosazana not only advocated for her country but also for the betterment of the African continent.

Furthermore, South Africa's National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 places considerable importance on the advancement of women and stresses the necessity of enhancing educational standards to better the prospects of younger individuals, highlighting the significance of availing opportunities for women. Correspondingly, the African continent has demonstrated a firm dedication to gender parity and the strengthening of women's status. Most nations have ratified the convention concerning the elimination of all types of discrimination against women. Moreover, the African Union's Protocol pertaining to the rights of women in Africa has been adopted by over half of the Union's constituent countries.

2.4 South African Policy Frameworks Advocating for the Emancipation of Women

South Africa's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) aimed to help women, especially those in rural communities, thrive. Furthermore, our Constitution set up ways for women to get the support they need and actively participate in society. However, even with these efforts, women still struggle to access resources and programs designed to improve their lives (RDP, 1994). Lack of education and being poor are big barriers preventing women from advancing in life. More women are out

of work compared to men. While women make up just over half (55.8% in 2024, up from 50.9% in 2014) of the formal workforce (SSA, 2024), they often hold lower-paying jobs than men. A lot of women work in the informal sector, where pay is usually lower and there are no benefits like health insurance or retirement plans. Studies show that households led by women are much more likely to be struggling financially. Working mothers also face the challenge of balancing work with raising children, and there aren't enough childcare options to support them. On top of that, households headed by women are often vulnerable because fathers don't always provide child support.

Official statistics from Stats SA (2024) indicate that females constitute a marginal majority of the South African populace, accounting for 51%, while males represent 49%. Although the lived realities of women in South Africa are varied and shaped by factors such as ethnicity and socioeconomic status, they share common experiences pertaining to gender disparities. Historically, discriminatory policies have disproportionately affected Black women. Furthermore, women residing in rural locations face challenges stemming from their isolation, limited access to information, and restricted prospects for socioeconomic advancement.

Nelson Mandela deeply valued the contributions of South African women. He is recognized for championing women's progress following South Africa's transition to democracy in 1994. True liberation, in his view, necessitates the dismantling of all oppressive systems that restrict women. Consequently, women should be afforded opportunities to engage in every facet of society on equal footing with all citizens. Both Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki played crucial roles in leading transformative efforts and enabling women's involvement in a democratic economic structure. Their leadership focused on improving the overall condition of women.

2.4.1 New Partnership for Africa's Development

NEPAD came about when two big ideas one from South Africa's Thabo Mbeki, the other from Senegal's Abdoulaye Wade joined forces. Think of it as a combined effort to help Africa grow. One of the key things NEPAD wanted to do was make sure women were involved and empowered in all the plans for development. It also emphasised fulfilling some of its international development goals, which are:

- Achieving gender parity and bolstering the position of women through the eradication of gender imbalances in primary and secondary school registration by the year 2005.
- To reduce maternal mortality ratios by three-quarters between 1990 and 2015.
- To provide access for all who need reproductive health services by 2015.

The NEPAD poverty reduction policy not only seeks to address the issue for general constituencies but also has a special focus on women. The strategy set to establish a task team to ensure that specific issues faced by women were addressed. Under one of the listed objectives of diversification and production, the strategy had plans to collect data that often overlooks women's significant economic contributions, particularly to families and the nation, because it primarily focuses on the formal sector as the sole measure of economic activity. Improve the productivity of agriculture with a focus on small-scale and women farmers.

The contributions of women to the economic, social, and political spheres of their countries, communities, families, and future generations position them as crucial agents in successful advancement. Furthermore, African women's engagement in the development process has reportedly allowed them to improve their ability to apply their physical and intellectual energies in promoting sustainable development, hence the

attention to rural non-farm activities. NEPAD document (NEPAD, 2001: 126-131). The NEPAD document (NEPAD, 2001: 126-131) recognizes the intrinsic link between advancement and health, emphasizing that a certain degree of economic and social progress is essential.

There is a need to shift NEPAD away from its existing liberal framework towards a feminist political economy model. This approach tackles challenges faced by women by acknowledging the complex historical context of African society. It is essential for NEPAD policy to genuinely address women's issues in a manner that is sensitive to the demands and situations of the population. Consequently, for NEPAD to effectively address the issue of disempowerment, it must originate from the people during its creation and be adapted to specifically address the circumstances of African women, rather than being designed by African elites and customized according to Western solutions.

2.4.2 South Africa's National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality

Kornegay (2000) indicates that the Office on the Status of Women (OSW) created the national policy framework, which was subsequently endorsed by the Cabinet in 2000. This framework, designed to achieve gender equality, elaborates on the values and tenets that underpinned the National Gender Programme, emphasizing their incorporation into policy. Following the end of apartheid, the 1996 Bill of Rights within the South African constitution established a core tenet: the new democratic society must uphold the rights of all citizens without discrimination based on race, gender, class, age, or disability. Subsequently, the National Gender Machinery was tasked with ensuring that institutions prioritized the inclusion of women in policy development. This machinery consisted of entities such as the Office on the Status of Women

(OSW), the Commission on Gender Equality (CGE), and the Parliamentary Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC). The National Gender Policy pledged to achieve substantial progress towards gender equality by empowering the National Gender Machinery, reinforcing female representation within civic bodies, the legislature, and various institutions. However, the offices under the National Gender Machinery lacked funds and skilled personnel to clearly articulate the vision of the National Policy Framework (Kornegay,2000). Some of the intentions of the framework were to enhance work from the offices within the NGM and aimed at fast-tracking implementation and commitment to women's empowerment.

The framework commences with a delineation of the framework's core objectives. These encompass: the realisation of governmental pledges regarding gender equality, the development of mechanisms for the comprehensive empowerment of women in the workplace, both through state action and within the wider community, and the embedding of this framework into organisational structures alongside the cultivation of attitudinal shifts that align with the stated policy. In September 1997, the leaders of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), encompassing South Africa, endorsed a proclamation obligating their administrations and nations (Kornegay, 2000), specifically, to:

- The SADC Programme of Action and Community Building Initiative must explicitly integrate gender equality.
- Guaranteeing balanced participation of both sexes in all decision-making bodies within member nations and SADC institutions.
- Advancing women's comprehensive access to and authority over valuable resources.

- Abolishing or modifying discriminatory laws and societal norms that disadvantage women.
- Improving access to superior education for all genders and eliminating prejudiced views within educational materials, career paths, and professional sectors.
- Improving the availability of comprehensive reproductive and general healthcare services for all.
- Safeguarding and promoting the fundamental freedoms of women and children.
- Acknowledging, protecting, and advancing reproductive and sexual rights, particularly for women and girls.
- Actively working to address and prevent increasing instances of violence against women.
- Encouraging media organizations to share information that supports women's fundamental freedoms.

According to data from Statistics South Africa, the then appointed executive council is composed of 37 individuals, encompassing the Head of State and the Vice President. Of these, 15 are female Ministers, representing approximately 40% of the cabinet's composition. Conversely, male members constitute roughly 60% of the council (Kornegay, 2000).

2.4.3 Adoption of The Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill

Enacted by the National Assembly in 2014, the WEGE Bill was subsequently submitted to the National Council of Provinces. This referral aligns with the Council's constitutional duty to safeguard provincial interests within the national legislative framework. The intended purpose of this legislation was to reinforce current empowerment laws and advance the position of women. Specifically, the Bill

advocated for equal gender representation (50%) across all decision-making bodies and initiatives. Proponents expected the Bill to catalyse substantial improvements in South African workplaces by establishing a structure designed to benefit both male and female employees (WEGE Bill, 2014). Some of the core economic empowerment goals under the policy are:

- Promote greater access to monetary assistance, procurement possibilities, real estate acquisition, and professional development, with specific attention directed towards business education and the strengthening of women's abilities for empowerment.
- Support employment prospects and market access for women; gather and maintain relevant information concerning women's financial independence, as stipulated.
- Comply with existing legal frameworks intended to promote the financial progress of women, as detailed in relevant statutes.

The economic empowerment goals or guidelines were not only prescribed for women in general, but also for those who dwell in rural areas. Here are some of these goals. Here are some paraphrased versions of the points, using more formal language and general synonyms:

- Enable enduring economic opportunities and respectable employment for women residing in rural communities, primarily, but not exclusively, through agricultural activities.
- Integrate a gender perspective into land redistribution initiatives to secure greater land ownership for women in rural areas, coupled with the requisite expertise and monetary support to cultivate the land effectively.

- Enhance the circumstances for women employed on farms, female agricultural labourers, and wives of male farm employees, while also elevating the overall standard of living for women inhabiting rural regions.
- Guarantee equitable representation and substantial involvement of women within traditional governing bodies.

2.4.4 National Planning Commission

In 2018, President Ramaphosa tasked the National Planning Commission (NPC) with evaluating the execution of the National Development Plan: Vision 2030 (NPC, 2012). This charge stemmed from apprehensions regarding the gradual and inconsistent advancement in realising the nation's development agenda. The NPC's efforts prominently emphasise the pressing need to advance women's empowerment and gender parity, a critical element that cuts across all facets of national progress. This imperative is not novel but rather represents the culmination of sustained activism by various women's groups and liberation movements spanning from the 1950s to recent times. Women make up a large percentage of the poor, particularly in rural areas. The plan not only considers gender but also race and geographic location are considered; it proposes a range of measures to advance women's equality (NDP, 2012). In summary, recommendations made along these lines are as follows:

- Public employment should be expanded to provide work for the unemployed, with a specific focus on youth and women.
- The transformation of the economy should involve the active participation and empowerment of women.
- The role of women as leaders in all sectors of society should be actively supported. Social, cultural, religious and educational barriers to women entering the job market should be addressed.

- Concrete measures should be put in place, and the results should be evaluated over time.
- Access to safe drinking water, electricity and quality early childhood education, for example, could free women from doing unpaid work and help them seek jobs. By 2030, people living in South Africa should have no fear of crime.
- Women, children and those who are vulnerable should feel protected.
- Security of tenure should be created for communal farmers, especially women.
- The Department of Health should design and pilot a nutrition intervention programme for pregnant women and young children.
- Coverage of antiretroviral treatment to all HIV-positive persons requiring such drugs should be expanded, alongside treatment of high-risk HIV-negative persons.
- Effective microbicides should be offered routinely to all women 16 years and older.

To foster a more equitable society, it is imperative that South Africa's rural communities experience enhanced prospects for comprehensive involvement in the nation's economic, social, and political spheres. This necessitates the provision of superior education, healthcare, transportation, and other essential utilities (Taylor, 2021). Effective land redistribution initiatives, the generation of employment opportunities, and increased agricultural output will be instrumental in cultivating an integrated rural economy. The country's rural regions are characterised by significant poverty and unemployment, alongside limited agricultural employment.

The prior system of segregation relegated a substantial portion of the African population to unproductive rural territories. This resulted in a sophisticated and varied

commercial agricultural sector dependent on inadequately compensated agricultural workers, alongside impoverished, densely populated settlements with restricted economic possibilities and insufficient governmental support (Budlender, 2020). To remedy this, a comprehensive strategy is proposed. This includes generating additional employment via agricultural advancement, predicated on efficient land redistribution and the augmentation of irrigated agriculture and land productivity. Furthermore, the delivery of fundamental services is vital to empower individuals to cultivate their capabilities, allowing them to seize opportunities throughout the country and contribute to their communities through financial contributions and the transfer of expertise. The development of sectors such as agricultural processing, tourism, fisheries, and small-scale businesses should be pursued where feasible.

To understand how far we've come with women's rights and gender equality, the NPC's review looked at the government's latest reports from the Department of Women in 2019 (Taylor, 2021). It also relied on a chapter prepared by Budlender (2020) for a 25-year review, since it provided key data showing how things have changed over time. Importantly, the Beijing+25 report highlighted the biggest areas needing improvement for women and girls between 2014 and 2019: creating jobs and a stable economy; getting more girls into education, especially in the STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics); improving women's health, focusing on pregnancy-related deaths and HIV/AIDS in young women; tackling gender-based violence; and helping women become financially independent, particularly outside of traditional employment.

2.5 Summary

This chapter explored different ideas about how rural non-farm economic activities outside of farming have grown since the 1970s, and how these ideas have changed over time. It focused on two main theories about rural development: the "women and development" approach and the "sustainable livelihoods approach." In the 1970s, the "women and development" view was very influential. It emphasised improving the lives of women, giving them more power, and making sure they were included in all parts of rural development. This idea comes from feminist viewpoints that promote the advancement of women. Later, in the late 1990s, the "sustainable livelihoods approach" became popular as a reaction to older, more top-down ways of thinking. This approach is valuable because it puts the needs and experiences of people struggling with poverty at the heart of development efforts. Even though it's been criticised, the study uses the "sustainable livelihoods approach" as a main framework because it focuses on helping vulnerable individuals.

This research highlights the intricate nature of impoverished individuals' survival strategies. It seeks to understand how they develop these strategies by utilising diverse resources, including skills, relationships, savings, infrastructure, and the environment, within specific systems and procedures and considering external influences and crises. Furthermore, the chapter demonstrates that rural existence encompasses a wide array of economic pursuits, not solely farming. Consequently, it presents the idea of the rural non-agricultural sector as a potential path to advancement for the rural poor, especially women.

The chapter also reviewed some of the policies that speak to women's emancipation in Africa and in South Africa as well. These policies were born after the apartheid regime to address the wrongs and disparities that were committed against women.

South Africa is known for its unequal societies, but more so, gender imbalance is still a hot topic to date, and the gender that is overlooked is females. The policies share commonalities such as women should be at the forefront of development; women should have equal treatment and opportunities as their male counterparts. These policies also advocated for a 50% quota in each workplace. Despite the work and positive strides that these policies have made so far, a fair number of women have not yet known or tasted the emancipation and that of the economy. South African women continue to face serious inequality and disadvantage in a wide range of spheres: in government, in business, in their communities and in their homes.

These disadvantages are further complicated by unequal gender relations within the categories of race, class, disability, sexual orientation, religion and geographic location. Women continue to face these challenges, such as a lack of information on how they can best empower themselves, especially those who dwell in rural areas. Recognising women's empowerment as a crucial requirement for equitable and rapid human development in developing nations, it's clear that female empowerment and economic advancement are inextricably linked. Without existing economic agency, addressing societal disparities and promoting inclusive development, particularly for marginalized populations, becomes significantly more challenging. Evidence suggests that empowering and including women, especially at the local level, in development initiatives not only diminishes inequality but also significantly reduces poverty.

Expanding economic prospects for women in rural areas is essential for accelerating economic growth and progress, ultimately alleviating poverty. The World Bank (2014) also highlighted the significance of women's empowerment. Research conducted across 33 developing countries revealed that women and girls from poor households are particularly susceptible to the consequences of global economic and food

insecurity, and they encounter substantial levels of gender-based violence annually. A significant portion of these nations (15), predominantly in Sub-Saharan Africa, exhibit slow economic growth and elevated rates of infant and child mortality. If women gain economic empowerment, it is anticipated that they will become catalysts for positive change and recovery. In essence, empowering women offers an effective strategy for mitigating the adverse impacts of crises and fostering global economic reconstruction.

Chapter Three- Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter establishes the conceptual framework for examining rural non-agricultural economic endeavours and their influence on the well-being of women in rural areas. It seeks to explore the primary research question: In what ways do rural non-agricultural economic activities bolster the livelihoods of rural women residing in the Keiskammahoek and Alice districts? Moreover, the chapter delivers a thorough exposition of the methods utilized to acquire data for this study. This encompasses a clarification of the chosen research approach and the justification for its selection, followed by an analysis of the research perspective. Furthermore, the chapter elaborates on the research plan enacted, encompassing elements such as the research structure, sampling approaches, data acquisition methods and processes, and data interpretation techniques. Concluding the chapter is a delineation of the geographic settings under study, Alice and Keiskammahoek.

3.2 Conceptual Framework

3.2.1 Non-Rural Farm Economy and Livelihoods of Rural Women

According to Haggblade, Hazell, and Readorn (2010), the Rural Non-Farm Economy has received much attention in the 2000s, even though it has long been rejected by policymakers. In the study conducted by Haggblade, Hazell, and Readorn (2010), the RNFE over the years has accounted for 35 to 50 % earnings recorded from developing economies. This shows the enormous contributions that these economic activities have on the livelihoods of people, particularly from developing nations. Moreover, it is

also important to note that these authors also postulate that the policy makers see this sector as a possible alternative in agriculture and a stimulus for rural income growth.

Women across the globe are often seen as primary caregivers, usually seen as better suited to childcare or rearing, and tasks including cleaning. This often denies women economic opportunities. According to Jabeen, Haq, Jameel et al. (2020), the Beijing Platform for Action and Millennium Development Goals in Pakistan advocate for gender equality and women's empowerment, also signifying the importance of promoting the economic independence of women, which includes decent jobs. Furthermore, it also contributes to the sharing of non-agricultural employment, productive possessions, public services or facilities, and opportunities (Kabeer, 1999).

Addressing disparities based on gender is crucial for maximising women's capabilities and autonomy (Kabeer, 1999). This is necessary to foster social and individual progress within interconnected socio-economic (Taylor & Perznieto, 2014), political, and psychological spheres, ultimately strengthening opportunities and improving the lives of women. (O'Niel, 2014). Women have historically been and remain crucial to preserving fundamental ecological systems, including soil, water resources, plant life, and animal life. They have safeguarded soil quality through natural decomposition processes and fostered agricultural stability by preserving crop diversity and inherent resilience (Subathra, Khrishnakumari, and Bharathivasu, 2020). In India, women are significant contributors to food production, measured by economic worth, amount produced, and labour invested. In rural India, approximately 70% of women rely on agriculture for their livelihoods, although this reliance may vary globally.

Falola, Fakayode, Kayode, and Amusa (2020) argue that women do engage in income-generating activities of different kinds; however, these usually have similar

characteristics. Moreover, women often tend to operate their businesses nearby, making it easier to juggle their various responsibilities as workers, moms, and homemakers. For instance, a study in Zimbabwe showed that roughly two-thirds (64%) of women in the informal economy ran their businesses close to where they lived (UNICEF, 2006). Getting involved in activities that bring in money can really help women feel more in control of their lives. It offers them a way to support themselves and their families. Research from the International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW, 2012) suggests it can also improve their confidence, give them more say in family decisions, and allow them to get out more, exposing them to new ideas and knowledge.

In South Africa, female entrepreneurs often participate in small-scale ventures like cultivating produce, raising animals, collaborative sewing initiatives, poultry farming, candle production, horticulture, and artisanal crafts. These endeavors are typically classified as micro-enterprises (Mandipaka, 2014). However, research indicates that these activities receive inadequate backing from both government and private organizations, which increases vulnerability and limits success for these women (Masango et al., 2014, and Fiseha et al., 2015). Despite these challenges, women entrepreneurs in South Africa significantly contribute to the social and economic stability of rural populations. (Read Annual Report, 2020 and Mahadea, 2020).

With the necessary support, these businesses can complement their agricultural activities and thereby become an additional source of livelihood. However, in the context of South Africa, that support is usually lacking or inadequate, as stated above. Previous research has identified multiple factors motivating rural households to engage in non-farm businesses, including the need to mitigate poverty and supplement inadequate income from agriculture due to factors such as unforeseen

crises, excess workforce capacity, and seasonal variations (Nagler & Naude, 2017; World Bank, 2007; Bleahu & Janowski, 2002; Odoh & Nwibo, 2017). Consequently, rural non-agricultural activities offer significant income opportunities for lower-income individuals to augment their agricultural earnings and are particularly crucial for households without farmland (Madaki & Adefila, 2014; UNCTAD, 2015). Broadly speaking, the non-farm sector contributes significantly to economic advancement, poverty alleviation, rural job creation, and overall rural income levels (Nasrin & Wahid, 2015; Ratšo, 2016). Furthermore, rural populations require a range of livelihood resources to ensure their livelihood.

Livelihood assets are the resources available to different families, broken down into five key areas: skills and knowledge (human), relationships and support networks (social), money and savings (financial), the environment around them (natural), and infrastructure like tools and buildings (physical). Think of these as the inner strengths and resources that families draw upon when deciding how they will make a living (DfID, 1999; Fang et al., 2014; Scoones, 1998; Wu et al., 2017). The 'skills and knowledge' aspects are detailed further in Figure 2 below:

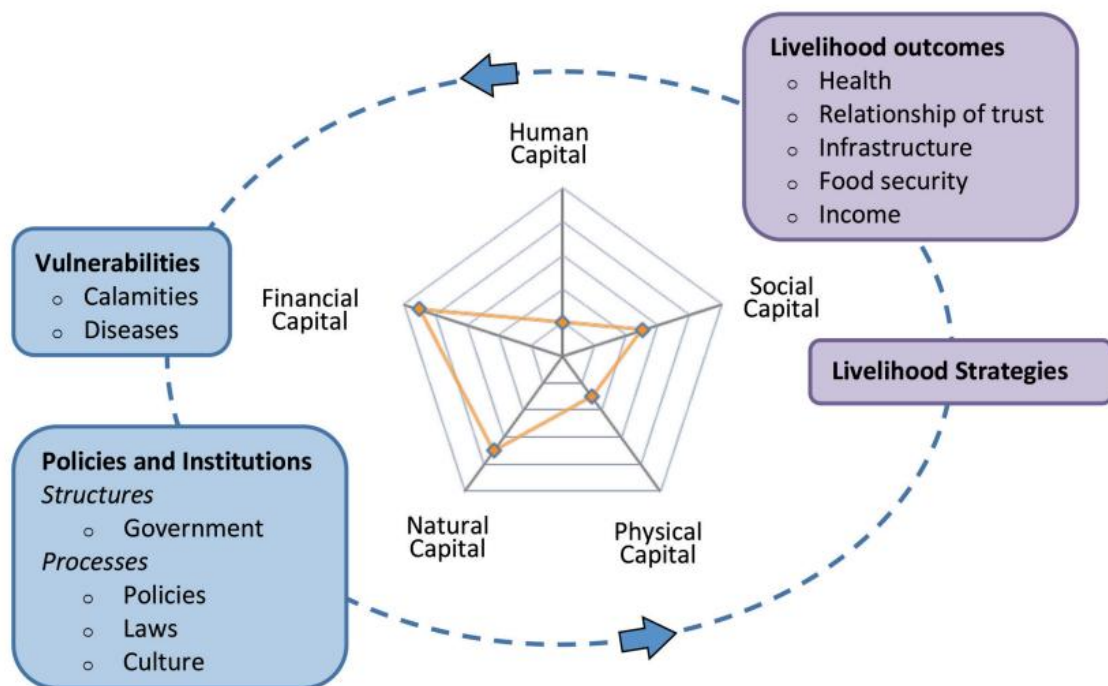


Figure 2: Illustrating different livelihood assets

Figure 1: Source from Scoones (1998).

- A household's human capital represents its most significant resource, facilitating the implementation of diverse livelihood approaches. This primarily encompasses the extent and attributes of household labour, specifically encompassing their competencies, understanding, capacity for work, and overall well-being.

- Also, a financial asset is a basic asset, which is necessary for households to pursue any livelihood strategy. Financial assets primarily refer to savings and having access to credit from formal and informal sources.
- Furthermore, tangible property represents a vital resource essential for productive activities. Although individuals engaged in fishing or animal husbandry may possess fewer liquid funds, they tend to have greater access to livestock compared to those who employ trade-oriented or diverse livelihood approaches.
- Furthermore, natural resources encompass access to naturally occurring materials and ecological services, such as land, water sources, and fauna. Indigenous populations often utilize these resources as a means of sustenance and to generate revenue.
- Finally, social capital refers to the resources accessible to individuals and collectives through participation in a social structure. These resources, inherent within relational networks, are distinct from personal possessions. Moreover, environmental assets include access to naturally existing substances and ecosystem services, such as land, water supplies, and wildlife. Indigenous communities frequently depend on these resources for both sustenance and income generation. This highlights the relevance of the sustainable livelihoods' framework to this research, as it incorporates the diverse assets that rural women require to ensure their economic stability.

3.3 Methodology of the Study

The study examined the contribution of non-farm activities on the livelihoods of rural women in two rural towns within the Amathole district, Alice and Keiskammahoek. The motive behind this notion was to assess the contributions of the rural non-farming

sector and to map out and discover new activities within the sector. Consequently, this research adopted a mixed-methods design, integrating qualitative and quantitative techniques. This approach was selected based on the rationale articulated by Creswell & Clark (2007) that a singular methodology may be insufficient for comprehensively addressing complex research questions. The mixed methods framework proved particularly suitable for this study, as its primary aim was to gain a more nuanced comprehension of the consequences and potential of the rural non-agricultural economy by contrasting agricultural and non-agricultural sectors in the Eastern Cape. It was determined that alternative methodologies were unlikely to yield comparably profound insights.

This methodology is shown as an arrangement of activity that joins different methodologies and perfect models in the enquiry of the research question with the end goal to help trust in the reliable findings (De Vos, 2005). Accordingly, a mixed research approach is supported as a method for keeping up an interest in a few parts of evaluation, while in the meantime consolidating interpretive worries around subjectivity and significance (Maree, 2007). This helped in affirming and approving findings from various strategies while looking at comparable phenomena.

The decision to implement a staged methodology stemmed from the belief that the research concept could be refined through iterative evaluation. Specifically, the strengths of one technique could be leveraged to address the weaknesses and limitations of another (Fidel, 2008:265). This process aimed to mitigate potential bias inherent in any singular method by counterbalancing it with diverse approaches. The concluding dataset incorporated both textual and numerical elements, representing a convergence of qualitative and quantitative perspectives.

Qualitative research methodology is a comprehensive category encompassing diverse investigative approaches that aim to interpret, elucidate, depict, and ultimately understand phenomena. This study, drawing on the work of (Welman, et al, 2005), aims to understand the everyday lives of women working both on farms and in the rural non-farm economy. It's important that we see their lives within the context of their own communities, culture, and experiences, rather than imposing our own pre-set ideas on them.

Qualitative research is helpful here because (as Braun & Clarke, 1999 point out) it allows us to gather rich information about people's opinions, behaviours, values, the social environment they live in, and their personal experiences. By understanding the lived experiences of these women, whether they're farming or in non-farm economic activities, we can better understand how they see the rural non-farm economy and its impact on their lives. The goal is to truly understand their world from their perspective, getting "inside" their experiences and recognizing that their individual, subjective views are valuable and real. This is achieved by talking to them and carefully listening to their stories.

Qualitative research also takes an inductive approach (Winberg, 1997). This means that instead of starting with a fixed theory, the understanding evolves as the research progresses. The findings emerge from the data itself, rather than being dictated by the researcher's initial assumptions. In other words, the conclusions are drawn based on what is happening, and on the probability of a conclusion being correct given what has already happened. The researcher builds a connection with the women, allowing them to guide the direction of the information gathered. This also gives the women a chance to raise important issues that might not have been considered otherwise. This

approach allows for a deep exploration of how the rural non-farm economy contributes to the well-being of women in the Eastern Cape.

Quantitative research, on the other hand, uses statistical analysis to link real-world observations with numerical data (Cooper & Schindler, 2006:45). This approach assumes that the world is made up of objective facts that can be measured. The goal is to be objective and to allow the research to be repeated in different places or at different times to obtain similar results. The methodology determines whether a generalisation of a model is true and aims to make predictions and explanations that apply to other people and places. As a result, the researcher's personal involvement in the study is reduced.

3.4 Research paradigm

The mixed methods research approach used here is grounded in the post-positivist perspective. Post-positivism builds on the strengths of both positivism and interpretivism, making it a suitable framework for this study. This combination of methods, sometimes called methodological triangulation, involves blending different techniques and viewpoints to explore the research question and strengthen the reliability of the results (De Vos, 2005). A mixed methods approach was chosen to allow for both numerical analysis and a deeper understanding of individual experiences and meanings (Maree, 2007). To fully grasp the nature of the rural non-farm economy in both locations, quantitative data (numbers) and qualitative data (experiences) were gathered at the same time. This allowed for the findings from different methods to support, validate, or confirm each other while examining the same issue.

3.5 Description of the study area

Figure 3: Map of Alice



Figure 3: Map of Alice

Source: Google Mpiyane (2016)

Situated on the southwestern edge of the Tyume River in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa, Alice is located west-northwest of East London at an altitude of 524 meters. Originating as a mission station for the Xhosa people, founded by the Glasgow Missionary Society in 1824, the settlement was christened in honor of Princess Alice, daughter of Queen Victoria. It became the administrative center for the region in 1847 and achieved municipal status in 1852. The adjacent rolling coastal highland supports the farming of livestock, citrus, and tobacco. The town is also home to Lovedale Training Institute and the University of Fort Hare (established 1916), South Africa's oldest black African university, though it now accepts students of all races, which are

located near the town. It has road and rail connections with East London (Mpiyane, 2016).

Alice is located within the Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality, positioned on the southern side of the Winterberg Mountain range and its associated geological formation. Geographically, it resides within the broader jurisdiction of the Amathole District Municipality in the Eastern Cape Province. The municipality's land encompasses an area of roughly 6,474 square kilometers, incorporating key settlements such as Alice, Adelaide, Bedford, Fort Beaufort, and Middledrift (Mpiyane, 2016). Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality comprises 23 wards with a total population of approximately 151 379 of which the majority, about 72% reside in rural villages and farms (Mpiyane, 2016).

Urban growth is primarily focused in Alice, Adelaide, Bedford, and Fort Beaufort. The Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality is predominantly rural, with the economy significantly reliant on agriculture, encompassing citrus cultivation, silviculture, and arable farming. Within Raymond Mhlaba, the historical educational establishments of Healdtown, Lovedale College, and the University of Fort Hare represent notable heritage assets, although their potential for tourism or cultural development remains largely untapped. Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality confronts significant difficulties stemming from inadequate infrastructure and high rates of joblessness and poverty (Mpiyane, 2016). Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality contends with significant infrastructural deficits alongside elevated rates of joblessness and impoverishment (Mpiyane, 2016).



Figure 4: Map of Keiskammahoek

Source: Google ECSECC (2017)

Keiskammahoek is a small town founded by European settlers, nestled in the Amatola Mountains, around 50km from King William's Town. It sits where the Gxulu and Keiskamma Rivers meet. Local people have always known it as a good, fertile place to be, and even though the area around it often suffers from drought, it's never run out of water. The original name for the place is Qobo Qobo, which roughly means "something delicate." Since 1847, it's also been known as Keiskammahoek. This name comes from Dutch and Khoikhoi languages and means "corner of bright waters."

Whites first settled here during the War of the Axe in 1846-7. The British military set up a base, often called "the camp in the mountains." When the fighting stopped, the army left, and in 1849, a Scottish missionary, Rev Robert Niven, arrived. He wanted to start a mission called Uniondale to share his faith with the Mfengu and Xhosa people

already living there. At first, the buildings were just simple huts. But the mission didn't last long because Rev. Niven and his family had to run away when their home was burned down during new fighting in 1850.

In 1851, because of the war, the British set up a tented camp again at Keiskammahoek, led by Colonel Henry Somerset. In 1852, engineers arrived and started building a strong tower, completed in 1855 and named Castle Eyre. In 1853, the local government declared the area around Castle Eyre a special reserve to build a permanent village. People started building homes in Keiskammahoek after the war ended in 1853. Over the next ten years, the town's white population grew quickly as German soldiers and their families arrived in South Africa in 1857 and 1858. More German families came in 1876-7. Around 1858, a Lutheran church was built, but it wasn't good enough, so a better one was built in 1877. Several other churches were also built in Keiskammahoek, with the Gilead Chapel, built in 1872, being one of the most important.

3.5.1 Socio Economic Status of Keiskammahoek

Let's explore the area of Amahlathi Local Municipality, which sits within the Amathole District of the Eastern Cape Province. Think of it as a region (about 4,820 square kilometers) within a larger district. It's surrounded by other areas: Chris Hani to the north, Buffalo City Metro to the south, Mnguma and Great Kei to the east, and Raymond Mhlaba to the west. You'll find towns like Cathcart, Kei Road, Keiskammahoek, and Stutterheim there. The main ways people make a living are through community services (like government jobs), finance, factories and manufacturing, retail, farming, construction, and transportation. You can see a map (Figure 3.2) that shows where Amahlathi is and where the towns are, including Keiskammahoek, which is the focus of this investigation.

Back in the days of apartheid, Keiskammahoek was known as a place where people went to find work. Many families depended on money sent home by men who had to leave to find jobs, often leaving women to care for everything in the villages. After 1994, this kind of migration slowed down, leading to job losses and a struggling local economy. Unfortunately, many people lost their rights to their land. Nowadays, things have changed a bit land ownership in Keiskammahoek is now a mix of individual ownership and shared community land. However, unemployment is still a big problem, affecting around 78% of the population. Many families rely on government assistance. According to a 2011 study, about 26% of people in the area earn R400 (about \$35) or less each month, and 53% earn R1600 (about \$200) or less.

A study from 2011 looked at how women in South Africa were able to get access to land in three different places, including Keiskammahoek. Researchers spoke with over 400 women and held group discussions with them. They found high rates of unemployment and low incomes. Only 5% of the women had steady jobs, 2% were working short-term, 15% did occasional casual work, 14% were involved in farming on their land, 29% were unemployed and looking for work, and 31% were unemployed but not currently seeking work. If you add up the women working short-term jobs, doing casual work, and those unemployed and seeking work, it comes out to 46% of the women without stable, long-term employment. The study also revealed that 75% of the women relied on government assistance as their primary source of income, while only 9% said they depended on money earned by another family member.

The community in Keiskammahoek is fortunate to have organizations like the Directorate of Cooperative Governance (DoCG) starting and supporting projects like the Siyakholwa Government-Sponsored Projects. These projects can help women in rural areas by providing support, teaching them new skills, and helping them get out of poverty. The focus on learning skills, commercial farming, and production can empower women at the local level.

The Community Work Programme (CWP) gives women money for working, whether full-time or part-time. Participants are expected to contribute to community development. The CWP is a key part of what the Department of Cooperative Governance does within the Ministry of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. It supports the government's efforts to provide social safety nets. The program aims to offer even a small amount of employment to people with limited options and connects unemployed youth with job opportunities. The Department of Cooperative Governance hires agents to run the program. In 2014, there were 148 locations across the country, with about 1000 participants at each location. The goal is to have at least one CWP site in every local municipality by 2017. Most participants are young women, and the number of participants and locations are increasing.

Established in 2001, Siyakholwa is a non-governmental organization that provides direction and resources to local initiatives within the Keiskammahoek region. Its mission centers on alleviating poverty through the development and oversight of ventures that foster employment and promote thriving communities. Currently, they collaborate with 60 farmers representing 37 villages. They help farmers grow valuable crops, increase their production, and find local markets, which helps create sustainable jobs. This program creates work in Keiskammahoek by hiring people to do tasks that the communities have identified as important.

Training and skills development are essential for ensuring that projects and the area can continue to thrive. Employees of the foundation receive training in areas like first aid, computer skills, financial literacy, basic bookkeeping, administration, and leadership. Other training includes how to plant vegetables and maize, make compost, operate nurseries, and care for fields. While Siyakholwa has seen progress in the fight against poverty, providing education and training to people in rural areas remains a challenge in South Africa.

The Seven Stars Dairy Trust, created in 2010, has been important in building up the cooperative and working towards its goals. It produces and sells healthy milk, offers jobs to some people, and contributes to the development of the Keiskammahoek area. Most of the dairy's 55 employees are women, and it's the biggest business in Keiskammahoek. This is an example of a community and private sector partnership. Partnering with companies like Amadlelo, IDC, and Coega has helped them achieve a lot. The Hawker's Association is managed by Mrs. Lumka Maso. It helps about 20 women in Keiskammahoek buy milk at a lower price from the Seven Stars Dairy Cooperative and then sell it in town. The Amahlathi Hawkers Association is a well-established way to connect and communicate with women traders, especially in informal markets. Its goal is to provide support programs that help street traders increase their participation in the supply chain.

3.5.2 Socioeconomic Status of Alice

According to Dodd and Nyabvudzi (2014), the threat to farming due to the revised Land Act had adverse results on food security for the whole country. This Land Act

reopened the process of land claims, which is still an ongoing process, due to the unjust land expropriation during the apartheid era. This saw a decline in food production and brought a negative impact to South Africa's poor communities. With limited employment opportunities, the country's inflation affected them the most.

Musemarwa (2013), the province of the Eastern Cape has few employment opportunities, more especially those in the rural areas, which heavily rely on social grants and remittances as a livelihood strategy. Most South African households buy food from the stores or local markets, but with limited income, this becomes a challenge in meeting the required dietary needs and other essentials. With employment rates ranging from 25,4% to 31,20% from 2000 to 2013, and a slight decline to 25,2% in 2014 (Taborda, 2014). According to Eastern Cape Socio Economic Consultative Council (2017), the unemployment rate in 2017 was 27, 7% in the third quarter and 26, 7% in the fourth quarter, then in 2023 it was sitting at 40% in the third quarter, 41, 9% in the fourth quarter. In the year 2024, the first quarter, the unemployment rate was set at 42, 4% which is quite high for the province, and unemployment for women was 40,7% (ECSECC, 2024).

The South African Constitution (Act 106 of 1996) stipulates that individuals are entitled to consistent and reliable availability of sufficient, secure, and wholesome sustenance, enabling them to fulfil their dietary requirements for a vigorous and healthful existence. This Act is almost impossible; most households are forced to live with what they can afford, which is due to the low incomes and unemployment rates mentioned above. The buying power of these households and their living conditions are, therefore, limited.

While the region is host to 4 higher educational institutions (University of Fort Hare, Walter Sisulu, Fort Cox, Lovedale Further Education and Training). With these four

institutions of higher learning, many of the poor are still left out with no job or educational qualifications. These institutions can only take up so much of the labour force, while many are still left seeking.

The district needs to create a specialized plan to improve education in the area. This plan needs to fit with the long-term goals for the region, especially focusing on the new key areas that are boosting the economy. We need to look at what our local colleges and universities are offering to make sure they're helping people gain the skills the region needs. The Provincial Department of Education and these schools should work together on a plan to develop the workforce, making sure it lines up with our goals for the future. We need to pay close attention to the skills needed for building and improving our infrastructure, as well as the skills required for our ocean-based industries and agriculture (Ngumbela, 2022).

Getting infrastructure to the rural parts of the region is difficult because it lacks dependable funding (ECSEC, 2017). Right now, the district relies on grants from the national government. However, the way funds are divided among municipalities doesn't really help us. Because the district includes areas that used to be "Bantustans," we have huge infrastructure problems left over from the past. The current funding formula doesn't consider these historical problems when deciding how much money we get. So, it's essential that the district find ways to raise its own money to fix these issues in water, sanitation, transportation, and other important economic areas. These problems are holding us back from growing enough to really tackle poverty and underdevelopment (Ngumbela, 2022).

In the Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality of the Eastern Cape, a significant proportion (62.0%) of households surveyed indicated monthly earnings below R1 500. These diminished earnings generally correlate with adverse effects on household food

security. Furthermore, as Lahiff (2014) notes, possibilities for employment in distant mining and manufacturing industries, historically a mainstay for the Eastern Cape, have decreased considerably. Reductions in employment are also occurring in numerous local sectors, particularly within governmental organizations.

This decrease in opportunities for standard employment has prompted numerous households to engage in less structured economic activities to secure their livelihoods, leading to a greater reliance on established, agriculture-based pursuits. The prevalence of elevated joblessness, reduced income, and widespread destitution within much of the population undermines the fiscal capacity of municipal authorities to gather revenue from residents, resulting in poor income collection. Consequently, local governments become more dependent on financial support from central government, due to their limited capacity to generate revenue independently. This situation exacerbates socio-economic difficulties such as impoverishment and inadequate access to nutrition, as municipalities are constrained in their ability to furnish effective public services to their constituents.

3.6 Research design

Asenahabi (2019) defines research design as a structured framework or plan that guides the gathering of data to address the research questions or hypotheses in the most efficient manner. In essence, a research design provides a systematic plan detailing a study's data collection and analysis methods, employed to arrive at conclusions regarding the research problem. The principal aim of the research design is to enable the researcher to anticipate appropriate research decisions that will enhance the study's reliability and validity.

Within the realm of social science research, case studies and surveys are frequently employed as fundamental methodologies for data acquisition. A case study constitutes a thorough investigation of a person, event, collective, or locality over a protracted duration (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). This methodology furnishes an elucidative analysis of a subject, explored via single or multiple examples within a framework, and achieved through intensive observation within its natural setting. Substantial comprehension can be derived from a specific instance; however, some scholars contend that the constrained scope of a case study inhibits the broader applicability of its conclusions, owing to the examination of merely a restricted set of instances. Consequently, the collected data may not possess sufficient reliability and validity for generalization to a larger population.

Conversely, a survey involves a broad overview, examination, or depiction of diverse individuals or subjects, not investigated with extensive depth or duration. Survey research necessitates various instruments for collecting data from samples, including interviews, questionnaires, and observations. This triangulation of data collection tools is more likely to enhance the significance of research results. In this investigation, a

survey is deemed appropriate for assessing the contributions of the rural non-farm economy to livelihoods in Alice and Keiskammahoek.

This research strategically integrated surveys and case studies. Recognizing the limitations of case study methodology, particularly concerns about variability in analytical processes, data interpretation, and the gathering of empirical evidence, the study proactively addressed potential weaknesses. Such variability is often associated with the introduction of predisposition and subjectivity arising from researcher perspectives and collaborative influences. The inherent reliance on evaluative reasoning and expertise throughout case study investigations was acknowledged. To enhance the trustworthiness and rigor of the findings, surveys were implemented with systematic bias monitoring protocols. The deliberate combination of these methodologies was deemed appropriate for effectively pursuing the research aims and responding to the central inquiries, thereby minimizing the impact of individual researcher inclinations.

3.6.1 Population

According to Babbie (2001), a population comprises the entire set of individuals or items possessing specific characteristics relevant to the researcher's study. Consequently, the population for this study encompassed all women engaged in the agricultural economy and sector within Keiskammahoek and Alice, respectively. Given the impracticality of examining every member of the population, a representative sample was necessary. The selected participants constituting this sample were chosen to ensure its accurate reflection of the broader population. The population for this study was all women within the non-farming sector across Alice and Keiskammahoek.

3.6.2 Sampling method and sample size

Stratified random sampling and purposive sampling were employed in this study. The researcher selected a sample based on the researcher's own information about the population, analysis components, and the nature of the analysis aims (Berndt, 2020). In the case of qualitative data, the researcher selected a sample from all women engaged in rural non-farm activities in Alice and Keiskamahoeek using purposive sampling. Whereas in the case of stratified sampling, the researcher, that is, the sample, is non-randomly dependent on a specific trademark. The individual attributes were chosen to answer important questions regarding a particular issue or item. This strategy was helpful to the research as it would have been a difficult task to study the entire population (Berndt, 2020).

The population of women in the rural non-farm sector and those in farming from three villages in each town formed part of the study population, and the total population was 115. The population was divided into groups that share similarities, for instance, those who are involved in RNFEA and those who are doing both farming and partaking in RNFEA, and then random sampling took place from the groups. Respondents from the population were grouped according to their non-farm economic activity and farm activity, and were given numbers. The sample size for each town was 89, and Slovin's formula was used to determine and ensure the validity of the sample size: $n = \frac{N}{1 + (0.05)^2}$.

Table 1: Sampling of the sample size

Respondents	Population	Sample Size
Aloe	25	$25/115 \times 89 =$
Hair	22	$22/115 \times 89 =$
Woods	5	$5/115 \times 89 =$
Mixed Farming	12	$12/115 \times 89 =$
Spaza Shops	15	$15/115 \times 89 =$
Transport	3	$3/115 \times 89 =$
Piggery	10	$10/115 \times 89 =$
Chicken layers/Broilers	10	$10/115 \times 89 =$
Seamstresses	11	$11/115 \times 89 =$
Bead Work	2	$2/115 \times 89 =$
Total	115	89

$115/1+155 (0,05)^2 = 89,3$, when rounded off, it gives a sample size of 89

RPS/NXn

The researcher then took advantage of a readily selected sample size and applied purposive sampling for the qualitative part of the study. Purposive sampling uses the

information or knowledge of those who are known and can participate in the study. In this case, the researcher used the respondents who were at the researcher's disposal.

3.6.3 Data collection

Data collection refers to a procedure of gathering and transcribing information to construct conclusions regarding critical problems (Mazhar et al., 2021). There are many ways that were used to collect data during this research, including interviews, a tape recorder, note pads, and interview guides (Mazhar, 2021). The researcher used semi-structured interviews as research instruments. Semi-structured interview questions were used to enable participants to participate during a procedure of sharing data and experiences they have had. In addition, interviews were used to explain the participants' impressions without forcing any of the researcher's views, consequently, keeping away bias and accomplishing greater reliability (Mwita, 2022). The thought was to enable the participants to express their opinions, issues, or views as freely as possible. Indeed, the respondents were able to express themselves freely, which was possible through the semi-structured methodology, consequently stressing the emphasis on qualitative research. A written interview guide was facilitated to structure the interviews (Vosloo, 2014).

Due to the substantial size of the study's sample, the researcher necessitated supplementary assistance to manage the workload. Consequently, two research assistants were recruited and underwent comprehensive training prior to the commencement of data collection. To this end, the researcher facilitated a two-day training program for the assistants. This training was deemed crucial to familiarize them with the ethical considerations of research and appropriate interviewing

methodologies. The research assistants gained a thorough understanding of the study's aims, the defined problem, and the guiding research questions, enabling the successful collection of data.

3.6.3.1 In-depth interviews

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001), detailed interviews are a key method for collecting information in qualitative studies. Similarly, Taherdoost (2022) describes these interviews as focused talks led by the researcher to gather the necessary details for addressing the study's aims. In this research, the researcher conducted personal interviews with women working outside of traditional farming in the rural areas of Alice and Keiskammahoek. These interviews were crucial in understanding their lives and the impact of these non-farming jobs on their livelihoods. The researcher used an interview guide, allowing the researcher to steer the conversation while also exploring points brought up by the women themselves. The information gathered was then linked to their livelihoods and the effects of their non-farm work.

Following the approach of De Vos et al. (2002), the researcher started each interview by introducing the topic and then guiding the discussion using a prepared set of questions. This approach, as Porta (2014) suggests, allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the topic, discover new perspectives, and uncover detailed information, providing opportunities for further exploration. Furthermore, the interviews allowed the researcher to observe non-verbal cues that added meaning to the spoken words. The use of in-depth interviews was also justified because discussions about women's empowerment can be quite personal and sensitive.

As Denscombe (2003) points out, these are often topics that people are hesitant to discuss unless they feel comfortable and secure in a private, one-on-one setting. This type of information is often considered private and confidential. To circumvent the problem of preventing people from pulling out, as in-depth interviews are lengthy, interviews were short and straight to the point. Interviews, while taking up a lot of time, also carry risks. There's a chance of leaning towards a particular viewpoint or people stretching the truth, which can weaken the value and believability of the information you gather. People might not be honest or simply might not have all the details you need. To reduce these issues, we gave people enough time to think about their responses and encouraged them to be open and honest about the subject we were exploring.

3.6.3.2 Interview guide

An interview guide was used in conducting in-depth interviews. Naz, Gulab, Aslam (2022). Both the interview guide and a questionnaire were composed in English and translated into IsiXhosa, which is the primary language spoken in Eastern Cape Province. The interview guide contained basic points and questions. The guide guaranteed that the interviews stayed focused on the advancement of the present issue. In any case, the interviews were sufficiently conversational to enable participants to speak and discuss problems freely, and indeed they were.

With informed consent obtained, participants willingly engaged in audio recording of research interactions. To protect participant anonymity, assurances of confidentiality were provided. Audio data were securely destroyed following completion of data analysis. The primary purpose of employing audio recording was to minimize data attrition and facilitate a more comprehensive and accurate record of the proceedings.

These recordings proved valuable in augmenting and validating findings derived from supplementary methods, such as observational field notes (Sheppard, 2002).

Field notes also served as a contingency measure in the event of technical malfunction or accidental data erasure during the transcription process. Research assistants emphasized documenting research dialogues by utilizing field notes. The audio recordings also helped in data verification and cross-referencing other sources of information, such as field notes and observations (Patton, 2002). As a secondary measure, notes were used if the audio recorder malfunctioned or if data was accidentally erased during the transcription process. Research assistants prioritized data documentation using field notes.

3.6.3.3 Semi-structured questionnaires

A survey, comprised of a set of uniform questions relevant to the research subject, served as a data collection tool. Participants provided written or verbal responses. This study employed semi-structured surveys, incorporating both open-ended and closed-ended questions, to gather data from chosen women engaged in non-agricultural economic activities within the Amathole District. For the open-ended inquiries, respondents were given space to elaborate on their answers; research support assistants significantly assisted in this process by recording responses on behalf of participants.

To gather comprehensive data, a mixed-methods approach was employed, utilizing both open-ended interviews and closed-ended questionnaires. The interview format facilitated detailed responses, allowing participants to articulate their perspectives and provide thorough explanations. Conversely, the questionnaires offered structured response options for ease of selection. Following each interview, participants

completed a corresponding questionnaire. Data verification procedures were subsequently conducted, involving field observations and a review of relevant literature within the school library, to ensure response consistency. The researcher examined completed questionnaires for omissions and sought to clarify any ambiguous or incomplete answers.

This complementary use of interviews and questionnaires was strategically implemented to enhance the rigor and trustworthiness of the research outcomes. Recognizing potential limitations associated with questionnaire administration, particularly issues of literacy prevalent in rural contexts, the questionnaire, initially written in English, was translated into isiXhosa to mitigate misinterpretations. Research assistants also provided support to participants with limited literacy skills to ensure equitable participation.

3.6.4 Data analysis

De Vos (2011) conceptualizes data analysis as a structured methodology for condensing and structuring data to generate results that necessitate the researcher's interpretation. In this study, quantitative data underwent preparation, cleansing, organization, and coding within Microsoft Excel. Subsequent analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Descriptive techniques, including bar charts, pie charts, and basic frequency and percentage tables, were employed to scrutinize questionnaire items and address the research inquiries. Qualitative data, derived from interview transcripts, were subjected to thematic analysis to categorize responses into overarching themes or salient issues, thereby augmenting the quantitative findings. Ultimately, both quantitative and

qualitative outcomes are discussed thematically in relation to the established study aims.

3.6.4.1 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis is characteristic of most qualitative analyses. The themes were developed from the objectives of the study and participants' responses. Themes are teams of codes that recur through being similar or connected with each other (Vosloo, 2014). Castleberry and Nolen (2018) argued that thematic analysis might be a useful strategy for viewing the points of read of assorted analysis participants, that includes likenesses and contrasts and manufacturing sudden bits of information. This method allowed the researcher to link the prevalence of a specific theme to the entirety of the data. This contributed to both precision and detail, enriching the overall interpretive value of the research. Thematic Analysis facilitated a more comprehensive understanding of the possible implications of any subject under investigation.

3.6.4.2 Statistical Package for Social Science Analysis

Dummy variable coding was employed for statistical analysis using SPSS software. Initially, coded data were recorded in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and subsequently imported into SPSS to generate frequency distributions. SPSS facilitated the analysis of quantitative data, with results displayed through graphs, tables, and pie charts. Visual representations enhance the clarity and accuracy of data presentation, thereby facilitating more insightful analysis (Vosloo, 2014).

3.7 Summary

In social science research, there are typically three main ways to conduct studies: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approach. This study used the mixed methods approach, combining questionnaires and interviews to gather firsthand

information from households in the Amatole district. These methods were chosen because they allow for collecting data from many people, enabling more in-depth analysis and leading to more meaningful findings. Data was collected from four villages located in the Alice town and Keiskammahoek areas within the Amathole District. Specifically, household heads were the focus of the study. The data collection involved one-on-one interviews with these individuals, using a prepared questionnaire that included both fixed-answer and open-ended questions.

The surveys took place between October 2019 and March 2020. Participants were selected using a purposive and random simple sample as a sampling strategy. Ultimately, interviews were conducted with 89 household heads across the villages. The data collected from the surveys was analysed using a statistical software program called SPSS. SPSS was used to generate summary statistics, which helped draw conclusions about the larger population. These summaries included frequencies, charts, and bar graphs. Microsoft Excel was used for the initial step of entering the data into the computer. Throughout the study, ethical guidelines from the University of Fort Hare were carefully followed. Before the research began, participants were fully informed about the study's goals, purpose, and how their information would be used. Participation was completely voluntary, and to protect privacy, individual names are not used in any reports.

The subsequent chapter will detail the study's outcomes. These outcomes will be elucidated with reference to the central research inquiries and the foundational theoretical constructs that informed the investigation. Furthermore, a comprehensive analysis of the results will be provided. Thorough discussions of the results will also be made.

Chapter Four- PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

4.1. Introduction

Rural non-farm economic activities (RNFEA) have often been overlooked by those planning and implementing development initiatives. While this is a known issue, there's a lack of specific knowledge about RNFEA in the Eastern Cape. This research aimed to understand the situation better, focusing on the types of non-farm economic activities that small-scale farmers participate in, why they're doing them, how these jobs affect their lives, and the problems they face. Because RNFEA has been neglected, this study seeks to shed light on the reality in rural areas. The goal is to encourage the government, charities, and businesses to take action to support and improve RNFEA. The Amathole District served as the study area. The research looked at the non-farm activities farmers were involved in, their motivations, the effect of these activities on their well-being, and the difficulties encountered.

This chapter details the data acquired from two Amathole District villages during July and August 2020. It presents a rigorous analysis and evaluation of the collected information. The research outcomes are displayed through tables and figures. Therefore, this section aims to present, examine, and rigorously evaluate the findings derived from the data acquired in two villages within the Amathole Rural District during July and August 2020. The research outcomes are displayed using tables and figures. These statistical representations will offer a concise overview of the research results and provide further clarification. Themes will facilitate comprehension of the qualitative data.

4.2 Section A: Biographical data

Table 2: Presenting the Chi Square test of significance

One-Sample Test

Test Value = 89

	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower	Upper
Age of Participants	-430.414	88	0.000	-84.685	-85.08	-84.29
Marital Status of Participants	-1670.613	88	0.000	-87.404	-87.51	-87.30
Reasons for Being Single	-1755.490	52	0.000	-87.151	-87.25	-87.05

Household Head	-423.832	88	0.000	-85.596	-86.00	-85.19
Household Member	-729.919	88	0.000	-85.865	-86.10	-85.63
Types of Marriage of Participants	-1051.000	35	0.000	-87.583	-87.75	-87.41
Education Level	-1075.277	88	0.000	-87.427	-87.59	-87.27

Figure 5: A One-Sample T Test presenting the biographical data of all women sampled to participate in rural non-farming economic activities in Alice and Keiskammahoek

Source: Own (2024)

Age is quite significant in any sector to determine which age group is likely to participate. In several studies under the Rural Non-Farm Economic Activities, it is seen as one of the determinants of the pull and push factors in this sector. Age not only influences the participation of participants in the rural non-farm economic activities but also forms part of policy development.

For one to attain decent employment, one must have an educational qualification that aligns with the jobs advertised. However, in South Africa and other countries in Africa and within the Sub-Saharan countries, that is not the case. Levels of unemployment have risen, and the economy is struggling to meet such demands. Naugler and Naude (2017) had an estimation that by the year 2020, the population of Africa and those who want to enter the job market is 170 million. Indeed, and the number of those without formal employment has risen. For instance, the number of the unemployed reported in 2024 is 31,9% SSA (2024) and the number of unemployed women is. Therefore, one sometimes partakes in rural non-farm economic activities as they are unable to find formal employment, or due to a lack of education and skills.

The government of South Africa strongly points out that people should be open to creating employment for themselves, as there are no jobs for everyone, but with limited resources, such as skills development centres, information centres, and funding, this is hard to achieve, as most of these people are in rural areas. Arugo (2014) posits that marriage constitutes a pivotal societal institution. It is characterized as a lifelong union between a male and a female, and concurrently, a social framework facilitating a relationship and mutual understanding between two family units. However, that may not be the case, as in every society, there are situations in which marriage fails, and the couples cannot tolerate living together, and they divorce. The question was divided into three: from married to single, to what kind of marriage, and the other was giving some understanding as to why some are single.

Women in the rural non-farm economy are married under civil marriage; the other group of women are in cohabitation. If one lives with their partner for a long time, society sometimes deems them as married people. Some women are single due to the following circumstances: divorce, and some are widowed. In Africa, it is believed that for a woman's security, one must marry, and it is believed that a woman's place is taking care of their household and reproduction.

Even though the study focuses mainly on women, it is also important to establish the household head of their households. Figure 9 presents the data of household members. The table above shows that most households are led by men, followed by those households where women live on their own, and then those households where women still live with their mothers. Men in African households culturally have been deemed as heads of the households, regardless of whether they are young or female; a male figure is considered the head, and all ownership is discussed with him. This has been like this for centuries, and in most parts of the country, this is still the case.

In the countryside, family size is everything. For many struggling rural families, having more children isn't just about expanding the family tree; it's a vital survival tactic. They see it as a safeguard against life's uncertainties, a way to guarantee care in their twilight years, and a source of essential help from a young age. Children quickly become active contributors, looking after younger siblings, tending to livestock, running errands, gathering essential resources, and assisting with agricultural tasks, becoming invaluable assets to the family's household.

The type of data that is presented in this section is important as it gives a brief description and some insights into the respondents. It paves the way for the concrete that is to come after, ideas on one's challenges and positives in their lives. The data was analysed using the sample t-test to look for the significance of the study.

4.3 Section B: Research findings

4.3.1 Years of experience in the sector

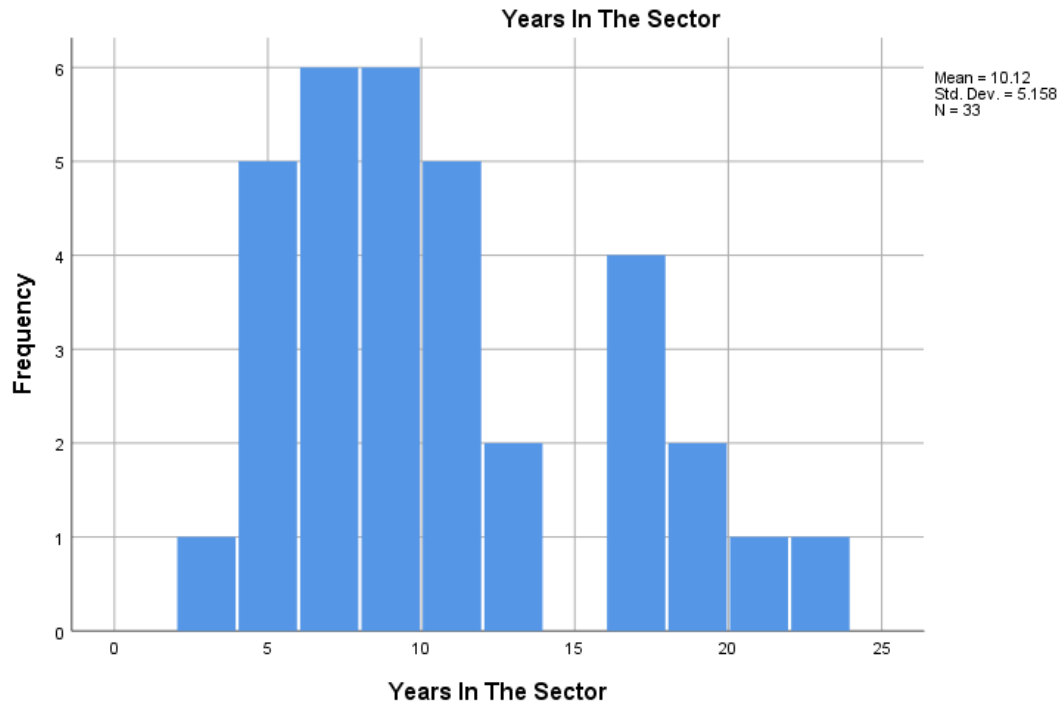


Figure 6: A statistical graph showing the years in the sector

Source: Own (2024)

Figure 6 shows the number of rural non-farm women when they started in the non-farming economy and how long they have stayed to date. Some women have more than twenty years in this sector, while others have. This, therefore, means that this sector has lived for quite some time, and it is continuously doing so. Evidence from the data above shows that these have held on longer than others in this. This may be attributed to the positive gains from this sector that these women have seen over the years. The non-rural farm sector came into being through the disappointments or the lack of from the farming sector.

Hence, the rural non-farm sector varies in activities pursued by the women, which makes it exciting and enticing at the same time. This doesn't take away from farming, but it gives an option instead of looking at farming as the only source of income.

4.3.2 How the respondents sell their services or products

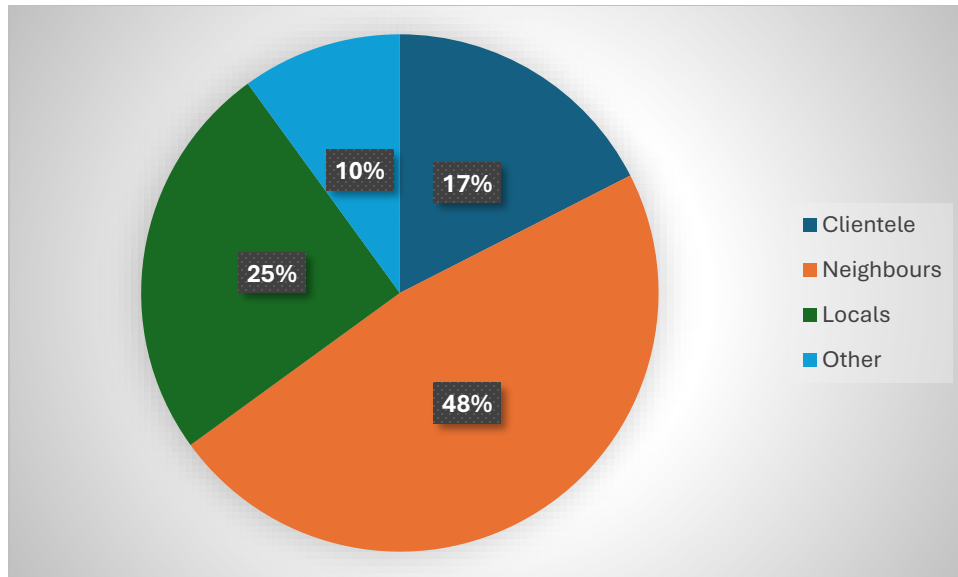


Figure 7: A pie graph showing how the respondents sell their services or products

Source: Own (2024)

Figure 7 represents how these women sell their services or products in order to receive profits, and it also shows who sells mostly. The figure shows that 48 percent of their products are mostly bought by their neighbours, 25 percent shows that their their customers are in their localities, 17 percent shows that they sell they products based on

personal clients, while 10 percent represents other ways of selling the services, some of the women mentioned that in order for their products to sell they have to go from village to village selling. While some have to wait for someone who is from outside their location or town to come and buy their products, offering a good price is key.

4.3.3 Their income or Profit received

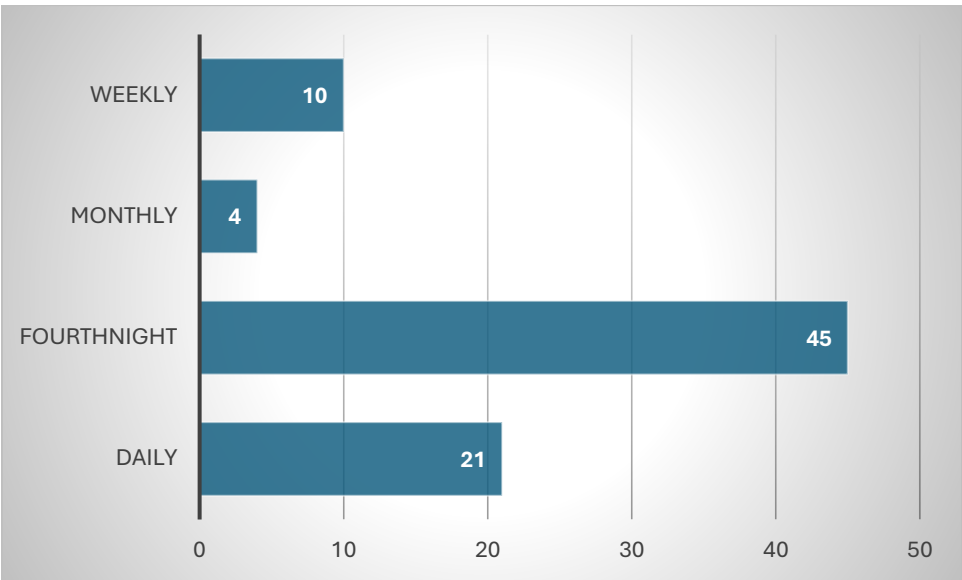


Figure 8: A bar graph showing when their Income or Profit received

Source: Own (2024)

The figure 8 above shows or tells us how these women receive their profits or income. 45 percent represent most of these women who receive their profits on a fortnightly basis, followed by 21 percent of those who say they receive their money daily, 10 percent say they receive their money on a weekly basis, and lastly, 4 percent of these women receive

their income monthly. This depends on which sector these are involved in and what kind of trade they have agreed on with their clients. Steven (2010) posited that direct subsidies are generally favoured, given their perceived role as the core component of agricultural support mechanisms within the Common Agricultural Policy. Kleinhanss's comprehensive research in 2015, for instance, demonstrated that even big farms in Germany needed a helping hand with their income through direct payments. However, as data reads, most of them receive their money four times nightly; this is due to the trade agreement between the client and seller.

Figure 8 represents contributions made by the Rural Non-Farm Economy to address some of the important arguments around this study. Not only does Figure 16 speak of the contribution, but also some of the themes below have been explored in interviews to sort of get the human side of the matter. Most respondents agree that the sector does provide some relief in their households. As seen in the figure, some of the activities that participants are engaged with lack sustainability due to various challenges that are encountered while pursuing this matter. For example, one is pursuing a tailoring service, and the machine becomes faulty, one has taken out money from their own pockets for repairs, resulting in no income until the machine is fixed. Most of these activities pursued are not registered and therefore lack information on insurance and other means of protecting one's form of income.

4.3.4 The contributions of the RNFAE

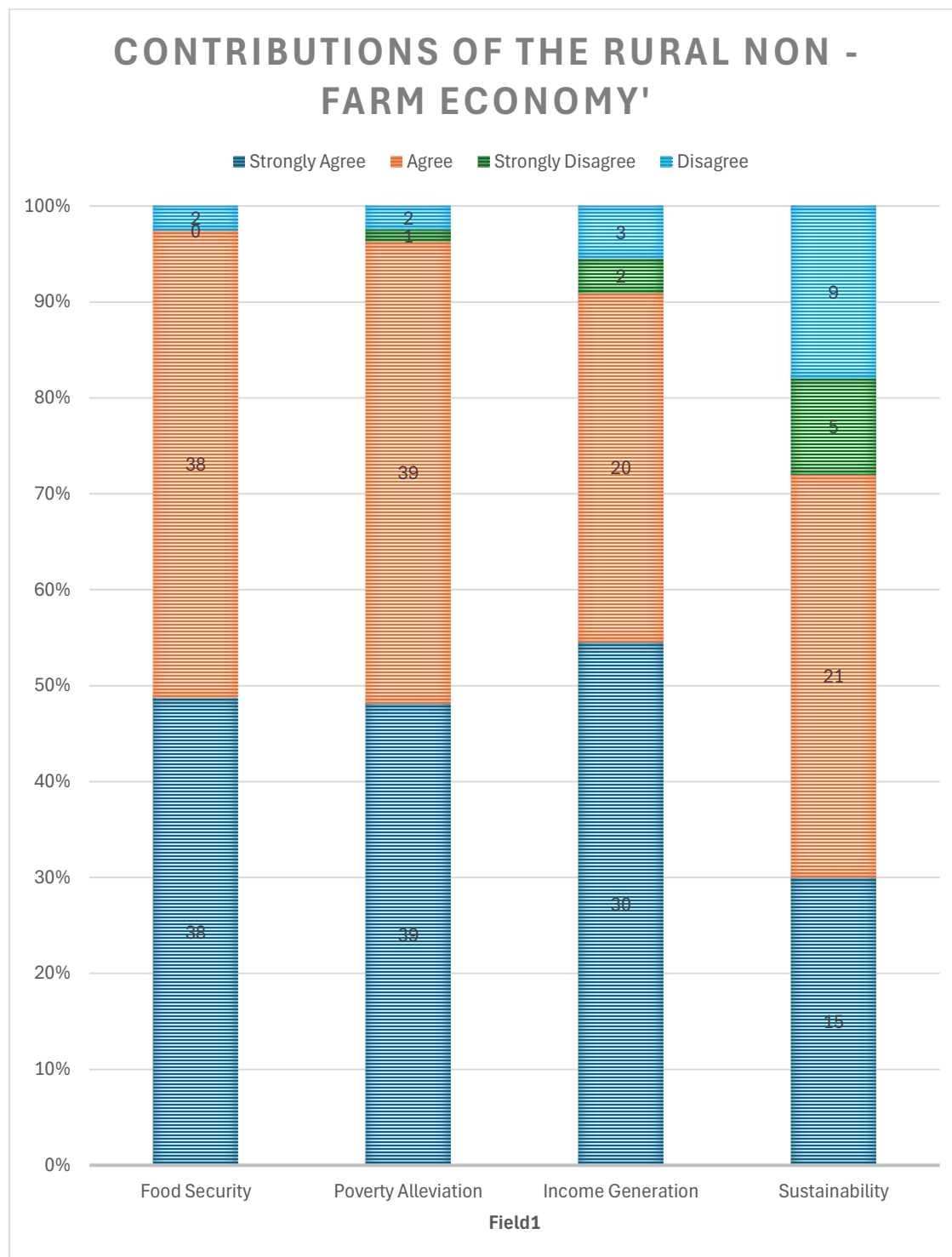


Figure 9: Presents the contributions of the RNFAE

Source: Own (2024)

Figure 9 presents a data that contains the contributions of the rural non-farm economic activities, the data had four variables that explored the effectiveness of this sector. 38 % of the respondents strongly agreed that the sector does contribute to food security in their households. In poverty alleviation 39 % of the respondents agreed that the sector does alleviate poverty. Income generation, 30% of the respondents agreed that the sector does bring income generation.

4.3.5 Income

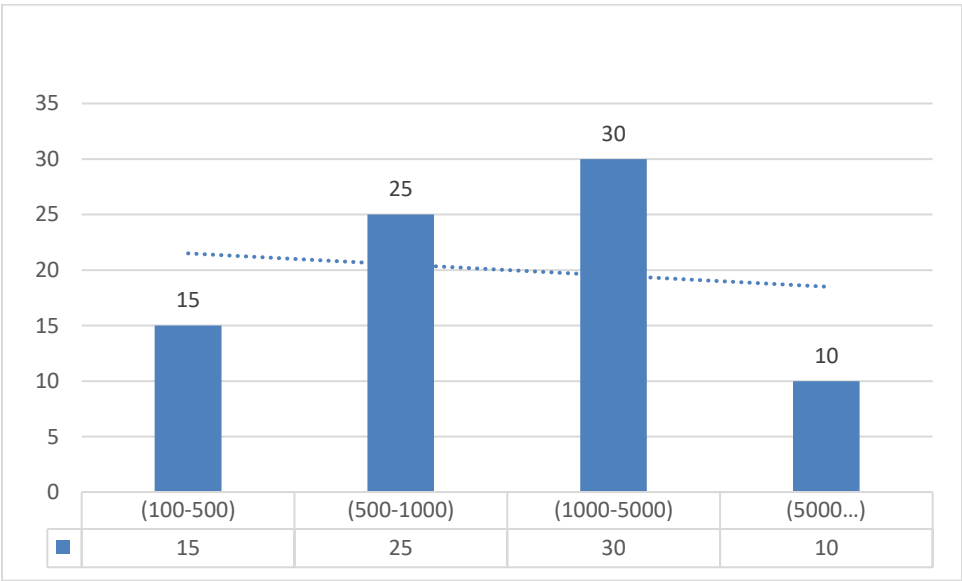


Figure 10: A bar graph showing how much the respondents make

Source: Own (2024)

Figure 10 represents the income that all these women receive. Most of these women state that they receive between (1000-5000) followed by those who say they receive (500-

1000), then the others receive (100-500) then there's those who receive an amount of R5000 and above are few. This data represents both towns which is Alice and Keiskammahoek within the Amathole district. It was presented by a few field studies in the 1970s and then increased in the 1980s and 1990s then in the 2000s that the share income from RNFEA accounts for 35-50 %. Small enterprise studies show similar figures. For example, estimate that 20-45% of full-time employment of rural households is undertaken in small nonfarm firms, and 30-500% of rural incomes come from these activities Nagler, 2017). Therefore, this means that the rural non-farm economy does offer some form of profit and is a viable form of employment for those who are unable to attain formal employment.

4.3.6 How the rural non-farm economy best describes household income

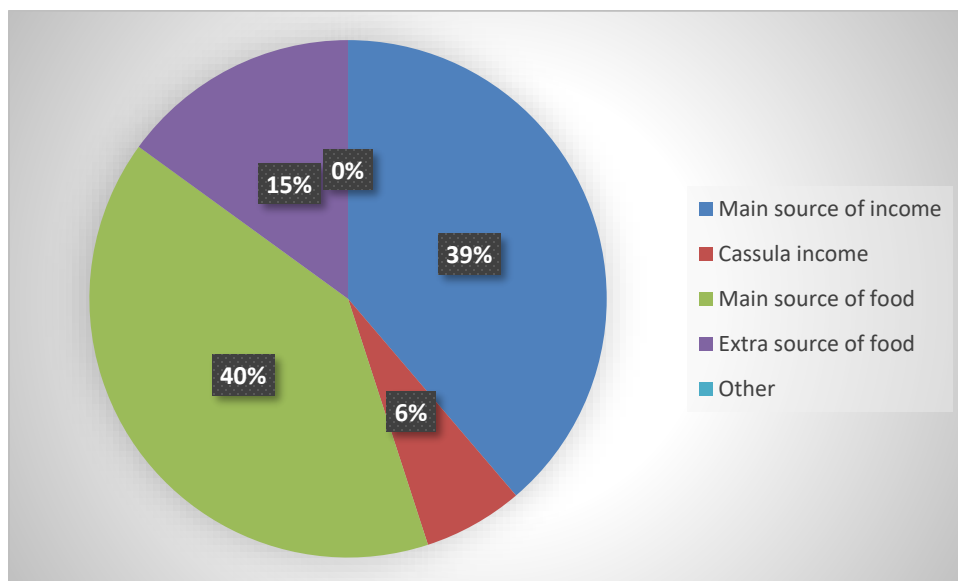


Figure 11: A pie graph showing how the rural non-farm economy best describes household income

Source: Own (2024)

The data shows that 40% percent of these women state that the income received from these sources goes straight to food, while 39% of these women state that this income is their main source of income. 15% say that this income is used to supplement food, maybe during the month, as shown in the figure, that the number of black African households is quite huge; therefore, this means that an extra income is needed to buy extra food. While 6% of these women are saying that their income is just for casual stuff this could refer to toiletries or cosmetics, clothes or for just an extra pocket money. Therefore, this means that the rural non-farm sector does offer relief be it in a form of securing food in the household and while some view the incomes from this sector as the main source of income.

4.3.7 The graph shows whether this is the only income that the respondents receive.

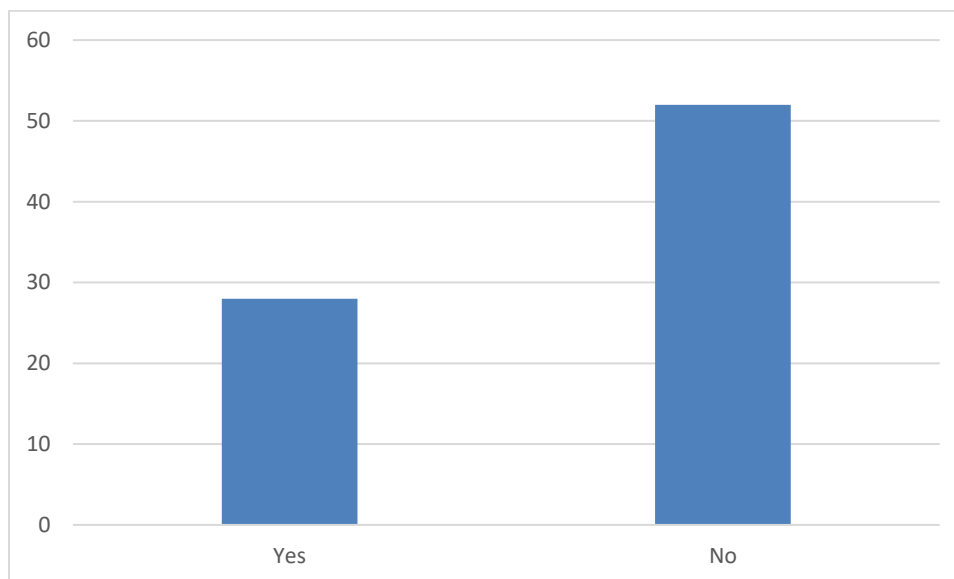


Figure 12: the bar graph shows whether this is the only income that the respondents receive.

Source: Own (2024)

Figure 12 shows that most women are not only dependent on the earnings of this sector, but also on other income streams that they receive, so that this money can either be used as the main income or to supplement whatever needs are there within the household. Mamabolo, Chaminuka & Machethe (2022) discerned eight distinct income streams across all National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS) waves conducted between 2008 and 2017. These encompassed earnings from labour (salaries/wages), state welfare payments, returns on investments, earnings from assets, financial transfers, revenues from leased properties, proceeds from farming operations, and income derived from alternative governmental programs. The NIDS survey estimates imputed rental revenue associated with owner-occupied residences (Brophy et al. 2018). Furthermore, receipts from supplementary government initiatives, including the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) and compensation for workplace injuries, were also considered. In the Eastern Cape Province, over 65 per cent of the population received social grants in the period 2008-2010. This increased to over 70 per cent in the period 2012-2017, which is quite a significant number.

4.3.8 The graph shows the other sources of income that the respondents have

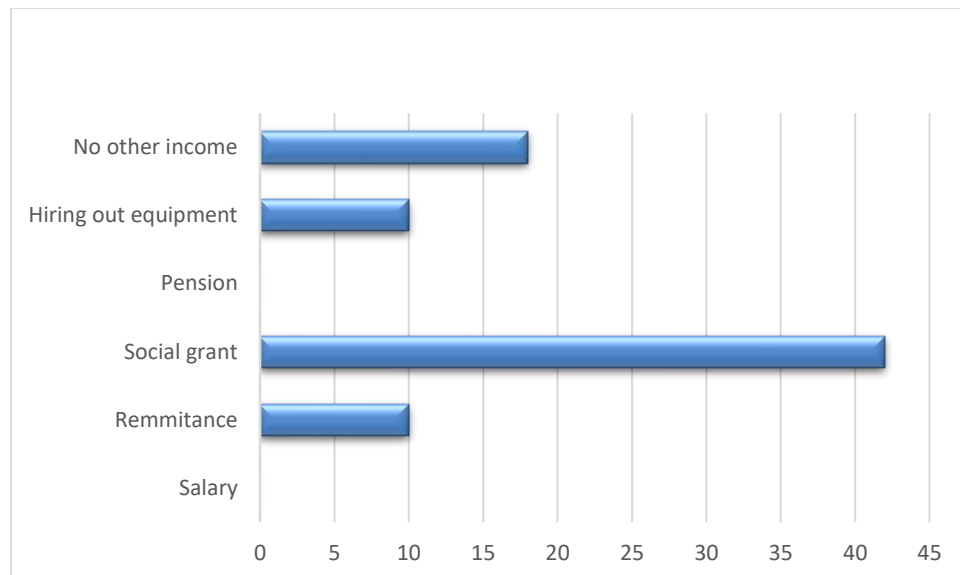


Figure 13: The graph shows the other sources of income that the respondents have

Source: Own (2024)

Graph 13 shows that there are other sources of income that these women have, as shown in the figure, that not all of them only receive their income from the Rural Non-Farm Economy, or as small-scale farmers. A huge number also rely on or receive a social grant, which is paid monthly. Followed by those who say that they have no other sources of income, they solely rely on this sector to receive an income; some receive remittances from their spouses or family members, and while some make money through hiring out equipment to small-scale farmers. The data represented in figure 6 shows that the majority of people in the Eastern do receive social grant as the primary source of income these grants vary; child grant which is received by the mother or guardian on behalf of the child or foster care grant, old age grant which is received by persons who are at the

age of 60 and onwards, according to the data above the number of social grants recipients has grown quite significantly from 2012 to 2017 by 70 percent.

4.3.9 The graph shows whether the respondents are employees or not.

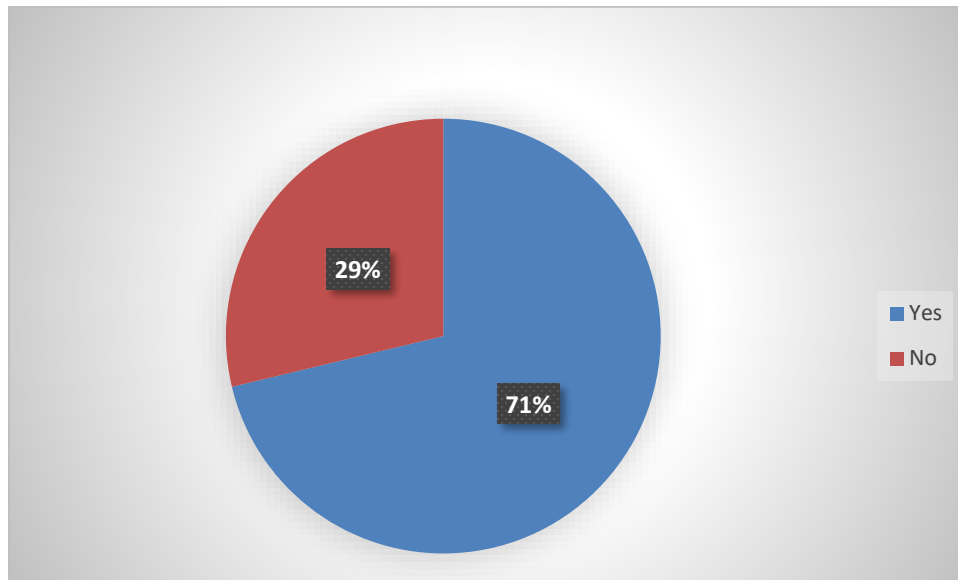


Figure 14 The pie graph shows whether the respondents are employees or not.

Source: Own (2024)

According to Figure 14, a large percentage of these women have 1 or 2 or more people assisting them in their sector, depending on the size of their business or farm and the income that's being generated in the sector. Then a small percentage says no, they do not have employees. According to Ghana (2021), the Rural Non-Farm Sector (RNFS) does offer diverse employment opportunities to the rural populations, for instance, to those involved in poultry slaughtering and plucking and cleaning of the chicken meat requires manpower; therefore, this opens an opportunity for employment.

4.3.10 CHI SQUARE

Table 3: Presenting the Chi Square test of significance

Chi-Square Tests				
	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	
Pearson Chi-Square	143.270a	9	0.000	
Likelihood Ratio	98.016	9	0.000	
Linear-by-Linear Association	15.896	1	0.000	
N of Valid Cases	89			
a. 12 cells (75,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is ,07.				

Source: Own (2024)

Table 3 presents data, with a sample of 89 people, the study was required to check the significance and measured by the 3 variables, and with standard answers that appear in the table. The expected number or value of people who strongly agreed that the sector is indeed helpful, to those who just agree, and to those who do not see the impact or significance of this sector. The question was asked of the active participants of the RNFEA, of farm participants, and of those who chose neither of the sectors. $X^2(1) = 0,07$, $p < .05$. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. A high number of people agree that the RNFEA is significant to the livelihoods.

Table 4: Presenting the Chi-Square test of significance

Case Processing Summary							
	Cases						
	Valid				Total		
	N				N	Percent	
Contributions of Rural non- Farm Economic Activities * Agricultural Participants	57	64.0%	32	36.0%	89	100.0%	

Contributions of Rural non- Farm Economic Activities *	57	64.0%	32	36.0%	89	100.0%	
No Economic Activities							
Contributions of Rural non Farm Economic Activities *	89	100.0%	0	0.0%	89	100.0%	
Rural Non Farm Participants							

Source: Own (2024)

Table 5: Presenting the Chi-Square test of significance

Count						
		Rural Non-Farm Participants				Total

		0	(Strongly Agree)	(Agree)	(Disagree)	
Contributions of Rural non-Farm Economic Activities	(Strongly Agree)	0	34	11	0	45
	(Agree)	0	0	36	0	36
	(Disagree)	0	0	3	2	5
	(Strongly Disagree)	2	0	0	1	3
Total		2	34	50	3	89
Crosstab						
Count						
		Agricultural Participants				Total
		0	(Strongly Disagree)	(Agree)	(Disagree)	
Contributions of Rural non-	(Strongly Agree)	0	8	5	0	13

Farm Economic Activities						
	(Agree)	0	0	36	0	36
	(Disagree)	3	0	0	2	5
	(Strongly Disagree)	3	0	0	0	3
Total		6	8	41	2	57
Crosstab						
Count						
		Agricultural Participants				Total
		0	(Strongly Disagree)	(Agree)	(Disagree)	
Contributions of Rural non- Farm Economic Activities	(Strongly Agree)	0	8	5	0	13
	(Agree)	0	0	36	0	36

	(Disagree)	3	0	0	2	5
	(Strongly Disagree)	3	0	0	0	3
Total		6	8	41	2	57

Source: Own (2024)

4.4 Research Themes

4.4.1 Non-farm activities of rural women

A prerequisite for an individual's engagement in any non-farm economic activity as a means of sustenance often involves an impelling factor, such as limited employment prospects. The greater proportion of women in the rural nonfarm economy indicated that the sector provides a form of employment because some live in homes without a breadwinner due to divorce or death, and others are not employed at all, and they seem not to see any opportunity of getting formal employment, hence the decision to create their own form of employment.

The respondents engaged in the following rural non-farm economic activities. These women in the rural non-farm economy are involved in various activities; some are in production, some are secondary entrepreneurs, while some are offering services. All these activities fit under the traditional and the modern farming economy. Two of these women stated that they clean houses, and some are involved in the aloe juice business. Others are busy with hair for a living; they do hair installations, braids, and plaiting, while one of them also offers hair treatments. Some sell alcohol, but they do not have a license

to sell, so they only sell alcohol on a takeaway basis to avoid law enforcement. While others are seamstresses who design and alter clothing for customers. Some are involved in multiple activities, such as growing and selling broiler chickens and loaning money out, while some also own spaza shops. Others raise pigs and sell piglets as they are in high demand, and pork meat is in high demand annually. One offers transportation to those who commute from the village to the town to work and some school kids. I am into poultry farming, and I sell eggs starting from six dozen to sixty dozen. While some of these women grow and sell these broiler chickens. The other group of these women own spaza shops or tuck shops in their houses.

In some instances, these women mix these or participate in more than one activity to enhance their income. For example, some women, while growing their broilers for a six-week period, have extra time on their hands to do other activities. Some said that they spend that time in the bushes looking for aloe; they also say that the money is used for buying chicken feed.

While women in Keiskammahoek are involved in farming and rural non-farm economy, other women participate in the rural non-farm economy and participate in small-scale farming only, and some supplement small-scale farming with rural non-farm economy. Here are some of the activities that they do: small-scale farming, where they focus on plant production, and some only focus on planting or growing one crop, such as cabbage or spinach, while others mix their crop farming. These small-scale farms do community projects on communal land; some own these projects in groups of four women or more. These women in some villages in Keiskammahoek do not solely own these; there are men that they partner with. Some of these community projects are funded by the

government, while others must fork out money from their own pockets to fund the growth of their projects.

Stats on employment. The following are some of their comments that were given by participating women in the RNFE:

After college, I had to look for an in-service training programme, but I couldn't find anything. I have been applying almost every month when I see internship programs. I haven't been in any interview, so instead of sitting and doing nothing and being penniless, I decided to join others to extract the aloe juice.

People mentioned that they turned to these activities because other jobs didn't pay enough, and there was a demand for what they offered. Others explained they did it to boost their income from government assistance or money sent from family and friends.

For one to attain a living these days one has to fend for themselves and find means that are sustainable, the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach attests to this statement, originating in the latter part of the 1990s, this framework is grounded in developments in the understanding of poverty alleviation, the lived experiences of impoverished and susceptible populations, and the significance of governance structures and regulations (Ellis, 2001:30; Ashley and Carney, 1999:6).

4.4.2 Challenges faced by respondents in farming and rural non-farm economies

Just like any other sector these women are faced with challenges when it comes to the rural non-farm economy and those in small scale farming and the most common challenges that these women face is the climate change; safety as well seems to be one

of the major challenges. Below is a representation of some of the challenges accompanied by some of the comments from the respondents:

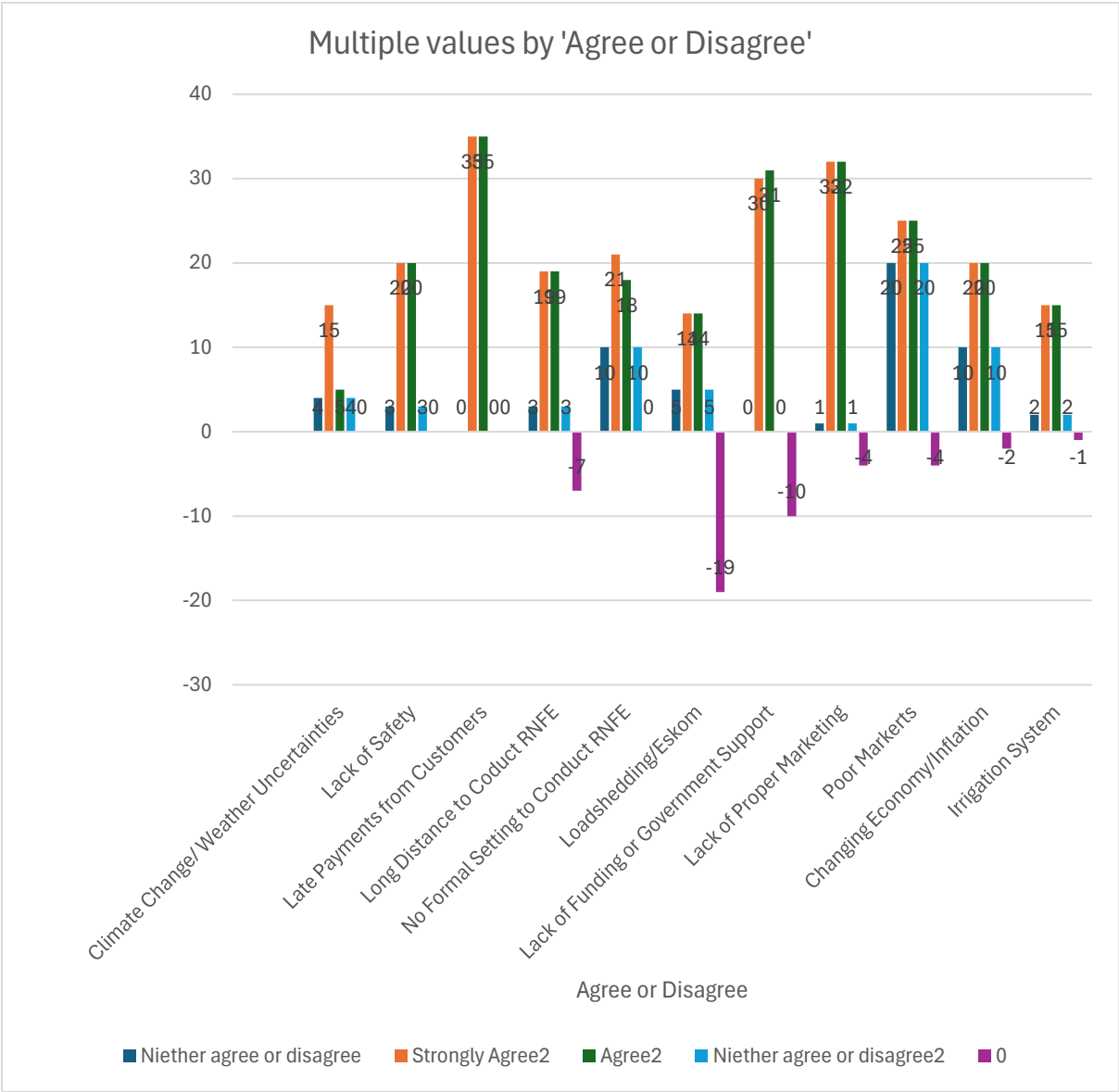


Figure 15: Multiple values by 'Agree or Disagree

Source: Own (2024)

Sometimes some of the of the customers do not pay in full or in time, or at times come up stories and make excuses for next month end. As for the aloe juice, when it rains, I cannot

go and extract and on windy days and during winter seasons it becomes difficult because there is not sufficient sunlight.

The distance that I must travel which can be 10 kilometres to a house, or sometimes I get calls from different customers in one week, so that means I can't attend to all customers.

The labour is quite intensive and to extract enough one must go in the sunny or hot days, so you can imagine the heat in summer, and on top of that one must stack a pile of aloe so that I can get at least 5 litres. On windy, cold and rainy days it impossible to go and collect the juice.

I don't have a workshop, I use a dining room to conduct my business and sometimes I must meet my customers inside the house so that inconvenience my family and sometimes my customers feel comfortable, and mostly when I must take measures.

Safety is one of the major concerns, as we travel quite far from our homesteads to look for aloe as early as sun rise and come back home late. The aloe is mostly found in the bushes. Secondly in this area four women have been killed brutally and raped in the year of 2018 by a serial killer so as you can see, we are not safe at all.

While in Keiskammahoek they also face challenges while pursuing these activities in this sector, their challenges faced are slightly different from those of the women in Alice: here are some of the challenges that these women in Keiskammahoek are faced with difficulty in finding markets to sell our fresh produce. Farmers are struggling, trapped in a cycle of poverty. The lack of funds for essential transportation and supplies is a constant barrier. Compounding this issue is their inability to secure any loans, leaving them stranded.

Without financial support, weeks or even months can pass without any activity as they desperately try to gather resources.

Sadly, these periods of Climate change is a contributing element that adversely affects agricultural yields. For instance, a period of dryness between May and October 2021 resulted in conditions ranging from moderately to severely dry, with isolated areas of extreme aridity observed in portions of the Eastern Cape Province. Furthermore, in 2015, South Africa encountered water deficits, delayed precipitation patterns, and declining reservoir volumes, culminating in a drought that was considered the most severe in the nation since 1982. The Eastern Cape was subsequently designated a disaster zone in 2019. Insufficient access to financing also poses a significant challenge for these agricultural producers. Stagnation can stretch on indefinitely, sometimes forcing them to sell off valuable animals or equipment just to scrape together enough capital for other income-generating ventures outside of farming.

Access to electrical power was a significant impediment, particularly for individuals engaged in trades such as tailoring and carpentry, where it is an essential resource. Furthermore, the absence of electricity constrained economic prospects, compelling reliance on existing, yet often insufficient, income-generating activities for sustenance. Load shedding has been one of the contributing factors in effectiveness of the business, there are instances where electricity would load shed three times a day which affects badly on output. Beyond the challenges already mentioned, several people also talked about how bad roads made transportation expensive. They felt stuck because they couldn't easily afford to travel to get the supplies they needed or even reach better places to sell what they had to offer.

4.3.3 Support from Rural Development

Some of the respondents who are participating in Agricultural projects, do get a start-up kind of a support. That support is sometimes in a form of seedlings from different crops like Spinach, cabbage, potatoes, beetroot etc. Officials from the department before they dispatch the seedlings, they take a sample of the soil for testing and to see which crops are best suited for these crops. Furthermore, they take few individuals for training after the completion of the training they come back and share the knowledge and skills. With regular monitoring and support these projects can sustain and grow themselves. However, not all projects are as lucky greed is sometimes one of the contributing factors apart from climate as major contributing factor, lack of accountability from the members of the project, theft and mismanagement of earnings from the produce. Some of the respondents mentioned that failure of these projects leaves them with limited opportunities of earning income. Diversifying for income earnings is seen as an opportunity.

4.3.4 Livelihood

Some of these women have never had the chance nor a presented opportunity to any form of employment. They have stated a few reasons to their misfortune such low of education which led to the inability to search and sometimes process information. The squabbles and divisions within the community that lead to different groups that are in favour of the short-term community projects. When employment opportunities arise within the community in most cases, they need only a few people to employ and for a short term, and one family member gets the opportunity to be employed and still that is not enough to sustain a household. Most of these women have cell phones and they only now how to make and receive calls only, which limits access to information relating to job

opportunities or skills development programmes. Therefore, the rural non-farm economic activity becomes part of their livelihood.

African households consist of many household members, and this is sometimes done deliberately extend one's lineage and to keep the name for future generations. A woman's significant role in this household is reproduction and managing the household affairs such as nutrition and the wellbeing of the household. While relying on social grants for sustenance. This proves to be another outstanding motivation of venturing into rural non-farm economy to increase household income known to be inadequate. One of the women indicated that she needed to make a living and not depend on her husband's income only. Some of the women participating in the rural non-farm economy stated the following:

It is hard to find employment no matter the age even if you are educated these days, it is hard finding employment, I hold a bachelor's degree but to this day, I haven't landed not even an internship. So meanwhile I'm still at home I have decided to sell some sweets and other things that are essential to the community members.

According to Statistics South Africa the unemployment rate in the Eastern Cape is currently seating at 44, 0 percent which is quite high for the province and the overall total for women in the province without unemployment is at 43, and 6 percent which is quite high. In 2022, nearly half (47.0%) of women in Southern Africa were classified as economically inactive. This indicates a substantial proportion of the female working-age population in the region is not participating in the labour force, a figure considerably higher than the 35.6% observed for men. According to recent global data, female labour force

participation stands at approximately 47%, significantly lower than the 72% rate for males (ILO, 2022). Consequently, a considerable amount of the productive capacity represented by women in the South African labour market remains untapped.

4.3.5 Potential of the sector

This research acknowledges that non-farm activities can have both adverse and beneficial consequences. However, given the positive impact documented in this study, it posits that impoverished rural women typically participate in such endeavours with the expectation of favourable results. Consequently, the investigation centered on assessing the contribution of non-farm activities to women's livelihoods, specifically examining three principal outcomes: enhanced financial resources, improved welfare, and the generation of employment opportunities. Enhanced financial resources was evaluated by determining if participation in the selected activity led to a rise in household earnings. Improved welfare assessed whether the chosen activity facilitated the fulfilment of essential needs. Finally, employment generation refers to the capacity of specific livelihood strategies to produce productive employment, encompassing both financial compensation (salaries and wages) and output. Testimonials from participants indicated substantial benefits, including increased participation in social groups and the ability to construct housing and support their families. It is thus evident that the pursuit of non-farm activities serves as a means for these women to augment their earnings and address various fundamental needs, such as procuring food and clothing, purchasing inputs, covering transportation costs, and financing educational expenses for their children.

4.5 Summary

This research investigated the livelihoods of rural women in the Amathole District of South Africa, focusing on their involvement in rural non-agricultural enterprises (RNAEs). The findings indicated that all surveyed women participated in RNAEs, with some also engaged in small-scale farming. These farming activities supplemented income to cover essential expenses such as school fees, clothing, and food. While a subset of the sample was involved in farming, the majority primarily engaged in RNAEs. Key obstacles to engaging in RNAEs included limited opportunities, age-related barriers, inadequate infrastructure (electricity and paved roads), lack of access to credit, and time constraints. The (RNFEAs) undertaken encompassed a range of activities, including painting, carpentry, construction, aloe juice harvesting, tailoring, brick production, trading, and firewood sales. Although education is generally considered important for accessing opportunities, the study revealed no correlation between educational attainment and the type of RNAE pursued. Individuals with both primary and secondary education levels participated in the same activities. Geographic location, however, significantly influenced the RNFAEs undertaken. Participants in peri-urban areas engaged in activities dependent on nearby towns, such as trading, while those in remote rural areas focused on activities reliant on locally available and immobile resources, such as firewood sales and brickmaking.

The primary motivations for engaging in RNAEs were financial necessity and lack of formal employment. Other contributing factors included the continuation of family businesses and market access. However, participants faced challenges such as low earnings, limited market access, lack of credit for acquiring inputs, infrastructure

deficiencies (electricity and paved roads), and input shortages. While participation in RNAEs resulted in increased income, improved well-being, and the creation of working days, the contribution to income was often marginal, whereas the improvement in well-being was generally considered substantial. The impact on creating working days was typically viewed as modest.

In general, respondents expressed optimism regarding the prospective advantages of rural non-agricultural enterprises (RNAEs), while also underscoring the necessity of assistance from governmental bodies and various industries to foster increased output. They highlighted the importance of enhancements to the fundamental framework, specifically the development of transportation networks, the broadening of power distribution systems, and the delivery of centralized water services. Furthermore, they highlighted the importance of accessible credit facilities. The subsequent chapter presents recommendations aimed at enhancing the productivity of rural non-farm enterprises in South Africa.

Chapter 5- Critical Evaluation

5.1 Introduction

Rural non-agricultural economic activities possess significant potential to stimulate socio-economic advancement in South Africa; however, this capacity remains largely untapped. Despite its considerable promise, the non-agricultural sector has yet to realise its full potential. This chapter offers a thorough analysis of research outcomes, supported by a review of relevant literature and secondary data. The subsequent sections present a summary of the research findings pertaining to the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. This section underscores the key topics examined and their connection to the overarching theme of the study. The chapter proposes preliminary recommendations intended to benefit government officials, non-governmental organisations, the private sector, and other relevant rural development stakeholders. These recommendations, informed by the study's results, can serve as a reference point for enhancing the rural non-agricultural economy in South Africa. Lastly, the chapter identifies areas requiring further research.

5.2 Analysis of Research Objectives

5.2.1 The main objective of this study was to assess mainly the contributions of the rural non-farm economy to women in the Eastern Cape under the Amathole District, focusing mainly on two towns, Alice and Keiskammahoek.

Local government and rural department have an important role to play in realising development in developing states. The study identified non-farm economic activities as one of the alternative means outside of farming to try to alleviate unemployment amongst women in this region. Women are the most vulnerable group in any low-income state,

and they are seen as lacking when it comes to development. The main theory of the study, Women and Development, is that women should not be left behind in development, as they are seen as the major key towards realising a developed state. Women saw a gap outside of farming and ventured into non-farm economies, creating means of employment. The objective was answered under different themes, creation of income, to see how it has contributed to the household income and check if the only income. According to a report issued by Statistics South Africa in 2022, the unemployment rate in the Eastern Cape is currently sitting at 44, 0 and the overall total for women in the province without unemployment is at 43, 6 percent which is quite high. In 2022, official statistics indicated that nearly half (47.0%) of the female population in Southern Africa were not participating in the formal labour force.

This indicates a notable gender disparity in economic activity within South Africa, as approximately half of the women of working age are not engaged in the labour force. This figure contrasts with the corresponding rate of 35.6 percent for men. Globally, recent data from the International Labour Organisation (2022) reveal that women's participation in the labour force is significantly lower than men's, with rates of approximately 47 per cent and 72 per cent, respectively. Hence, the Women and Development theory argues that women must not be left behind in development and planning. The study has further looked at contributions and financial gains of the non-farm economy; some of the respondents were quite happy with the gains made through this sector, even though it is not enough, but at least one is able to put food on the table. Studies indicate that earnings from non-agricultural activities contribute significantly to household income (Collier and Lal, 1986; Collier et al., 1990). Observed initially in several studies during the 1960s to the 1970s,

this trend strengthened throughout the 1980s and 1990s. The proportion of income generated outside of agriculture varies considerably, accounting for between 22 and 93% of total rural earnings, including both monetary and non-monetary forms.

5.2.2 The second objective focused on activities in which these women are involved in this sector. These women are involved in quite a few activities under this sector, while some mix farming and non-farm economies. Some of them are spaza shop owners who sell and study the needs of a particular village or location and capitalise on that and make monetary gains in return. Some of these women extract aloe juice and sell it nightly. In this sector, the money that you make is determined by you. For instance, if you manage to extract 20 litres of aloe, you are guaranteed R400.00. This activity is quite common in the Sheshegu Location and has spread to neighbouring villages under the Raymond Mhlaba Municipality. While some prefer mixing both sectors, this one is quite common in Keiskammahoek, and the justification was that some of the farming is project-based, where the income must be equally shared amongst members, and it is not enough.

5.2.3 The third objective tried to assess the challenges faced by these women as they continue to pursue these activities. Seasons change as some of these activities take place in an outside setting or at informal shelters, for instance, aloe extraction needs calm and warm weather for the juice to come out, and aloe is mostly found in forests. These women are faced with such challenges. However, there is a positive impact from both sectors; these women get an opportunity to put food on the table, as most households are female-led. Those involved in projects such as Zanyokhwe get an opportunity to acquire skills in the farming sector and supply nearby markets. This is in line with what the WAD has been advocating for, but sustainability is lacking in most of these activities,

as some lack the necessary skills to sustain these activities. For instance, those who cook and sell do not have certification that ensures the safety and health of customers which puts them in a risk losing such business. Therefore, the government needs to visit and reach out to offices such as NYDA to educate and find means of sustaining these livelihood activities, hence the sustainable livelihood approach.

5.3 Summary

It has been said that RNFE is a livelihood strategy that has been chosen by many in the rural setting even more so, by women in the Amathole District's rural areas in response to high rates of unemployment. The study revealed that there are those who are involved in small-scale farming and subsistence farming in Amathole who are engaged in non-farm activities, particularly because of the decline in agricultural production. Those who partake in farming saw a decline in agricultural production that has been due to frequent natural disasters such as drought and flooding. For many, farming is the main way they earn a living, while others depend on government assistance and money sent home from relatives. But lately, farmers haven't been able to grow as much due to difficulty getting supplies and loans to purchase them. This has severely impacted their earnings, leading to intense hardship and the constant worry of going hungry.

To survive, they've been forced to seek out other ways to make money beyond farming, finding that these alternative jobs offer a more reliable path to meeting their families' daily needs. The range of RNFEAs encompasses both established and innovative non-agricultural pursuits. The non-farm sector capitalises on readily accessible local resources, such as aloe juice. Conversely, the innovative activities comprise services such as clothing construction, merchandising, and garment alteration. It is apparent that

the most prominent activities are non-traditional activities. The prevalence of unconventional economic pursuits indicates a potential for greater use of resources within the local community. Despite this potential, rural non-farm enterprises (RNFE) in Amathole are experiencing limited productivity, hindering rural residents from fully leveraging the non-agricultural sector of the regional economy. This underperformance stems from various challenges that require attention to enable the anticipated expansion and efficiency of RNFE in rural areas nationwide.

First off, research showed that improvements to things like roads and electricity have a huge impact on how well rural non-farm businesses (RNFE) grow and how much they produce. It's crucial to understand that not having good transportation to get materials and sell products has been a major obstacle for these rural businesses. Basically, bad roads and limited, pricey transportation have kept business owners from reaching a wider customer base. They're stuck selling to the same, often poor, local markets. On top of that, a lack of electricity really holds people back, whether they're already involved in these non-farm businesses or thinking about starting one, because it limits the kinds of things they can do.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1. Improving access to information

Rural Non-Farm Economic Activities have been practised for a long time, but came into the light in the late 60s with authors studying their nature and their benefits to the rural communities. In this study, what has stood out is that these women lack access to information on how they can best enhance, embrace this sector and the potential for

growth. The Amothole District Municipality can partner up with local Municipalities such as Raymond Mhlaba and the Amahlathi municipalities and go to villages and offer them information.

5.4.2. Advocating for individual ownership

The government should assist these women who partake in RNFE, giving people individual ownership of the communal land they use for their businesses, which is vital. It safeguards their basic rights and offers them complete legal security. This means shifting from a shared land system to one where a person or a small group has full, private control. With this individual ownership, they have the sole right to use the land, earn money from it, keep it safe, sell it, or even use it as security for a loan.

Some experts believe that shared land ownership can lead to neglect because people don't always feel responsible for it. They might not see the point in taking care of something if the benefits are shared with everyone. But with individual ownership, people are more likely to invest in the land because they're the ones who will directly benefit from it. To make this transition easier and fairer, we need simple, user-friendly processes for applying for and registering these individual titles, managed locally. This will give people a real sense of ownership and security, empowering them to build better lives.

5.4.3 Safety

Some of the women indicated their safety while pursuing some of the activities in the rural non-farm economy, for instance these women wake up in the wee hours of the morning to look for and to extract the aloe juice in the forests far away from home in the bush of which some are dense. This exposes a greater risk to their safety, one of the women who

attested that there have been killings in this activity, of four women who have been brutally murdered in the bushes while extracting the aloe juice. Therefore, safety is one of the crucial factors in their lives as the aloe juice is quite in demand in their line of business; aloe is used in so many things when it is processed, such as (ukrakrayo), a medicine for reducing bane or when someone is constipated, and in other medicinal things. Therefore, this means women tapped into a good way of making money as it is continuously in demand, but they fear for their safety.

5.4.4. Policy development/ Information

The government needs to embrace the Rural Non-Farm Economy as a new strategy for poverty alleviation in rural areas, particularly for rural women. The government must study the sector extensively and come to terms with the fact that agriculture is not the only option for the rural poor for employment. They need to see the sector as a way of alleviating pressure in means to try and provide for the rural poor. This sector must form part of the Integrated Development Plan or policies. Ensuring that women are developed and that they are seen for trying. Provide guidance and education as they pursue the rural non-farm economy, be educated about each field that they have chosen, for instance, those in the aloe business, instead of selling the juice, why not build something where they will be able to process the juice on their own and create future and sustainable employment.

5.5 Concluding Remarks

It is apparent that there are quite a few hindrances that these women face, and these can affect them negatively. Failure from the South African government to recognise and

support these ventures a way of alleviating pressure from the government as way of sustainable livelihood. This has created a large population of women who are unemployed and without access to basic services. Often, the recognised result is that this has placed not only the province but the country at high levels of unemployment, especially for women.

Although the government promotes self-employment over dependence on the government for employment, this is not as easy as South Africa is one of the developing countries, and with an economy that is struggling to grow, some of these ventures fail before they can lift off, or don't see any growth at all. Governments often expect that investments in land by foreign entities will stimulate job creation, enhance technological advancements, advance infrastructural development, and bolster national food security. However, these projected advantages frequently fail to materialise. A suitable policy and legislative framework are essential to ensure the accrual of economic development benefits and the mitigation of potential risks. Furthermore, it is necessary to address the impediments that have historically excluded women from participating fully in development processes. The persistent challenge lies in formulating tangible alternative development initiatives that empower and support women within the rural non-farm sector and smallholder farming contexts.

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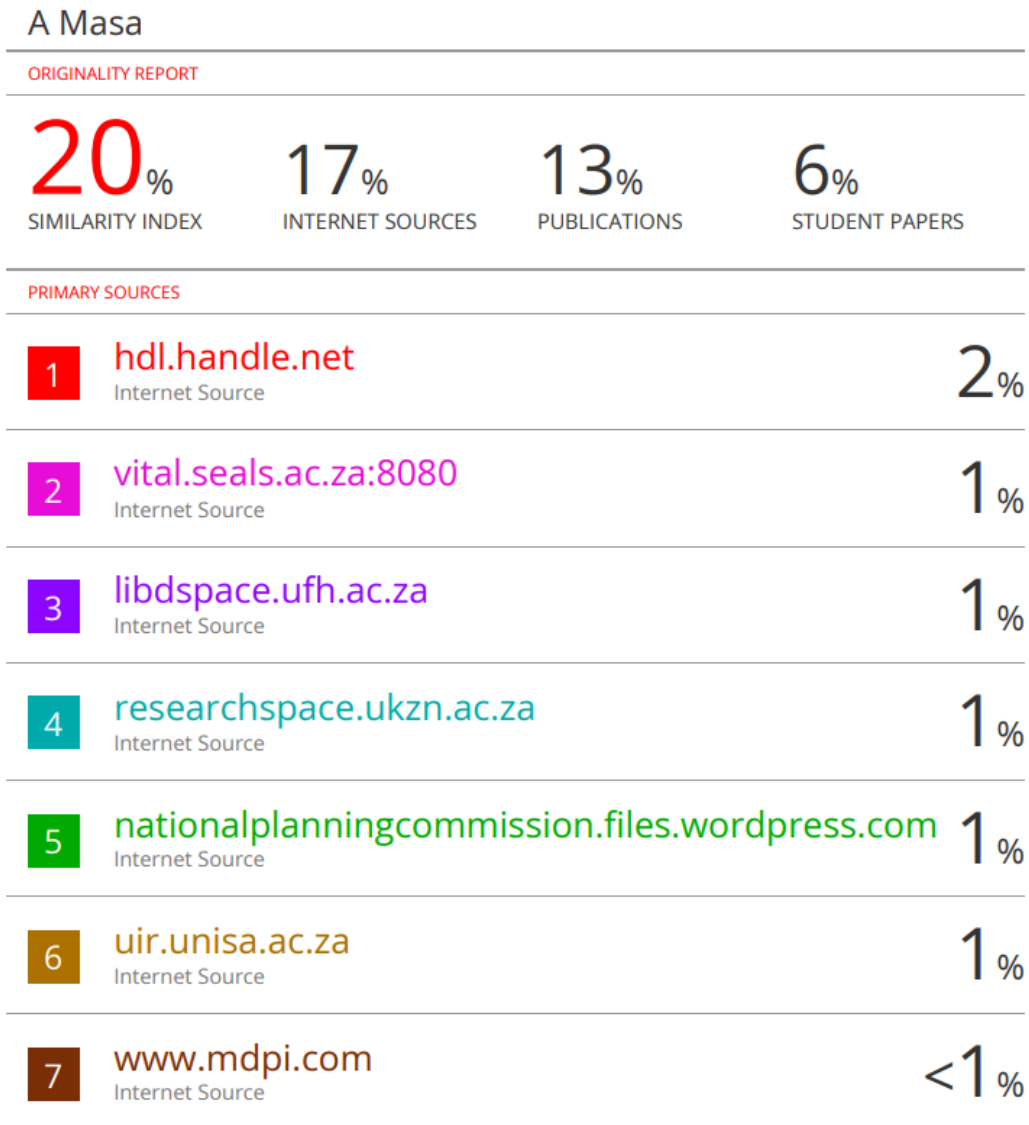
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Appendices

Appendix A: Turnitin Report



Appendix B: Ethical clearance



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

INTER-FACULTY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (IFHREC) ETHICS CLEARANCE

Ethics Clearance ref. number: MAQ011SMAS01

Project title: Contribution of rural non-farm economy to the livelihoods of women in the Eastern Cape: The case of Keiskammahoek and Alice town in the Amathole District.

Qualification registered for: Master of Commerce: Development Studies

Student name: Amanda Masa

Student registration number: 201300436

Supervisor: Mr A Maqubela

Department: Development Studies

Co-supervisor: N/A

On behalf of the University of Fort Hare Inter-Faculty Human Research Ethics Committee (IFHREC) I hereby grant ethics approval for MAQ011SMAS01. This approval is valid for 12 months from the date of approval. Renewal of approval must be applied for BEFORE termination of this approval period. Renewal is subject to receipt of a satisfactory progress report. The approval covers the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project and research instrument(s). The research may commence as from the 05/07/24, using the reference number indicated above.

Note that should any other instruments be required, or amendments become necessary, these require separate authorisation.

Please note that IFHREC must be informed immediately of

- Any material changes in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the document;
- Any material breaches of ethical undertakings or events that impact upon the ethical conduct of the research.

The student must report to the IFHREC in the prescribed format, where applicable, annually, and at the end of the project, in respect of ethical compliance.

IFHREC retains the right to

- Withdraw or amend this approval if
 - Any unethical principal or practices are revealed or suspected;
 - Relevant information has been withheld or misrepresented;
 - Regulatory changes of whatsoever nature so require;
 - The conditions contained in the Certificate have not been adhered to.
- Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project.

Your compliance with Department of Health 2015 guidelines and any other applicable regulatory instruments and with IFHREC ethics requirements as contained in relevant policies and standard operating procedures, is implied.

IFHREC wishes you well in your research.

Yours Sincerely,



Dr Aceme Nyika

Chairperson: University of Fort Hare Inter-Faculty Human Research Ethics Committee (IFHREC)

05 July 2024

Appendix C: Language Editor Certificate

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

LETTER OF ATTESTATION

I, Dr. K. E. Monyai, hereby certify that I received and edited the Masters Dissertation of Amanda Masa, entitled “The contribution of rural non-farm economy to the livelihoods of women in the Eastern Cape: The case of Keiskamahoe and Alice town in the Amathole District.”

Director/ Editor/ Educator

Dr. K. E. Monyai (Ph D)

PARLONS LA LANGUE – LET US SPEAK THE LANGUAGE cc 2005/072166/23

Tax Clearance Certificate Number: 0007/1/2014/0006506743

Diplôme d'études de la langue française (Ministère de l'Education Nationale, Paris)

Post Graduate Diploma RE (Corpus Christi College, London)

B Th (Urbaniana, Rome), B Phil (University of Hull, England), M Th, Drs (UNISA),
Ph D (NWU, Tlokwe-Potchefstroom Campus)

P.O. Fort Beaufort, 5720

Email: drkemonyai@gmail.com Cell: 072 406 4662

Date: 29 November May 2024

Disclaimer: The editor is not responsible for the non-implementation of the proposed corrections in the final version of the dissertation/thesis.

Appendix D: Letter of Permission to collect data



Tel: 046 645 7400/7451 | Fax: 046 645 2562
8 Somerset Street | Fort Beaufort, 5720 | P.O.Box 36, Fort Beaufort, 5700

Enquiries: Ms. P Madotyeni

Ms. Amanda Masa

Dear Ms Masa

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Your letter bears a reference.

Kindly note that your request to conduct research has been approved by the Raymond Mhlaba municipality.

Regards,



U.T. MALINZI
MUNICIPAL MANAGER

Date: 27/01/24

Appendix E: Interview



I Amanda Masa, a Master of Commerce student in the Department of Development Studies, at the University of Fort Hare. I am undertaking an academic research project which focuses on Contribution of rural Non-Farm Economy to the livelihoods of women in the Eastern Cape: The Case of keiskamahoe and Alice town in the Amathole District. This research is a requirement in completing a Master's degree in the department of development studies.

Therefore, this is to kindly request you to participate in the collection of information to make this study a success.

I hereby do confirm that all information collected will be treated confidentially and the data will be used only for academic purposes. The results of the study can be made available to you if requested.

Your co-operation will be highly appreciated in making this study a success.

Thank you for your assistance

A.Masa (Researcher)



Section A: Demographical background of the respondents

PLEASE TICK IN THE BOX PROVIDED

1.1. Which of the following age group do you belong to?

AGE	
20 – 29 Years	
30 – 39 Years	
40 – 49 Years	
50 - 59 Years	
60 + Years	

1. Are you married?

1. Yes	2. No
--------	-------

2a) If **No** what is your marital status?

1	2	3	4	5
Single	Married	Divorced	Widowed	Other(specify)

2. Type of Marriage

1	2	3	4
Civil marriage	Customary	Cohabitation	Other (specify)

3. Who is the head of the household?

1	2	3
Husband	Wife	Other (specify)

4. Who is the head of the household?

1	2	3
Husband	Wife	Other (specify)

5. Educational level

1	2	3	4	5	6
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None	Primary	Secondary	FET	Tertiary	Other (specify)
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Section B: To evaluate the potential of the rural non-farm economy in improving the livelihoods of women.

2.1. What do they understand about the RFNE? Do they know its aims, objectives and its intents?

2.2. When did you start participating in the RNFE/farming sector?

2.3. What motivated you to participate in the RNFE/farming sector?

2.4. So far would you say the RNFE has the potential to sustain your livelihood? Please elaborate.

Section C: To map out both farm and non-farm activities in which rural women in Keiskammahoek and Alice are involved in.

3.1. What activities are you involved in this RNFE/farming sector?

3.2. These activities that you partake in do you think they have enough potential to attract and keep clientele? Please elaborate.

Section D: To assess the challenges that rural women face as they pursue non-farm activities.

4.1. What challenges are you facing as you pursue these activities?

Section E: To assess the support that rural women receive from the department of rural development

5.1 Ever since you started in this sector, is there any form of support that you have received from the department of rural development? If not what kind of assistance would you like the department to extend to you?

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How many years have you been in this sector?

2. How many activities are you involved in this sector

8. To whom do you sell your products?

1	2	3	4
Neighbors	Fresh produce markets	Local shops	Other (specify)

3. The income/profit is it received

- Daily
- Weekly
- Fourth nightly
- Monthly

4. How much do you make in this sector

- (100-500)
- (500-1000)
- (1000-5000)
- (5000....)

5. How does the RNFE best describe your household income?

Reason	Tick All Applicable	
	Yes	No
1 Main source of income		
2 Extra source of income		
3 causal activities		
4 Main source of food for household		

5 Extra source of food		
6 Other (specify)		

6. Is this the only income?

➤ (yes)

➤ (no)

7. What are your other sources of income?

Sources of Income	Amount of Income		
	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly
1. Salary			
2. Remittance/non-farm income			
3.			
4. Social Grants (specify if child support,			

5. Pension			
6. Non-farm income (specify)			
7. Hiring out labour			
8. Hiring out equipment			
9. Other (specify)			

8. Do you have any employees/assistants?

➤ (yes)

➤ (no)

9. Which type of institutional support do you receive?

Type of Support	Institutional Support (Tick Applicable)		
	Government/ Municipality	NGO's	Other (specify)
1.Fertilisers			
2.Pests Control			

3.Boreholes			
4.Support for Fencing			
5.Extension support (specify)			
6.Credit			
7.Infrastructure			
8.Assistance with Marketing Opportunities			
9.Training			
10.Other (specify)			

