

Working Papers

6. Land Restitution and Livelihoods: The #Khomani San

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FARM-AFRICA WORKING PAPER

No. 6

Land Restitution and Livelihoods: The #Khomani San

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September 2007

FARM-Africa Working Papers

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I. Background information about the #Khomani San group

In 1995, shortly after South Africa came under majority rule, the Land Claims Committee of the Southern Kalahari Bushmen, henceforth referred to as the #Khomani San group, submitted a claim to the government for the restitution of land in the Kgalagadi Transfrontier National Park, formerly known as the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park, asserting that its members had been illegally alienated from their ancestral lands following the proclamation of the Park in 1931 (Surplus People Project, 1990; Bosch and Hirschfeld, 2002). While initially, in the 1930s, the #Khomani San group had been allowed to live in the Park, Bosch and Hirschfeld (2002: 164) argue that these rights were retracted soon after because the #Khomani San were deemed to have acquired a 'western life style and habits'. While many San families left the area to seek opportunities along the Orange River and in the Western Cape province, a minority settled near the Park in the Rietfontein area.

The negotiations between the government and the #Khomani San group regarding the land claim were completed in 1999 and, on 21 May, a settlement agreement was signed. The agreement dealt with the transfer of 37,000 hectares of land outside the park as well as outlining the process that would determine how the group would access a further 25,000 hectares of the South African section of the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (Bosch and Hirschfeld, 2002). After three years of deliberations, negotiations were brought to a conclusion on 31 August 2002.

The 37,000 hectares outside the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park consists of six farms that, up until the land was transferred, were owned and managed by white commercial farmers who used the land for either extensive livestock production or game farming of antelope species. The #Khomani San group refer to these farms collectively as the 'Farms' and, in early 2002, approximately 30 per cent of the group's households were residing there. They are experiencing difficulties in incorporating this asset into their existing livelihoods as 70 per cent of beneficiaries live approximately 100 to 300 kilometres from the Farms and they cannot easily access affordable transport.

At the time the research was undertaken in late 2001 and early 2002, the 163 households of the #Khomani San beneficiary group were situated in the following areas: Rietfontein (91 households), the 'Farms' (45 households) and Upington (27 households). Figure 1 shows the location of these areas. As beneficiaries of the government's restitution programme, the

group is entitled to a government grant that enables them to undertake specific development activities such as housing, sanitation, micro-enterprise and agriculture. However by mid-2003, the group had not managed to access these monies due to their inability to develop a 'business plan' that satisfied the Department of Land Affairs' criteria.

The structure of this paper is as follows. The first section provides an overview of the #Khomani San group's farms. This is followed by a description of the research approach and methods. The next section describes the asset status of the sample and investigates variations in holdings between different per capita income groups. The subsequent section explores the livelihood activities of households and describes the income sources that group members rely upon to sustain and develop their livelihoods and, finally, in conclusion, the research findings are used to comment on the South African Government's land reform policy.

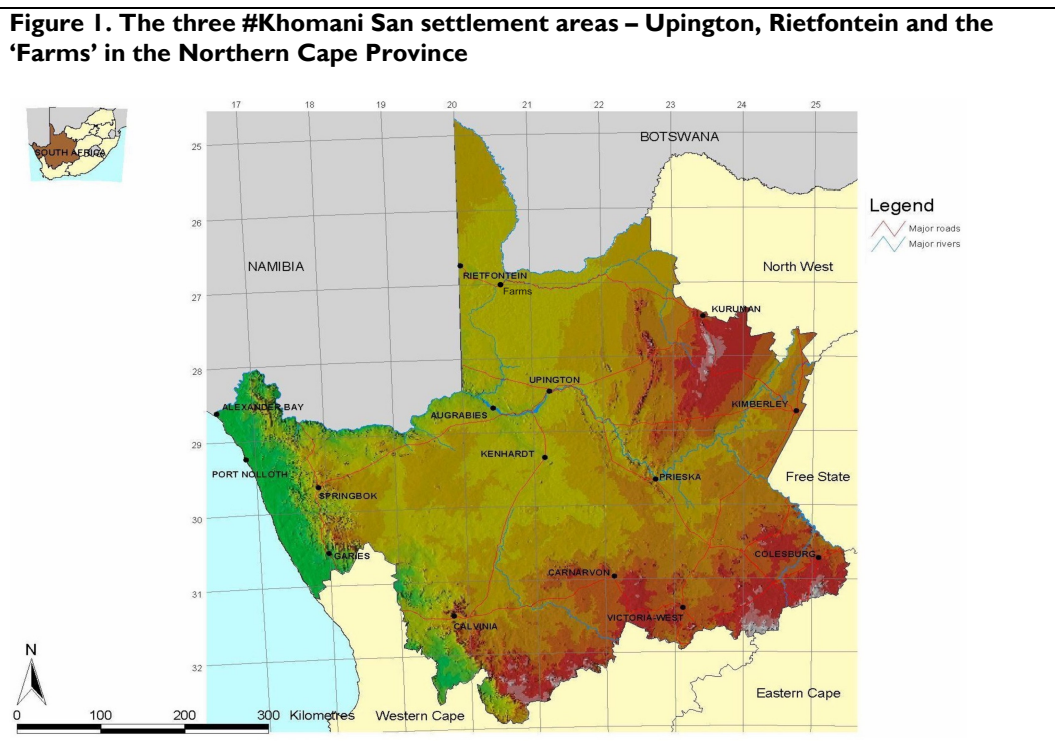
The #Khomani San farms

All of the #Khomani San group's six farms are located in the southern Kalahari where the rainfall pattern is spatially and temporally unpredictable and highly erratic. Most rainfall is recorded in the summer, with the majority falling between January and April with an average annual precipitation rate of 200 mm (Low and Rebelo, 1998). The seasonal range of temperatures in the Kalahari is large. In summer it can reach 45 degrees Celsius and in winter -10 degrees Celsius (Van Rooyen, 2001). The very low levels of soil nutrients that result from most of the Kalahari being covered in wind-blown sand, coupled with the low levels of precipitation, make the primary productivity of the area low. In addition, the levels of phosphorous and nitrogen are poor, but in spite of these harsh conditions most indigenous plants have adapted well to the environment (Van Rooyen, 2001). However Van Rooyen (2000) notes the dangers of heavy grazing, especially during times of drought, and argues that this may have serious, irreversible, negative impacts on the ecosystem. These severe climatic conditions make the Kalahari a relatively disease and parasite free area than other wetter parts of South Africa. The conditions are therefore good for extensive livestock production as long as managers are vigilant in ensuring that animal numbers do not damage the productivity of the natural resource base overtime.

The part of the Kalahari in which the #Khomani San farms are situated is not a true desert, but rather an arid savannah and some areas are quite densely covered with grasses, trees and shrubs. The region has distinctive long sand dunes that run in parallel rows in a

northwest-southeast direction and, in some places, rise 15-30 metres above the dune valleys or so-called “streets” between them (Van Rooyen, 2001). The remoteness of the area and the lack of surface water for the majority of the year have combined to reduce the amount of human impact in the area (Van Rooyen, 2001).

The carrying capacity of all six farms is approximately 958 large stock units (Van Rooyen, 2002). Three farms have been developed to accommodate wildlife species (Gemsbok and Springbok) and three farms for domestic species such as cattle, sheep and goats. A report undertaken in March 2002 by Van Rooyen (2002) investigated the condition of the infrastructure and the carrying capacity of the #Khomani San farms and concluded that approximately two-thirds of the range was over-grazed and stocking rates should be kept to a minimum until the vegetation had recovered. It was also found that the majority of the infrastructure – gates, water troughs and tanks, and fences – was in good condition, although a maintenance plan needed to be initiated and implemented to prevent the deterioration of this valuable asset.



2. Research approach and methods

The research for this study was undertaken from December 2001 to February 2002. The research methods were designed to discover the current livelihood circumstances of the #Khomani San and to permit inferences to be made about the capability of group members to take advantage of this new asset in order to improve their livelihood outcomes. The livelihoods framework (Carney, 1998) was used as the methodological approach to understand the conditions, the alternatives and limitations that affected the households of the #Khomani San land reform group.

The research process was comprised of three main elements: wealth ranking, focus group workshops and a household questionnaire. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods was used as the literature on this subject suggests that the research outcome is of higher quality when these two complementary approaches are combined (White, 2002). The outcome of the wealth ranking exercise that drew heavily upon Grandin's (1988) work was a stratified random sample of 100 households. This process involved a small group of #Khomani San beneficiaries of approximately six to eight people that were chosen to ensure an age, wealth and gender balance. The next step in the process was to convene three focus group workshops that were run at the three sites (Upington, Rietfontein and the Farms). Approximately 15 people were invited to each workshop and participants were selected to ensure they were representative of the group. The objective of the workshops was to understand the historical context of the group with particular reference to the land claim and, in particular, to explore how, overtime, households have adapted their livelihoods in a changing socio-economic and political environment. The last element of the research process was a household survey that covered 100 households. This was designed specifically to gather quantitative information about households' asset holdings as well as their income sources. Prior to analysis, the data set was split into three per capita income groups or terciles, with per capita income tercile III being the richest and I the poorest.

3. Assets of the #Khomani San group

There are many references in the literature that highlight the critical role that the ownership of assets or the ability to gain access to assets plays in helping poor people not only to devise poverty exit strategies, but also to reduce their vulnerability to shocks (Berry, 1989; Chambers and Conway, 1992; Moser, 1998; Bebbington, 1999; Ellis, 2000; Reardon et al., 2000). Thus households with an abundance of different assets will be (*ceteris paribus*) more able to cope with shocks and exploit opportunities to accumulate wealth than those households that have fewer assets.

The discussion focuses on the following assets: land area owned; livestock holdings; access to credit; old age pensioners, disability and child support grants; number of Economically Active Adults (EEAs) in the household and the highest number of education years achieved by EEAs in the household. These assets will be examined by using interval or count distributions, and by reference to asset holdings across income terciles.

Land

Prior to 1999 – when the government granted the #Khomani San group 37,000 hectares of land outside the National Park and 25,000 hectares of land inside the Park – their land holdings were restricted firstly to their home plots and secondly to their ability to access common land.

Table 1 excludes the land (Farms and the Park) that households now have access to following their successful restitution claim and shows the very small size of home plots. 52 per cent of the sample had no more than 200 square metres of land or one fiftieth of a hectare and 81 per cent had no more than 400 square metres or one twenty-fifth of a hectare. The land use options on such small areas of land are very limited. However, it is possible to keep small animals like chickens and, if the land is suitable and the household can afford inputs such as irrigation water, fruit trees and vegetables can be grown.

Table 1. Household distribution of home plots, #Khomani San

Area owned	Per Cent
20-100 square metres	42
101-200 square metres	10
201-300 square metres	17
301-400 square metres	12
401-500 square metres	9
501-600 square metres	3
601-700 square metres	4
701-800 square metres	3

Source: Sample survey conducted in January – April 2002

This finding is representative of land holdings of other black groups in the country where a key reason why plot sizes were so small was that the apartheid regime required black people for their labour only. They allowed them to stay in 'white' South Africa to work for white business interests and they built houses for them in order to meet that narrow objective (Posel, 1991). White governments wanted to limit livelihood opportunities in 'white' South Africa for black people so that they had no alternative but to work for white employers. Thus in the townships the provision of complementary assets including land that might have enabled black people to diversify their livelihoods was severely limited (Terreblanche, 2002).

Livestock

Only 32 households in the sample own livestock and 23 of those households own large animals such as cattle, goats, horses, sheep and donkeys. The low ownership pattern in the group is primarily caused by previous discriminatory land policies. Of the seven animal species that households own (cattle, goats, sheep, pigs, chickens, horses and donkeys), the three most common species in terms of numbers are: goats, chickens and sheep, although as Table 2, overleaf, shows, the holdings are small.

The spatial distribution of the 32 livestock owners is as follows: 59 per cent of them live in Rietfontein, 31 per cent live at the 'Farms' and only ten per cent live in Upington. Rietfontein has a population of 1,870 and common land amounting to 80,781 hectares, which is the equivalent of 43 hectares per person. Upington, in contrast, has a population of 38,000 people and has a total common land area of 27,739 hectares or 0.73 hectares per person (Anderson, 1996). While the climate, and the quality of land in both places are similar, the

amount of land per capita in Rietfontein is clearly much greater than in Upington and this may be one of the reasons why the majority of livestock owners are to be found in this area.

Table 2. Ownership distribution by household of selected livestock, #Khomani San

Ownership range	Percentage of households owning goats	Percentage of households owning chickens	Percentage of households owning sheep
0	84	88	94
1-10	6	12	2
11-20	5	0	0
21-30	2	0	1
More than 30	3	0	3
Total	100	100	100

Source: Sample survey conducted in January – April 2002

Another reason that was discussed in the focus group discussions was the fact that some of the households in Rietfontein work for white commercial farmers and, post-1994, it was suggested that some of their employers might have allowed them to build up small herds of sheep or goats on their farms. However, in the light of current experience, this seems to be unlikely. Since the passing of the Land Reform (Labour Tenants) Act, No. 3 of 1996 and the Extension of Security Tenure Act, No. 62 of 1997, both of which give occupiers (i.e. farm workers) rights to their owners' land, many white commercial farmers have evicted their workers to circumvent this piece of legislation.

The numbers of livestock owned by households were transformed into 'Cattle Equivalent Units' (CEUs). (This was achieved by taking market value ratios between the mean current price (five per cent trimmed mean) of different species of livestock: cattle = 1; goats = 0.13; sheep = 0.15; pigs = 0.15; chickens = 0.01; rabbits = 0.01; doves = 0.001; horses = 0.52; donkeys = 0.17; ducks = 0.008).

Table 3. Livestock ownership by income tercile, #Khomani San								
Income terciles	Male headed HHs owning livestock	Mean CEUs	Std. dev.	Median CEUs	Female headed HHs owning livestock	Mean CEUs	Std. dev.	Median CEUs
I <i>n=15</i>	9	5.24	7.95	3.77	6	0.32	0.23	0.36
II <i>n=12</i>	9	1.9	2.35	0.85	3	6.64	7.92	4.42
III <i>n=5</i>	4	0.81	0.90	0.56	1	0.09	-	0.09

Source: Sample survey conducted in January – April 2002

Table 3 reveals that livestock ownership is concentrated in the poorest tercile. Throughout the terciles male-headed households own more livestock than female-headed households. However some caution is required in interpreting these results as the standard deviations are very high. For the sample as a whole, the findings suggest that there is a negative relationship between the amount of cattle equivalent units and per capita income. The correlation for the whole sample is negative, the relationship is significant at the 0.05 level (two tailed), but it is weak at (-) 0.236.

The research findings for #Khomani San households show how few households own livestock and those that do have relatively small numbers. This is in contrast to other rural communities in sub-Saharan Africa. For example, livelihoods research undertaken by Ellis and Bahiigwa (2003) in three districts in Uganda showed a much more even livestock ownership distribution than the #Khomani San. Another unexpected finding from the research results was that poorer households had larger animal holdings than richer ones. This was in contrast to Ellis and Bahiigwa's Ugandan study that showed a strong, positive relationship between per capita income and livestock ownership. However, interestingly, Roberts (2001), in his research on rural households in KwaZulu Natal province of South Africa, produced similar findings to the #Khomani San. This indicates that poorer households may consider livestock keeping as a more important livelihood strategy than richer ones.

Credit

Before the 1994 elections, apartheid legislation made it impossible for black people to access the formal credit market. Indeed, as Kaplinsky (1995) highlights, government policy restricted the business activities of black people in the townships by preventing them from accessing input and output markets. However, even if poor black rural South Africans had not been discriminated against in the credit market, economic theory predicts that they would have experienced difficulties in accessing it.

The number of households borrowing money at the time the data were collected was very small. Of the 100 households sampled, only eight households had loans from either formal or informal sources. The distribution of borrowers was as follows: three households in the lowest tercile, four households in the middle tercile, and one household in the highest tercile. Of the eight households borrowing money, only one had borrowed money from a formal South African financial institution, the Land Bank, and this was for investment purposes. The other households had borrowed from the informal market and were using their loans for consumption purposes, for example, to purchase food and clothes. The amount borrowed by these households ranged from Rand 100 to Rand 500.

There were some differences between households with regard to the terms and conditions of their loans. While some had managed to negotiate the market interest rate, the majority had one month in which to repay their loans and were being asked to pay a monthly interest rate of 30 per cent. The research did not attempt to determine the demand for credit in the #Khomani San group and therefore it was impossible to be definite about whether households want credit and, if so, what they want it for, and whether credit has a role to play in poverty reduction.

With regard to the working capital requirements of the group's farms, it is difficult to imagine how these can be met through a community-based savings scheme. The transaction costs of co-ordinating a savings scheme would be large considering that some group members live up to 300 kilometres apart. Moreover as the majority of members have not benefited from the farms, they may ask for investment guarantees that cannot be given. Thus the only source of funds available to the group is through the government's Land Bank, but a lack of skills in preparing business plans will make accessing funds from this source very difficult.

Social assistance grants – old age pensions, disability and child support grants

Only three countries in sub-Saharan Africa provide non-contributory pensions to their elderly citizens: South Africa, Namibia and Botswana (Devereux, 2001), and South Africa's scheme is well developed for a middle income country (Van der Berg, 2001). In 2001 South African men and women over the age of 65 and 60 respectively were entitled to receive an old age pension of Rand 640 per month if they could prove that their monthly household income was less than Rand 2,000 (Department of Social Welfare, 2001). Many old people rely upon pensions, especially in rural areas, and the important role that they play both in supporting the livelihoods of poor South African households and in preventing them from descending into poverty is well documented (Ardington and Lund, 1996; May, 1996; Bryceson, 1999; Lund, 1999; Seekings, 2000; Slater, 2001; Lund, 2002). South Africa's social security system also includes grants for disabled people. A medical examination determines eligibility and the amount is the same as the old age pension. When the data were collected, households that had children under the age of seven and could prove that their monthly income was less than Rand 800, were entitled to a child support grant of Rand 110 per month per child. Households are limited to six grants (Department of Social Welfare, 2001). There are two other child grants: a foster child grant (Rand 470 per month) for households that adopt children and a care dependency grant (Rand 640 per month) for disabled children. Households are entitled to the former on receipt of a court order and, for the latter, a medical certificate is required confirming that the child is disabled. Both grants are valid up until the child's 18th birthday.

Table 4 overleaf shows a marked increase in access to old age pensions with increasing per capita income, with nearly two and a half times as many households in tercile III receiving old age pensions when compared to tercile I. There is a very strong, positive correlation, 0.30, that is significant at 0.01 level (two tailed) between per capita income and the number of pensions received by households. Disability grants, as the table shows, are much more evenly distributed across the sample.

The table shows the number of child support grants declines with increasing per capita income and the correlation between per capita income and the number of child support grants is (-0.257) and it is significant at 0.01 level (two tailed). Theory would predict such a result as households receiving more than Rand 800 per month are ineligible for the grant. The findings also showed that access to pensions for male and female-headed households

become more equal with increasing per capita income. All of the ten children that have been adopted by #Khomani San households are living with households in the highest income tercile that are headed by men. This may be related to the fact that only relatively rich households have the necessary resources to accommodate adopted children. However, drawing any firm conclusions from such a small sample is inadvisable and it is doubtful that the decision to adopt is based on economic factors alone; social factors may be of equal, if not more importance.

Table 4. Distribution of government grants received by income tercile, #Khomani San

Grant	Tercile I n=33		Tercile II n=34		Tercile III n=3		Total No. of grants	No. of HHs receiving the grant
	No. of grants	No. of HHs receiving the grant	No. of grants	No. of HHs receiving the grant	No. of grants	No. of HHs receiving the grant		
Old age pension	7	7	14	12	22	17	43	36
Disability grant	8	8	8	7	9	8	25	23
Child support grant	25	17	19	16	6	6	50	39
Foster child grant	0	0	0	0	10	5	10	5
Care dependency grant	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
Total	40	32	42	36	47	36	129	104

Source: Sample survey conducted in January – April 2002

Economically Active Adults

Another asset that was studied was the number of EEAs resident in households. These were defined as all male and female adults between the ages of 15 to 60 years old exclusive of those individuals in full-time education. 94 per cent of households have at least one adult that was economically active: the six households that did not were from income tercile II and tercile III. Table 5 shows the variation in the number of EEAs in the three terciles and, notwithstanding, the high standard deviations, households across the sample have approximately three EEAs.

Table 5. Distribution of Economically Active Adults (EAAs) by income tercile, #Khomani San

Income tercile	HHs with EAAs	Median	Mean	Std. deviation
I <i>n</i> = 33	33	4	3.52	1.20
II <i>n</i> = 34	32	2	2.66	1.28
III <i>n</i> = 33	29	3	3.07	1.77

Source: Sample survey conducted in January – April 2002

For the sample as a whole, the findings suggest that there is a negative relationship between household per capita income and the number of EAAs in a household. The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two tailed) and at (-) 0.294 the relationship is quite strong. This finding is supported by other studies undertaken in South Africa (see May, 2000; Leibbrandt and Woolard, 2001; Van der Berg, 2001) and in other developing countries (see Scott, 2000 and his findings in Chile).

However, Sender's research (2000) in the Mpumalanga Province of South Africa found a positive relationship between the two variables and elsewhere in Africa the relationship has also been refuted. Reardon et al. (1992) found that, in Burkina Faso, large numbers of EAAs in a household may help in the process of livelihood diversification.

Table 6 overleaf shows the employment status of EAAs, and it demonstrates clearly the very high levels of unemployment that income tercile I experiences when compared to terciles II and III. The level of unemployment for the sample as a whole is 47 per cent and this is higher than the provincial average of 28.5 per cent (Stats SA, 2000).

The results show that gender differences in unemployment do exist. There are more unemployed women than men in the two lowest income terciles and in the third tercile there are equal numbers of men and women unemployed.

Income tercile	Number of EAAs	Number of unemployed EAAs	Unemployed EAAs as a percentage of all EAAs
I	116	74	64
II	85	33	39
III	89	30	34

Source: Sample survey conducted in January – April 2002

The results demonstrate that poorer households have not only more EEAs when compared to other households but also more of them are unemployed and unproductive. The resultant financial burden falls on households that are arguably the least able to cope with these hardships.

Educational attainment

The racial inequalities in access to education were starkly visible during the apartheid era (Weber, 2002). The differential between per capita educational expenditure between Africans and white pupils was substantial. For example in 1975 Africans received just four per cent of that for whites and 18 years later the gap had narrowed to 51 per cent (see Leibbrandt et al, 2001; Weber, 2002). In addition only three per cent of white teachers did not have a university degree, whereas 96 per cent of black teachers had not graduated from a university (Collins and Gillespie, 1993).

The research investigated the educational attainment of EEAs in the #Khomani San group. The majority of the statistical analysis for this variable was undertaken on the household member who had completed the highest number of education years. The positive effect that education has on the economic and social well-being of households worldwide, as well as in South Africa, is well documented in the literature (see Psacharopoulos, 1994; Budlender, 2000; Glick and Sahn, 2000; Lestrade-Jefferis et al., 2000; May et al., 2000b; Schultz, 2002).

One prominent feature of the #Khomani San group is that none of the households has a resident EEA that has attained a higher educational qualification at a tertiary institution, and only 18 households have a resident EEA that has successfully completed their secondary schooling. In total only six men or five per cent of EEA males, and 18 women or 11 per cent of EEA females have completed their secondary schooling.

Table 7. Number of completed education years by the most educated Economically Active Adults (EEAs) by income tercile, #Khomani San

Education years	Income tercile I n=33 (per cent)	Income tercile II n=32 (per cent)	Income tercile III n=29 (per cent)
0-6	24.1	34.4	24.0
7-9	57.7	31.1	24.2
10-12	18.2	34.5	51.8
Total	100	100	100

Source: Sample survey conducted in January – April 2002

Table 7 shows the number of completed education years by the most educated EEA in each household by income tercile. What is most evident in the table is that only 18 per cent of households in tercile I have managed to gain ten or more years of education when compared to tercile III that has approximately 52 per cent of households reaching this level of education. However this should not detract from the fact that approximately one quarter of all households in terciles I and III and over one third of households in tercile II are functionally illiterate. Table 8 overleaf shows the number of completed education years for EEAs in four age groups: 15-29 years, 30-39 years, 40-49 years and 50-60 years.

While the standard deviations are high for the two older groups, the findings reveal that all of the EEAs over the age of 40 are functionally illiterate. While the age group 30-39 has been at school for approximately seven years, they are by no means well educated, and the mean and median educational achievement of the youngest group is also low. Lestrade-Jefferies et al. (2000) and Woolard and Leibbrandt (2001) have both shown that individuals who fail to complete secondary schooling (12 years of schooling) experience difficulties in securing employment in the formal sector of the economy.

With regard to the relationship between per capita income and education years achieved, the above analysis included employed and unemployed EEAs. If the unemployed are excluded from the analysis, then a positive relationship is evident. Table 9 overleaf shows a strong positive and significant correlation for the most highly educated employed female household member and per capita income and, while the correlation between the highest educated employed male is positive, it is insignificant and the relationship is weaker when compared to women.

Table 8. Years of education completed by age group and by income tercile, #Khomani San

Number of education years completed by income tercile	Statistics	Age group 15-29 years n = 115	Age group 30-39 years n = 62	Age group 40-49 years n = 53	Age group 50-60 years n = 60
Tercile I	Mean std. dev. median	7.46 2.28 8.00	5.94 3.11 6.00	1.83 2.69 0.00	2.61 3.19 0.00
Tercile II	Mean std. dev. median	9.04 2.82 10.00	6.63 3.28 7.50	3.67 4.06 3.00	2.11 2.51 0.00
Tercile III	Mean std dev. median	9.25 2.76 10.00	7.25 2.91 7.00	2.67 3.71 0.00	3.06 3.37 1.50

Source: Sample survey conducted in January – April 2002

Table 9. Correlations between most highly educated employed household members and per capita income, #Khomani San

Household Member	Spearman correlation
Highest education years achieved by employed adult household member	0.317**
Highest education years achieved by employed male household member	0.129
Highest education years achieved by employed female household member	0.342**

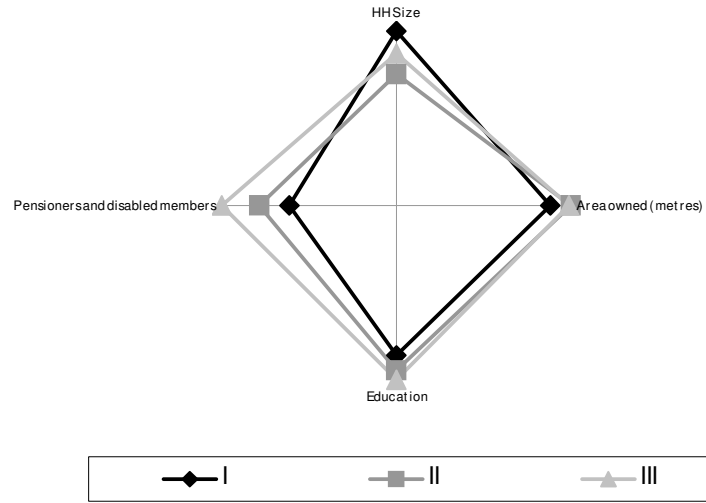
** indicates correlation is significant at the .01 level (two tailed)

Source: Sample survey conducted in January – April 2002

Figure 2 overleaf is a radial graph that presents the comparative level of four assets for per capita income terciles across the whole sample. Both credit and livestock assets were excluded from the figure on the grounds that only a minority of households had gained access to the former and because the quality of housing was similar for the majority.

In general, the poorest third of households are distinguished by their lack of resident old age pensioners and disabled people; and the largest number of EEAs (labelled HH size in the graph) in their households, although they do show very similar levels of completed education years and land ownership as the other two terciles. It should be noted that the radial graph simply presents the comparative levels of asset holdings of the different income terciles. It does not attempt to describe any causal relationships that might exist between assets and per capita income.

Figure 2. Selected asset levels by income terciles, #Khomani San



Source: Sample survey conducted in January – April 2002

4. Livelihood activities and incomes

Agriculture, livestock and natural resources

The number of households involved in growing either fruit (deciduous and citrus) or vegetables on their home plots is limited to 24 and they are evenly distributed between the income terciles. The results show that the income generated from this activity only comprises 0.5 per cent of mean annual income and is therefore a minority activity for the group. The reasons for the low levels of agricultural activity are the very arid climate, the lack of good quality soils in households' home plots and the high cost of irrigation water.

The majority of the 32 owners of livestock are concentrated in income terciles I and II. The contribution that livestock makes to mean annual income for the sample is slightly greater than fruit and vegetables at 1.2 per cent. Only 14 of the 32 owners realised any income from their livestock during 2001. The average amount was Rand 1,220, but with high standard deviations (1763), and the median amount was Rand 555. The focus groups indicated that rising unemployment had forced many households to dispose of their livestock assets in order to meet current food and income shortfalls.

The focus group noted that the way in which households use their assets had not changed, for example, all chickens, vegetables and fruits were still consumed at home, domestic animals like goats and sheep were still consumed at home and sold to generate income, and cattle were only sold to raise income. However, the group pointed out that many households were no longer able to maintain their livestock holdings and the depletion of their herds was occurring.

Income portfolios

Table 10 overleaf shows the income portfolios of the income terciles of the #Khomani San group. There are six sources of income:

- Agriculture relates to income derived from the sale of livestock, fruit and vegetables;
- Non-farm self-employment is income generated from selling handicrafts, traditional beer and petty trading;
- Non-farm wages or wage income are comprised of income earned from employment in either the private or the public sectors;

- Public transfers include income from disability grants, old age pensions, and child support grants;
- Private transfers relate to remittances from family members that are not resident in the household; and,
- Physical transfers are gifts of any kind made to the household.

Table 10 illustrates that agriculture, non-farm self-employment, private transfers and physical transfers make a very minor contribution to the sample's household income. The table shows the overwhelming importance of wage income and public transfers for all income groups. Indeed, for tercile II, these two sources of income comprise approximately 92 per cent of annual income. The lowest contribution that these two sources make is to the lowest income group but at 78 per cent, they are still highly significant.

Table 10. Income portfolios by income terciles, #Khomani San – structure of household incomes in percentages				
Income sources	Income tercile I n = 33	Income tercile II n = 34	Income tercile III n = 33	Total n = 100
Agriculture	4.2	1.4	0.2	1.4
Non-farm self-employment	9.9	2.3	1.5	3.4
Non-farm wages (wage income)	36.2	45.1	56.6	49.3
Public transfers	42.4	47.3	32.7	38.6
Private transfers	5.8	2.7	7.6	5.9
Physical transfers	1.5	1.2	1.4	1.4
Total transfers	49.7	51.2	41.7	45.9

Source: Sample survey conducted in January – April 2002

Table 10 shows that gaining access to the labour market is an important factor in determining a household's wealth status and for avoiding poverty. This finding is corroborated by other South African studies (see Leibbrandt et al., 2001; Van der Berg 2001; Woolard and Leibbrandt, 2001; Terreblanche, 2002). The results showed that individuals from tercile I only managed to secure 26 jobs; this is in contrast to individuals from terciles II and III that secured 32 and 44 jobs respectively. It is revealing to examine the types of jobs that households from the different income terciles have managed to secure. All of the jobs undertaken by individuals from the lowest tercile are unskilled and manual; 81 per cent of individuals in tercile II and 71 per cent of individuals in tercile III have these types

of jobs. This finding is higher than the results of the Northern Cape's 1995 household survey which found that approximately two-thirds of individuals were employed in these elementary occupations (Orkin, 1998).

However, a further qualification is required to try to explain what initially appears to be a very high number of individuals across the sample having similar low skilled occupations. Although the skill levels of the jobs are very similar, the difference lies in the conditions of employment. For example, a seasonal farm worker is unlikely to have a contract of employment and it is equally doubtful that the employer will contribute to a pension. In contrast, a casual labourer with similar skills working in the public sector will have a contract and much better conditions of employment with regard to sick leave, pension and holiday entitlement. While the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997 was aimed at trying to eradicate these differences, the nature of casual and seasonal work and the remote location in which many of the #Khomani San group work make enforcing the law difficult.

The sample survey results show the most vulnerable jobs were those that were paid in-kind, followed by seasonal/casual, regular wages, a salaried job in the private sector and, finally, the most secure jobs were to be found in the public sector. Table I I shows the different types of pay for wage income jobs across income terciles.

Table I I. Type of pay for individuals with wage income jobs by income tercile, #Khomani San – employment in percentages

Type of pay for wage income jobs	Tercile I n = 26 (per cent)	Tercile II n = 32 (per cent)	Tercile III n = 44 (per cent)
In-kind	7.7	3.1	2.3
Seasonal/casual	50.0	37.6	22.7
Regular wage	38.5	40.6	40.9
Private sector salary	3.8	15.6	25.0
Public sector salary	0.0	3.1	9.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Sample survey conducted in January – April 2002

The table above demonstrates how, for every job type, households in lower income terciles have more vulnerable jobs with poorer employment conditions than richer ones.

Policy makers concerned with poverty reduction have responded to this feature of the labour market by introducing a minimum wage as well as the requirement that all employers register their employees with the Unemployment Insurance Fund. The effectiveness of this new legislation will be dependent upon how successfully the new laws are enforced, that employers understand their responsibilities and that employees are made aware of their rights.

As Table I I above shows, the proportion of wage income derived from in-kind and seasonal/casual sources peaks in tercile I at 58 per cent and declines thereafter to 25 per cent in tercile III. The interesting point is that the lower terciles derive more of their non-farm income from sources that are irregular and prone to temporal fluctuations.

With regard to migration, the results show that 30 per cent of households had at least one EEA that had migrated from their home district and only 13 of those households received money from migrants. Private transfers or remittance incomes from migrant household members were small and did not exceed eight per cent of total income for all households across the sample.

Remittance incomes are used either for consumption or for investment purposes and, in their review of the migration literature, Wiggins and Proctor (1999) showed that the majority of remittances is used for consumption. The research results showed that 100 per cent of remittance income received by all households in the sample was used for consumption purposes. While the research with the #Khomani San did not investigate this particular topic, there is a debate about what factors determine whether migrants remit and, if so, how much they send to their household (Stark and Lucas, 1988; Hoddinott, 1994; De Haan, 1999; Wiggins and Proctor, 1999).

Considering the minor contribution that remittances make to annual income of the group, coupled with the fact that there are only 43 migrants living outside their home district, the evidence does not suggest that migration is a significant livelihood strategy for most #Khomani San households.

As the research findings have shown, the income portfolios of the #Khomani San group are heavily dependent on two main sources of income: public transfers and waged labour. This finding is very unlike the income portfolios of other rural people in Africa. For example, Ellis and Baghiwa (2003) show a much greater variety of income sources for the households they

studied in Uganda. Research undertaken by Ellis and Mdoe (2003) in Tanzania also show a similar, more diverse pattern of income sources for all per capita income groups. Bird and Shepherd's (2003) work in the communal areas of Zimbabwe also demonstrates how rural households draw upon a much greater variety of income sources than the #Khomani San. Wiggins et al. (1999) in their work on the livelihoods in rural Mexico found households were on average drawing upon five income sources.

However, similar research studies in South Africa show that the #Khomani San group is not an exceptional case. May et al. (2000b) and Woolard and Leibbrandt (2001), using the Project for Statistics on Living Standards and Development (PSLSD) data set, compare and contrast the income sources of poor and non-poor households. Their work highlights the insignificance of agricultural income for both rich and poor households which confirmed by other South African studies (see Baber, 1996; May, 1996; May et al., 2000a) . However, the importance of public transfers and wages as key income sources for all households is emphasised. Public transfers are shown to contribute more to poorer than to richer households and the opposite is true for wage income. That these very visible distortions exist in South African rural livelihoods when compared to other rural livelihoods elsewhere in the developing world is explained by the extraordinary control that apartheid policies had upon restricting black South Africans from accumulating assets and diversifying their livelihoods.

5. Conclusion

The results of the research carried out with the #Khomani San group show how distorted their livelihoods are compared to other rural communities in the developing world. Despite the fact that they live in one of the remotest rural areas of South Africa, their livelihoods have more in common with poor households living in an urban environment. Their asset holdings are low and what few they do own are largely unproductive. The low levels of purchasing power that exist in the areas in which the group lives and the legacy of decades of exclusion from both factory and product markets are core explanatory factors. The research results show that for EEAs, labour is their most important asset, although its quality is often poor due to the detrimental effects of discriminatory apartheid education policies. The low levels of human capital still restrict their entry into the mainstream economy and the research showed that many members remain on the periphery of the modern economy in low skilled casual or seasonal jobs. The levels of unemployment in the area are nearly twice the provincial average and this pool of unskilled labour has little chance of joining the modern economy, unless they are able to increase their human capital or migrate to an area where their type of labour is in demand.

The results of the research also emphasised the important role that public transfers play in supporting the livelihoods of the whole group. This finding has no comparison elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa, except in Botswana and Namibia where households do benefit from public transfers, but not to the same extent. The findings also showed that access to waged income is a key factor that differentiates the rich from the poor (Leibbrandt and Woolard, 2001; Van der Berg, 2001; Aliber, 2003). The research also demonstrated that the majority of households had not managed to diversify their income sources to any significant degree and had failed to integrate the land that had been restored to them into their livelihoods.

What is surprising and of concern to poverty reduction policy makers, is that when this research was undertaken, the ANC had been in power for nearly ten years and the #Khomani San group exhibited very limited asset holdings, which suggests that transforming the legacy of apartheid will be a protracted process.

The results also highlighted that the poorest and the most vulnerable households in the group were those that had large numbers of unemployed EEAs and a lack of both old age

pensioners and disabled people. This made these households heavily dependent upon wage earning members and therefore very vulnerable to the negative effects of unemployment.

One of the striking paradoxes that the research highlighted was the large distances that most group members have to travel to reach their land. This 'distance effect' is a key factor that has constrained the development of the group's farms. Another problem that the group experiences is that they have been granted land that has previously been operated at such a degree of technical sophistication that they are unable to exploit it due to their lack of skills and assets coupled with the inability of the Department of Agriculture to provide technical training and extension support. Another paradox is that research undertaken for South Africa's Participatory Poverty Assessment report indicated that many black South African households are adverse to engaging in agricultural activities in areas of poor rainfall, as agriculture is seen as a very risky strategy (Breslin and Delius, 1995). Francis (1999) cites the poor profitability of black agriculture as a main constraint facing this sector. These findings raise serious questions about the effectiveness of land reform as a poverty reduction instrument especially in remote arid areas.

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