



Prevailing inequalities in the provision of agricultural support in South Africa



By
Tim Hart and Michael Aliber

Economic Performance and Development

Social science that makes a difference

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Addressing past inequities in agricultural service provision

- Top of the agenda since 1995 White Paper
- Public sector extension and research services lack the skills, competencies (and motivation), resources and abilities to provide for diversity of clients
- Farmers are diverse in their motivations and technology requirements
- Spillover technologies not suitable for agriculture as a safety net and thus technologies need to be specifically developed and adjusted to farmers diversity – motivation & objectives, skills & education, land & other resources
- Overwhelming emphasis on support for commercially oriented production but not a key practice
- Focusing on and targeting women in projects does not amount to gender mainstreaming
- Lack of acknowledgement of structural causes of inequality
- Women should not be considered in isolation to men and vice versa

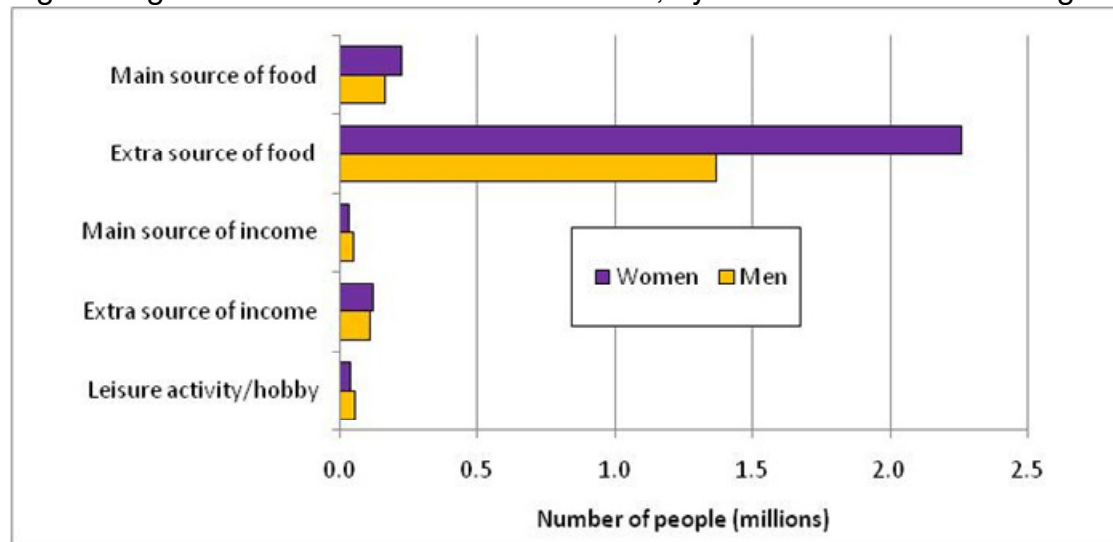
Intentions and methods

- Examine four main areas of concern:
 - Education
 - Lack of access to land
 - Extent and type of service provision
 - Degree to which women can use modern agricultural technology
- Literature review of extension service
- Quantitative data – March 2007 LFS and 2009 GHS
- Qualitative data from various interviews, participatory workshops and ethnographic encounters from a number of studies from January 2005 to June 2010 – Mopane District Limpopo and Bergville KwaZulu-Natal

Diversity of black female farmers in SA

- 2.5 million black households and 4.4 million individuals engage in some level of agricultural production.
- Women represent 61% of all those engaged in farming.
- Irrespective of gender 90% engage in farming for 'main' or 'extra' source of food (LFS 2007 – GHS 2009 = 94%).
- 3.6% of men and 3.5% of women are commercially oriented

Figure 1: gender distribution of black farmers, by 'main reason' for farming



Source: Labour Force Survey, March 2007 (Stats SA 2007)

Diversity of black farming households

- Women outnumber men because more women than men farm in male-headed households
- Women generally responsible for food in all households
- In about 40% of cases male household head is not active in agriculture (not illustrated)

Table 1: Agricultural participation of women and men according to position in household

	Women engaged in agriculture who:			Men engaged in agriculture who:		
	Number	Share	Avg age	Number	Share	Avg age
...are HH heads	1,164,380	43%	54.4	964,827	55%	52.5
...reside in male-headed HHs	954,383	35%	40.7	314,756	18%	25.8
...reside in female-headed HHs	571,823	21%	27.8	486,825	28%	26.9
Total	2,690,586	100%		1,766,408	100%	

Source: Labour Force Survey, March 2007 (Stats SA 2007)

Education

- Advances in technology require better education but education levels are low
- 25% of women HH and 19% of men HH have no formal education
- 60% of female HH have no more than a primary school education
- Despite low-levels of education public sector persists with transferring spillover-technologies

Table 2: Level of education of female and male household heads involved in agriculture 2009

Level of education	Female household heads		Male household heads	
	Number	Share	Number	Share
No schooling	333,518	26%	252,406	19%
Primary schooling	452,618	35%	462,284	35%
Secondary schooling	425,682	33%	532,525	40%
Tertiary	63,621	5%	84,902	6%
All	1,275,439	100%	1,332,117	100%

Source: General Household Survey 2009 (Stats SA 2010)

Access to Land

Table 3: Where black households engage in crop production, by gender of household head, 2009

	Female-headed Households		Male-headed Households	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Farm land (communal or private)	146,092	12%	165,332	14%
Backyard garden	978,813	82%	986,824	81%
School garden	17,381	1%	22,709	2%
Communal garden	34,078	3%	27,240	2%
On verges & unused public land	16,498	1%	20,883	2%
	1,192,861	100%	1,222,988	100%

Source: General Household Survey 2009 (Stats SA 2010)

Extension services and access to government support (1)

- Access to agricultural support is extremely limited irrespective of gender

Table 4: Black agriculturally-active households receiving agricultural support services

	Number of agric-active HHs receiving support in previous year	As share of all agric-active black HHs	Number of C-O agric-active HHs receiving support in previous year*	As share of all C-O agric-active black HHs*
Training	50,806	1.9%	7,164	17.4%
Visits from extension officers	47,077	1.8%	5,604	13.6%
Grants	5,236	0.2%	615	1.5%
Loans	3,822	0.1%	1,049	2.5%
Inputs as part of a loan	7,752	0.3%	742	1.8%
Inputs for free	52,377	2.0%	1,219	3.0%
Livestock health services	262,568	10.0%	6,407	15.6%
Other	1,773	0.1%	278	0.7%
Any 1 or more of the above	339,805	12.9%	13,315	32.4%

*Source: GHS 2009. Note * 'C-O agric active' means 'commercially-oriented agricultural active', as determined by those who indicated that they sold most of what they produced*

Extension services and access to government support (2)

- Male-headed households more likely than female-headed households to get support – difference between bad and very bad!

Table 5: Black agriculturally-active households receiving agricultural support services, by gender of household head

	Number of agric active FHHs receiving support in previous year		Number of agric active MHHs receiving support in previous year		Ratio of MHHs receiving to FHHs*
	Number	Share	Number	Share	
Training	18,874	1.47%	31,932	2.36%	1.60
Visits from extension officers from Agric	22,415	1.75%	24,662	1.83%	1.04
Grants	1,251	0.10%	3,985	0.30%	3.02
Loans	1,482	0.12%	2,339	0.17%	1.50
Inputs as part of a loan	3,454	0.27%	4,298	0.32%	1.18
Inputs for free	27,123	2.12%	25,254	1.87%	0.88
Dipping and vaccination services for stock	116,524	9.10%	146,044	10.81%	1.19
Other	260	0.02%	1,513	0.11%	5.52
Any 1 or more of the above	154,665	12.08%	185,140	13.71%	1.14

* To be precise, this is a comparison of the share of men-headed households receiving a particular form of support relative to the share of women-headed households receiving that form of support; e.g. for training, $1.60 = 2.36\% / 1.47\%$.

Source: GHS 2009.

Extension services and access to government support (3)

- 2008 DOA report suggests that:
- Overall extension personnel have low levels of qualification, with only 20% having a qualification higher than a diploma - 80% are deemed insufficiently qualified to operate as Agricultural Advisors or Subject Matter Experts.
- 73% of all extension officers are men, but in six out of nine provinces female extension officials possess higher qualifications than their male counterparts.
- Few extension officials have been exposed to formal skills programmes.
- Less than 25% of extension staff exposed to technical training programmes since joining the public service.
- Extension officers and researchers are not trained with regard to the crops and livestock and the technology needs of the bulk of their small-scale and subsistence clients
- Training inadequate to addressing rural people's realities.
- Recovery plan to be implemented

Women and modern technology in SA

- Two field sites – both using conventional technology:
- Differ culturally, socially, economically and agroecologically.
- Limpopo – 2 vegetable garden projects – exotic vegetables – mainly women - knowledge ‘useless’ outside of projects as large scale farmers plant maize and traditional crops while women grow traditional vegetables and maize in household gardens – continual support - unsuitable to local climate and practices.
- KZN - central demonstration plot – new hybrid maize - men and women – household fields (1.5Ha) – local source – good uptake but lack of sustained support.

Recommendations

1. Increase in female extensionists will assist in overcoming structural constraints in existing extension service.
2. Extensionists require adequate training and expertise to fulfill their functions with new diverse clients.
3. Government support must acknowledge that most women are subsistence oriented and that those who are commercially oriented equal the number of men so oriented.

Recommendations

4. Reconceptualise technology transfer and development to develop appropriate technologies and support to reach different scales, abilities and accommodate gender and other cultural dynamics.
5. Move away from 'spillover large-scale industrial agricultural' technologies to a more responsive and gender appropriate support while constraints are tackled – land, education, scale. Enhance existing practices.