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Report

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**Life on the farm:**

**Shifting social and moral foundations of the farming community**

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## **A. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDIES: PURPOSE, METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLES**

### **1. The purpose of the study**

The main purpose of the study was to determine farmers' and farm workers' preferences with regards to on-farm and off-farm residential choices. The underlying reason for this focus is that service delivery, in a context of limited budgets, needs to be targeted to either on-farm or off-farm residential areas.

There is currently no clarity with regards to the optimal spending patterns of municipalities and government departments. Most institutions and departments favour expenditures in urban areas, because a large proportion of the population can most easily be served. However, mobile clinics, farm schools, road maintenance, farm worker housing, electrification, sanitation, and rural policing have traditionally been provided in farming areas.

Given the strong trend towards urbanisation, it is understandable that urban spending will increasingly eclipse service delivery on farms. However, there will always be some number of farm workers who live on farms, and they will also require some kinds of government services. This raises the question of future "mixes" of rural and urban service delivery.

Underlying the issue of service delivery, is the issue of private residential choice and spontaneous demographic patterns. In the farming community, this refers to the residential choices of farmers (about their own place of residence and that of their workers) and choices of farm workers. Consequently, a research process was required to investigate these choices. Because it is not a longitudinal study, it was impossible to determine *trends*. However, some of the questions do refer to interviewees' experiences in the last five years, and therefore it is possible to infer some of the social dynamics which are taking place.

Furthermore, residential choices are influenced by a wide variety of other issues, such as the availability of services, the relationship between farmers and workers, the workers' rights to other kinds of livelihoods (e.g. stock keeping) which supplement wage incomes, the farmers' needs regarding the quality of labour, and farm workers' needs regarding training. Furthermore, land reform options are increasingly becoming available, and this study attempted to assess farmers' and farm workers' awareness and attitude towards land reform.

At the heart of the study are profound questions relating to changing social relations in the countryside. This includes wage-based labour relations, share-cropping relations, communal sentiments between farmers and farm workers, and ties between farm workers and their urban-based families and communities. The results show a

wide variety of approaches to rural life, ranging from traditional “paternalistic” attitudes to classical market-based (“Marxian”) wage relationships, to a growing awareness of urban options for upward mobility and rural options for land reform. This is a very complex picture, and can be regarded as a “snap-shot” of rural-urban dynamics in a process of rapid change.

Ideally, the study should be conducted on a longitudinal basis (every five years or so). This may, however, be impractical, since the farmers may no longer own those farms.

The study excluded a key issue-area, viz the question of wages. This was done because the study is not primarily a labour market survey, but instead, is fundamentally informed by service delivery questions. The researchers were also aware that information about wages is not only controversial but is likely to be inaccurate or misleading.

Furthermore, the study should be extended to other rural areas, notably the maize producing areas in the northern Free State, to serve as a contrast to the primarily irrigation- and stock-farming areas covered in this study.

## **2. Selection of case studies**

Eight localities were selected, covering a diversity of agricultural types in the southern Free State and north-eastern parts of the Northern Cape:

1. *Colesberg* (Northern Cape): Sheep and game farming, situated on the N1, and a growth area for tourism
2. *Phillipstown* (Northern Cape): Sheep farming, with a rapidly declining urban area
3. *Hopetown* (Northern Cape): Irrigation farming on the Orange River, with a growing urban economy
4. *Ritchie* (Northern Cape): Irrigation farming on the Modder River, with a static urban area
5. *Luckhoff* (Free State): Irrigation farming on the Orange River, with a static urban area
6. *Fauresmith and Jagersfontein* (Free State): Sheep farming, with a declining urban area. Jagersfontein also has some diamond mining activity, based on De Beers’ operations. These towns are located 12 km apart, and were treated as a single locality study.
7. *Philippolis* (Free State): Sheep and game farming, with a static urban area
8. *Ladybrand* (Eastern Free State): Grain and sheep farming, with a growing urban economy.

To some extent, the localities were selected because of personal contacts of the researchers. The research team realised that access to farmers requires a credible channel of contact. Farmers are notoriously cautious and anxious about providing information about their enterprises and labour relations. Consequently, the team tended to work through church contacts and clergymen, who recommended farmers who would be amenable to be interviewed, and who would allow their workers to be

interviewed.<sup>1</sup> This created a climate of openness, which enabled the researchers to extract sufficient information.

### **3. Methodology**

Closed questionnaires were used, although additional qualitative comments were recorded. The questionnaires are attached as Appendix A.

The following limitations characterize the study and should be considered when the findings are interpreted and applied:

- The study is not completely representative because of the limited number of farmers, farm workers and ex-farm workers who participated in the study. Thus, generalisations cannot simply be made without additional investigation.
- Before starting, the questionnaires were not thoroughly tested and adapted for the various language groups represented by the participants. This made effective collection of relevant information difficult. Piloting in Philippolis?
- The qualitative aspects of the research were not thoroughly controlled because various researchers co-operated in different locality studies and no researcher was completely involved in the whole process. Perspectives and sentiments of individual researchers may therefore have played a role.

### **4. Spatial location of case studies**

#### **4.1 Colesberg**

Colesberg is located in the north-east corner of the Northern Cape, 30 km south of the Free State border. In Colesberg, the farms are large because the farmers farm predominantly with sheep and cattle and the farms. In this survey, the distance between the farms and the town vary from 10 to 50 km.

The farmers tend to farm predominantly with sheep, cattle and game on the one hand. There are also some irrigation farmers, who plant lucerne and maize. There are also instances of farming with vegetables like potato and carrots.

#### **4.2 Phillipstown**

Phillipstown is located .... Five of the farms are located within 20km of Phillipstown, while three of the farms lie further away, in a radius of approximately 20-35km from Phillipstown.

The sample of farmers all farm primarily with sheep, supplemented with goats, cattle and on occasion with game. Most plant lucern as supplement animal feed. One farm

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<sup>1</sup> The researchers took note of the methodological difficulties experienced by the study undertaken by the Centre for Rural Legal Studies (CRLS) *Give reference*. Despite attempts to secure the support of agricultural unions, research access was undermined by a spate of farm murders, the opposition of some agricultural unions, and rumours in the Free State that the study was a front for ANC election campaigning (see page 13).

(Farm E) has diversified into small scale irrigation farming, hunting and also has a guest house (B&B) on the farm.

#### **4.3 Hopetown**

Hopetown is located 90 km south of Kimberley. In Hopetown, due to the different kinds of farming practises and the different ways the land is used, the farms are large where a farmer farms with cattle and the farms are much smaller where there are irrigation farmers. In this survey, the distance between the farms and the town vary from 4 to 52 km.

The farmers tend to farm predominantly with sheep and cattle on the one hand, there are also instances where they farm with goats. On the other hand they are irrigation farmers and plant maize, popcorn, wheat and carrots. Due to the diversity of farming in the Hopetown area there are two different kinds of agricultural practices, which require two different kinds of land use. Stock-farming takes place on huge amounts of land and is not that labour intensive, while irrigation farming uses smaller amounts of land, but this kind of farming is much more labour intensive.

#### **4.4 Ritchie**

Ritchie is situated 60 km south of Kimberley. One farm lies within a 7km radius from Ritchie. The majority of the farm workers of these two farms reside on the farm. Only farm worker lived in town. In Ritchie, six of the farms are located within 20km of Ritchie and Modderfontein, while two of the farms lie further away, approximately 40km from Ritchie and Modderfontein. Farms A and D lie within a 5km radius from Ritchie. The majority of the farm workers of these two farms reside on the farm.

In the Ritchie area, the type of farming varies. Four farms practice primarily irrigation farming, although not exclusively so. They generally combine it with some sheep, goat and/or cattle farming.

#### **4.5 Fauresmith and Jagersfontein**

Fauresmith is located in the south-western Free State, about 110 km from Bloemfontein. In Fauresmith, the farms visited were between 10km and 48km away from the town. Jagersfontein is located 12 km from Fauresmith, on the Bloemfontein road.

The farms are predominantly sheep and cattle farms.

#### **4.6 Luckhoff**

*Luckhoff* is located in the south-western Free State. In this survey the distance between the farms visited and the town varied between 18 and 40 kilometres.

In Luckhoff, farmers tend to manage irrigation farms, due an extensive system of channels covering the countryside that is supplied by the nearby Xhariep dam. The crops of choice are maize and corn and to a lesser extent, popcorn (a separate crop from corn). There are also several sheep and cattle farms in the area. In general, irrigation farming requires quite a high level of skill from both farmers and workers. Irrigation farms are smaller than sheep or cattle farms and tend to average around 60 hectares.

#### 4.7 Philippolis

Philippolis is located 180 km south of Bloemfontein, and 60 km north of Colesberg. Due to the arid conditions of the Philippolis area, the farms are large. In this survey, the distance between the farms and the town vary from 12 to 42 km.

In Philippolis, the farmers tend to farm with sheep, and to a lesser extent, with cattle, goats, game and horses. This type of farming is not labour intensive, and consequently fewer workers are needed on a farm.

#### 4.8 Ladybrand

Ladybrand is situated .... Km east of Bloemfontein, and borders on Lesotho. There is more mixed farming, which requires more workers, than those farms in, for instance, the districts of Philippolis and Philipstown. Because of the position of the district, the workers are mainly Sotho-speaking and the farmers generally speak Sotho with the workers.

The interviewees farm mainly with sheep, cattle and dry-land crops. One of the participants is, exclusively, a dairy farmer and another farmer also grows vegetables. The dairy and vegetable farms need more workers and thus these farmers have relatively more workers in their service than the other farmers.

INSERT MAP

## 5. The interviewees

### 5.1 Number of interviewees

The survey attempted to locate 8 farmers and 8 farm workers per locality study. In each case, a farmer and farm worker living on the same farm were selected.

Table 3: Number of interviewees

Town	Farmers		Farm workers	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
<i>Northern Cape:</i>				
Colesberg	6	1	6	1
Hopetown	7	-	6	1
Philipstown	7	1	7	1



Ritchie	8	-	7	1
<b>Free State:</b>				
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	8	1	6	2
Ladybrand	6	2	6	2
Philippolis	7	1	8	-
Luckhoff	6	1	6	1
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>9</b>
	<b>Total farmers: 62</b>		<b>Total farm workers: 61</b>	

In sum, 62 farmers and 61 farm workers were interviewed.

## 5.2 Age of interviewees

Table 4 indicates a wide spread of age cohorts. In the case of farmers, the most numerous category is the 40-60 age group, while in the case of farm workers, the most numerous category is the under-40 age group.

**Table 4: Age of interviewees**

Town	Farmers			Farm workers		
	Under 40	40-60	Over 60	Under 40	40-60	Over 60
<b>Northern Cape:</b>						
Colesberg	2	3	2	3	4	
Hopetown	-	6	1	5	2	-
Philipstown	3	4	1	5	2	1
Ritchie	2	2	1	3	3	1
<b>Free State:</b>						
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	6	2	1	5	3	
Ladybrand	5	3		1	6	1
Philippolis		6	3	5	3	
Luckhoff		7		5	1	1
<b>TOTALS<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>18</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4</b>

This relative youthfulness of farm workers confirms the finding of the CRLS study that farm workers are relatively young when compared with other employees in the country.<sup>3</sup> The CRLS study showed a predominance of farm workers in the 20-32 age category.

On some farms, in some cases the workers are much younger than the farmers. For example, on three farms in Colesberg, the farmers are between 19 and 28 years older than the workers. In Luckhoff, with one significant exception, the farm workers were generally younger than the farmers. The farmers tended to be in their middle age and generally had been farming for well over decade. In Philippolis, the farmers in the survey tend to be in their middle age and older. They have experience of farming, as

<sup>2</sup> In three questionnaires, the ages were not recorded.

<sup>3</sup> CRLS (2001), p. 23. Census 1996 data was used.

well as the changes experienced during the last two decades. Farm worker interviewees were typically 10-15 years younger than the farmers. The general impression is gained that the farmers have greater seniority than their workers. In Hopetown, the workers are generally much younger than the farmers. The farmers are at least 15-20 years older than the workers.

This may indicate a trend towards ageing amongst farmers (possibly because young aspirant farmers lack start-up land and capital), while farm workers are primarily in the younger age categories. This, in turn, may reflect a higher mobility and turnover of farm workers.

### 5.3 Marriage status of farm workers

The questionnaire asked farm workers about their marriage status, to determine whether farm workers are primarily family-based people, or whether they are singles. Intuitively, the marriage status of farm workers will have a significant impact on their residential decisions, especially so that their spouse can have a job, and so that their children can go to school.

**Table 5 : Marriage status of farm workers**

	Married	Common law / traditional marriage / living together	Unmarried	Divorced/ widowed
<i>Northern Cape:</i>				
Colesberg	2	4	-	1
Hopetown	1	5	-	1
Philipstown	2	4	-	1
Ritchie	4	2	1	2
<i>Free State:</i>				
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	4	4		
Ladybrand	3	5		
Philippolis	2	5	1	-
Luckhoff	2	5		
<i>Totals</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>5</i>

Significantly, a greater number of farm worker interviewees were married in common law, or were living together, than in formal civil marriages. This may indicate that some farm workers have a family in town, while living with another person on the farm. (One case in Colesberg admitted to this practice). On the other hand, it may simply indicate that many farm workers find "living together" arrangements simpler than going through the formalities of marriage.

### 5.4 Size of farm workers' families

This information was requested because farm workers have traditionally kept a large number of their children on the farms. Because of this practice, farm schools were

viable. However, recent indications are that farm workers prefer their children, as well as their spouse, to live in town.

**Table 6: Size of farm workers' families (living on the farm)**

	1 family member	2 family members	3	4	5	6	7 or more
<i>Northern Cape:</i>							
Colesberg	1 (4 children living in town with family)	2	1	-	2	1	-
Hopetown							
Philipstown	2	1	2	1	1	1	-
Ritchie	1	3			3		1
<i>Free State:</i>							
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	-	2	3	1	1	1	-
Ladybrand			1	2	3	2	
Philippolis	1	2	2	2			1
Luckhoff	-	2	1	2	2	-	-
<i>Totals</i>	5	12	10	8	12	5	2

Generally, a large proportion of farm workers have only one, two or three members. This suggests that many workers are sending at least some of their family members away (possibly to towns). Other farm workers' households on the farms are larger, with 4 or 5 members.

This finding confirms that of the CRLS study, that the average household size for farm workers is relatively small, as more than 60% of farm workers live in households containing four or fewer members. However, the CRLS study noted that this small household size may well be an artificial construct since on-farm housing is normally restricted to farm workers and their dependant children.<sup>4</sup> It may well be the case that some children or other dependants are forced by circumstances to live in the towns.

Very few households have more than 7 members, which indicates that extended households are rare on farms.

### 5.5 Educational levels of farmers and farm workers

The level of education of farmers is remarkably high, as Table 7 shows:

**Table 7: Qualifications of farmers**

Town	High school	Diploma	University degree
<i>Northern Cape:</i>			

<sup>4</sup> CRLS (2001), p. 24, drawing on 1996 data.

Colesberg	2	4 (two in agriculture, one in dentistry, one has NTS 2)	1 (Science)
Hopetown		3 (in agriculture)	4
Philipstown	3	1	4
Ritchie	2	4 (agriculture and game management)	2 (B Comm, B agric management)
<b>Free State:</b>			
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	5	4	-
Ladybrand	2	2	4
Philippolis	2	4	2
Luckhoff	2	1 (agriculture college)	4
<b>Totals</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>21</b>

In particular, the number of farmers who have specialised agricultural diplomas and degrees is noteworthy.

In contrast, the level of education of farm workers is distressingly low, as shown by Table 8:

**Table 8: Literacy and education of farm workers**

Town	No schooling / illiterate	Exposure to Primary school	Exposure to High school
<b>Northern Cape:</b>			
Colesberg	3	3	1
Hopetown	2	4	1
Philipstown	1	4	3
Ritchie	4	3	1
<b>Free State:</b>			
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	1	5	2
Ladybrand	-	6	2
Philippolis	4	4	
Luckhoff	4	3	
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>19 (31%)</b>	<b>32 (52%)</b>	<b>10 (16%)</b>

The figure for farm workers (31%) with no schooling is comparable with the 1996 Census, which showed that 33% of farm workers have had no formal education.<sup>5</sup>

## **B. MOBILITY AND ROOTEDNESS: COMPARING FARMERS AND FARM WORKERS**

### **1. A profile of farmers: Length of residence on the farm and in the district**

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in CRLS (2001), p. 35.

The vast majority of farmers in the interviews have been living on their own farm for longer than 16 years. The largest category have been living on their farm for over 20 years. This indicates a great degree of stability in land ownership.

**Table 9: Length of residence on the farm: Farmers**

	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	More than 20 years
<i>Northern Cape:</i>					
Colesberg	-	3	2		2
Hopetown	1	1	2	1	2
Philipstown		1	1	2	4
Ritchie	1	1	2		4
<i>Free State:</i>					
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	4	1	1	2	
Ladybrand	1	2	1	1	3
Philippolis					8
Luckhoff					
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>23</b>

Table 10 below shows that the vast majority of farmers have farmed for longer than 20 years in the district. This means that they have enormous experience to draw on.

**Table 10: Length of time in the district: Farmers**

	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	More than 20 years
<i>Northern Cape:</i>					
Colesberg	-	2	1	2	2
Hopetown	-	-	1	1	5
Philipstown		1	1	2	4
Ritchie	1	???			2
<i>Free State:</i>					
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	1	-	3	1	3
Ladybrand	1	3	1		3
Philippolis					8
Luckhoff		2	-	1	13
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>40</b>

The long residence of many of the farmers in the district means that they have substantial experience as farmers. It is also interesting to note that some of the farmers have spent their whole lives on farms in the district. From this we can deduce that they view farming not only as a business, but also as a form of identity, i.e. they were born as farmers and grew up as farmers.

**2. A profile of farm workers: Length of residence on the farm and in the district**

Table 11 below shows that the majority of farm workers have spent only 1-5 years on the farm, although a significant number have lived up to 10 years on the farm. There are isolated cases where farm workers have spent a very long time (more than 16 years) on the farms.

**Table 11: Length of residence on the farm: Farm workers**

	Less than 1 year	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	More than 20 years
<i>Northern Cape:</i>						
Colesberg		3	3			1
Hopetown	-	2	2	2	1	-
Philipstown	2	3		1	1	1 (for 50 years)
Ritchie	2	1	2	1		2
<i>Free State:</i>						
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	1	5			1	1
Ladybrand	-	3	2		1	2
Philippolis	2	2	3	1		
Luckhoff		4	1	1	1	-
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>

The workers's length of residence on the farm varies widely. Several farm workers have worked on farms for a long time. In Colesberg, in one case, a farm worker has

been with the family for three generations. In one case, the worker is much more experienced than the farmer, since the farmer has only 6 years' experience, while the worker has been a worker for 41 years. In Hopetown, it is interesting to note that in two cases the worker has been longer on the farm than the farmer, and in one case the worker and the farmer have been on the farm for the same amount of time. In Ladybrand, on three of the farms, the workers have worked for a considerably longer period of time than the farmers have owned the farms. The farmers inherited the farm and the workers continued to work on the farms after this occurred. On two of the farms, the current farmers began working with their fathers and are now gradually taking over the running of the farm. The workers worked for the fathers and are now working for the sons. In Jagersfontein, the farm workers had on average spent far more time on the farms than the farmers had. However, it should be taken into account that the younger two farmers have recently taken possession of family farms and had spent additional time away from the farms in order to earn their qualifications. The third farmer interviewed had spent a little less than a decade farming in the district in between the 1950's and 1960's, and had recently returned. Moreover, two workers had spent their entire lives on the farms visited, while the second worker had worked on other farms in the district for all his adult life.

In many other cases, farm workers have been more transient, and there seems to be a tendency for workers to change their places of employment fairly frequently. The largest category of respondents had worked on the farms for less than five years. An extreme case is a "*Karretjies-mens*" (migrant worker living in a cart), which is typical of the Colesberg area. He only works on the farm for a short period of time, and then leaves again. When he feels he needs to work again he returns to the same farm to resume his work. It is interesting to note that the farmer accepts this routine as normal.

When Table 11 is compared with Table 9, i.e. the length of farm workers' residence on a farm, compared with farmers' residence on a farm, it appears that there has been a much more rapid turnover of farm workers than farmers. In Fauresmith, the farmers had lived on the farms for far longer than the farm workers. Whereas the average length of stay for farm workers was about 2 years, the average length of stay for farmers was about 10 years. This indicates that there is quite a high turnover of labour on farms in the district.

In Luckhoff, farmers had on average spent between 10 and 35 five years on the farms visited. The workers interviewed had spent between three years and 20 years on the farm. Again, the general impression was that the farmers had spent more time on the farm than the workers.

In Jagersfontein, the farm workers had on average spent far more time on the farms than the farmers had. However, it should be taken into account that the younger two farmers have recently taken possession of family farms and had spent additional time away from the farms in order to earn their qualifications. The third farmer interviewed had spent a little less than a decade farming in the district in between the 1950's and 1960's, and had recently returned.

Farm workers were also asked how long they have worked as a farm worker in this district. This information was aimed at determining their experience *as farm workers*,

and not simply workers on a specific farm. Table 12 below shows that the vast majority of farm workers have more than 20 years' experience:

**Table 12: Length of residence on farms in the district: Farm workers**

	Less than 1 year	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	More than 20 years
<b><i>Northern Cape:</i></b>						
Colesberg		1	1			5
Hopetown			2	1	-	4
Philipstown	1			3	1	3 (one for 50 years, one for 40 years, one for 35 years)
Ritchie	1	1		2		4 (one her whole life; other 40 years; one for 35 years, one for 23 years)
<b><i>Free State:</i></b>						
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein		2			3	2 (one for 37 years, one for 45 years)
Ladybrand	-	1	1		2	4
Philippolis		3	1	2	1	1 (30 years)
Luckhoff		-	1	2		4
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>27</b>

The findings suggest that many farm workers have a strong identity as farm workers, and if they leave one farm, they will try to find work on another. It also suggests that farm workers have a great deal of experience, drawn from a variety of employers. In Colesberg, for example, the workers are also vastly experienced, because they have been farm workers for between 2 years and 41 years. Four of the workers have been farm workers for more than 25 years.

In Philippolis, with one exception, all the workers had worked on other farms in the district. The number of years worked as farm workers in the district ranged from 3 to 18, with one unusual case in which the farm worker had 30 years' experience in the district. This indicates that farm workers tend to circulate amongst farms in the same district.

In Hopetown, with one exception, all the workers had worked on other farms in the district. The farm workers have resided on the farms for between 2 years and 19 years. The farm workers also have a vast experience behind them and they have been working on farms for between 7 years and 30 years. They are not new to the business and one gets the impression that it was a career choice for them.

In Ladybrand, with the exception of two workers, all the other workers have worked on other farms in the district. The impression gained was that workers circulate within the same district but do not work outside the district.

### **C. POPULATION CHANGES ON THE FARMS**



## 1. Number of farm workers on the farms

The 2001 figures are drawn from interviewees' own memories. Farmers and farm workers were asked: "How many workers were there on this farm two years ago?" In some cases, there are discrepancies between the information provided by farmers and that provided by farm workers. In such cases, estimates were used.

Table 13 shows that the 61 farms under review employed a total of 953 farm workers in 2001. Two years later, these farms only employed 607 workers (see Table 14) – a decline of 36%. It can safely be assumed that the vast majority of the 346 workers who lost their jobs have joined the ranks of the urban unemployed.

**Table 13: Number of farm workers on farms: 2001**

	Number of farms interviewed	Farms with 1-2 workers	Farms with 3-5 workers	Farms with 6-10 workers	Farms with 11-15 workers	Farms with more than 15	Total number of farm workers on farms interviewed	Average number of workers on farms interviewed
<i>Northern Cape:</i>								
Colesberg	7 (livestock)	1	2	3		1	54	7.7
Hopetown	7 (irrig)	1	-	4	-	2 <sup>6</sup>	478	68.2 (9.6)
Philipstown	8 (livestock)	2	4		2 <sup>7</sup>		46	5.75
Ritchie	8 (irrig)	-	4	1	2	1 <sup>8</sup>	75	9.3
<i>Free State:</i>								
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	8 (livestock)	-	3	3	1	1	71	8.8
Ladybrand	8 (intensive)			2	1	5	147	18.3
Philippolis	8 (livestock)	2	1	4	1		44	5.5
Luckhoff	7 (irrig)	2	3	1		1	38	5.4
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>953</b>	

In 2001, the largest average number of farm workers in the sample, was the case of Hopetown. However, this finding is skewed by one farm which has 420 workers. If this anomaly is corrected, then there is an average of 9.6 farmers per interviewed farm in Hopetown.

The locality with the largest average number of employees is Ladybrand, an area of intensive dry-land and irrigation crops. The irrigation farms of Hopetown and Ritchie have a slightly larger number of workers than the livestock farms (Luckhoff is an exception in this regard, with a very low average number of workers).

<sup>6</sup> This includes one farm with 21 workers, and one with 420 workers.

<sup>7</sup> One of these farms employed 96 workers five years previously, because there had been a brick-making business at that time. This had declined to 14 workers by 2001.

<sup>8</sup> This farm employed 25 workers in 2001, which had already been reduced from 100 workers in 2000.

**Table 14: Number of farm workers, 2003**

	Number of farms interviewed	Farms with 1-2 workers	Farms with 3-5	Farms with 6-10	Farms with 11-15	Farms with more than 15	Total number of farm workers on farms interviewed	Average number of workers on farms interviewed
<b>Northern Cape:</b>								
Colesberg	7 (livestock)	2	3	1		1	39	5.5
Hopetown	7 (irrig)	1	1	2	1	2 <sup>9</sup>	226	32.2 (8.8)
Philipstown	8 (livestock)	1	6	1			36	4.5
Ritchie	8 (irrig)	1	3	2	1	1	65	8.1
<b>Free State:</b>								
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	8 (livestock)	-	2	5	-	1	74	9.25
Ladybrand	8 (intensive)		1	3	2	2	95	11.8
Philippolis	8 (livestock)	2	3	3			36	4.5
Luckhoff	7 (irrig)	2	2	2	1		36	5.1
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>607</b>	

Again, the largest average number of workers per farm is in Hopetown, although this finding is skewed by a farm with 173 workers (reduced from 420 workers since 2001). If this anomaly is removed, then Hopetown has an average of 8.8 workers per farm.

With rare exceptions, the number of farm workers had been reduced on all the farms. In a few cases, the number of farm workers had remained the same (two cases in Colesberg, two in Luckhoff, four in Philippolis, three in Ritchie, three in Hopetown, one in Ladybrand). In even more rare cases, the number of farm workers had increased (two cases in Fauresmith, two in Luckhoff, one in Ritchie). In Luckhoff, two of the farmers interviewed made use of workers living in town, in addition to the workers already living on the farm.

**Table 15: Changes in average number of workers per sampled farm**

	Average number of workers on farms interviewed (2001)	Average number of workers on farms interviewed (2003)	Decline in average number of workers interviewed
<b>Northern Cape:</b>			
Colesberg	7.7	5.5	- 2.2
Hopetown	68.2 (9.6) <sup>10</sup>	32.2 (8.8)	- 0.8
Philipstown	5.75	4.5	- 1.25
Ritchie	9.3	8.1	- 1.2
<b>Free State:</b>			
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	8.8	9.25	+ 0.45

<sup>9</sup> On one farm, the number of workers had declined from 420 to 173 in two years.

<sup>10</sup> The "corrected" figures, without the anomaly of the single large employer, are used in the case of Hopetown.

Ladybrand	18.3	11.8	- 6.5
Philippolis	5.5	4.5	- 1.0
Luckhoff	5.4	5.1	- 0.3

Table 15 shows that the average number of farm workers on all the 61 farms sampled, declined in all areas, except Fauresmith, where two farms recorded a slight increase in the number of farm workers.

The largest decline in average number of farm workers is in Ladybrand, which is the most intensive employment area in the sample.

Various reasons for this decline in employment were offered by the farmers. Information about the reasons for changes in employment patterns was not specifically requested. Rather, farmers volunteered their opinions in unstructured discussion.

According to several interviewees, this was due to the new labour laws. In Hopetown, Colesberg and Ladybrand, interviewees remarked that the new laws related to labour matters, salaries and residential rights made it necessary for them to reduce the number of workers on their farms.

In Fauresmith, the reduction in the number of workers was ascribed to the drought in the area a few years earlier, with consequence that many farmers had reduced the number of workers to the minimum needed. In Ritchie, farm workers were retrenched when the type and scale of farming changed during the past three years. The farmers ceased irrigation farming because the change in legislation prevented them from using child labour: "We were no longer allowed to employ children under 15 years old, so it was no longer profitable." This farm currently only employs three farm workers.

In Hopetown, one farm had a significant decline in the number of workers. This was not due to the new labour laws, but rather to the fact that they have restructured on the farm in terms of what they produce. It is foreseen that the number of workers working in the factory will double in the next year.

In Ladybrand, it is quite clear that farmers have reduced the number of workers on their farms during the last two years. The reduction was more than 50% on two of the farms. These particular farmers have not made use of piece-job workers either. The farmer closed down his dairy and, therefore needed fewer workers. At least three farmers said that they planned to reduce their workforce still more. They justified their actions in terms of the need to mechanise.

## **2. Farm workers living on the farm or in town**

By far the majority of the workers still live on the farm with their families. In Philippolis, there were no farm workers living in town, presumably because of the long distances between farms and the towns. The survey showed very few farm workers living in town, and commuting to their place of work.

There were a few exceptions; for example, in Hopetown, one farmer wants to make use of workers living in town. A second farmer in Hopetown indicated that he eventually wants all his workers living in town.

Similarly, the 2001 CRLS survey of 230 farm workers showed that 83% of the respondents live on the farm on which they work.<sup>11</sup>

### 3. Workers' families living on farms

One of the possible changes that may be taking place in the farming community, is the trend towards farm worker families residing in town. Farmers were asked how many women, pre-school children, primary school children and high school children are living on the farms, as shown in Table 15:

**Table 16: Farm workers with families living on the farms and in towns**

	No of farms researched	No of farm workers with families living on the farm	No. of farm workers with families living in town
<i>Northern Cape:</i>			
Colesberg	7	23	9
Hopetown	7	78 <sup>12</sup>	141
Philipstown	8	35	1
Ritchie	8	58	7
<i>Free State:</i>			
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	8	42	11
Ladybrand	8	91	3
Philippolis	8	27	7
Luckhoff	7	26	15
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>194</b>

In Fauresmith, in the majority of cases (32), the families of workers live with them on the farm. Similarly, in Luckhoff, the family of the workers live on the farm in the majority of cases (26 families). In Philipstown, it is clear that many farm worker families still reside on the farms. There is no farm school in the sample and children travel to various towns for school where they reside with relatives, non-relatives and hostels (where possible). In Ritchie, it is clear that many farm worker families still reside on the farms. The farms that are close to town generally have more children living on the farm. This is presumably because it is easy for children to get to school. School buses and other transport can be accessed easily and affordably by the farm workers. On two of the farms, children attend the Heuningskloof primary school, and are transported by means of a bus to school. The high school children go to boarding school in Kimberley.

There is a tendency, although not a very strong one, of farm workers living on farms, while their families live in towns. In Philippolis, this is the case with 7 families,

<sup>11</sup> CRLS (2001), p. 26.

<sup>12</sup> This is an unrepresentative figure. On one farm, 52 workers live in a compound; the other farms have only a few workers living with their families on the farms.

compared to the 27 farm workers who still have their families living with them on the farm. In Colesberg, there is also a tendency for farm workers to work in the week on the farm, and to return to town over the weekend to be with their families. The reason for this is that farmers feel it is safer, and that they then do not have to deal with the social problems that occur on the farms in over the weekends. The farm workers can choose to have their families in town for their children to attend school. In Fauresmith, four workers had families that lived in town. In Luckhoff, a significant minority of families (15) live in town. This may indicate a growing tendency in the residential choices of the workers and their families. The strongest indication of this trend is in Hopetown, where the majority of farm workers on the sampled farms live in town. The farm workers work on the farm during the week and return to town over the weekend to be with their families. The reason for this is that farmers feel it is safer, because they then do not have to deal with all the social problems that occur on the farms over the weekends; and on the other hand, farm workers choose to keep their families in town for their children to attend school. This can be deduced from the fact that only 78 farm workers live with their families on the farms, while 141 workers live with their families in town.

In Ritchie, one farm would like to stop relations of farm workers coming to live on the farm. He also has some erven in Ritchie, which he makes available to his workers when they reach retirement age and they move there. This is primarily due to ESTA.

In Hopetown, one farmer even provided a subsidy of between R 1500- R 1800 to farm workers to build a shanty in town if they want to live there. On this farm, there is a system whereby farm workers (those who do not use alcohol) receive three-bedroom houses on the farms as a form of acknowledgment for their sober lifestyle.

There is another interesting case in Hopetown, where the workers live either on the farm or in town, and the farm owner has now decided to put out 10 hectares of land to develop a small town/village where the workers can live and have title deed to their houses and land. New houses will be built there for the workers.

Table 16 below gives some indication of the number of women and children living on the sampled farms. This was drawn from the interviews with the farmers, who were asked to list the number of women, pre-school, primary school and high school children living on their farms.

**Table 17: Family members living on farms**

	No. of farms researched	Women	Pre-school children	Primary school children	High school children	<i>Average: Family members per farm visited</i>
<b><i>Northern Cape:</i></b>						
Colesberg	7	30	21	25	9	12.1
Hopetown	7	131	28	32	11	28.8
Philipstown	8	33	25	16	5	9.8
Ritchie	8	59	33	54	15	20.1
<b><i>Free State:</i></b>						
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	8	56	23	26	1	13.25

Ladybrand	8	92	61	75	18	30.75
Philippolis	8	34	11	15	1	7.6
Luckhoff	7	29	17	13	7	9.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>16.4</b>

Several conclusions are evident from this table. Firstly, the largest average number of family members per farm is in Ladybrand, which is an area of more intensive farming. Secondly, relatively large numbers of family members per farm are found in the irrigation farming areas (Hopetown, Ritchie). Luckhoff is an exception in this regard, with a relatively low number of family members per farm.

Two unusual comments were made by interviewees in Ladybrand. One farm has four pensioners who used to work on the farms. Another farm has five AIDS orphans living on his farm. These are issues which need to be more fully researched.

#### **D. QUALITY OF LIFE: LEVELS OF INFRASTRUCTURE FOR FARM WORKERS**

The next part of the interviews was an assessment of service delivery on the farms. Farmers and farm workers were asked about the type of housing, sanitation, water delivery, electricity and telecommunications. On occasion, there are discrepancies in the information provided by the farmer and the farm worker. Typically, in such cases, the farmer's information tends to suggest that services are relatively high, while the farm worker suggests that services are poor or non-existent. These discrepancies may be explained by the fact that, on some farms, service delivery levels are not uniform for all the houses. In a few cases, farm workers have two homes – one on the farm, and one in town. There are significant differences in services between these localities. For example, one worker in Ritchie has in-house water and flush sanitation in town, but an outside tap and a pit toilet on the farm.

A general finding is that there is an enormous difference in quality of services. On some farms, farm workers have decent houses and full services; on other farms, services are very poor or non-existent. There are also cases where a farm worker has a high level of service in one respect (e.g. water), but poor or non-existent service in another respect (e.g. electricity or sanitation).<sup>13</sup>

##### **1. Housing**

The vast majority of farm workers sampled live in brick houses. In Jagersfontein, Hopetown, Colesberg, Phillipstown and Philippolis, all the workers live in brick houses. This finding confirms that of the CRLS study (based on the 1996 census), which found that more than 65% of all farm workers live in formal dwellings.<sup>14</sup>

In Ladybrand, workers live in brick houses on 7 out of the 8 farms.

<sup>13</sup> This variability of services on a farm was also noted by the CRLS study (2001), p. 28.

<sup>14</sup> CRLS (2001), p. 26.

In Ritchie, all farm workers, except one, live in brick houses, ranging generally from a 2-roomed house to a 5-roomed house. Generally there are different size houses on a specific farm. One worker is currently living in a shanty which he has erected next to his house because the two-roomed brick house is falling apart and he fears for the safety of his children. He said the most of the houses on the farm is in a similar state. The farm workers are also now paying rent for their houses.

There are a few exceptions. In Ladybrand, the workers on one farm lived in huts. In Fauresmith, one farm worker lived in a temporary structure, however, he did indicate that he had access to a stone house, but that he found the structure 'too big' for him. In Luckhoff, one worker lives in a temporary structure.

The sizes and quality of the houses vary greatly. In Phillipstown, the houses range from a 1-roomed house to a 6- roomed house. In Hopetown and Colesberg, The sizes of the houses vary from two rooms to five rooms.

Similarly, the CRLS survey (2001) found that most farm workers live in small homes, with an average of three rooms per house.<sup>15</sup> When employees were asked to cite problems related to housing, the issue of house size and the number of rooms emerged as a primary but not overriding concern. About 12% of respondents complained about overcrowding.

Two workers indicated that their family are living in a shanty in town, and that he also lives in the shanty over weekends, when he visits them. In Ladybrand, on two of the farms, the workers live in three- to five-bedroom houses with ceilings and bathrooms. On one of the farms, the house is painted regularly with paint supplied by the farmer and every house has good quality curtains.

The issue of quality of housing was not addressed in the HSRC survey. The CRLS survey found that numerous workers had complaints about poor features of their house, such as the lack of a proper floor, damaged ceilings, cracked walls, leaking roofs, the absence of windows, or bad quality windows.<sup>16</sup>

Another issue which should be focused on in future, is the apparently increasing requirement for farm workers to pay rent for their housing. Usually, housing is regarded as a form of payment in kind, or a condition of employment<sup>17</sup>, but impressionistic evidence suggests that the minimum wage laws are encouraging farmers to charge rent for housing. In the CRLS study, 21% of on-farm residents reported that they pay rent. Of these workers, about half pay more than R90/month

## **2. Water provision**

Table 18 shows that the majority of farm workers have in-house water provision. A significant number have outside taps:

**Table 18: Water provision for farm workers**

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<sup>15</sup> CRLS (2001), p. 28.

<sup>16</sup> CRLS (2001), p. 31.

<sup>17</sup> CRLS (2001), p. 31.

	<b>In-house taps</b>	<b>Outside taps</b>	<b>Communal taps</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Northern Cape:</b>				
Colesberg <sup>18</sup>	4	1	1	2 (one draws from the dam; the other from the farmer's house)
Hopetown	4	6	1	
Philipstown	5	4	1	-
Ritchie	3	8	-	-
<b>Free State:</b>				
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	5	2	2	
Ladybrand	8	3		
Philippolis	5	4	-	-
Luckhoff	3	6	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>

The vast majority of farm workers have water supply above RDP levels. This finding is confirmed by Census 96 data<sup>19</sup> that farm workers appear better off than other non-urban workers with respect to the availability of on-site piped water (50% versus 38%). However, the availability of piped water on-site in the urban areas of the country is considerably higher compared to non-urban areas.

In contrast with the CRLS study, two-thirds of the farm workers have water available in their homes. The CRLS study found that only one-third of farm workers have water available in their homes. This may well be due to the fact that District Municipalities in both the Northern Cape and Free State have promoted water provision for farm workers for several years. The better results in the Free State sample (21 houses with in-house water, compared with 16 in the Northern Cape) also echoes the findings of the CRLS study, that water provision in the Western Cape, Mpumalanga and Free State is superior to the other provinces.<sup>20</sup>

It should be noted that the questionnaire did not ask about the quality of the water.

## 2. Sanitation

Table 19 shows the level of sanitation services, which are much more problematic than the level of water services.

**Table 19: Sanitation provision for farm workers**

	<b>Flush</b>	<b>VIP</b>	<b>Unimproved pit</b>	<b>None / buckets</b>
<b>Northern Cape:</b>				
Colesberg	3	-	-	4
Hopetown	1	5		2

<sup>18</sup> In Colesberg, there were several cases of discrepancies in information, where a farmer claimed that his workers have services, which turn out not to be true.

<sup>19</sup> CRLS (2001), p. 29.

<sup>20</sup> CRLS (2001), p. 30.



Philipstown	2	1	3 ? (in all cases, workers maintain they have no facilities)	4 ? (according to workers)
Ritchie <sup>21</sup>	1 (not working)	2 (District Council subsidies)	4	2
<i>Free State:</i>				
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	4	1	3	3
Ladybrand	-	-	8	1
Philippolis	2	1	3	3
Luckhoff	2	2	1	3
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>

Flush and VIP<sup>22</sup> toilets qualify as RDP levels of sanitation services. This means that only 27 of the 61 farms (44%) of the farms have RDP levels of sanitation. Furthermore, it is not always clear what the condition of these toilets may be, particularly because flush and VIP toilets require a higher level of careful maintenance. In Ladybrand, on one farm, both the owner and the worker said that the workers preferred to use the veld instead of always using the toilet. On one farm, both the owner and the worker said that the workers preferred to use the veld instead of always using the toilet. This probably indicates the bad condition of the toilets, and the need for VIPs.

The majority of the farms have sub-RDP levels of sanitation. In particular, the 22 farms with no sanitation, or with buckets, should be a cause for concern.

In Colesberg, one the farmer claimed that he applied for sanitation subsidies from Karoo District Municipality to build VIP toilets, but that they did not want to help him. They only gave him a plan of a toilet and this plan was not implementable.

Other research has shown (find Mvula reference) that the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry in the Northern Cape has worked extensively with District Municipalities to promote farm worker sanitation. Typically, VIP toilets are constructed. It is significant, therefore, that double the number of Northern Cape farms in the sample have VIP toilets, compared to the Free State farms.

The CRLS study found that more than half its 230 respondents have pit toilets, which confirms the HSRC study that 54% of the respondents have a pit toilet. Furthermore, the CRLS findings about flush toilets (33%) is only slightly higher than the HSRC finding of 24% flush toilets.<sup>23</sup>

A significant difficulty with the CRLS study, is that it did not distinguish between VIPs (which are RDP level) and ordinary pit toilets. There is a major difference in quality between a well-functioning VIP toilet and an ordinary unimproved pit toilet.

<sup>21</sup> In Ritchie, in one case, the farmer maintains that the worker has a pit toilet, whereas the worker maintains that he has no sanitation facility.

<sup>22</sup> "Ventilated improved pit" toilet. This kind of toilet has a black airvent, which allows air flow through the toilet, and thereby removes bad smells from the toilet. The vent should be covered by gauze, which kills flies.

<sup>23</sup> CRLS (2001), p. 30.

### 3. Energy

Table 20 illustrates the sources of energy in farm workers' houses. Several households use more than one form of energy for cooking, heating and lighting., and therefore these may be recorded twice.

**Table 20: Energy sources in farm workers' houses**

	Electricity/ Generator	Paraffin/Oil / Candles	Wood/coal
<i>Northern Cape:</i>			
Colesberg	5	-	7
Hopetown	7	-	7
Philipstown	6	5	8
Ritchie	5	1	8
<i>Free State:</i>			
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	6	2	8
Ladybrand	8	-	8
Philippolis	8		8
Luckhoff	6	-	5
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>59</b>

The table shows the widespread access to electricity (whether Eskom supply or by means of generators). This is typically for lighting. However, the use of wood and coal is even more widespread, particularly for cooking and heating. This may have significant implications for household air pollution and health issues.

These findings, which show that 85% of farm workers in the HSRC survey have electricity, are dramatically different from the 1996 Census figure for farm worker electricity (44%).<sup>24</sup> The HSRC figures are more on par with the census figure for urban workers (82%). The HSRC figures for farm workers are also higher than the CRLS survey (66%).

In Ladybrand, all the workers who participated in the research project said that their house had electricity and that they used this for lighting. Two of the workers said that they did not use heating facilities. One participant uses an electric heater while the rest (five) all have wood stoves which they use to prepare their food. Although they have two-plate stoves, only two workers make use of these. One worker uses a small gas stove. This may be because they are more at ease with the wood stoves and/or that electricity is too expensive. In Ritchie, some farm workers have to use quite primitive heating methods, notably coals in a drum ("*konka*"). In Phillipstown, in one case, the workers' homes on the main farm have electricity, but on the "*veeposte*" (outlying stock ranges), the houses do not have electricity.

<sup>24</sup> As quoted in CRLS (2001), p. 33.

There were several cases where the farmer has access to electricity, but electricity is not laid on to his workers (e.g. two cases in Colesberg). In Ritchie, one farmer said that it is too expensive to connect electricity to farm worker houses that are far from farm house and transformer: The District Municipality provides no subsidy for the long-distance cable, only for in-house wiring.

An emerging issue is that farmers expect the workers to pay for a part or all of the electricity that they use, as is the case in Ladybrand. In Jagersfontein, one farm worker complained that while electricity was free in the past, they had been required to pay for it of late. In Philipstown, one farmer insists that the workers pay for their electricity use.

#### 4. Communications

Table 21 shows farm workers' access to different forms of telecommunications.

**Table 21: Farm workers' access to telecommunications**

	Cell phone	Own land-line	Farmer's phone	Public phone	None
<i>Northern Cape:</i>					
Colesberg	2	-	6	-	-
Hopetown	1	1	5	3	-
Philipstown	-	2	5	1 (in town)	-
Ritchie	3	-	4	3	-
<i>Free State:</i>					
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	3	1	4	2	1
Ladybrand	6	-	7	3	-
Philippolis	-	-	8	-	-
Luckhoff	2	2	1	1	-
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>

These figures are similar to the CRLS survey, which indicated that fewer than 10% of farm workers have a telephone in their own dwelling.<sup>25</sup>

The vast majority of farm workers have to use their employer's telephone to make calls. It indicates a general willingness on the part of many farmers to allow their workers to make use of facilities in the farmers' homes.

However, this is not always an ideal situation, as employers are sometimes reluctant to let their workers use the phone, or farm workers need to make calls at an inconvenient time. Some of the farm owners mentioned that it could be inconvenient at times for both the owner and the worker when they have to use the same telephone. For instance, there may sometimes be calls for the workers during weekends and after hours. In Ritchie and Phillipstown, two farmers do not allow phone calls from his house. On another farm, the worker feels more comfortable about making calls from the farmer's parents, with whom he has a better relationship than with the farmer.

<sup>25</sup> CRLS (2001), p.33.

This indicates the level of constraint which is prevalent when farm workers have to use their employers' telephones. In Philippolis, one of the workers noted that they have a serious need for a public telephone, to reduce the dependency on the farmer's telephone.

A significant number of farm workers have their own cell phones, or have access to cell phones. Clearly, cell phones are filling the gap in the provision of land-line telephones.

## 5. Access to media

Farm workers have surprisingly widespread access to radio and TV (see Table 21). There were only isolated cases where farm workers did not have access.

**Table 21: Farm workers' access to the media**

	Own Radio	Access to radio	Own TV	Access to TV
<i>Northern Cape:</i>				
Colesberg	7		3	2
Hopetown	5	2	3	3
Philipstown	7	1	2	4
Ritchie	4	1	3	2
<i>Free State:</i>				
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein		3		3
Ladybrand	8			6
Philippolis				
Luckhoff		5		5

## 6. Recreation

There is a general dearth of recreation opportunities for farm workers. In Colesberg, none of the farm workers have access to sports fields. Recreation for farm workers remains a problem, and one farmer in Colesberg remarked about recreation were that "workers have a national sport on weekends, and that is that they drink."

Impressionistic evidence suggests that alcohol abuse is directly related to the lack of recreation facilities. In Ritchie, five farm workers have no recreation activities on the farm at all (one worker claimed that they work at weekends as well; one worker is only involved in Bible study).

In Jagersfontein, one farm has a soccer field that can be accessed by other workers, although the two workers from other farms reported knowing about the field but not having access to it. It is unclear what forms of relaxation is available to the last two workers, apart from radio and television. The worker on the first farm visited mentioned that, at times, workers on the farm were required to work from six in the morning to six in the evening on Saturdays and Sundays. The farm in question is also home to a dairy concern that requires extra work.

In Fauresmith, four of the five workers reported having access to a soccer field. The impression was that workers did not have much to do in the way of recreation. Workers also display strong desire to own the means to recreation as opposed to having access to it.

In Philippolis, only one farm has a soccer field, but because there are so few workers, that soccer is not played any more. The impression is gained that workers do not have constructive activities during their free time. In Philipstown, seven farm workers have no recreation facility on the farm at all.

A few notable attempts have been made to provide recreational facilities. In Hopetown, on one farm there is a soccer field, and the farmer has remarked that since the workers started to play soccer the levels of alcohol abuse have dropped. Almost all of the workers have access to soccer, either in town or on some of the farms.

In Ladybrand, three of the workers said that they are able to make use of soccer facilities and one farm also has netball equipment. Seven of the workers mentioned that they enjoy visiting people and that that is their main recreational activity. The impression was given that there is no meaningful and constructive use of free-time.

In Ritchie, three farm workers have access to soccer fields, either in Ritchie; at the neighbouring farm and one on the farm. One worker also reported that card games are also played on the farm by workers, and that they have a recreational room/facility on the farm. Two farms have a recreation facility for the use of the farm workers.

In Phillipstown, one farm has a TV room for the workers (although the TV has been broken for some time), which is also used as a room for church services. Two farms also have a soccer field on the farm. Five interviews recorded the following recreational activities:

- Dominoes & card games
- Visiting on neighbouring farms
- Going to church
- Some get drunk (According to one worker, "The problem is that there is nothing else to do").

## **7. Religious activities**

Some of the farms have the benefit of visits by clergymen or lay preachers, to conduct services.

In Ritchie, five of the farms have regular church services on the farm or nearby farm. One farm worker is a lay preacher and a church deacon, and conducts weekly services on the farm. Only two farms have specified areas (usually a recreation facility) on the farm to conduct church services, on the rest of farms services are conducted in the houses or outside. The rest of the farm workers in the sample generally can only attend a church service in a nearby town.

In Luckhoff, a number of farms are visited by church members, who conduct services. However, it is unclear whether these are established denominations or some of the independent revivalist movements known to operate in the area.

In Philipstown, three of the farms have regular church services on the farm. On one farm, the workers conduct their own service and when they get the opportunity to get to town once a month, they attend a service there. The other farm workers have to wait until they travel into town to attend church service.

The issue of church penetration in the countryside deserves a great deal more investigation, since this is probably one of the most effective ways in which farm workers can experience contact with outsiders, and thereby broaden their world.

## **E. SERVICES AVAILABLE TO FARM WORKERS**

The services which are analysed in this section refer to *human services* rather than infrastructure.

There are two issues: (1) Awareness or ignorance of available services, and (2) actual availability of services *on the farms*. The latter may mean that services are brought to the farms, or that farm workers can access such services easily.

### **1. Awareness of services**

In the questionnaire, farmers and workers were asked if they are aware of the following services:

- Primary health
- Ambulance
- Social services
- Pensions
- Disability pensions
- Child maintenance grants
- Schools
- Adult basic education and training (ABET)
- Transport by farmer
- Taxis
- Department of Labour and information on labour matters
- Churches
- Police.

The findings show different levels of awareness of services amongst farm workers. In Ritchie, for example, five farm workers were aware of all available services, while two workers were unaware of welfare services and the Department of Labour. One worker was unaware of welfare services and taxis.

Furthermore, it is possible that farmers are aware of services, while their workers are not; or vice versa. In Jagersfontein and Luckhoff, it was clear that the farmers interviewed considered more services to be available than the farm workers. More farmers also consider information about labour affairs and access to the Department of Labour to be available than farm workers.

Farmers and farm workers tended to have different priorities. In Ritchie, farmers tended to focus on the problems of the clinic system and the police service, while workers focused on the accessibility of the maintenance grant, and problems of transport.

In Colesberg, in only one case, were the farmer and the farm worker in agreement about the services that were rendered on that farm. This scenario is intriguing, because it seems that some of the workers keep the farmers in the dark of who is visiting on the farm and *visa versa*.

## **2. Availability of services**

The interviewees were then asked which of these services *are available on the farms*.

### **2.1 Clinics**

In Luckhoff, all farmers and farm workers were aware primary health care offered in the nearby town. Several workers and farmers also reported that a mobile clinic would occasionally visit the farms.

In Philippolis, Colesberg, Fauresmith and Jagersfontein, the farmers and the workers are aware of the clinic in town, and the mobile clinic which visits the farm. The farmer workers visit the clinic when necessary.

In Hopetown, the farmers and the workers are aware of the clinic in town, and the mobile clinic which visits the farm. It seems that in some cases the mobile clinic visits the farm on a monthly basis and in other cases it visits a farm on a quarterly basis. Where there is a high population density, the visits are more frequent. The farmers visit the clinic when necessary, and if their workers are ill they take them to town to the clinic. The farmers complained that the mobile clinic does not visit every farm individually and that they must take the farm workers to a central point to visit the mobile clinic. The fact that the clinic comes only every three months is a problem, because it is not enough to render a decent service to the farming community.

In Ladybrand, the farm owners and the farm workers are well-informed about the services offered by the local clinic, as well as those offered by the mobile clinic that visits the farms. However, one farm owner said that the mobile clinic was no longer in operation. The impression was given that the mobile clinic does not visit every farm and that the workers on some of the farms have to go to neighbouring farms and that the mobile clinic is no longer operational in certain areas.

In Philipstown, the clinic services were the criticised. The mobile clinic no longer comes around (a problem mentioned by several farmers and farm workers). Some of the farmers and their workers go to De Aar and Colesberg for medical treatment instead of Philipstown. The clinic in Philipstown was described as unsatisfactory, and staff are seen as discriminatory against Coloureds and people who are not ANC members. The Cuban doctors (unable to speak Afrikaans) arrive once a week.

In Ritchie, the clinic services were also criticised. The mobile clinic comes around every three months to the farms, but there is never sufficient medication available. Farmers are not allowed to take their workers directly to hospital. They now need to work through the clinic, and this appears to be a problem. The clinic in Ritchie was described as unsatisfactory. One farmer described the clinic system as “appalling and chaotic”; and another maintained that the clinic in Ritchie is not satisfactory. One farmer said that his workers now refuse to go to the clinic, so he gives them money to go to a private doctor in Kimberley.

## 2.2 Ambulances

In Luckhoff, Colesberg, Philippolis, Hopetown, Fauresmith and Jagersfontein virtually all farmers and farm workers were of the ambulance service, which visits the farm when necessary.

In Ritchie, two farmers said that they preferred to take their workers to medical services, since the ambulance must come from far away (Kimberley, 65 km), and the response time is too slow.

In Ladybrand, the farm owners and the farm workers know of the services offered by the local ambulance unit and they speak with praise about the good service that it delivers.

## 2.3 Social services

In this section, “social services” were defined as contact with social workers, to address family or other problems.

**Table 22: Awareness of social services**

	Farmers aware	Workers aware	Farmers not aware	Workers not aware
<i>Northern Cape:</i>				
Colesberg	?	1	?	6
Hopetown	1	3	1	3
Philipstown	1	5	7	3
Ritchie	5	3	5	3
<i>Free State:</i>				
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	6	1	2	7
Ladybrand	?	?	?	?
Philippolis	8	4	-	4
Luckhoff	6	3	1	4



This table suggests that social services are either not readily available, or have not been marketed sufficiently.

#### **2.4 Pensions and grants**

In Philippolis, Ladybrand and Jagersfontein, the farmers are all aware of the various pensions and grants. In Hopetown, six of the farmers were aware of the full range of social pensions and grants.

In Philippolis, four of the workers were aware of all the grants. In Ladybrand, three workers are familiar with all the grants, and two claim never to have heard of any grants. In Philippolis, two workers were not aware of any of the pensions or grants. In Colesberg, no farm workers were aware of the full range of pensions and grants that are available. In Jagersfontein, only one farm worker was aware of all the pensions and grants.

In Luckhoff, there was surprising low level of awareness of the various grants available to farm workers. Only two farmers were aware of all the grants on offer. In Jagersfontein, one worker did not know about any grants or pensions at all. In Fauresmith, a worrying indicator was that four of the five workers were not familiar with the concept of grants, let alone where such grants could be obtained. The remaining three farmers knew where all of the grants concerned could be obtained. By contrast, one farm worker knew of all the grants but did not know where it could be obtained. The remaining two knew of all the grants and where it could be obtained.

- *Pensions*

In Luckhoff, one farmer claimed not to have been aware that workers could apply for pensions in their old age. Two workers had not heard about old age pensions. In Colesberg, two farmers were not aware of old age pensions, and two farm workers did not know of the old age pension. In Jagersfontein, one worker was not aware of old age pensions.

- *Child maintenance*

In Luckhoff, two farmers were not aware that a child maintenance grant existed. Two workers had not heard about child maintenance grants. In Philippolis, four workers were not aware of the child maintenance grant. In Colesberg, two farmers were not aware of grants for children, and three farm workers were not aware of this grant. In Jagersfontein, one worker was not aware of child maintenance grants. In Ladybrand, three farm workers are not aware of the child allowance. In Fauresmith, one farmer did not know where a child maintenance grant could be obtained and another claimed not to have heard any of the grants available.

In Ritchie, one farmer noted that welfare services are urgently needed on his farm, because there are AIDS orphans, and there are problems accessing the maintenance grant. One farm worker complained about the length of time for the grant applications to be approved. He had adopted his deceased sister's children, but no financial assistance has been forthcoming yet.

In Ladybrand, one of the farm owners said that the child allowance had contributed to an increase in the birth rate, especially by single women on the farm.

- *Disability grant*

In Philippolis, three farm workers three did not know of the disability grant. In Colesberg, six farm workers were aware disability grants. In Ladybrand, one worker is ignorant of the allowance for the disabled.

- *Access to grants*

In Philipstown, grants are normally paid out in towns and generally farmers will provide transport. Otherwise workers travel with donkey cart or other own transport to town to access these pay points and other services.

In Ritchie, grants are normally paid out in towns and generally farmers will provide transport. One group of farm workers travels monthly with organised transport (little bus owned by one of the other retired farmers) to pay-points. This helps the farmer, because it releases him to stay on farm, while he knows that the farm workers, especially the old people, will come back safely at the end of the day.

One of the farmer workers said that there is insensitivity regarding circumstances on the farms when the payment of pensions is made. Because of the long queues in which the pensioners have to wait, it wastes the time of his employer when they take the pensioners into town to collect their pensions. It sometimes happens that they have to wait all day.

## **2.5 Education**

Generally, all farmers and farm workers were aware of the schools in town. In Jagersfontein, the farm workers and the farmers said that it is reasonably easy for the farm children to reach the schools.

There are very few farm schools left. In Colesberg, there is an excellent farm school in the district where some of the farm workers children attend school, but in Philipstown, for example, there are no farm schools. Children are forced to live with relatives, non-relatives and/or hostels in a variety of towns. In Ritchie, only two farms have easy access to a farm school. All other farm worker school children must go to school in the nearest town. In Fauresmith, one of the few remaining farm schools in the district is located in this area and a number of children attend that institution as opposed to a school in town. In Hopetown, there is a farm school in the district, and some of the farm workers' children do attend the school, but the children do not

attend that school any more, due to a lack of hostel facilities. These workers send their children to Strydenburg because there are hostel facilities available and the children are better looked after. Another worker moved his family to town because he wants his wife to look after the children.

Several farmers and workers mentioned that the accommodation provided for the children was not satisfactory. In Philippolis, several farmers recommended that accommodation facilities should be established in town for the children, as an urgent necessity. The farm workers tended to agree with this view. The need for a hostel was also expressed in Ritchie.

In Ritchie, the situation at the local farm school is problematic. The women teachers at Heuningboskloof school need to hitchhike to school in the mornings because they are afraid to live at the school as it is isolated and located next to N12. Some mornings the teachers are very late, this is not good for children, as then they are there unsupervised right next to the N12. A lot of stealing is also destroying the school.

## **2.6 Adult education**

A general trend was a lack of information about the awareness of ABET (Adult Basic Education and Training).

In Luckhoff, six of the farmers knew where adult education for workers might be available. One farmer claimed that adult education was available on the farm. All but three of the workers were familiar with the concept but none knew of a near-by institution where it might be available. In Philippolis, three of the farmers and two farm workers were not aware of an adult education programme although such a programme is presented in town. In Colesberg, three farmers were aware of adult education programmes. Five farmers were not at all aware of the existence of an adult educational programme, while all seven of the farmers interviewed did not know where to access the programme. Five farm workers were aware of an adult educational programme, and two did not know of such a programme. Six of the workers did not know where to access it. None of the workers indicated that they could get access to this programme in town. In Jagersfontein, two farmers were aware that adult education was available in town, while one farm worker was aware of this. The two others workers had never heard of the concept.

In Hopetown, three farmers were not at all aware of the existence of an adult educational programme, while six of the farmers interviewed did not know where to access the programme. Six farm workers were aware of an adult educational programme, but one did not know of such a programme. Although six of the workers knew about an adult educational programme, five of them did not know where to access it. Only two workers indicated that they could get access to the programme in town. In Fauresmith, none of the farmers or farm workers knew where adult education could be obtained.

In some places, ABET appears to be unavailable. In Philipstown, ABET classes appear to have stopped (this mentioned by two farmers and one farm worker). In

Ladybrand, at present, there are no programmes for adults. Previously the Rural Foundation offered educational programmes for adults.

One farmer, in Ritchie, has taken special effort to build a facility for ABET classes on his farm. The salary of the ABET trainer is paid for by government. In Hopetown, four farmers are aware of adult education programmes. One farmer indicated that his wife is teaching an ABET programme in town, and he was the only farmer who knew where to access the programme.

## **2.7 Department of Labour**

In Luckhoff, Jagersfontein, Colesberg, Fauresmith and Ladybrand, all farmers were aware of the Department and in what town it could be found. In Philippolis, the farmers were all aware of the Department. Interviews in Colesberg suggested that the farmers were more aware of the Department of Labour paying visits to the farms than the farm workers. Farmers in Colesberg and Ladybrand have received visits from the Department. In Hopetown, it appears that the Department visits the farms to check the contracts and all other aspects of the new labour dispensation. They do it by checking the documentation of the farmer and then by having an interview with the workers.

By contrast, farm workers were not as well informed about the Department. In Luckhoff, three of the workers did not know where to find the department and was consequently not aware of its services. In Philippolis, only three farm workers were aware of their services. In Colesberg, six of the workers were informed about the Department of Labour. Only one of them indicated that the Department paid them a visit on the farm. In Jagersfontein, two other workers claimed never to have heard of the Department. In Fauresmith, only one worker knew where the department was located, four knew about the department but not where it was located. One worker did not know about the department at all.

In Ladybrand, there was a greater degree of awareness amongst farm workers. Except for two workers, the rest said that they are aware of Department of Labour and they say that they get information about labour matters from the television and the radio. Although a number of farmers and workers are aware of the existence of the Department of Labour, it seems that they do not know of the services offered by the department.

In Hopetown, all the workers were informed about the Department of Labour. Three of them indicated that the Department paid them a visit on the farm, one indicated that he was informed of his right as a worker in town and one was aware of the Department, but was not sure if they ever visit the farm.

It seems that in most cases the farmers, as well as the workers, were quite aware of the new Labour Act and what their rights are. A notable exception was a farm in Hopetown, where neither farmer nor the worker had had any contact with the Department of Labour.

On one farm in Hopetown, a visit by Labour officials had counter-intuitive results. The farmer informed his workers that he had paid them “too much” and “the government says that he must pay them less”, so he reduced the wage of the workers to the minimum wage level.

## **2.8 Police**

In all towns, the services of the police are well known to all.

Police services are generally available on the farms as well as in town. However, there are notable exceptions. In Ritchie, three farmers mentioned that the police are very slow to respond to problems on the farms. In Colesberg, one farmer claimed that the Police service is non-existent – they do not come when he needs them.

## **F. FARMERS' VIEWS ON THE ROLE OF SERVICE PROVIDERS**

### **1. Government officials' access to farms**

Farmers had very diverse opinions on the question of official visits to their farms. Some farmers were quite content that such visits take place, but other farmers were suspicious and anxious about official visits. There are at least four underlying issues:

- What services should be provided by government officials?
- Where should such services be provided – in town or on the farm?
- What procedures should be followed when officials visit the farms?
- Can government visits result in negative behaviour on the part of farm workers?

In Luckhoff, farmers were divided on whether government officials should be allowed to visit farms. Two mentioned that such officials were ‘welcome’ but that an appointment should be made. A further three mentioned that they would not personally prefer such visits, but that they would allow them nonetheless. One specifically mentioned that trade union representatives were not welcome on the farm. In contrast, two farmers stated that such officials were not welcome at all. One of these cited security reasons, saying that he did not want ‘strangers’ to get to know the farm. The other said that he ‘demanded’ privacy.

In Philippolis, the farmers do not mind that officials of government departments visit the farms, but they must make appointments ahead of time, and must not “incite the workers”. Three farmers were concerned that government should not become too involved in service delivery, because government officials will then make demands on the farmers, and thereby sour relations between farmers and the government.

In Philipstown, two farmers felt that government officials should not visit their farms, while two felt that they may visit provided that it is with an appointment and as long as it is only for their work purposes and not for political reasons “and that it should all

be transparent". A third thought that there should be community halls available where the officials can meet with the workers, and that it is not a good idea that they meet workers at their place of work.

In Ritchie, four farmers felt that officials should only come onto the farm if their visit would be "constructive". One farmer did not want any government official on his farm: "They must not come onto my land; I will provide services myself." Two farmers had no problem with government officials coming on to their farms. One farmer said it is essential that they come on to the farm to deliver service, as everyone on the farm (including the farmer and his family) needs services.

In Ritchie, two farmers did not think that government would be able to afford services on farms, but that they should rather improve the services in the towns and bring that up to standard.

In Colesberg, most of the farmers do not mind that officials of government departments visit the farms, but they must make appointments ahead of time, and must not incite the workers. Five farmers indicated that government officials are welcome to visit the farm, while one were of the opinion that they should stay away because they will talk politics and incite the workers. One was also of the opinion that the government has nothing to do with what is happening on his farm. Some of the respondents said that they have no problem that officials visit the farm, but the officials must not "talk politics".

In Jagersfontein, one farmer was very suspicious of government officials entering farms and described this as 'unnecessary'. He went on to say that such visits would only "cause trouble". Another farmer ascribed wonderful educational qualities to television and thought that it would help to expand to the worker's knowledge of the world. He did caution however, that such programmes would have to be of an educational nature and that it should not 'incite' the workers. The third farmer wished to see almost all responsibility concerning housing for farm workers shifted to governmental agencies. He believed that a government agency should provide workers with houses according to their specifications or alternately pay rent to the farmer to subsidise their accommodation on the farm.

In Ladybrand, the farmers do not object to government officials visiting their farms but would like them to really be of assistance and not use propaganda to incite the workers. One farmer said that they should not come to the farms during working hours. One farmer said that he preferred not to receive any services from the state because that gave them a hold on his farm. Another farmer mentioned that if taxes are imposed then, services should be delivered accordingly.

In Hopetown, the farmers do not mind that officials of government departments visit the farms, but they must make appointments ahead of time, and must not incite the workers. Four farmers indicated that government officials are welcome to visit the farm, while two were of the opinion that they should stay away because they will talk politics and "stir up the workers". One didn't have any preference or opinion about this matter. Some of the respondents that said that they have no problem that officials visit the farm, but they had only one request: The officials must not "talk politics".

In Fauresmith, farmers indicated that they did not mind government officials visiting the farms, as long as they made appointments. One stated that they were welcome as long as they did not 'stir like the trade unions'. One farmer thought that the government 'was doing enough already' and that farmers themselves had to make a contribution in service delivery.

These responses indicate a variety of views on the nature of the state, and the proper "reach" of the state onto private property. Some farmers prefer to see their farms as outside the reach of the state, whereas others have a more modern view of the state as having universal access and reach.

## 2. What services should be provided to farm workers?

Farmers were asked about the services which they believe government should provide to rural communities. The list of proposed functions, in Table 23, can serve as a very valuable guide to municipalities and other government departments about the "felt needs" of residents on the farms:

**Table 23: Proposed government functions: The views of farmers**

<i>Proposed government functions</i>	<i>Towns</i>
<b>Road maintenance<sup>26</sup></b>	Luckhoff, Philippolis, Philipstown, Ritchie, Colesberg, Ladybrand, Hopetown
<b>Mobile clinics or improved clinics or hospitals</b>	Luckhoff, Philipstown, Philipstown, Ritchie, Colesberg, Ladybrand, Hopetown, Fauresmith
<b>Improved ambulance service</b>	Philipstown, Ritchie,
<b>Medical aid kits and medicines for farmers to provide to farm workers</b>	Ritchie
<b>More medicines at clinic</b>	Philippolis,
<b>HIV/AIDS awareness training</b>	Colesberg, Hopetown, Fauresmith
<b>Sports/recreation</b>	Luckhoff
<b>Toilets or toilet subsidies and sanitation training</b>	Luckhoff, Philipstown, Colesberg, Fauresmith
<b>Servicing of pit toilets</b>	Philippolis
<b>Commuter transport to town and schools</b>	Luckhoff, Philippolis, Philipstown, Ritchie, Jagersfontein, Ladybrand, Fauresmith
<b>Radio/TV signals</b>	Luckhoff,
<b>Family planning</b>	Luckhoff,
<b>Refuse removal</b>	Ritchie, Ladybrand
<b>Improved telecommunications, e.g. internet</b>	Hopetown
<b>Public or private telephones</b>	Philippolis, Philipstown, Ritchie, Ladybrand
<b>Cell phone infrastructure / Automatic phones</b>	Philippolis, Philipstown
<b>More schools or farm schools which teach agriculture</b>	Philippolis, Colesberg, Hopetown
<b>Creches</b>	Ladybrand

<sup>26</sup> In the Ladybrand area, there is a definite need for the maintenance of roads. The researchers also found the roads, especially the gravel roads, in a poor state of repair when they embarked upon this research project. The condition of the roads does not only increase the wear and tear on the vehicles but includes a safety risk.

<b>Recreation facilities</b>	Philippolis,
<b>Water connections to homes</b>	Philippolis, Philipstown
<b>Dissemination of information about subsidies</b>	Jagersfontein
<b>Housing in town for pensioners</b>	Philippolis
<b>Housing subsidies</b>	Philipstown, Jagersfontein, Luckhoff, Philipstown
<b>Housing in town for farm workers</b>	Philipstown,
<b>Hostels for school children in town</b>	Philippolis, Philipstown, Ritchie, Ladybrand
<b>Electricity for farm workers</b>	Philippolis
<b>In-service training, skills training</b>	Philippolis, Jagersfontein, Ladybrand
<b>Mobile libraries</b>	Philipstown
<b>ABET classes</b>	Philipstown, Fauresmith
<b>Life skills training for farm workers or their wives</b>	Colesberg, Fauresmith
<b>Upgrade donkey carts and teach farm workers to look after donkeys</b>	Philipstown
<b>Improved service at pay-points of welfare grants, or pay-points located nearer to farms</b>	Philipstown, Ritchie, Colesberg, Ladybrand
<b>One-stop shops, to provide pensions, medical service, AIDS prevention, family planning, IDs</b>	Hopetown
<b>Awareness programme on nutrition</b>	Hopetown
<b>Solar panels</b>	Philipstown, Hopetown
<b>Free basic electricity</b>	Philipstown, Ritchie, Colesberg, Jagersfontein
<b>Welfare services</b>	Ritchie, Jagersfontein, Ladybrand, Hopetown
<b>Alcohol abuse treatment</b>	Colesberg, Jagersfontein, Hopetown
<b>Police services, e.g. patrols</b>	Ritchie, Hopetown
<b>Home affairs services – help with ID's etc</b>	Colesberg, Hopetown
<b>Removal of vermin animals and illegal weeds</b>	Colesberg
<b>Building erosion walls</b>	Colesberg
<b>Maintenance of fences</b>	Hopetown

These proposed functions and services can be categorised as follows:

- (1) *Transport:* Road maintenance, commuter transport for farm workers; upgrade donkey carts and teach farm workers to care for donkeys;
- (2) *Health:* Mobile clinics, improved town-based clinics, improved ambulance services, medical aid kits for farmers to provide to farm workers, more medicine at clinics, HIV/AIDS awareness training, family planning; awareness training about nutrition
- (3) *Environmental health:* Sanitation training, refuse removal
- (4) *Infrastructure for farm workers:* Toilets, servicing of pit toilets; dissemination of information about subsidies; water connections to homes; electricity for farm workers; solar panels; free basic electricity
- (5) *Housing:* Housing in town for pensioners; housing in town for farm workers; housing subsidies



- (6) *Social services:* Improved payment points for pensions and grants; counselling services for people with problems; One-stop shops, to provide pensions, medical service, AIDS prevention, family planning, ID's; alcohol abuse treatment; assistance to farm workers to fill in official forms
- (7) *Social activities:* Recreation facilities; mobile libraries
- (8) *Telecommunications and media:* Radio/TV signals; improved telephone lines; public telephones; cell phone infrastructure
- (9) *Education:* More schools to teach agriculture; farm schools; creches; school hostels in town; in-service training; agricultural skills training; life-skills training; ABET classes
- (10) *Police:* Improved police response times; rural patrols
- (11) *Environmental management:* Removal of illegal weeds; removal of vermin animals; building erosion walls; repairing fences.

### **3. Farmers' experience of non-state organisations**

Farmers were asked which non-state organisations are active in their area. The overriding impression is that very few NGOs are active in the rural areas of the Free State and Northern Cape.

In many cases, farmers had no experience of NGOs delivering services in the farming area. In Luckhoff, six farmers reported having no experiences with such organisations. In Philipstown, the farmers generally have no knowledge or awareness of NGOs working in their areas. One farmer mentioned a "Landbouwerkers organisasie", but he had no information about this organisation. In Philippolis, with one exception, there are no NGOs providing services. In Ritchie, farmers generally have no knowledge or awareness of NGOs working in their areas. In Jagersfontein, four farmers had never experienced NGO involvement. In Hopetown, six farmers were not aware of any NGOs that work on the farms. In Fauresmith, none of the farmers have had any experience of non-state organisations in service delivery for farm workers. In Colesberg, five farmers do not have any experience of NGO's.

There were isolated cases where farmers had had some experience with NGOs. In Luckhoff, two farmers have had experiences with non-state organisations in the form of trade unions. In Philippolis, two farms have experience of the Free State Rural Development Partnership Programme (FSRDPP)<sup>27</sup> is active. In Jagersfontein, two farmers had prior experience of service delivery by non-state organisations. One such organisation marketed funeral policies to workers and the other consisted of a team of people doing educational work amongst farm workers on HIV/AIDS prevention. In Jagersfontein, four of the farmers expressed their appreciation for the

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<sup>27</sup> An outreach project led by the University of the Free State.

work that the Rural Foundation did and expressed their regret that this body has ceased to function. In Hopetown, only two of the farmers interviewed indicated that they have had experience with NGOs. These NGOs are Amos (NG Church outreach initiative), and a Trade Union.

Some farmers were supportive about potential NGO involvement. In Ritchie, Two farmers felt that there could be a role for NGOs on their farms. One farmer suggested that they should provide for example ABET classes. In Jagersfontein, one farmer welcomed NGO involvement and said that such organisations should also do educational work on literacy and labour matters. In Jagersfontein, one participant felt that NGOs can play useful role especially in the instances where the state has failed. One participant mentioned that the NGOs could do a great deal, for instance, in the upliftment of women. In Hopetown, at least five farmers indicated that NGO's could play a valuable role in the development of farm workers. In Fauresmith, one farmer thought that such organisations had a role to play in basic skills training such as sheep shearing.

Some farmers were negative about the idea of NGO involvement. In Ritchie, one farmer had heard of NGOs working in the area, but does not use them: "I don't think I need them on my farm". In Jagersfontein, one farmer did not believe that such organisations had any role to play delivering services on farms.

The Karoo Law Clinic in Colesberg is an interesting case. The Law Clinic helps people when their human rights are infringed. The farm workers used to make use of the Law Clinic when they were unfairly dismissed or abused on the farms. The Law Clinic then wrote letters to the farmers and conducted a mediation process to resolve the matter. At first, the farmers were not keen to do this, but many have realised that the Law Clinic can work to their advantage. They now make use of the Law Clinic they want to discontinue employment, and then the Law Clinic handles the whole process<sup>28</sup>. They also use the lawyers from the Law Clinic as judges and mediators in disciplinary hearings when dealing with the workers. Because of these activities, the workers no longer trust the Clinic. The Clinic will soon have to close its doors because their donor funding has been discontinued.

#### **4. The role of farmers' organisations**

Farmers had mixed feelings about farmers' organisations.

Some farmers thought that farmers' organisations could play a constructive role in service delivery to farm workers. Various suggestions were offered. In Luckhoff, only two farmers thought that farmer's associations could play a role in service delivery to farm workers. The services they suggested included courses in tractor driving as well as help for workers wanting to attain driver's licenses. Furthermore, farmers could also assist workers in acquiring identification documents and perform a 'mentoring' role (presumably on matters pertaining to farming). In Hopetown, seven

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<sup>28</sup> One farmer explained the whole process as follows: "*Ek maak van die Law Clinic gebruik as die werker wil bedank of as ek hom wil afdank, ek kap hulle met hulle eie mense. . .*"

farmers felt that the farmers association had a meaningful role to play in terms of service delivery to workers. They believe that the farmers association has an educational function and must provide training or access to training for farm workers. Some of the farmers were of the opinion that it was the task of the farmers association to check that its members comply with the minimum wage and a minimum standard of housing and sanitation for farm workers.

In Luckhoff, four farmers suggested that there was no role for farmers' associations in training farm workers, but still offered suggestions as to what such associations might be able to accomplish. These included building a soccer field. One suggested that the association could serve as a 'channel' of communication between workers, farmers and the government.

In Philippolis, five farmers felt that the farmers' association can play a meaningful role. The farmers believe that the farmers' association has primarily an education function. One farmer mentioned that the farmers' association can establish a labour pool of workers, so that those workers can secure employment or piece-work. Another farmer argued that the farmers' association can play a role in supporting emergent farmers. In Phillipstown, two farmers felt that they could play a role through the following: (1) Keeping a type of register of farm workers, including references from employers so that this can be used to benefit of farm workers, and (2) Job-oriented training.

In Colesberg, two of the farmers believed that the farmers association had an educational function and must provide training or access to training for farm workers. The training they had in mind was literacy programmes, courses in fence making, sheep shearing, vermin control, setting of traps, and knowledge of plants in the veld.

In Jagersfontein, two farmers thought that farmer's organisations could organise skills training courses for farm workers (such as tractor driving). One farmer stated that such organisations could inform workers of their rights according to labour legislation and assist in educating them about HIV/AIDS. Another farmer thought it could serve as a vehicle to discuss matters of concern, such as farm murders, with workers.

In Fauresmith, all farmers felt that farmers' organisations had a role to play in the training of workers. The farmers mentioned that such organisations could become involved in the following areas:

- Skills training (sheep shearing).
- Improved medical conditions.
- An 'arbitration role' between farmers and workers.
- Training to improve farming practices on communal land.
- Training workers in safety measures for use in case of a possible farm attack.

In Ritchie, all farmers (except one) felt that the farmers union had a role to play in provision of services. The following services can be provided to farm workers:

- Literacy training
- Agricultural training (how to work with sheep, illnesses, shearing, etc; how to drive and fix tractors; how to help secure the security on the farms; etc)
- Life skills training (should be delivered by the Boervrouverening)

- Tractor driving and licenses for tractors
- Vehicle licenses
- Sport days for farm workers
- Lobby at government level on behalf of the farm workers.

Six Ladybrand farmers believe that the farmers' associations can play a role in the following ways:

- Training
- Farm Watch meetings that the farm workers attend.
- Negotiating for services
- Surveying of needs concerning the delivery of services.

Some farmers saw no role for farmers associations in service delivery to farm workers. In Luckhoff, one farmer saw no role for such associations in service delivery. In Philippolis, three farmers agreed with this view. In Philipstown, three farmers felt that the farmers' union had no role to play. One farmer felt it is not practical, while another farmer thought it won't work, as the farmers need to mobilise the farmers' union to work for them, as they are being harmed by the new legislation and need to address this. The farmers' union appears to be inactive and in financial problems in Philipstown area. In Colesberg, five of the farmers were of the opinion that the farmers association has no role to play in service delivery to the workers. In Hopetown, one farmer felt that the farmers association had no role to play with regards to farm worker development, and that it was the job of the association just to gather its own members and to address their issues.

There are inklings that farmers associations are not functioning as well as could be hoped. One Phillipstown farmer even went so far as to say that the farmers association currently does not do a thing for the farmers, so how can it help the workers? In Ladybrand, two of the farmers are of the opinion that the farmers' associations cannot really play an effective role because, amongst other things, they are not well organised. One farmer mentioned that the farming community is becoming more and more cosmopolitan and that this made the existence of a united organisation difficult. Although the Ladybrand farmers believe that these associations can play a role, they do not think that they will be able to play a prominent role. This point of view can be attributed to the fact that, amongst other things, the farmers' association in this district is not very active and does not function effectively, according to remarks made by one of the farmers' wives. In Ritchie, one farmer mentioned that farmers need an open channel to the government so that farmers are not forced to work through the farmers union. The farmers union is divided, and "what works for one farmer does not necessarily work for the other farmers".

One Colesberg farmer suggested that there should be a separate organisation for farm workers, that takes care of their needs, and that can communicate with them in their language and frame of reference.

## 5. Farmers' views on the role of churches

Churches are potentially a very powerful service delivery agency in the countryside.

Some farmers and farm workers have ongoing experience of church activities on the farm. In Philippolis, the farmers and workers are well informed about the activities of churches. In Phillipstown, one farmer is closely involved with his workers in this aspect. He had implemented the AMOS programme (of the NG Church), and provides transport for workers to church. In Colesberg, a few workers attend church services on the farm. It seems that the United Reformed Church has worked out a system where they have elders on the farms, and these elders are responsible to hold services on Sundays. The Minister of Religion only visits once a quarter. In Ladybrand, the workers know of the various church denominations and are able to attend church services. Some of them go to church in town or to churches on neighbouring farms. In Hopetown, a few workers attend church services on the farms, but it is not clear who leads these services. In general, the farmers and workers are well informed about the activities of churches.

In other cases, farmers envisage a more prominent role for churches. There are, however, some differences of opinion regarding the role of churches as spiritual organisations, or as welfare or development agencies. In Luckhoff, only two farmers saw a role for the church in the areas of service delivery and training with a view to job creation. The rest all saw the role of the church as addressing the spiritual and social needs of the workers. Some farmers commented that they would like to see the NG Church in particular playing a more active role in evangelising farm workers. In Philippolis, some of the farmers recommended that churches have more services for farm workers, and provide more spiritual support. The churches should also play a greater role in promoting charity for the poor.

In Phillipstown, all farmers felt that there was a role for farm workers' "own" churches and that they are not doing enough for farm workers. The roles and services needed are:

- Spiritual work
- Home visits and services on farms.
- Need to help reduce alcohol problem on farm
- Evangelisation
- Transport to nearest church.

In Ritchie, all farmers felt that there was a role for churches and that they are not doing enough for farm workers. The roles and services needed are:

- Spiritual work
- Home visits and services on farms. Many farm workers pay their church fees regularly and the church do not even send someone out to come and see them.
- Welfare role: great alcohol problem; family violence
- Need to come and help when people are dying<sup>29</sup>, and at times of hardship
- Evangelisation

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<sup>29</sup> "Sterwensbegeleiding".

- Transport to nearest church
- Provide more services on farms
- Make more pastors available for spiritual work.

In Colesberg, the farmers and workers are generally well informed about the activities of churches. Some of the farmers recommended that churches should have more services for farm workers, and provide more spiritual support. They must address the issue of alcohol abuse. The church must also be an instrument of development of farm workers, in terms of life skills.

In Jagersfontein, one farmer thought that the church had a role to play in the way of identifying and addressing social issues among the workers (such as alcohol abuse). Another thought that it could do evangelical work and prepare workers in a 'moral' fashion.

In Ladybrand, the farmers agree that the church should give spiritual ministering to the workers. One also mentioned that the church should also become more involved in educating and empowering people. Another farmer mentioned that, because there are so many denominations it is difficult for churches to function effectively on the farms. One said that, because of the stigma of apartheid, the Dutch Reformed Church does not play a large role.

In Hopetown, some of the farmers recommended that churches should have more services for farm workers, and provide more spiritual support. They felt that the church must help to support the AIDS orphans and that the church must become the instrument for reconciliation. They must address the issue of alcohol abuse. The church must also be an instrument of development of farm workers<sup>30</sup>.

In Hopetown, farmers tend to view the role of the church in moral terms. It was mentioned that established churches should visit the farms more often, and organise more prayer meetings. One farmer suggested that a central point should be identified in town or on a farm where workers could gather to worship. An independent church in the area (the '*bekeerkerk*' or 'conversion church'), attracted a lot of comment. Not much is known about the "conversion church", its doctrine or its membership, but some farmers welcomed its presence as it emphasises that its members reject vices such as alcohol and tobacco. Others are worried that it is gaining in popularity to the detriment of established churches. The fact that some farmers are highly impressed by this body's success in curbing drinking amongst farm workers is indicative of the social conditions prevailing on such farms and the means of recreation available to farm workers.

Not all farmers were positive about church activities on the farms. In Hopetown, one farmer thought that the church had no role to play in service delivery for farm workers. In Colesberg, one of the farmers was of the opinion that the church should stay away from his farm and not visit the workers, because they incite and politicise the workers.

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<sup>30</sup> See Addendum A.

In Jagersfontein, one farmer indicated that in his experience workers were not interested in such activities.

## G. PREFERENCES FOR FARM WORKERS' RESIDENCE

A fundamental question concerns trends regarding on-farm and off-farm residence. This has huge implications for service delivery, including the logistics, cost, staffing and quality of services to be provided. As such, this will be a major issue to be addressed by municipalities in the next few years.

### 1. Farmers' preferences

Farmers were asked whether they prefer their workers to live on the farm, in town, or in a combination of these options, as Table 24 shows:

Table 24: Farmers' preferences for farm workers' residence

	Prefer farm	Prefer town	Combination
<i>Northern Cape:</i>			
Colesberg	3	3	1
Hopetown	3	3	-
Philipstown	6	2	-
Ritchie	6	1	1
<i>Free State:</i>			
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	6	1	2
Ladybrand	6	1	-
Philippolis	6	6	
Luckhoff	4	1	2
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>6</b>

The table shows that the majority of farmers still prefer their workers to live on the farm.

The following reasons were typically suggested by farmers for having farm workers living on the farms:

- Labour is nearby when needed, especially on weekends.
- The farmer is frequently away from home, and needs workers on-site, whom he can trust.
- Labour is available during emergencies, such as veld fires.
- It helps to reduce security problems.
- Reduced transport costs – distance from town makes commuting unrealistic, time-consuming and costly.
- Dislike or mistrust negative social influences in town.
- The farmer knows and trusts the workers on the farm; one farmer (Colesberg) and the workers know one another, they have been together for three generations, they know one another's weak and strong points.
- Commuting farm workers may present security risks.

- Workers take ownership of their work when they live on the farm, and they become more responsible for the well-being of the farm.
- The workers are better off on the farm because the farmer would help in case of need and provides transport to towns and services.
- Farmers have made a large investment in housing.
- Farmers can ensure adequate food for farm workers, e.g. meat, milk.
- Farm workers share game hunting.

Farmers' preference for their workers to live on the farms were sometimes expressed in quite emotive terms. One farmer (in Ritchie) maintains that farm workers should live on a farm, they are a community and that there is an "umbilical cord between the farmer and the workers", and that they must look after each other.

The farmers that preferred their workers *not* to live on the farm, or who were uncertain whether that was still a desirable option, cited the following reasons:

- There will be fewer social problems on the farm; this refers primarily to drinking and social problems during weekends. They would rather that such socially dysfunctional behaviour should happen in town.
- People who visit farm workers on the weekends are a security risk.
- Labour legislation makes it an unattractive prospect (one case in Fauresmith, who would otherwise prefer to have farm workers living on the farm)
- Land tenure legislation (ESTA), which may mean that workers eventually have a claim to life-long tenure on the farm.
- Some farmers live in town, so picking the workers up in the morning does not present a problem.
- The farmer would not have to provide housing.
- There would be fewer problems with theft.

Land tenure and labour legislation featured prominently in farmers' arguments. In Colesberg,, one farmer said that he would prefer workers that live on the farm, but that the reality is that "we are working towards a position where farmers will not have workers living on the farm due to the new Labour Act. We won't even have permanent workers, but will make use of contract workers".

Another farmer in Colesberg mentioned that he is moving his workers to town due to tenure rights and the new Labour Act. Especially the Labour Act is significant, because he does not want problem workers on his farm that are difficult to fire. Eventually he foresees that he will only work with contract labour. This is despite the fact that he prefers workers living on the farm, so that he can build a good relationship with them.

Another farmer in Colesberg was explicit about the issue of legislation. He prefers working with workers who lives in town, due to the new Labour Act. Currently there are two workers living on the farm and two workers living in town. Eventually he only wants one worker living on the farm. He wants to make use of contract workers to do piece-work, and then he only have to pay a day wages and he would not need to have a contract with them.



The type of labour also affects farmers' preferences. In Colesberg, one farmer wants one worker per farm to look after the livestock. He makes use of workers from town when he needs a big job done.

On one Hopetown farm, the farmer has the following policy: If the worker does not use alcohol, he is welcome to live on the farm. Currently, five men and two women living on the farm. On this farm, the workers have received R1500-R1800 subsidies to build their own shanties in town. Workers who do not abuse alcohol are rewarded with three-roomed houses on the farm.

One Hopetown farmer has a long-term vision of farm worker housing. He preferred that the men stay on the farm, due to working hours (workers work overtime). Administration of the workforce better when workers live on the farm. He prefers that the women live in town, to take care of children, and that they live close to schools. He would like to see all the workers living in town with good housing. He is going to make 10 hectares available to develop a small town on farm. The workers will receive transport deeds for houses and land.

## 2. Farm workers' residential preferences

Farm workers were asked about their residential preferences (see Table 25):

**Table 25: Farm workers' preferences for farm workers' residence**

	Prefer farm	Prefer town
<i>Northern Cape:</i>		
Colesberg	3	4
Hopetown	6	1
Philipstown	7	1
Ritchie	2	6
<i>Free State:</i>		
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	3	5
Ladybrand	1	7
Philippolis	4	4
Luckhoff	4	3
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>

The farm workers showed a surprisingly even result regarding preferences for on-farm and off-farm housing.

The reasons for farm workers preferring to live on the farm are:

- Free food, including meat, fruit, vegetables
- Free water
- Free electricity
- Free housing
- Agreeable working hours
- Free housing
- Less overcrowding than in town
- Living costs are lower than in town; living in town is expensive

- Close to work
- Families can live with farm workers
- Children are safe when parents are at work
- It is the only way to get work; there is no work in the towns
- Towns are too frenetic and oppressive, and it is more peaceful on the farm
- Farm workers are used to stay on the farms, and do not feel at home in town
- There are farm schools for the children
- Can keep livestock
- “The owner is good to me”.

The range of free goods and services suggest that farmers do not regard their relationship with the workers as a purely economic one. There seems to be a powerful element of patronage present in the interaction between farmers and their workers.

It can also be argued that such free goods make it an economic proposition for the workers to stay on the farm. In Fauresmith, in the one case where free goods (in the form of food) were withdrawn, the worker indicated that he would like to stay in the nearby town.

In contrast, the reasons for living in town are:<sup>31</sup>

- Farms are too far from town, and it is difficult to access services such as clinics.
- Do not own a house
- Workers have no security when they get old and have to retire – they have no house in town or place to go to
- There is inadequate housing on the farm
- On the farm, one is separated from one’s family
- Workers have to pay for water, housing and/or electricity<sup>32</sup>
- Access to transport is a problem, or transport is expensive
- The roads are bad and getting to town is difficult
- Difficult to get accommodation for school children in town
- There is a “better atmosphere” in town; on the farm, one has to be too careful
- There are better services (e.g. housing, sanitation) in town
- On the farm one is separated from one’s family who live in town, and it is lonely; the family is divided during term-time
- When some of the worker’s family wants to visit him, the worker first has to ask the farmer for permission, and then the farmer makes it very unpleasant for them to have a visit.

In numerous cases, farm workers have had to figure out innovative ways of accessing services in town. Numerous workers have families who live in the town with the

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<sup>31</sup> In Jagersfontein, farm workers were very reluctant to mention reasons why they would want to stay in town. Two farm workers mentioned advantages to living on the farm. They indicated the reason they lived on the farm was because it is close to their place of work. The workers seemed reluctant to criticise their employers, and it may be difficult to discern any reasons behind their preference.

<sup>32</sup> In Ritchie, farm workers need to pay for their accommodation, water and electricity. Generally wood is still free of charge.

school children during term-time. This means that the breadwinner is separated from his family for long periods.

A few observations can be made concerning farm worker's preferences. Firstly, the requirement to pay for rent, water and electricity on a farm appears to be a major disincentive to stay on the farm. Conversely, for those workers who get such services for free, life is a lot less expensive than for their urban counterparts. Given that the minimum wage legislation is encouraging farmers to begin charging payment for housing and infrastructure services, this may well be an incentive for increasing numbers of farm workers to live in town.

Secondly, the availability of services (primarily schools and clinics) to farm workers on the farm is a major incentive to continue living on the farm. This means that government decisions about farm schools and mobile clinics will have a huge impact on farm workers' preferences. The availability of transport also influences this issue. Where workers are dependent on their employers for transport, it is likely to be a more problematic situation than where workers have their own transport, or can catch a taxi or bus.

Thirdly, the social relationship between worker and employer is a significant variable. Where employers have a positive and warm relationship with their workers, the workers tend to find it a more amenable environment than the towns. Conversely, where employers are resentful and suspicious about their workers' activities and conduct, then the workers are likely to prefer the freedom in town.

### **3. Comparing employers' and workers' preferences**

It is possible that employers and workers do not agree about the optimal residential arrangement. There were cases where the farmer prefers his workers to live on the farm, but the worker prefers to live in town; or vice versa.

In Colesberg, in only three cases were the farmers and the workers in agreement about the living arrangements of the workers. In Philippolis, in only two cases did the farmer and worker agree on their preferences. In four cases, the farmer preferred the worker to live on the farm, but the worker preferred to live in town. Conversely, in two cases, the farmer preferred the worker to live in town, but the worker preferred to live on the farm.

The complexity of the choice is illustrated in Hopetown:

- A farmer prefers a combination of farm and town accommodation. He needs some of the workers to stay on the farm because he is not always there. He can contact them with radio or cell phone to give instructions. He needs workers on farms during the week, but return to town over weekends – these he rotates between the different farms he farms on.
- The worker prefers to live in town. In the week he lives on the farm and over the weekends he returns home to his family. He has his own house in town and his family are living with him over weekends, during the week he and his family is separated from one another. He has access to services like the clinic and school. However, he admits that there are advantages to living on the

farm. In town, he must pay for water and electricity. Wood and meat are free on the farm and he can take it home to his family. It is difficult for him to survive on his income due to the fact that he must keep two households afloat, one on the farm where he lives in the week and another one in town.

In Colesberg, in almost all cases, interviewees had powerful reasons in favour of an option, but were also aware of counter-arguments or negative factors. A general observation can be made: There is a general tension between the residential advantages derived from living on the farm (free housing, water and electricity) and the social services obtained in the towns (schools and clinics). This is a direct consequence of the abolition of the Rural Foundation, which had encouraged the provision of social services provided by the farmers.

It appears that workers face very difficult choices. Should they keep their family on the farm, and create transport problems vis-à-vis schooling and health services? Should they split their family and create a separate home in town? Can a split household still function optimally as a family? Should they move to town and risk losing their job? At present, government systems of service delivery do not make these choices any easier. Different departments have different philosophies; and rural-urban transport is very unreliable and scanty. It is tragic that farm workers, whose livelihoods are marginal and difficult to maintain, have to make such difficult decisions in intractable circumstances.

## G. FARM WORKERS' RIGHTS: CEMETERIES

One way of testing the changing social relationship between farmers and farm workers is to investigate farmers' views regarding on-farm cemeteries for farm workers and their family members.

There have been several instances when farm workers wanted to bury family members on a farm, or wanted to visit family cemeteries. In terms of many black people's value systems, a family burial ground gives some kind of rights to the descendants. This value system has caused anxieties for some farmers, who believe that it may be the beginning of ESTA-type land claims. **Give details**

In the survey, farmers were asked whether farm workers have burial rights on the farm; and farm workers were asked if they have a cemetery on the farm. Table 26 below show the results of the survey:<sup>33</sup>

**Table 26: Farms with and without burial rights**

	Farms with burial rights	Farms without burial rights
<i>Northern Cape:</i>		
Colesberg	5	2

<sup>33</sup> In some cases, the responses were contradictory. In Hopetown, for example, two farmers maintained that the workers have burial rights, but the workers claimed that this was not the case.

Hopetown	6	1
Philipstown	3	5
Ritchie	4	4
<i>Free State:</i>		
Fauresmith and Jagersfontein	4	4
Ladybrand	6	2
Philippolis	7	1
Luckhoff	1	2
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>21</b>

Interestingly, a larger number of farmers in the survey still allow farm workers to bury family members on the farms. This may indicate that those farmers do not share the anxieties about land tenure claims.

In Ladybrand, on six out of eight farms, the workers have their own cemeteries that are for their use only and not for their extended families. Similarly, in Philippolis, several farmers noted that the on-farm cemetery is only for workers, and not for members of extended families. One Ladybrand farmer said that, after his workers have worked on the farm for ten years, they are entitled to make use of the cemetery. He added this regulation after a worker wanted to bury visitors who had died on the farm while visiting him. This matter ended in a court case where judgement was given in favour of the farmer.

In Colesberg, five farmers agreed that the workers have burial rights. It is also interesting to note that the workers and the farmers were in agreement about this right. On one farm in Colesberg, the farmer indicated that a worker must have worked for a long time on the farm to have the right to be buried in the cemetery on the farm.

The farmers who do not allow burial rights, give the following reasons:

- It would result in too many people having access to the farm
- It would create potential security problems, since it is difficult to control access to the farms
- On irrigation farms, ground has to be used to its full potential
- Burial sites could give rise to land claims.

In Ritchie, one farmer would rather provide a lorry and money for workers to bury their family members in Ritchie's urban cemetery. Another farmer typically pays for the burial of the worker and his dependents. The farm provides an ox for the funeral.

In Philipstown, two farmers used to allow burials on the farm, but prefer not to do this any more. One cited "political problems". One Colesberg farmer argued that if he allows the workers to have a cemetery, that they could later come and "claim the land". He also described a situation where one of his workers, who had worked for him for 21 years, had passed away, and the worker's wife wanted him to bury the worker on the farm. He refused to do it, but allowed them to have the church service on the farm, but the body was buried in town. In Philippolis, two farmers also remarked that it is becoming a risk to have an on-farm cemetery, due to land tenure legislation.

According to three of the workers in Ladybrand, they prefer to bury their family members in the cemetery in town. Similarly, in Philipstown, three workers prefer to use the town cemetery, even though facilities are available on the farm. In Philippolis, two workers prefer to bury their family members in town, where they are near other family members.

The complexity of the situation is illustrated in Hopetown. On one farm, all the live-in workers have the right to bury their family in the on-farm cemetery. This right was also extended to all the ex-workers that were on pension and all the children of ex-workers. This was also the situation on another farm, where workers that had left a long time ago, still were buried on the farm. On a third farm, the right was limited only to workers that have lived on the farm for their whole life. On a fourth farm, burials were not allowed, due to the "politicised" nature of the issue.

## **H. TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS: HOW STRONG ARE THE LINKS BETWEEN FARM AND TOWN?**

### **1. Urban services**

In the survey, farm workers were asked an open-ended question about the reasons why they visit the towns. The following reasons were suggested:

- School attendance for children
- Church attendance
- Visiting family
- Visiting doctor and clinic
- Shopping and services
- Business transactions, e.g. visit the bank
- Sport and recreation
- Visiting a social worker
- To access social grants
- Attending community meetings (e.g. housing, school)
- Have a house or shanty in town, and need to check up on it
- To visit the magistrate's court.

These reasons suggest the urgent need for some kind of transport system between the farms and the towns.

Farm workers were asked about the frequency of visits to the towns, as in Table 29 below:

Table 27: Frequency of visits to town

	Commute daily or whenever chooses	Commute once a week	Visit once a fortnight	Visit town once a month	Visit town once a quarter or six months
<i>Northern Cape:</i>					
Colesberg	1 (has own car)	1	2	4 (farmer's transport)	-
Hopetown	1	2	-	3	-
Philipstown	1 (travels with farmer)	3	2	2	-
Ritchie	2	3	1	1	1
<i>Free State:</i>					
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	1	-	2	3	1
Ladybrand	-	-	2	3	2
Philippolis		7		7	-
Luckhoff	3	1		3	-
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>4</b>

The largest number of workers only get to town once a month, although a significant number commute once a week.

It is likely that the frequency of visits and the availability of transport are closely related. In Philipstown, two workers get to town once a month, although they are free to go to town when they have time off, but lack of transport is generally a hindrance. One farm worker has the dilemma that, even though he does not work on Sundays, he has no transport to get into town regularly. One of the most typical scenarios is that in Colesberg, where four of the workers only go to town once a month with transport that the farmer provides.

In Ladybrand, although the workers do not go to town regularly, some of the male workers mentioned that their wives often go to town. As shown below, bus transport is available in Ladybrand.

## 2. Transport services

Farm workers were asked what types of transport they use to get to town, as shown in Table 27:

**Table 28: Transport modes**

	Own car	Travel with farmer	Taxi	Walking	Bicycle	Horse / Donkey cart	Hitch-hike	Bus	Access to Farmer's bakkie
<i>Northern Cape:</i>									
Colesberg	1	5	-	1	1	1	1	-	1
Hopetown	-	5	-	1		1	-	1	-
Philipstown	2	6	-	1	3	2 <sup>34</sup>	-	-	-
Ritchie		4	2	3	4	1	4	1	
<i>Free State:</i>									
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	1	8	2	-	1	1	-	-	-
Ladybrand	-	6	6	-	-	-	-	1	-
Philippolis	1	7	2	2	3	2	-	-	-
Luckhoff	1	5	1	1	1	1	-	-	-
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>

The survey shows that the vast majority of farm workers are dependent on their employers for transport to town. Substantial numbers of farm workers ride bicycles, or walk. A significant minority still uses horse or donkey carts. Significantly, 6 farm workers (about 10%) have their own car, which indicates that they earn sufficient wages to purchase and maintain cars.

The very small number of farm workers who use buses (5%) shows how rare organised transport is. It is only in towns which are located on major through routes (Hopetown, Ritchie and Ladybrand) that bus transport is available.

The inadequate transport systems lead to numerous problems in people's lives. Some farm workers ventured their own comments on issue. In Ladybrand, although there is a school on a nearby station and there are a few farm schools, both the farmers and the workers said that transport to the schools is a problem. As far as secondary-school learners are concerned, there is a great need for accommodation in town for these children. In Ladybrand, on one of the farms, the workers were recently involved in an accident while they were using the farmer's vehicle. According to this farmer, he now pays his workers a small allowance so that they can arrange their own transport.

In Ladybrand, taxis are generally available and the farm workers make regular use of them. On certain routes, there are also buses that the workers can use.

### **3. Commuting patterns: Living in town and working on the farm**

Farmers were asked whether they employ workers living in town. Often, but not always, these are casual workers.

<sup>34</sup> One worker gets a lift from another worker, and must pay for this.



**Table 29: Farmers providing transport to urban-based workers**

	<b>Number of farmers providing transport for casual workers</b>
<i>Northern Cape:</i>	
Colesberg	
Hopetown	3
Philipstown	???
Ritchie	-
<i>Free State:</i>	
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	5
Ladybrand	5
Philippolis	3
Luckhoff	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>

Only a minority of farmers are prepared to transport urban-based workers to work on their farms. Given the poor rural transport systems, this is presumably a serious inhibiting factor in encouraging farm workers to live in town.

In Philippolis, only three farmers use piece workers, e.g. for fence-making and sheep-shearing. The farmers then provide transport. Similarly, in Luckhoff, the two farmers who indicated that they use casual labour from town provide transport for them when such labourers are used. In Jagersfontein, one farmer provides transport to his workers to town, and charges them R50 for the occasion.

In Ladybrand, one farmer said that he used to use piece-job workers but that the new salary and labour laws have resulted in his no longer continuing with this practice. Five farmers use piece-job workers when they need to and they transport them to and from the farm themselves. Sometimes the workers are transported every day and sometimes they spend a night or two on the farm.

A great deal more research is needed on the trends regarding casual work or piece-work, and whether permanent jobs are being displaced by casual work.

## **I. THE FARMING COMMUNITY**

The interviewees were asked several questions to investigate farmers' and workers' views about the social relationships prevailing on the farms.

### **1. Main developmental needs: Farmers' views**

Firstly, farmers were asked about their views on farm workers' main developmental needs, as shown in Table 30:

**Table 30: Farmers' views on farm workers' developmental needs**

<b>Locality</b>	<b>Issues mentioned</b>
<i><b>Northern Cape:</b></i>	
Colesberg	
Hopetown	HIV/AIDS
Philipstown	Alcoholism; child grant leads to ineffective family planning; poor clinic service; ill health of many farm workers
Ritchie	Social aspects of HIV/AIDS (orphans, widows); poor clinic service; alcoholism; TB
<i><b>Free State:</b></i>	
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	Ill health, ascribed to HIV/AIDS and TB. Workers physically weak, infants are dying.
Ladybrand	HIV/AIDS and funerals, alcoholism, domestic abuse
Phillipolis	Alcoholism; deaths due to HIV/AIDS and TB
Luckhoff	HIV/AIDS and medical complications; increasing mechanisation to avoid wage laws

The farmers overwhelmingly regard ill health, HIV/AIDS, and domestic abuse as the most pressing problems facing farm workers.

In Fauresmith, four out of the five farmers interviewed suggested that the general health of their workers had radically declined over the past three of years. All attributed this decline to the spread of HIV/AIDS. The decline was apparent enough for some farmers to see it in the general productivity and physical strength of the workers. One indicated that there was still a social stigma attached to the disease amongst farm workers, while another expressed the desire for an organised campaign that would educate workers as to what the disease entails.

In Hopetown, one farmer, who is a doctor, was of the opinion that about 52% of the people of Hopetown were HIV positive. On one of the farms there are now at least 2 funerals per week. It was suggested that there should be a comprehensive programme to teach farm workers about HIV/AIDS. On one farm the farmer is now paying between R 3000 and R 5000 to take care of the AIDS orphans of some of his employees who have died.

There were some concerns about dysfunctional or unhelpful municipalities. In Phillipstown, one farmer maintained that he pays taxes to District Council and receives no services: "I am building houses for pensioners and new workers without any help." Another farmer maintained that the local authority should support all security initiatives. All government departments should work together. Local authority is invisible, there is no clarity regarding the local authority structures, which is causing confusion. The local authority representative does not know who he represents.

Some farmers were concerned that farmer-worker relationships are deteriorating. In Luckhoff, two farmers reported that workers had become more aware of their rights. One suggested that he could not trust his workers anymore and that he could not

afford to leave his farm for long periods of time. He attributed 'politics' especially among the 'younger generation', as playing a 'big role' in this state of affairs.

Another farmer reported that labour legislation had made it difficult to employ permanent workers. He went on to say that he was turning to increased mechanisation of farming activities in order to avoid having to depend on labour. However, another farmer described the legislation as 'just' but added that some parts of it made the employment of more workers unattractive. Yet another farmer added that it made farming 'easier' and 'more organised'.

## 2. Main developmental needs: Farm workers' views

Farm workers were asked an open-ended question about developmental needs which they would like to have addressed:

**Table 31: Farm workers' views on developmental needs**

Locality	Problems mentioned
<i>Northern Cape:</i>	
Colesberg	Proper sanitation; minimum wage
Hopetown	Low wages (three interviewees – one experienced a reduction in wage after the Minimum Wage levels were introduced)
Phillipstown	Transport; toilets; meat rations; better wages; some livestock
Ritchie	Need child grants until end of school; school clothes and fees; flush toilets; small piece of land for animals; transport; better housing; better salary; electricity
<i>Free State:</i>	
Fauresmith	A house; a school nearby; an improved salary
Jagersfontein	
Ladybrand	Problem of minimum wage laws means that workers have to pay rent.
Philippolis	-
Luckhoff	Availability of transport; want to keep stock but fears being charged rent; own farms; better housing; telephone; flush toilet; stove

There were several grievances related to the minimum wage laws. One worker in Colesberg indicated that she was not paid according to the prescribed minimum wages, she was paid only R 500 per month, and the employer does not pay her in cash, but pays her wage over into a bank account. This means that she must go to town to draw her money from her account and she loses out on the deal because she has to pay banking fees as well. In Hopetown, one worker indicated that his wages were reduced when the Labour Act became law. That the farmer told him that it was not his choice to reduce his wage, but that it was the government that forced him to reduce his wage, because the government prescribes that he must only be paid R 630 per month.

Some workers were generally concerned about wage levels. In Phillipstown, one worker does not get the minimum wage. He was told that he is not a permanent worker and thus does not need to get the minimum wage. He has been working for this farmer continuously for 9 months, and receives only R400 per month. In

Ladybrand, one worker mentioned that things used to be better before the minimum wage laws, because then he did not have to pay rent.

One of the Hopetown workers who travels between the farm and town was also of the opinion that he was not paid enough. When asked how much pay he received, he answered that he was being paid R 800 per month. After some discussion it became clear it is difficult for him to keep two households afloat, one on the farm and the other one in town, and that this caused a lot of stress for him. This is an interesting case, as it is not primarily an indication of low wages, but of low wages *in relation to the need to access urban services*. The fact that services are not available on the farm requires higher wages to enable workers to access them in town.

In Phillipstown, two workers have not received contracts. On one farm, a lawyer came to speak to them about contracts, although the workers were not satisfied with the contracts, they were all forced to sign them. On another farm, there is no contract, even for farm workers who live permanently on farm. "The farmer talks of a contract, but we have never seen such a thing."

Some workers complained about infrastructure. One worker in Colesberg complained that the sanitation situation on the farm really needs attention. It was on this farm where the farmer indicated that there was proper sanitation for the workers, but where closer investigation revealed that the sanitation consisted of a pit toilet and that the pit were full. This meant that the workers have to use the veld. In terms of sanitation, it seems that there is a communication problem between the district municipality and the farmers about the subsidies that is available for sanitation, and the route the farmers have to follow to get the subsidies.

However, there are also cases where workers are satisfied with their working conditions. In Colesberg, for the most part the farm workers were happy about their situation and did not want anything more. In Phillipstown, one worker maintained that the employees have always been paid well. "Every year we get an increase. We get R750 per month, plus food, and a slaughter animal every month, and we do not have to pay for anything. We are like a family here, and the workers don't leave". On another farm, the "new contracts ensured that we get more pay." In the previous month, he got R1080 (after deductions) because he also catches some predators (rooikatte) to supplement his income. He buys at a store on the farm, because he can buy on credit. They have to buy meat, at R10 per kg.

A remarkable fact is that there is virtually no correlation between farmers' and farm workers' views on their most pressing developmental needs. Whereas farmers emphasised ill health, HIV/AIDS and domestic abuse, no farm workers mentioned these problems. It will take a great deal more qualitative research to find out why. In contrast, farm workers' concerns about wages, contracts and infrastructure were not reflected in farmers' consciousness.

### **3. Farmers' views on social relations on the farm**

Farmers were then asked an open-ended question: "Is it realistic or feasible to regard the farmer and his workers as one community? Or is it purely a labour relationship? Please explain your answer". Table 32 below shows the result:

**Table 32: Social relationships between farmers and farm workers: Farmers' views**

	A community	A labour relationship	Quasi-family relationship	Mutual dependency	Community relationship deteriorating because of legislation	Role for farmer's wife
<i>Northern Cape:</i>						
Colesberg	2	2	1 (a guardian)	3 (work as a team)		4 (life skills, literacy, health, creche)
Hopetown	2	2		3 (work as a team)		6
Philipstown	4		4 (a guardian)			
Ritchie	4	3	1		2	
<i>Free State:</i>						
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	4	3				5
Ladybrand	6				2	
Phillipolis	5		3			
Luckhoff	1	4		2 ("symbiosis")		
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>15</b>

The categories in Table 32 are artificial constructs, and were drawn up during the analysis of the findings. The important role of the farmer's wife was particularly notable. Consequently, it is conceivable that farmers' replies could be interpreted or categorised differently from what they have been done in the table. Nevertheless, it gives some idea of the diversity of social relationships which prevail – or to put it differently, of a social system in transition. It suggests that a great deal more qualitative and nuanced research should be undertaken.

In Fauresmith, three farmers thought that it would be possible to describe themselves and their workers as "one community". Of these, one commented that "we are not on the same level yet", but thought the idea of a community desirable. In Ritchie, the sense of community was expressed by one farmer: "We are a community – when one of our workers died a few days ago, we all took time off and mourned; there is a lot of mutual trust; farm workers borrow money if needed". Another farmer said that "We have to become more of a community if we want to survive. We belong together; if I don't have black residents on the farm, I will be very lonely". In Phillipstown, at least two farmers emphasised the fact that they form a community with their workers: "We are one community, like a family. They come to us with their social and medical problems and when I am ill they look after me. A guardianship relationship is not good for workers, they need/want to take more responsibility and initiatives".

According to another farmer in Phillipstown, “We have good relationship, there is a loyalty, I am closer to them than my neighbours, we trust each other, I don’t even have to lock my house – that I would never be able to do with temporary workers or piece workers”.

Of course, this view begs the question of what a “community relationship” actually entails. In Colesberg, two of the farmers were of the opinion that they and the workers formed one community and they cited economic, safety and social reasons for their opinion.

There are indications that this “community perspective” is coming under strain. Two other farmers observed that it used to be a community, but the labour laws have created a purely work relationship, I am now less empathetic towards them”. Another farmer also said that the minimum wage laws have brought a separation between the farmer and workers, and brought strain into the work relationship. In Ladybrand, two of the farm owners mentioned that the new labour laws have resulted in there being merely a work relationship between them and their workers. The situation was different before the introduction of the new laws, which have brought tension into their relationships. In Luckhoff, one of the farmers no longer provides a monthly sheep for slaughter, due to the labour legislation.

A Jagersfontein farmer also reported a close community relationship, although it suffers strain on occasion. He described his relationship with his workers by saying ‘we are like family’. He added that while the relationship was not without its problems, they generally shared each other’s pain and happiness. However, he went on to say that radio coverage of incidents of crime or cruelty involving white perpetrators and black victims, upsets workers and makes them ‘rebellious’.

Some farmers have a relatively “pre-modern”, “patron-client” understanding of the relationship between farmer and farm worker. In Philippolis, five farmers believe that they have a patron-relationship with their workers. Workers will ask for help, and they were happy to provide assistance. Three farmers described it as a quasi-family relationship, and that there is a great deal of mutual dependency.

Some farmers regard the farming relationship as a labour relationship between worker and employer. According to one farmer in Fauresmith, the relationship should rather be characterised by mutual respect with both sides understanding of their respective rights and obligations.

It is sometimes difficult to categorise farmers’ views – or, to put it differently, their views are so complex that it would probably do violence to categorise them too forcefully. In Colesberg, two farmers describe their relationship with the workers as a labour relationship and cited the huge difference in culture as a reason why they do not see themselves and the workers as one community. Nevertheless, one of these farmers also described his role as that of a “guardian”, and that he must see to it they do not fight over weekends, and that he must take them to the doctor when they are hurt or ill. In Ritchie, two farmers reported that it is primarily a work relationship, but that they are “a community to promote farm security”.

In Hopetown, two farmers indicated that they are in a labour relationship with their workers. They said that their culture differs very much from that of the workers, and that they do not want to “befriend the workers”. In Hopetown, five farmers indicated that they think that they and their workers can be described as one community or family. They believe that they are dependent on the workers in terms of safety, financial prosperity, and that they spend their lives together on the farm. In some cases this kind of relationship can be described as patron-relationship, but in other cases it is beyond that point because the farmer and the worker sits around the table and plan the farming activities together. Three farmers in Hopetown noted that they and his workers are “one team”.

Similarly, in Colesberg, three of the farmers described the relationship as one of co-dependency, they need one another in terms of the farming activities and here they work and plan together as one team, but due to the cultural differences they are not one community. This creates an impression of collective team effort, but based on strong class and cultural inequalities.

Some farmers envisage a much more modern and egalitarian relationship between themselves and their workers. In Fauresmith, one farmer felt that that he would prefer it if the social distinction between worker and employer would fade away. Another farmer had already formed a partnership with one of his workers and the farm was under joint ownership. The farmer was also assisting the worker to acquire a farm of his own nearby. In Ladybrand, six of the farmers said that they are like a community and are dependent on one another. One of the farmers mentioned that his son had been a member of the farm soccer team at one stage and that he and his sons, often, after they have e.g. finished harvesting, have a braai with the workers. Another owner said that he and his workers know one another very well because the last time he had appointed a new worker was in 1990. Two other farm owners said that some of their farm workers attend farm watch meetings and that they work together with them to ensure safety on the farms.

In contrast, some farmers do not hold much hope for development work amongst farm workers. One Colesberg farmer were of the opinion that it is not going to help to do development work, because the farm workers “will never change”. Another farmer indicated that he and his wife started with a development programme on the farm in 1985, but it didn't work out because the workers didn't show any interest in the programme, which lead him to the conclusion that his wife is not responsible for development work on the farm.

A special issue is the role of the farmer's wife. Many farmers believed that the farmer's wife had a role to play in delivering services to workers in number of ways. This implies a very inclusive conception of the farming community, where farmers, their wives, and their workers, form a mutually-supportive unit. For example, one farmer's wife had offered classes in cooking and house keeping classes, as well as literacy training. One of the farms houses a farm school that is managed by the farmer's wife. In Philippolis, according to the farmers, the farmer's wife can play a role regarding medical help, purchasing of supplies, transport of workers, and training. According to several farmers in Colesberg and Hopetown, the farmer's wife can play a role regarding teaching the farm workers literacy programmes, religious education, life skills, arts and craft skills, HIV/AIDS programmes and basic

sanitation, and also setting up and running a crèche for the farm children. On all eight farms in Ladybrand, the wives of the farmers play an important role in assisting the workers and their families. They give medical aid, advice about family matters, organise telephone calls and buy items that the workers need. In Luckoff, according to the farmers, the farmer's wife could play a meaningful role regarding training workers and their wives in areas such as hygiene, food preparation, training and the making of clothes. Two farmers also suggested that their wives could present Bible study courses and one thought that she could provide marriage counselling for the workers.

However, social relations are changing here too. In Philippolis, one farmer mentioned that farmers' wives, who have full-time jobs, are finding it increasingly difficult to play a meaningful role. In Colesberg, one farmer said that his wife is a professional person in her own right and that it is not her responsibility to do development work on the farm with the workers and their families. In Ladybrand, there is a tendency for the wives of farmers to fill full-time positions in town and thus they are less involved with the workers and their families than they were previously.

The complexity of social relations on the farm can be understood from another perspective. It is possible that there may be correlations between farmers' views of the social relationship; their views on farm workers' rights to keep stock or grow crops; and farm workers' residential preferences. For example, the following table shows a combination of preferences in Fauresmith and Jagersfontein:

**Table 33: Correlations between aspects of social relations: Fauresmith and Jagersfontein**

Farm	Farmer's views of relationship	Farmer's view on stock keeping (see Section ??? below)	Farm worker's residential preference
Farm 1	Community	Yes	Farm
Farm 2	Labour relationship	No	Farm
Farm 3	Labour relationship	No	Town
Farm 4	Labour relationship	No	Farm
Farm 5	Community	Yes	Town
Farm 6	Patron 'we are like family'.	Sets limits on the numbers of the livestock	Town
Farm 7	'Community'	No	Town
Farm 8	Labour relationship	No	Town

The survey produced some interesting correlations. There is a clear correlation between the farmer's views on stock ownership and whether the farmers and workers could be considered a community. However, no such correlation is evident in the farm worker's residential choices. In the case of the second farm, the worker prefers to live on the farm despite not being allowed to keep cattle, while in the case of the fifth, the worker would prefer to live in town.

It is notable that the two farmers who describe their relationship with their workers in emotional terms employ workers who would rather live in town. If taken in conjunction with the worker's refusal to list any reasons why they would want to stay in town, the possibility presents itself that these two farmers are engaged in a form of self-delusion as to the actual state of their relationship with their workers. However, it



can be deduced that the workers do not feel particularly close to the farmers concerned.. On the other hand, the workers' choices to live in town may be prompted primarily by the availability of urban services, and not be a reflection of their relationship with their employer.

In Colesberg, Hopetown, Jagersfontein, Fauresmith and Ladybrand, other correlations can be detected:

- *“Community relationship” and on-farm residence:* In Ladybrand, in six cases where the farmer regarded the relationship as a “community”, they preferred their workers to live on the farm. On the farms where the farm owners have positive attitudes concerning their relationships with the workers, the workers were spontaneous and said that they enjoy living on the farms, they are happy and they get along well with the farmers. On the farms where the farmers said that there is merely a work relationship between them and the workers and that the laws have brought tension, the workers made comments that confirmed that there is tension at times between the farmers and themselves and that they are not happy there. In Colesberg, in both the cases where the farmer indicated that he believes that he and the workers are one community, the preference where the worker wants to live was on the farm. Similarly, in Hopetown, in four of the five cases where the farmer indicated that he believes that he and the workers are one community, the workers preferred to live on the farm.
- *“Community relationship” and livestock ownership:* In Hopetown, in three of the five cases where the farmers have indicated that they believe that they and their workers are “one community”, the workers were allowed to keep their own stock. In Ladybrand, five of these farmers allow their workers to keep livestock. In Colesberg, in one of the two cases where the farmer have indicated that he believes that he and the workers are one community, the workers were allowed to keep their own stock, In the other case the workers receives bonuses up 20% of the profit made by the farmer for looking after, and taking care of the livestock when it gets to the market. In both these cases, therefore, the farmer’s perspective of the farm “community” has translated into material advantages for the worker.
- *“Labour relationship and prohibition on stock ownership”:* In Colesberg, three out of the four farmers, who see their relationship as a labour relationship, do not allow their workers to keep stock. In Ladybrand, the two farmers who regard it as a labour relationship, also do not allow their workers to keep livestock. In Hopetown, the farmers, who see their relationship as a labour relationship, do not allow their workers to keep stock, yet they want their workers to live on the farm.<sup>35</sup>
- *“Labour relationship” and production bonuses:* In some cases, farmers appear to have a progressive approach to labour relations, by evolving some kind of profit-sharing or even partnership. In Luckhoff, one farmer does not allow stock ownership, and he prefers that his workers live in town, but he

offers them production bonuses. In Hopetown, one farmer indicated that he will not hire new workers if one of the workers resigns. Eventually he is looking at a scenario where he does not hire labourers again, but would appoints a farm manager who has a diploma in agriculture to run the farm. In addition to this he wants to make use of agricultural students to help with the management of the farm, because there is a large number of students that need to do practical work at certain stages in their training. This indicates a serious desire to professionalise the farming enterprise.

In Luckhoff, there are some counter-intuitive cases:

- Two farmers regard their relationship as one of “community”, and prefer their workers to live on the farm; however, those worker interviewees prefer to live in town. Two farmers chose to use the word ‘symbiosis’ to describe their relationship with their workers. This implies a great degree of mutual dependence and an emotional bond not dissimilar to family ties. Yet in both cases, the workers interviewed did not seem to share the feelings of the farmer and preferred to stay in town. The possibility exists that the farmers in question could be misleading themselves as to the real nature of their relationship with their workers. It is also possible that the ties of patronage, so evident in the descriptions used by the farmers, are not experienced favourably by workers. These findings suggest that the ‘patronage’ relationship is not only complex, but is also very differently perceived by farmers and workers.
- One farmer which regards the relationship as one of “community” does not allow stock ownership
- On three farms where the farmer regards it as a purely labour relationship, the worker prefers to live on the farm.

The situation is very complex. It is quite possible that a farmer has one kind of relationship with some of his workers, and another type with the other workers. A farmer in Luckhoff indicated that he had a labour relationship with the workers who lived in town but a ‘deeper’ one with the workers who lived on farm and who have worked for him longer. The worker interviewed in this instance indicated that he would prefer to stay on the farm.

#### **4. Farm workers' views on farming relationships**

Farm workers were asked who they would turn to if they needed help (unprompted answer). Table 34 indicates who farm workers believe should help them:

**Table 34: Farm workers' views on helpful agencies**

	<b>Government agencies</b>	<b>Farmers</b>	<b>Neighbours / Friends / family</b>	<b>Church</b>	<b>Farmer's wife</b>	<b>Municipality</b>
<i>Northern Cape:</i>						
Colesberg	1	5 (telephone, transport, financial assistance)		1	3 (medicine)	2 (house, driver's licence)
Hopetown	-	7 (financial assistance, transport and telephone)		2		
Philipstown		7 (phones, medication, transport, small loans)	1	2	3	1
Ritchie	1 (pensions)	7 (conflict-resolution, phones ambulance, transport, helps with problems, lending money)	1 (food, phone, look after children etc)	8	3 (medication ,discuss problems)	
<i>Free State:</i>						
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	1	4	2			
Ladybrand	1	7 (financial help, medical, transport)		3	7	
Philippolis		8 (phone, transport, lending money)				
Luckhoff		4		1	1	
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>

By far the largest number of farm workers will prefer to turn to their employer for help. Typical types of assistance are transport, financial help (e.g. small loans), medical assistance, and using the telephone). In Fauresmith, of the five workers interviewed, three suggested that they would turn to the farmer for help when faced with an urgent need or requirement. In Philippolis, all the workers suggested that they would approach the farmer for help, especially for financial assistance, transport and the use of the telephone.

Other helpful agencies seem few and far between. In Philippolis, two workers maintained that they would approach the municipality, the government, the church and the farmers' association for help, but it is difficult to reach them. In Jagerfontein, one mentioned that he would approach the government as well, but could not identify

exactly what kind of help he expected from that quarter. In Jagersfontein, one worker suggested that he would only approach the municipality for help. In Fauresmith, two stated that they would rather approach their parents. No worker mentioned any form of government institution (either national department or the municipality) that they would approach in times of need.

An interesting phenomenon is the large number of farm workers who would turn to farmers' wives. In Phillipstown, the following roles are played by farmers' wives:

**Table 35: Farmers' and farm workers' views on the role of the farmer's wife, in Phillipstown**

FARM	Farmer's views of role of farmer's wife	Farm worker's views on role of farmer's wife
FARM A	Medical help; act as welfare worker; on the job training; transport to shops	Phones, transport, medication
FARM B	Transport; medical help; provide clothes to children	None
FARM C	Education for the children	-
FARM D	Transport to town; medical help	None
FARM E	Medical	Provides medication, transport to town, etc
FARM F	Dispense medication; Transport	None
FARM G	Medical help, but only if medicines are provided	None
FARM H	Literacy	None

Table 35 indicates that many farmers regard it as normal and appropriate that their wives assist the workers in various ways. However, the farm workers do not seem quite as enthusiastic about this approach, although on some farms, the support provided by farmers' wives is appreciated by farm workers.

## J. FARMING LIVELIHOODS FOR FARM WORKERS

A major set of question concerns the trends with regards to wage labour on the farms. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the first few decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, many African farmers had sharecropping rights on white-owned farms.<sup>36</sup> This practice was widespread, because African farmers often had greater productive resources, in the form of ploughs, oxen and family members to provide labour.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, government legislation systematically removed this practice. It was prohibited by the 1913 Land Act, which was progressively implemented throughout the country. Steadily, independent African farmers were forced to either relocate to the "homelands", or to become urban workers, or to become wage labourers on the farms.

Nevertheless, impressionistic evidence indicated that black farm workers still had some kind of non-wage livelihoods on some farms. In the survey, farmers were asked

<sup>36</sup> See Tim Keegan ... Charles van Onselen

whether their workers have the right to own their own stock, or grow their own crops on the farms. Farm workers were also asked whether they have their own crops or animals.

## 1. Cultivation

Farmers and farm workers were asked about cultivation rights. It should be noted that, with the exception of Ladybrand, the areas under review are typically stock farms. On the irrigation farms in Luckhoff, Ritchie and Hopetown, land is typically in high demand, and infrastructure is expensive.

**Table 36: Farm workers with rights to cultivate plots**

	Number of farm worker interviewees	Allowed to cultivate plots
<i>Northern Cape:</i>		
Colesberg	7	6
Hopetown	7	7
Philipstown	8	5
Ritchie	8 (of which 2 live in town)	2
<i>Free State:</i>		
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	8	4
Ladybrand	8	8
Philippolis	8	8
Luckhoff	7	2
<i>TOTALS</i>	61	42

Table 36 shows that the majority of farm workers are allowed to cultivate vegetable plots or other crops. However, the impression is gained that farmers have not always discussed cultivation options with their workers, and that farm workers have not always actually requested farmers for permission. Consequently, it is not clear how many farm workers desire to have plots for cultivation, or whether they experience the right as a real one.

There are various complications in practice. In Colesberg, one worker indicated that the farmer said that they were allowed to cultivate vegetables, but he never put some land aside where they can do it. In Ritchie, one farm worker says that they are allowed to grow vegetables, he wants to start planting but there is no water nearby and needs a pipe to irrigate his crops. The farmer keeps promising a pipe but nothing has been forthcoming yet. In Ladybrand, the workers on all eight farms have the right to make their own vegetable gardens however, they do not all make use of this right.

Significantly, one of the farm owners said that the workers on his farm used to have a share of the crops, but because of the new laws on wages, it has become so complicated that he ended this privilege.

## 2. Stock ownership

The issue of stock ownership is potentially a very important one. It indicates whether a farmer regards the labour relationship as a “pure” labour relationship (the worker simply sells his/her labour power), as opposed to a quasi-feudal relationship (the worker has certain production rights) or even a potential partnership (the worker and farmer may begin to “farm together”). This could lay the basis for share-equity land reform schemes.

**Table 37: Rights to stock ownership**

	<b>Farm workers allowed to keep stock</b>	<b>Farm workers allowed to keep draught animals (horses, donkeys) or poultry</b>	<b>Not allowed to keep any animals</b>
<i><b>Northern Cape:</b></i>			
Colesberg	3	1	3
Hopetown	3	3	1
Phillipstown	2	3	3
Ritchie	2	4	2
<i><b>Free State:</b></i>			
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	3		5
Ladybrand	5		3
Philippolis	2	3	3
Luckhoff	3	-	4
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>24</b>

Table 37 shows that a significant number of farmers allow their workers to keep productive livestock (37%). However, 62% of farmers do not allow farm workers to keep productive livestock. About 38% of farmers do not allow their workers to keep any animals at all.

The reasons which farmers allowed workers to keep livestock are:

- It promotes farm worker’s interest in farming enterprise (Philippolis)
- The farmer has entered into partnership with workers. There is no limit on the number of sheep. The workers run a sheep shearing concern (Fauresmith)
- It prevents stock theft
- It teaches workers to care for the animals (Colesberg)
- This protects the stud herd, and by giving the worker quality animals, the worker will be encouraged to look after them all as well as he can (Ladybrand)
- Farm workers can raise money if they sell their stock (Jagersfontein, Luckhoff)
- They are allowed to keep animals on the farm, and the farmer included all the conditions in their contract (Colesberg)
- It teaches workers participatory management skills (Hopetown)
- Horses are an important form of transport (Hopetown)
- In the future the farmer wants to hire land in partnership with the workers and they can farm together there (Colesberg)
- It is a reward for good service (Phillipstown)

In one remarkable case in Jagersfontein, the farmer and worker the first farm have formed a partnership and are now farming together as single unit.

The reasons why farmers are not prepared to allow livestock are:

- This has failed in the past. Workers are not sufficiently motivated (Philippolis), or they lose interest (Ritchie), or it is difficult to administer (Hopetown)
- Stock-carrying capacity of farm is too limited (Philippolis, Phillipstown)
- It can lead to permanent tenure. In the past, stock-keeping was allowed, but this is now too much of a danger in terms of tenure legislation (Philippolis, Fauresmith, Jagersfontein, Ritchie, Hopetown)
- Some workers have 'a sheep or two'. Legislation has taken its toll on the 'humane' relationship. The issue of grazing rights places stress on relationship between farmer and worker (Fauresmith)
- There are too many workers, and there is too rapid turnover of staff (Ritchie)
- There are too many workers (15 in all), and it would cause complications (Ladybrand)
- It will cause problems. Workers started to fight amongst themselves over ownership of cattle when it was allowed in the past.
- Farmer pays them a good salary, which is more money than they will make if they keep stock (Colesberg); the farmer pays the workers a good salary, and if the farmer has a good yield from the farm, the workers share in the profit in the form of a bonus. It is more important to pay a good salary than to allow workers to keep stock (Hopetown); the farmer pays a cash bonus (Luckhoff)
- When the worker leaves his employment he has nowhere to take his livestock and the farmer has to buy it back from the worker.
- The farmer must rent land to keep animals; the workers should do the same thing (Colesberg)
- The farmer does not want to be in a situation where the workers' livestock increases all the time (Colesberg); the workers did not keep to the agreed number of livestock (Luckhoff)
- It is difficult to determine who is the owner of the animals (Hopetown)
- The workers will steal the farmer's livestock (Colesberg)
- They do not want to pay him to do the necessary immunisations for the animals (Colesberg)
- The farm is too small (Ritchie). Stock numbers have to be limited, to ensure the good condition of the animals (Hopetown).
- There is a risk of diseases which can be contracted by the stud dairy cattle (Ladybrand); it was tried in the past and then the animals died of disease (Luckhoff)
- The land is mainly irrigation land, and has to be used for high-intensity production (Luckhoff).

The prevalence of the argument concerning minimum wages should be noted. Some farmers are very nervous that stock-keeping rights will lead to more formal tenure rights.

There is another trend as well. In Colesberg and Hopetown, it appears that some farmers are still open to the idea that workers have their own sheep in the farm, and that these animals graze with the farmer's animals. There is, however, a movement in the farming community away from these practices to a point where the whole outfit is run as a business and that the worker is only an employee on the farm. From this

point of view, the farmer works with a bonus incentive, where the worker is made responsible for a certain amount of animals and if he manage to raise them and the farmer gets a good price for them, the worker receives a bonus for his effort, or a share in the profits. This is a more modern form of profit-sharing, than the old form of share-cropping which used to prevail a hundred years ago.

In Colesberg, one worker said that he owned four horses and five donkeys and that he had to sell it, and he feels bad about it, because the animals were his means of transport.

One potentially significant correlation may be farm workers' desire to live in town, with the fact that they are not allowed to keep stock (two farms in Philippolis, one farm in Hopetown, two farms in Fauresmith). Conversely, there are cases where the worker prefers to live on the farm, and stock ownership is allowed (two farms in Philippolis, three farms in Hopetown).

However, there are some counter-intuitive results. In some cases (two in Philippolis, one in Jagersfontein, and one in Fauresmith, for example), the workers are allowed to keep stock, yet the worker interviewed still wanted to move to town. This could suggest that the allure of urban life and services is stronger than whatever incentives life on the farm may offer, or that farm workers' need to be near urban services is stronger for these workers than the need to engage in farming. However, it may also suggest that the worker would like to live in town, but nevertheless still keep stock on the farm (i.e. the best of both possible worlds). This would be roughly similar to many farmers who prefer to live in town, and draw on urban and farming livelihoods or services simultaneously.

Other counter-intuitive cases (two cases in Philippolis) are those where stock ownership is not allowed, but the farm workers still prefer to live on the farm.

There are cases where a worker is allowed to keep stock, but does not use the opportunity to do so. In four cases in Colesberg, the farmers indicated that they allow workers to own livestock on the farm, but if we look at the corresponding workers preference of residence, it is interesting to note that only one of these workers preferred living on the farm. This might indicate that the workers themselves are not farmers at heart and see their work on the farm as merely a job. It might also be that they came to realise that is more profitable to share in the profit via the bonus system, than to take the stress upon themselves to take care of their own animals.

In Ladybrand, the impression gained was that the workers choice of residence does not affect their right to keep cattle. Four workers are allowed to keep cattle, but the workers live in town. The worker's choice of residence does not reflect his desire to farm or not because, although they said that they wanted to live in town, they also said that they wanted to farm.

A great deal more qualitative investigation is needed to determine what different farm workers' ambitions are, with regards to farming activities and urban livelihoods and lifestyles. The question needs to be "unpacked" into much more detail. For example, do significant numbers of farm workers want to grow crops or livestock for their own income? If so, where do they want to live? Does the desire to "farm" on their own



account translate into a desire to become independent farmers? Are their farm workers living in town, or ex-farm workers living in town, who may be more suited to farming entrepreneurship than the wage labourers on the farms? And may this be some indication of potential directions for land reform?

As regards the views of farmers, additional questions should include the potential benefit which farmers may see in stock-holding or crop cultivation by farm workers; the kind of rights, rents and distribution of benefits that this would entail; and the mutually supportive relationships which could be built between established and emergent farmers in future.

### 3. Training needs

Farm worker training is a potentially important issue, because it indicates the degree to which farm work has been professionalised, or can be further professionalised in future. This, in turn, would suggest the types of farm employees which should be trained, and it would also suggest changing power relations between employers and employees. The more skilled and specialised farm workers become, the more their work will become valued and prized, and even become indispensable.

The following table indicates the types of training which farm workers have received in the past.<sup>37</sup>

Table 38: Training experience and training needs

Subject	Number of farm workers who have received training	Number of farm workers who would like to receive training
Welding	17	25
Animal care and disease management	27	16
Farm management	20	20
Driver's licence	19 <sup>38</sup>	29
Tractor driving	1	
Repair of farm equipment and vehicles, mechanics	22	23
Literacy	26	17
Cooking, needlework, housework	5	6
Business / entrepreneurship		2
Electronics		1
Mechanics		5
Ploughing	1	
Sheep shearing	3	
Fencing	2	
Construction		1

<sup>37</sup> Farm worker interviewees were provided with a list of six training areas (welding, animal diseases, farm management, driver's licence, repair of farm vehicles, and literacy). They were then asked if there are other training areas which they may have had, or which they would like to have. Farmers were asked a totally open-ended question on their views of what training should be provided to farm workers.

<sup>38</sup> Of these, five workers can drive but do not have licences.

For farm workers, the most common forms of training have been animal care and disease management; literacy; repair of farm equipment; and driving. However, it should be noted that these are all the training topics which were “read out” to the farm workers, and hence the results may be skewed. Similarly, the training which farm workers would like to receive also focus primarily on these topics. However, there are some interesting additional training areas which were listed spontaneously, such as cooking, needlework, mechanical training, and entrepreneurship.

Much more information is required on this topic, to get a better idea of previous training experience – and in particular, whether training was “on the job” or formal training.

Table 38 suggests that, in some towns, such as Philippolis and Fauresmith, there have been very low levels of formal training of the farm workers (although it is possible that they may have extensive skills which are not the result of formal training). It is remarkable that only one of the eight farm workers interviewed has a driver’s licence, and only four have had some kind of literacy training. In contrast, in Hopetown, this table suggests a high skill level when it comes to farm management. One of the workers even were sent by the farmer to Potchefstroom to do a course in farm management, and one worker taught herself how to manage a huge packing warehouse on a farm, including how to do the basic book keeping of the warehouse. The other workers all have some experience in farm management (this means that they manage the farm when the farmer is away).

In Hopetown, it is also interesting to note that although only one worker has a driver’s licence, three of the other workers can drive a car but they do not have licences. This is not due to their own choice, but apparently the choice of the farmers because they have had the experience that once a worker has a licence, he leaves the farm to go work as a driver of a minibus taxi or as a truck driver.

Table 38 also indicates a widespread desire for training (although it is not clear whether such a desire will be sufficient motivation to actually complete a course). Furthermore, the widespread desire to learn about animal diseases, farm management, and repair of farm equipment does suggest an interest in farming. (However, the structure of the questionnaire may have affected the results).

In Ladybrand, farm workers are eager to be given further training as well in directions in which they have not been trained. Five of the workers said specifically that they would like to receive further mechanical training. The two women who participated asked for training in needlework, knitting and in crocheting.

Not all the workers are interested in training. In Colesberg, it is interesting that two of the workers interviewed indicated that they have had no training at all, and that one worker (a woman) does not want any training at all. One worker has learned to do the work on the job, but has no formal kind of training, and does not want any formal kind of training.

The farmers were asked an open-ended question about the types of training which they would find useful for their workers. In this case, no types of training were suggested.

**Table 39: Farmers' views of farm workers' training needs**

Subject	Number of farmers who approve of training for farm workers
Welding	9
Animal care and disease management	13
Farm management and entrepreneurship	30
Driver's licence and tractor driving	17
Repair of farm vehicles and equipment, e.g. windmills, tractors	21
Literacy	34
Sheep shearing	7
Wool classification	4
Fencing	4
Mohair treatment	1
Life skills (including parenting, work ethics, sense of responsibility, time management, social skills, parenting, family life, dealing with domestic violence, dealing with alcoholism)	19
Construction / artisan	4
Water infrastructure maintenance and technology	5
Domestic work/ housekeeping	3
Needlework	1
Financial management, including personal finances	5
General farming methods (animals, crops, fences, gardening etc)	21
Care for stock (e.g. dosing, artificial insemination)	2
HIV/AIDS training, health training, hygiene	8
First aid	1
Religious education	2
Veld maintenance	2
Care of horses	1
Hunting and working with hunting trophies	1
Farm security	1

Table 39 indicates that farmers regard literacy, farm management/entrepreneurship, mechanical repairs, general farming methods, and life skills as the most important skills for farm workers to acquire. The wide range of topics, and the number of responses, tend to indicate that there is a general desire on the part of farmers to have a better qualified and skilled workforce. This contrasts strongly with the very low level of skills training which workers have received (see Table 38 above).

Several of the skills listed above, all include some form familiarity with machinery. There is clear that there is glaring contrast between the skills that farmers would like their workers to have and those actually possessed by the workers. It appears that there have been virtually no training opportunities – possibly as a consequence of the abolition of the Rural Foundation, as well as the fact that the services provided by the Department of Labour have not been accessed. (The reasons for this remain unclear).

It appears that there is a vast reservoir of desire for expertise, and yet no means have been found to build the expertise. Demands and needs remain unmet.

In Luckhoff, several farmers expressed the need for a more qualified work force. One farmer also mentioned the valuable training at Boskop College in Potchefstroom (which has been ceased) to train workers in farm work. The farmers also displayed a strong preference for training in social and personal aspects for workers such as time management, management of personal finances, social and hygiene skills. This strong preference can be seen as a comment on the social conditions prevailing among the farm workers. It is at any rate significant that farmers considers this type of training to be as important as other types of technical training.

One interesting set of comparisons, which should be researched more fully, is whether farmers and workers agree on the type of training which is necessary or desirable. In Jagersfontein, only on one farm did farmer and worker broadly agree on the types of training that would be desirable. In addition, one farmer also mentioned the need for religious 'training' and another the need for workers to be trained to develop a sense of 'responsibility'. Such replies, along with 'hygiene training', provide a very candid glance at the social conditions of the workers as well as on how farmers think it could be addressed.

There may be some correlation between the farmers' enthusiasm for farm worker training, and farmers' sentiments on stock ownership (see Table 37 above). In Philippolis, there are four farms where the farmers would like farm worker training, and the farmers also indicated that stock ownership by farm workers is allowed on their farm. However, this correlation needs to be further investigated. It is possible that farmers who do *not* want to allow stock ownership may well have a preference for highly qualified workers, as well-paid farm managers.

In Fauresmith, one of the farms visited is home to one of the few remaining farm schools, and is run by the farmer's wife. The farmer made a thought provoking comment to the effect that farm workers used to be trained in basic farm skills while growing up on the farm; however, legislation pertaining to child labour now made this type of training impossible for farmers. The legislation referred to is presumably the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (no 75 of 1997). The Act regulates the employment of children older than 15 years. Penalties for those found contravening the Act vary from a fine to up to three years' imprisonment. The interviewee went on to state that upon finishing their schooling, people who want to be employed as farm workers no longer possess the level of skills possessed by an earlier generation.

The overriding impression is gained that there is a great desire, on the part of farmers and farm workers, to "up-skill" farm work. In Ladybrand, one farmer remarked that unschooled workers, with little potential and who can only carry out simple tasks, are unaffordable in terms of the new laws.

Furthermore, it appears that there have been virtually no training opportunities – possibly as a consequence of the abolition of the Rural Foundation, as well as the fact that the services provided by the Department of Labour have not been accessed. (The reasons for this remain unclear). It appears that there is a vast reservoir of desire for

expertise, and yet no means have been found to build the expertise. Demands and needs remain unmet.

#### 4. Ideas on training providers

Farmers were asked an open-ended question about their views regarding desirable service providers.

**Table 40: Farmers' views of desirable training providers**

Service provider	Farmers' choice of training providers
Agricultural college (e.g. Boskop)	6
Farmers' Associations	14
Producers' associations (e.g. Wool growers), co-operatives	2
Farmers	41
Farmers wives	4
Department of Agriculture, extension officers	13
Department of Labour	2
Department of Education	3
Government – either directly, or by providing subsidies	13
Farm workers should access it by themselves	1
Specialist organisations and NGOs (e.g. Training Solutions)	4
No training needed	1
Church	1
Farm schools	1
Social workers for lifeskills training	1
Retired teachers	1
Agricultural Research Council	1
Tractor companies	1

From this table, it is interesting that 66% of farmers believe that the farmers themselves would be the most desirable training providers. This indicates a remarkable willingness to invest in the skills of their employees. Farmers Associations were also frequently mentioned as a significant training provider. Some interesting ideas were expressed in this regard. In Ritchie, one farmer said that the responsibility of training should not rest on the shoulders of the government, as government cannot afford it; and that the responsibility for training basically rests with the farmer and his/her wife/husband. A second farmer suggested that there should be an evaluation process of workers who have received on the job training on farms and certificates should be given to these workers. One Colesberg farmer made the novel suggestion that government must hire farmers to do on-the-job training. In Hopetown, some farmers were of the opinion that, due to the limited staff numbers of the Department of Agriculture, that the Department should put contracts out for training of workers and pay farmers to do the necessary training.

In Hopetown, one farmer suggested that Government must pay for the training by putting out contracts to the farmers to do the training. Another farmer in Hopetown suggested that the Department of Agriculture should provide agriculture students (doing their practical on the farm) to do training of workers on the farm

In addition, farmers believe that it is the responsibility of government (particularly the Department of Agriculture) to provide training to farm workers. In Hopetown, the farmers generally indicated that it was the government's task to provide the training and in particular the department of Agriculture. Curiously, the Department of Education and the Department of Labour got very few mentions. This suggests that the Department's funding and training opportunities are not being marketed effectively.

However, six farmers expressed the need for agricultural colleges (e.g. the erstwhile Boskop college in Potchefstroom), which suggests that the closure of colleges has left a gap in the provision of training for farm workers. One farmer observed that it is now more important than previously because children are no longer learning the skills from their elders.

Generally, it seems that there are very little opportunities for further training on offer.

Several farm worker interviews showed that workers had received informal training by the farmer. In Jagersfontein, one worker claimed to have been trained in farm management by the farmer; another was trained in repairing farm vehicles and received literacy training from the farmer; a third said that he was taught how to 'work with sheep'.

## 5. Farm workers' views on desirable training providers

Farm workers were asked who they would prefer as training providers. The questionnaire suggested the farmer, the farmers' associations, and the government. The questionnaire then asked for additional suggestions. The findings are provided in Table 41 below:

**Table 41: Farm workers' preferences as training providers**

Service provider	Farm workers' choice of service providers
Farmers' Associations	3
Farmers	30
Farmers wives	6
Government	16
Farm workers should access it by themselves	2
Specialist organisations and NGOs (e.g. Training Solutions, Rural Foundation)	1
ABET classes	1
Schools	2
Skilled people, e.g. mechanics	3
Children who can read and write	1
Does not know / no reply	2

Several points should be noted from Table 41. Firstly, several farmers and farm workers believe that the farmers or farmers' associations should provide training –

presumably a type of in-service training. This indicates a generally trusting relationship between farmers and workers, and this coincides with the views of farmers (see Table 40 above). In Hopetown, for example, the majority of farm worker interviewees suggested that the farmer should provide training. One worker maintained that he will ask the farmer for advice on where to go and get the training needed. It is clear that, on the question of training, farm workers and farmers views roughly coincide on the question on who should assume responsibility for it. Another worker maintained that he would join a driving school in town, and he will borrow money from farmer and pay him back after he has received his licence. In Fauresmith, it is notable that both farmers and farm workers thought that the burden of training should fall on the farmer. In Phillipstown, three farm workers suggested that the farmer should either provide training, or provide finance for training.

Secondly, only 26% of the farm workers thought that Government should provide training. In Phillipstown, for example, only one out of eight workers suggested that they turn to government for help. There was no explicit reference to the Department of Labour, which suggests that its funding and training programmes are not being marketed effectively.

The overall impression is one of enormous need and desire for training, but no coherent systems of training provision, and no knowledge of where such training could be obtained. In Phillipstown, three farm workers had no idea who to turn to.

## **K. SUPPORT FOR EMERGING FARMERS**

Another set of “livelihoods issues” is the much more far-reaching question of land reform. How many farm workers would like to “graduate” to becoming independent farmers themselves? Or are farm workers primarily resigned to remaining wage labourers or to promoting their economic ambitions through off-farm employment?

Given that many farm workers have a great deal of farm work experience, they are arguably the best-placed category of potential land reform beneficiaries. In this section, farmers and farm workers were asked their views about various aspects of land reform.

### **a. The ideal of farm ownership**

Farm workers were asked whether they would like to own their own farm. If they responded positively, they were asked why they do not yet have their own farm. They were also asked whether they have made any attempts to access a farm. Finally, they were asked what kind of assistance they would need, and from who, to access a farm.

**Table 42: Farm workers’ ambitions to farm independently**

	Farm workers who would like to own farms	Farm workers who do not want to own farms	Unsure	Other	Farm workers who have taken steps to owning a farm
<b>Northern Cape:</b>					
Colesberg	3	3			
Hopetown	6	1			
Philipstown	6	2			
Ritchie	7			1 (wants to own a shop)	
<b>Free State:</b>					
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	5	1	1		1
Ladybrand	6	2	-		
Philippolis	7	1			
Luckhoff					
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

Table 42 shows that 68% of farm workers said that they would like to own their own farm. Of course, this is not necessarily a realistic or well-considered opinion, and should probably be taken with a pinch of salt in some cases. However, it may well indicate that a significant proportion of farm workers have real and realistic ambitions to farm on their own.

In Ritchie, all seven male farm workers expressed the wish for an own farm or piece of land to practice farming. In Fauresmith, three of the farm workers interviewed would like to own their own farms.

In Fauresmith, one worker claims to have tried to approach a government institution but went on to indicate that the process had come to a standstill. Another worker is being assisted by the farmer to acquire a farm. In Ritchie, one worker has applied for a land related grant, but the other workers were unaware of the availability of land subsidies.

Workers indicated some of the problems which prevent them from accessing their own farms. In Jagersfontein, the two workers that wanted farms felt that they were obstructed from acquiring by a lack of capital. In Ladybrand, Not one has yet tried to acquire a farm of their own and they gave the following reasons for not attempting to do so:

- A lack of money preventes them from acquiring farms.
- A lack of knowledge and training
- They do not have implements.

In Ritchie, one farm worker mentioned lack of information, another mentioned lack of opportunities/chances and one worker mentioned a lack of available farms in the district. In Fauresmith, three farm workers would like their own farm, but they have been obstructed from trying to acquire a farm by a lack of capital and experience.

In Colesberg, three of the farm workers indicated that they would like to have their own farming enterprises. However, they have been obstructed by the lack of capital



to buy a farm and farming equipment, as well as a lack of experience and training to start such an enterprise. In Luckhoff, all but one of the farm workers interviewed indicated that they would like to own their own farm. Those that did want farms said that they had not tried to obtain one due to their lack of capital.

In Hopetown, with one exception, all the farm workers indicated that they would like to have their own farming enterprises. However, they have been obstructed by the lack of capital to buy a farm and farming equipment, as well as a lack of experience and training to start such an enterprise.

There was a general lack of awareness about formal land subsidy programmes. In Phillipstown, for example, some of the respondents do not know how to go about accessing a farm/land reform grant or more information. One farm worker had approached his employer with a request for a piece of land, but his employer said he was not able to. The worker had some cattle, but due to lack of land, he had to sell them. This worker was unaware that he could approach the Department of Land Affairs, and he believed that only the farmer could help him. One farm worker had some knowledge of land reform, but was not aware that there was commonage land which could be accessed. The all felt that money would be a great help, as well as help from government and someone to help them fill in the application forms.

Farm workers suggested different agencies who should help them access their own farms. In Jagersfontein, one felt that it was the responsibility of the government to help him to acquire a farm, while the other did not know who, or what institution, to approach for assistance. In Phillipstown, one worker said that he would turn to his employer for help; three others said that they believe Government should help. In Ritchie, five workers believed that it is government's responsibility to help them to access a farm.

The table also shows that a significant minority (16%) have no desire to farm independently, and are presumably content to remain as wage labourer. In Ritchie, the female farm worker expressed an interest in rather having her own spaza shop. She is curtailed, as is the case with the male farm workers, by lack of information and lack of money.

## 2. Support agencies: Farmers' views

Farmers were asked a totally open-ended question about who they believed should support emergent farmers, as shown in Table 43 below.

Table 43: Farmers' views on land reform support agencies

	Government agencies	Farmers	Farmers Unions	Agricultural colleges	Other
<i>Northern Cape:</i>					
Colesberg	5 (financial assistance)	5 (training, advice)	1 (practical assistance)		
Hopetown	3	4	3		
Phillipstown	5	6 (training,			1 – NGOs

		advice, provision of stock, loan of implements)			1 – Marketing agencies
Ritchie	5 (Dept Agric)	7	1	1	
<i>Free State:</i>					
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	3 (2 mentioned Dept Agric)	6	1		
Ladybrand	-	8	-	-	-
Philippolis	7 (two mentioned Department of Agriculture)	3	2	1	1 -Subsidies and credit
Luckhoff	4 (one mentioned Dept Agric)	3	1		1 - Municipalities
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>

Remarkably, the majority of farmers (67%) believe that established farmers should help emergent farmers.

In Fauresmith, for example, with the exception of one farmer, all the other interviewees stated that farmers should help emerging farmers. This indicated a general willingness on the side of farmers to help, whether in their private capacity, or through the farmers' unions. There may have been an element of pressure, to avoid more radical forms of land reform. In Jagersfontein, one farmer said: "If we are not going to make it work then the government is going to make it work".

In Colesberg and Hopetown, it is interesting to note that the farmers feel that there should be more of an openness and willingness on the side of the government to help emergent farmers succeed by making use of the expertise of the commercial farmers. They believe that they can make a difference and really play a meaningful role to help emergent farmers to succeed in their ventures. They are more than willing to provide training, information and in some cases even infrastructure to help the emergent farmer to get a kick-start.

In Colesberg and Hopetown, the farmers also believe that there should be mentoring programmes in place where a commercial farmer acts as a mentor for an emergent farmer to help him with the day-to-day aspects of farming. In Phillipstown, at least four farmers stated their willingness to help emergent farmers. In Ladybrand, all the farmers are of the opinion that the farmers can help the emergent black farmers with advice and knowledge. One farmer said that a contract similar to a partnership could be drawn up with the emergent black farmers. Some of the farmers said that they are aware that the emergent black farmer often does not receive adequate help and when the farming venture is unsuccessful the farm is not utilised. The country cannot afford unproductive farms. In Jagersfontein, one farmer proposed that commercial farmers can rent out equipment to emergent farmers; or plough for them against payment; can also give advice and assist with the management of the farm.

There were dissenting voices. In Jagersfontein, one farmer felt that emergent farmers 'had it too easy'. In Ritchie, one farmer observed that it will not be easy to find [white] farmer who will help. They prefer to stay away from land reform, because it

just “a chaotic mess”. In Luckhoff, two farmers clearly stated that existing commercial farmers had no obligation to help emergent farmers. This suggests that the farming community in this area was very much divided over the issue of support to emergent farmers and that while certain farmers may support and assist newcomers, such support is by no means assured.

Generally, farmers believed that the Department of Agriculture is the most suitable government department to help emergent farmers. In Philippolis, for example, the farmers placed a great deal of store in the capacity of the Department of Agriculture – which is generally one of the more under-funded and understaffed government departments. Not one single farmer mentioned the Department of Land Affairs.

Farmers varied in their opinions regarding government assistance. In Fauresmith, it is noticeable that not a single reference was made to a specific government department, which suggests that farmers do not know much about existing land reform processes. In contrast, in Luckhoff, farmers place great store in the capacity of the government, and specifically the Department of Agriculture, to assist emerging farmers. This confidence might be unfounded as that Department tends to be under-funded and under-staffed.

In Colesberg and Hopetown, some farmers very critical about the selection of beneficiaries by government. They believe that these beneficiaries get farms due to their political ties, and not necessarily due to the fact that they have some experience as farmers or farm workers. They believe the government needs to rethink its strategy on who should be emergent farmers, and how many hectares is a commercial farming unit, and that they should put into place a better evaluation process on who should become these emergent farmers.

## **L. EX-FARM WORKERS**

As demographic trends show, many farm workers have lost their jobs during the last two decades. What, then, happens to these workers?

This is clearly a massive question, since different people resort to different migration and livelihood strategies. But the population growth of the small towns indicates that many of the ex-farm workers find a refuge here.

The sample consisted of 3-4 workers in each of the eight locality studies.

### **1. The sample**

A total of 31 farm workers were interviewed, as Table 44 shows:

**Table 44: The sample of ex-farm workers in eight locality studies**

	Number of interviewees	Age	Gender	Education
<b>Northern Cape:</b>				
Colesberg	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 26-30 (2)</li> <li>• 36-40 (2)</li> <li>• 51-55 (1)</li> <li>• 56-60 (1)</li> <li>• 61-65 (2)</li> </ul>	5 male	7 illiterate 1 primary school
Hopetown	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 26-30</li> <li>• 36-40</li> <li>• 51-55</li> <li>• Over 70</li> </ul>	2 male 2 female	1 illiterate 1 primary school ??
Philipstown	4	21-45	4 male	2 primary school 1 high school
Ritchie	4	All in the 40s and 50s	3 female 1 male	2 illiterate 2 primary school
<b>Free State:</b>				
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	3	? 46	2 Male 1 Female	2 primary school 1 illiterate
Ladybrand	4	Two 50-60 Two over 60	4 male	3 illiterate 1 primary school
Philippolis	4	41 55 Two 60-70	4 male	1 illiterate 2 primary school 1 high school
Luckhoff	3	One – 21-25 Two – 31- 45	?	1 illiterate 1 primary school 1 high school

The majority of interviewees were men. They covered all adult age groups, although the majority of interviewees were over 40 years old. Their education level was generally low, with most interviewees either illiterate or with only some primary school exposure.

## 2. Farming background

Ex-farm workers were asked how long they worked on the farms, and why they left:

**Table 45: Farming background of ex-farm workers**

	Number of years as farm worker	Reasons for leaving
<i>Northern Cape:</i>		
Colesberg	Between 2 – 30 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health reasons (3)</li> <li>• Farmer cut down on working force (3)</li> <li>• The pay was not enough</li> <li>• The work was too strenuous</li> </ul>
Hopetown	Between 2-50 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He was fired due to conflict with the farmer</li> <li>• It is closer to services like the school</li> <li>• The owner of the farm went bankrupt</li> <li>• He was too old to work – still longs for the farm; the farmer visits him regularly in town.</li> </ul>
Philipstown	7 years 8 years 23 years 30 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retrenched</li> <li>• Left after conflict with farmer (2)</li> <li>• Injured in an accident</li> </ul>
Ritchie	14 years 28 years 26 years 30 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Chased away” from a chicken farm</li> <li>• Farmer moved away</li> <li>• Husband became ill</li> </ul>
<i>Free State:</i>		
Fauresmith	14 years 28 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dismissed after a dispute with the farmer.</li> <li>• Dismissed after being unable to work after accident on the farm.</li> </ul>
Jagersfontein	About 20	Poor health
Ladybrand	3 years 27 years 35 years 37 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The employer moved away.</li> <li>• The worker and the farmer’s wife were in conflict.</li> <li>• To be closer to his children and his family.</li> </ul>
Philippolis	7 years 20 years 30 years 54 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Found a better job</li> <li>• Children at school in town, and transport problems</li> <li>• Closer to services</li> <li>• Better money in town</li> <li>• Health problems.</li> </ul>
Luckhoff	1 year 15 years 'many' years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dismissed</li> <li>• Farm too far from town</li> <li>• Fell ill</li> </ul>

A remarkable feature is many ex-farm workers’ long periods of service and farm experience. In many cases, it amounts to a lifetime of service.

Typical reasons for leaving farm employment is that they were dismissed; poor health, old age and accidents; moving to town voluntarily to be near services or family; and retrenchments.

### **3. Quality of life**

The interviewees were asked to compare their current living conditions with the situation they experienced when they lived on the farm. In many cases, aspects of

service delivery was similar between the farm and the town. However, there were some significant differences. Table 46 shows the ways in which urban conditions are better or worse than those on the farms:

**Table 46: Comparative living conditions**

	<b>Current Housing</b>	<b>Conditions better than farm</b>	<b>Conditions worse than farm</b>
<b>Northern Cape:</b>			
Colesberg	5 informal shanties	3 – sanitation 6 – phones	5 – housing 1 – sanitation 5 – water 1 – electricity
Hopetown	1 formal house 3 informal	2 – phones	3 – housing 3 – sanitation 4 – water 2 – electricity
Philipstown	4 formal housing	3 – sanitation 3 – water 4 – electricity 4 – phones	1 – sanitation
Ritchie	4 informal houses		4 – housing 2 – electricity 1 – must purchase wood 2 – communal water supply
<b>Free State:</b>			
Fauresmith & Jagersfontein	1 brick house 1 informal house	1 flush toilet 1 – electricity 1 – phone 1 – clinic 1 – church	2 – housing(a shack, compared to a brick house on the farm)
Ladybrand	2 informal shacks 1 brick house	2 – sanitation 3 – water 2 – electricity 4 – telephones	4 – housing
Philippolis	All brick houses	3 – sanitation 3 – in-house tap 4 – electricity 4 – telephones	1 – livelihood – he needs a job and food in town
Luckhoff	1 brick house 2 informal shacks	1 – housing	2 – electricity

A large proportion (54%) of ex-farm workers live in temporary structures or shacks.

In several cases, their physical services in town are better than on the farms, but several interviewees also recorded that their conditions of life had declined.

Some interviewees felt that life has more advantages in town:

- Ownership of house.
- Access to services such as clinic, school, church etc.
- Can attend social gatherings and events, and are near family members
- They are near sport and recreation facilities

- Work possibilities, particularly piece-work
- Transport is easier
- Electricity is available.

However, there are also some disadvantages:

- They have to pay for water and electricity
- Work is scarce
- They cannot keep livestock
- Difficult to keep a vegetable garden
- Those who keep stock on the commonage complain of stock losses due to vagrant dogs
- It is very expensive to live in town
- Dependence on relatives: "I do not want to be so dependent on my mother."
- Housing was better on the farm: "A brick house was better".
- They can not sleep at night, due to the noise in the township
- No food, have to beg for food
- No heating in the winter
- No wood available
- No camp where donkeys can stay.

Some interviewees preferred life on the farm. In Jagersfontein, the interviewee is hungry and needs a job; and he would like to work as a farm worker again. In Fauresmith, one person listed no advantages and was clearly embittered at being disabled and living in town. One interviewee would like to work on farm again and listed more food and a stable job as reasons. It was mentioned that the town does not offer any prospects for employment. In Hopetown, one worker would dearly like to move back to the farm, but he is too old and weak to work there.

In Hopetown, three of the interviewees are unemployed, and one receives a pension. Three of the interviewees want to work on a farm again, on the grounds that they would have fewer worries and that life is easier on the farm, because on the farm "you get everything for free, including wood and soap". It is also less expensive to live on a farm.

#### **4. Livelihoods in town**

Ex-farm workers were asked about the advantages and disadvantages of their current situation. Numerous unprompted comments were made, both in favour of, and against formal farm work.

At least 17 out of 31 ex-farm workers interviewed (54%) are unemployed, and several more rely on piece-jobs to make a living.

In Philippolis, of the four ex-farm workers, one interviewee is unemployed, two have formal jobs, and two work for themselves (a dairy, agriculture on a small holding, and making coffins). Only one of the interviewees wants to work on a farm again, on the

grounds that he would have fewer worries and would be more dependent on the farmer. The other interviewees do not want farm work again, for various reasons: (1) health problems, (2) wages too low; and (3) no real return on effort put in.

In Phillipstown, three of the respondents were unemployed, doing piece jobs when the opportunity arrives. There is also a system amongst the ex-farm workers: They take turns as to who should get the job on a specific day. Usually the man with a sick child/dependent or new baby goes first, but generally they get a turn once every three months. One was the leader of sheep-shearing team.

In Phillipstown, all respondents said they would want to work on farms again. The reasons were that farm work is a secure job, and they like the work, used to it, know it. In town, jobs are scarce, only get piece job once every three months. Would like to return to the farm if the farmer will only take him back, but the farmer only shops in De Aar and never comes to Philipstown, so never sees him to ask for his job back.

In Luckhoff, of the three people interviewed, one is a pensioner, one is unemployed and one does seasonal work on the farms. The pensioner indicated that he also sells oranges. Two of the interviewees would like to work on a farm again. Both stated that they earned more on the farm. The worker who did not want to return to the farm suggested that the farmer whom he worked for was unfriendly and shouted at him.

In Ritchie, two of the respondents are unemployed. Two of the respondents' husbands were away at the time of the interviews to do piece work. Three of the respondents said they would not want to work on farms again. The main reason was that their housing is secure, and they do not have to worry about being chased away. The male respondent would like to work on a farm again, because he likes farm work.

In Ladybrand, three of the ex-farm workers are unemployed and one works for himself. One of the unemployed workers tries to get piece jobs every now and again. The ex-farm worker who works for himself does stone carvings which he tries to sell along the roadside and the one that does piece jobs, does mainly painting and building.

In Ladybrand, only two of the four ex-farm workers would like to work on a farm again. The reasons that they give are that they enjoyed the work and they had housing. The two that do not want to live on a farm again say that their health is poor and they will not be able to cope with farm work anymore.

In general, many ex-farm workers show a strong desire to remain involved in farming. It can be deduced that this is their "comfort zone", the arena in which they have real skills and experience. The fact that many of these potentially productive workers are now unemployed in town, is a real loss to the economy.

## **5. Training options for ex-farm workers**

Given that several of the ex-farm workers are unemployed, it is important to inquire about their training levels, and their suitability for alternative employment.



Ex-farm workers were asked about training (whether formal or on-the-job training) they had received:

**Table 47: Previous training experience of ex-farm workers**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Farm workers who had received training</b>
Welding	10
Animal care and disease management	19
Farm methods, management and entrepreneurship	23
Driver's licence and tractor driving	9
Repair of farm vehicles and equipment, e.g. windmills	15
Literacy	2
Sheep shearing	17
Construction	4
Domestic work	3
Gardening	1

This table shows valuable human resources, which are now often going waste. At least 74% of the interviewees have some training in general farming methods and management. A significant number of interviewees (54%) have had training in sheep shearing, and 61% have had training in animal care.

In Philippolis, several interesting conclusions are apparent. Firstly, the ex-farm workers have a much higher level and diversity of skills than the current farm workers. Clearly, farm worker training used to be more accessible and widespread than it has been recently. This should be a cause for concern. Secondly, there is a great deal of farming-oriented skills available in the towns, with far too few opportunities for those skills to be utilised (e.g. in urban agriculture).

In Fauresmit and Luckhoff, several interviewees mentioned that the farmers provided training. This shows that farmers had been prepared to invest time and effort in up-skilling their farm workers.

Ex-farm workers now believe Government should provide training. In Hopetown, the interviewees also maintained that the government should provide training. These ex-farm workers have a much lower level of skills than the current farm workers. In Phillipstown, three interviewees mentioned that the Government should help them get training. Three interviewees in Luckhoff All three workers thought that it was the responsibility of the government to provide them with training.

## **6. Farming options for ex-farm workers**

Ex-farm workers were asked whether they would like to start their own farming enterprise. If so, they were asked what are the obstacles preventing them, and who do they expect to help them.

In Philippolis, all four interviewees have tried to farm on their own (with sheep and cattle). Two are still involved in small-scale farming, and one would like to start a poultry farm. The difficulties with farming enterprises are the lack of capital, land is not available, and there is no appropriate training. In Phillipstown, only one of the respondents had previously tried to start their own farming enterprise (chickens), although they would all like to start own farming enterprise.

In Colesberg, three of the interviewees have tried to farm on their own (with chickens, sheep, horses and donkeys). Six of the ex-workers want to start with their own farming activities. Three of them want to farm with sheep, two with cattle, one with horses, one with goats and want wants to have a vegetable farm. In Hopetown, two of the interviewees have tried to farm on their own (with sheep, horses and donkeys).

In Jagersfontein, the interviewee would like to own his own cattle and vegetable farm. However, he lacks the necessary capital and equipment to initiate such a venture.

Despite several interviewees' eagerness to engage in some farming enterprise, they have no information about land subsidies. In Colesberg, the main difficulties with farming enterprises are the lack of capital, land is not available, there is no appropriate training and two of them were not informed about the land reform programme and the subsidies they can apply for. It was also interesting to note that although the ex-workers are living in town, that the information on how to go about accessing a land subsidy has not been communicated to them. In Hopetown, two interviewees would like to start their own farming enterprise, one wants to farm with sheep, and the other one with chickens. Difficulties with farming enterprises are the lack of capital, land is not available, and there is no appropriate training. They have no idea how to access land.

In Ritchie, the male respondent would like to have his own farming enterprise and would prefer sheep farming. He has not tried farming yet, giving the following as reasons: He has no money to buy farm/rent farm; he has no money to purchase equipment and animals; and he does not know how to access the finance needed. One Phillipstown interviewee mentioned that the problem was that he was not allowed to keep stock on farms where he worked. That would be "the starting point, that is how one starts to farm

Almost all respondents said that government should help them (one interviewee in Ritchie, one in Jagersfontein) . In Phillipstown, all four respondents felt that government should assist, while one thought the other farmers should give advice, while another thought that farmers "will definitely refuse to help". One mentioned that the agricultural union could help with training. He would expect the government, other farmers and the farmers union to assist him if he should start his own farming enterprise.

Two women in Ritchie said that although they had not started farming before, they would be interested in starting a chicken farm, but finance is a problem. Another aspect mentioned was that they did not have the training needed to start farming. All three expected the government to assist should they venture into farming.

## CONCLUSIONS

Because of the information gained during the survey and the accompanying deductions the following conclusions can be drawn.

*Urbanisation:* Firstly, the general tendency to reduce the number of workers on farms during the past two years will apparently have far-reaching results for the worker, his family and the community. Because the farmers have the tendency to reduce their workers, there is only a slight possibility that the workers, who have lost their work, will get work on other farms. Probably the workers, who have lost their work, have moved to the towns. Hopefully, they found employment there but if the workers' average level of literacy is taken into consideration, the possibility of their finding work is slight.

The reduction in the number of farm workers contributes to the increase in unemployment figures and impoverishment with all the social problems that accompany such a situation. The ex-farm workers also possess certain skills, which qualify them to work in the agricultural sector but these skills are not used. They do not receive support from any institutions; they live as unemployed people in towns and form part of the growing number of unemployed persons.

Although various reasons can be given for the phenomenon of the reduction in farm workers by the farmers, it appears that the labour, housing and land claim laws all play an important role. The laws, which were meant to improve conditions for the farm workers, have contributed to a significant number of workers losing their work. And, with the loss of employment, they have lost their housing and other advantages.

*Infrastructure services on farms:* Secondly, although farm workers do not own houses on the farms, the majority of the workers live in brick houses and have access to the basic amenities of water, electricity and a toilet. It is possible that a few of the workers own a house in town but most of them do not. When workers lose their homes, they do often not have alternative accommodation, and have to erect informal shacks on the edge of town.

*Recreation and quality of life:* Thirdly, farm workers have limited recreational facilities and it can be accepted that they do not use their free time constructively to improve their quality of life.

*Social services for farm workers:* Fourth, the most essential services are available for the farm worker on the farms although there is concern that the mobile clinic does not visit all the farms. In the light of the growing number of terminally ill people and the death of parents, the absence of social services and the regular visits of the mobile clinic is a serious deficiency. Although there are primary schools that the farm workers' children attend, there is a great need for transport and accommodation in town for high school children in particular. There seems to be no possibility of establishing nursery schools or introducing programmes to stimulate the pre-school children.

The termination of the Rural Foundation has left a void regarding a number of developmental projects. There are no other NGOs that deliver services on the farms

even though it is obvious there are needs such as the farm workers' need to be literate, to be trained in various skills and to use their free time constructively.

*On-farm and off-farm housing:* Sixth, there are numerous factors which determine farmers' and farm workers' decisions to provide on-farm or off-farm housing. These reasons include issues of service delivery, social relationships on the farm, and family needs. Consequently, it will be difficult to find a "one-size-fits-all" solution to the issue.

*Transport:* Seventh, because farm workers do not have their own transport, they are dependent on the farmers, taxis and public transport. This hinders their access to services and their mixing socially with members of the community. The farm worker is thus isolated to a certain extent. The Education Department, together with other role players, should investigate accommodation and transport of farm-school learners. The Transport Department should accept greater responsibility for the provision of public transport that is affordable for farm workers. Then too, the maintenance of roads needs serious attention lest the farming communities become more and more difficult to reach.

*Training:* Eighth, farmers as well as farm workers are positive about training for the latter. Training cannot only contribute to the worker delivering better service to the farmer but may empower the worker to improve his quality of life. However, there are few options for formal training for farm workers, and the services and financing provided by the Department of Labour are generally unknown. Many farmers are prepared to provide training, and many farm workers would like to receive training from their employers. This provides a valuable reservoir of social capital which can be utilised much more effectively for training agricultural workers. The involvement of NGOs should be encouraged, particularly with regard to training, recreation and social services. The farmers' associations and the Agricultural Union could play a significant role.

*New tenure and labour laws:* Ninth, the relationship between the farmer and the farm worker has been significantly affected by the new labour and housing rights as well as the land claims laws. These have brought a measure of distrust and even aggression between the groups. It is as though the farmers experience the government as being unsympathetic towards them and this is then reflected in their relationship with the farm worker. The farm worker does not understand the situation completely and becomes the victim of the situation that has arisen between the farmer and the government. On some farms, the farmers have interpreted the laws positively and they still have good relationships with their workers. It is clear that there is still, to a large extent, mutual dependence between the farmer and the farm worker.

*Promotion of emergent farmers:* Tenth, the farmers are positive about emergent black farmers but find the way in which these farmers have been established ineffective. Many farmers are eager to assist emergent farmers. The impression has also been given that the existing farmers were not consulted concerning the process of establishing the black farmers. In this way valuable advice and help was ignored.

Eleventh,

This study can only be regarded as a pilot study because of its limitations: the participants are not representative of the total population and the concerns related to the questionnaires. As a result of these limitations, generalizations cannot simply be made and only tendencies that fall within the limited scope of this study can be pointed out. It would be valuable, however, to extend the study to other agricultural areas, such as the northern Free State maize areas and the grape-farming areas around Upington.

The study indicates that urgent talks need to be held between government departments, farmers and farm workers on grassroots level about such matters as:

- The impact of legislation regarding labour affairs, housing rights of farm workers and land claims;
- Extension of services to the farming community;
- Training of farm workers
- Improvement in the quality of life of the farm worker
- Promotion and fast-tracking of land reform, e.g. by disseminating information about land subsidies.

Such talks should be aimed at spreading the correct information, promoting better co-operation between the farmer and the government, using the knowledge of both the farmer and the farm worker to improve the quality of life on the farms and to develop the industry. Because of possible mistrust between the farmers and the government, use could be made of neutral facilitators who could lead the discussions.

This pilot study should be followed up with a wider qualitative and quantitative study. Talks with relevant stakeholders should lead to the acquisition of qualitative information which can better inform public policy in future.