

**UNDERSTANDING THE LEGACY OF DEPENDENCY AND
POWERLESSNESS EXPERIENCED BY FARM WORKERS ON
WINE FARMS IN THE WESTERN CAPE**

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, do hereby declare that this thesis is my own original work and that it has not been submitted previously in its entirety or in part to any other university for a degree.

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Signed

4 March 2008

Date

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the powerlessness and dependency on wine farms in the Western Cape from the viewpoint of an understanding the lived experience of farm labourers and the high incidence of habitual drinking, violence and other social phenomena.

The first farm labourers in the Western Cape were Slaves. When Slavery was abolished in 1834, Cape Slaves were freed but not compensated and so remained on farms, working as labourers, and powerless and dependent.

After slavery had been abolished, the relationship between landowner and labourer evolved into a paternalistic relationship where the labourer was tied to a particular farm through housing, debt ,economic impoverishment and political marginalisation.

Over the last few decades constitutional and political developments have resulted in changes to labour laws and working conditions on farms. Change has filtered down to the level of labourer at different rates in different areas. By and large, while working conditions may have improved, many labourers remain dependent and powerless to become masters of their own destiny. They remain unable to break free of the legacy of Slavery.

Slavery is not the only legacy that casts a shadow over farm labourers. The infamous Tot System, initiated by Jan van Riebeeck and continuing late into the twentieth century, has enslaved many labourers in a cycle of habitual drinking, social violence and poverty. Habitual drinking has become the norm on farms, a weekend ritual that few labourers manage to escape.

The purpose of this research is to broaden the field of knowledge for practitioners and organisations dealing with substance abuse and other social problems on farms.

One particular farm is used as a sample of farm life. The farm in question has a children's programme (crèche and after-school). There have also been several attempts over the last five years at social development and income-generation projects aimed at empowering adults on the farm. The experience of the farm management when attempting to introduce and establish these projects has been an overwhelming sense of immobilisation and apathy from the labourers.

The empirical research used a qualitative method to examine (by means of semi structured interviews and questionnaires) themes of hopelessness, dependency and powerlessness. The meaning and particular pattern of habitual drinking on farms was also explored through interviews and questionnaires.

There is evidence that habitual drinking continues on wine farms, generation after generation. It has become a legitimate way of life, a ritual so entrenched, that the community cannot imagine life any other way. To not drink is to place oneself in the position of outsider, opening oneself up to ridicule, disdain and verbal abuse. Individuals who *do* give up drinking do so as a result of an external threat rather than a conscious choice to change the course of their lives.

Furthermore, this study found that farm labourers consistently surrender responsibility for their children, their homes their behaviour, while they cling to the remnants of paternalism, avoiding at all costs becoming masters of their own destinies.

This study indicates that the abolishment of the tot system has not significantly reduced the incidence of habitual excessive drinking. Whilst achieving sobriety is a key intervention in achieving social harmony, in isolation, the outlook for sustained success is poor.

Working for change on wine farms is not the exclusive domain of any one role player. In any geographical area a partnership between farming communities is needed to address labourers' needs, and gaps and overlaps in service delivery. A comprehensive plan should be formulated by all role players with the empowerment of workers as the key outcome.

Concerning social and domestic violence, a zero tolerance of abuse and violence needs to be taken by farm management and implemented, making use of legislation and law enforcement agencies.

Early childhood development, educational enrichment and primary health care facilities are essential services on farms and should be staffed by qualified professionals dedicated to the upliftment and empowerment of farming communities.

Finally there remains a need for further research into accessible, appropriate and sustainable intervention strategies on farms that empower labourers and break the cycles of habitual excessive drinking, social violence and hopelessness on farms.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie navorsing ondersoek die magteloosheid en afhanklikheid van plaaswerkers wat op wynplase in die Wes-Kaap bestaan, met die oog daarop om die lewenservaring van plaaswerkers, die hoë mate van alkoholisme, gesinsgeweld en ander maatskaplike afwykings beter te verstaan.

Die eerste werknemers in die Wes-Kaap was slawe. In 1834 is 'n verbod op slawerny geplaas. Kaapse slawe is vrygelaat, maar het geen vergoeding ontvang nie en het dus aangebly as plaaswerkers – magteloos en afhanklik. Na die verbod op slawerny het die verhouding tussen plaaseienaar en plaaswerker verander. Werknemers was van die plaas afhanklik vir beshuising en ook as gevolg van skuld en armoede. Hulle het ook geen politieke gesag gehad nie. Oor die afgelope paar dekades het geregtelike en politieke veranderinge, veranderinge in die werksomstandighede en werkswette veroorsaak. Hierdie veranderinge het, op plaaswerkers vlak, teen verskillende tempos op verskillende plekke deurgedring. Al het die werksomstandighede al tot 'n groot mate verbeter, bly die plaaswerker nog afhanklik van die werkgewer en het hy nog nie die mag om die erfenis van slawerny vry te spring nie.

Slawerny is nie die enigste erfenis wat plaaswerkers aantast nie. Die Dop-stelsel is deur Jan van Riebeeck ingestel en het tot die twintigste eeu baie plaaswerkers in 'n kringloop van alkoholisme, gesinsgeweld en armoede verdoem. Alkoholisme is die norm onder plaaswerkers en min werkers spring die gesuip oor naweke vry.

Die doelwit van hierdie navorsing is om die insig van praktisyns en organisasies, wat met afhanklikheids- en maatskaplike afwykings werk, te verbeter.

Een spesifieke plaas word as voorbeeld gebruik. Die plaas het 'n "Kinderprogram" gestig waarmee hulle oor die afgelope vyf jaar verskeie pogings aangewend het om plaaswerkers te bemagtig deur middel van maatskaplike ontwikkeling en selfhelp skemas.

Die plaasbestuur se ondervinding aangaande hierdie pogings is dié van moedeloosheid en wanbelang van die werkers se kant.

Tydens die navorsing is van 'n kwantitatiewe metode gebruik gemaak deur middel van semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude. Vraelyste is gebruik om die temas van moedeloosheid, afhanklikheid en magteloosheid te ondersoek. Die betekenis en patroon van alkoholisme op die plaas is ook deur middel van onderhoude en vraelyste ondersoek.

In hierdie navorsing is bewys dat gewoonte drinkery op wynplase herhaal word, geslag na geslag. Dit het ontaard in 'n normale, aanvaarbare lewenswyse, 'n ritueel so ingeprent, dat die gemeenskap hulself nie 'n lewe daarsonder kan voorstel nie. Indien jy nie drink nie, plaas jy jouself in die posisie van 'n buitestaander en word jy 'n teiken vir belaglikheid, verbale misbruik en beledigings. Persone wat ophou drink, doen dit as gevolg van eksterne bedreigings en nie omdat hulle besluit het om 'n beter lewe te hê nie.

Verder is ook tydens hierdie navorsing gevind dat plaaswerkers nooit verantwoordelikheid wil aanvaar vir hulle kinders, hulle huise of hulle gedrag nie, maar steeds vasklou aan die oorblyfsels van vaderskap.

Daar is ook bewys dat plaas gemeenskappe die begrip van geweld aanvaar en dit toeskryf aan die gevolg van gewoonte drinkery.

Hierdie studie wys ook daarop dat die feit dat daar weggedoen is met die Tot-sisteem geen merkwaardige vermindering in die voorkoms van oormatige gewoonte drinkery voorgekom het nie. Huidiglik is soberheid die sleutel tot sosiale harmonie, maar dat dit met sukses volgehou sal kan word, is nie baie hoopvol nie.

Om verandering teweeg te bring op wynplase, is nie die domein van een party nie. In enige geografiese area word daar 'n vennootskap benodig tussen die Staat, NGDs, Maatskaplike werkers en plaas gemeenskappe om die nood van die gemeenskap asook die probleme met dienslewering te ondersoek. 'n Omvattende plan moet dan beraam word waarby alle rolspelers ingesluit word en waar die

bemagtiging van die werkers die sleutel is.

'n Skerp standpunt moet deur die plaasbestuur ingeneem word teen die mishandeling van vroue en kinders en daar moet gebruik gemaak word van wetstoepassingsinstansies.

Vroeë ontwikkeling in kinders, opvoedkundige verryking en primêre gesondheidsorg fasiliteite is noodsaaklike dienste op plase en moet beman word deur gekwalifiseerde, toegewyde personeel.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The lived experiences of farm workers in the Western Cape have been irrevocably influenced by slavery and the infamous Tot System. Du Toit (2004) states that the story of the first farm labourers in the Western Cape *is* the story of slavery. Giliomee (2003:12) explains the influence of slavery in the following way: "Slavery fundamentally changed the course of the Cape's history. It transformed the social ethos of a society, defining freedom and the status hierarchy. High status belonged to those who were free, kept slaves and did not have to work with their hands. From the arrival of the first slaves, slavery as an institution took a grip on social and economic life." Bedfellow with slavery was the Tot System; the use of alcohol as a currency of exchange between slave and settler. Where the legacy of slavery is powerlessness of people over their own lives the legacy of the Tot System is addiction and dependency. Farm workers in the wine industry then, have a dual legacy to overcome. On the one hand, the legacy of the Dopstelsel (Tot System) and on the other, slavery.

Central to the story of the Western Cape is the story of the production of alcohol. Within a decade of the arrival of the Dutch East India Company and its slaves on the shores of the Cape, malt beer and wine were being produced and by the end of the eighteenth century wine farming had become an established agricultural practise in the Cape region.

Since the arrival of the Dutch in the Cape, alcohol has become a currency of exchange between the indigenous people of the Cape, slaves from Dutch East India and the white settlers (Parry & Bennetts, 1998:6). Sailors and settlers would barter with each other and the Khoikhoi would exchange cattle and sheep for tobacco, alcohol and other western cultural objects (Kotze, 1981:9). The Khoikhoi

were exchanging necessities for luxuries. Luxuries which in many instances led to substance abuse, dependence, self-destruction, violence, crime, family neglect and deprivation. Dutch colonists attempted to entice the Khoikhoi and slaves from South East Asia into Christian religious education with a daily tot of brandy and chewing tobacco (Christie, 1987).

In the agricultural setting, wine was used to entice slaves and Khoikhoi to learn and work. This incentive scheme became known as the Dopstelsel (Tot System). The Tot System led to over-indulgence and by implication dependency (Kotze, 1981). In the latter half of the twentieth century the Tot System became illegal (Dopstop, 1988). Sadly by the time the Tot System was outlawed, generations of farm labourers had become alcohol dependent. A 1998 study conducted in the Stellenbosch district of the incidence of alcoholism among farm workers found that between 65–87% of interviewed farm workers could be classified as problem drinkers, 42% of women reported to have consumed alcohol during pregnancy and 5,6 % of children were found to have Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (Dopstop, 1998).

Wine as part-payment for labour was more than an economic decision. Farmers considered the Tot System a crucial element in maintaining social control (Scully, 1992). Social control of farm labour is as old as formal agriculture in the Cape Colony and was first practised by slave masters. “Almost every aspect of a slave’s life was controlled by his/her owner. The owner usually gave a slave a new name, decided how much and what they may eat, where they slept, the clothes they wore and so forth” (The Slave Experience www.museums.org.za/slavery/resources [2005], May 5).

The farmer was also legally entitled to discipline and punish his slaves (Loos, 2004). The farm was home, workplace and place of worship to the slave, and, the farmer, simultaneously father, employer, master and judge. Slavery was officially abolished on December 1834. Technically, slaves were free. Freedom in the Cape unlike in America did not compensate people for having been enslaved. American freed slaves received forty acres of land and a mule as a start to their new life while Cape slaves received no compensation once freed. Freedom Van der Ross

(2005:84) argues meant set “free to be poor” .

Slavery was replaced by paternalism and peonage on farms. In Peonage labourers are tied to the farmer not by ownership but by debt. The farmer supplies the labourer with clothes, accommodation, food and other benefits on credit. Come month–end the debt would be subtracted from the labourer’s wage. More often than not the debt would exceed money earned so the worker would always be in debt. A labourer would not be allowed to leave his employer until his debt was paid off. Working off the debt was an unlikely scenario. What was presented as a benefit/favour/gift was in reality little different than the shackles of slavery (Van der Ross, 2005:87).

Peonage was indeed a very disempowering system. The farm shop found on many farms around South Africa is an example of peonage. *When Mr X started at the farm, as manager he closed the farm shop down and arranged transport for people to shop in town. With the farm shop we were sometimes taking R1 of our wage home* (T, 2005).

Farm paternalism which followed slavery and peonage continued to legitimise the power of the farmer and maintained labourers and their families in a position of servitude and dependence. The Tot System and tied housing reinforced the labourers dependency on the farmer over and above his role as employer. In addition, until the early 1990s, farm workers were excluded from the provision of labour legislation, were classified “coloured” (second class citizens) and excluded from the protection of trade unionism, a scenario that marginalised and politically disempowered labourers (Du Toit, 2004:10). Political marginalisation and dependency argues Du Toit (1992) “leads to hopelessness, powerlessness and an absence of a united resistance or appeal to authority outside of the farm” (Du Toit, 1992:3).

Rural communities are further disempowered by the physical distance and isolation of the farm from other farms, services, resources, educational facilities and city life and creates a sense that daily life and conflicts on the farm are played

out almost entirely within the world defined by what the workers call the “*Wit Hekke*” (Du Toit, 1992:1). The community exists co-dependently, socially isolated, separate it seems from the rest of the world.

As a result of the physical and social isolation of rural communities, labourers and particularly women are denied legitimate access to educational and vocational pursuits. Isolation in turn creates dependency on what are often abusive relationships without access to any social support, assistance or protection. Once again farm labourers find themselves in a disempowering situation (Artz, 1998:3).

Over the last few decades economic, political, social and legislative factors have facilitated a change to the traditional employment and operational practises on farms. Slowly the legacies of paternalism are being disrupted (Davies 1990 in Barrientos, McLenaghan & Orton, 1999). However, as with slavery and the Tot System, paternalism was so entrenched that complete change has not happened. Some writers argue that all that has taken place is the renaming of an old tradition. At best, argues Du Toit (1999), the new farm management style can be called “liberated paternalism” or “neo paternalism”. Barrientos et al. (1999) where old and new styles co-exist.

The abolishment of the Tot System and the move from paternalism to a more formalised employment relationship has in many instances left labourers feeling dissatisfied and abandoned De Kock (2000). Tied housing has been suggested as the major factor that holds people hostage to a certain farm and farmer. However, with the move to the use of contract workers, where tied housing and fringe benefits and services are not part of the employment relationship, the labourer and contractor relationship has seemingly reinvented the paternalistic relationship of farmer and labourer (Kritzinger & Rossouw, 2002).

As a practitioner working in the Winelands, the researcher has experienced the single most difficult aspect of the work of understanding and working with an overwhelming sense of disempowerment and dependency that is manifested in the daily lives of labourers. It has been impossible to help people overcome

addiction or engage in development or self-help projects while labourers have almost no sense of their own ability to create change or at least be part of the change process.

An attempt to understand this despair and powerlessness began as a study of alcohol dependency and has grown to include a study of farm life in the Winelands of the Western Cape.

The practitioner is motivated by a desire to inform her practise by better understanding the current and historical social situation of labourers and to build on existing knowledge in the field. The ultimate goal is to be better able to engage people in effecting change in their personal and social circumstances. The social worker in the Winelands is faced with a situation where labourers, as a result of the dual legacies of paternalism and the Tot System, are powerless to effect change in their personal and social situations. London (2003) states emphatically that it is the underlying powerlessness of farm labourers that perpetuates the excessive morbidity suffered by labourers. In order to truly help farm labourers, the cycles of dependency and disempowerment need to be broken. While alcohol dependence is a major social problem on farms, it alone is not the only problem farm labourers contend with. This study is motivated by a desire to understand more fully the lived experiences of farm workers and the continuing effects of the legacies of slavery and the Tot System in order to empower people to become masters of their own destinies.

Authors such as Rankin (1997) and Nieman (2002) emphasise the need for indigenous research into the contribution that the South African social work profession is making to the development and implementation of a development perspective in South Africa. There is, says Nieman, an urgent need for indigenous research, theory and practise which will impact on the wellbeing of the country.

Indigenous research, states Rankin, should consider social development experiences from the "Third World" and augment existing social work knowledge and practises. Researchers in the field of alcohol dependency Parry and Bennetts

(1998) recommend that specific treatment strategies be developed, implemented and evaluated with specific high risk groups. They cite farm workers as one high–risk group.

Politically, socially and legally the climate in South Africa has changed over the last ten years. There exists now with Black Economic Empowerment and legislation regarding training in the work place and Ethical trading legislation, opportunities for farm labourers which never previously existed. Such opportunities will be wasted if the social environment of the people concerned and the personal issues people have to overcome in order to move forward, are not fully understood and acknowledged. This study will not only inform social work practise in the agricultural setting but management as well. On the farm where the researcher practises, a model is being developed for integrating social work practise and farm management. The findings and conclusions from this study will help to determine policy and practise for the agricultural setting in the Winelands.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Slavery and the Tot System have both been abolished in the statute books but their legacies remain in the hopelessness and powerlessness of farm workers on wine farms. In the last decade, political social and economic changes have taken place in South Africa that should have impacted positively on the lives of these farm workers. Yet by and large farm workers on wine farms remain trapped in cycles of poverty and self–destruction, powerless, it seems, to seek or take advantage of opportunities to break those cycles. It appears that the lived experiences of farm workers on wine farms contribute to the perpetuation of powerlessness and dependency on wine farms. This study explores the many dimensions of the lived experiences of labourers on wine farms and seeks insight into what would constitute indigenous and appropriate social work on farms.

1.3 AIM OF THE RESEARCH

This study aims to present information on the lived experiences of farm workers in the Western Cape so as to gain insight into the dual legacies of dependency and

powerlessness.

1.3.1 Objectives

- To describe the nature of dependency and powerlessness among farm workers on wine farms in the Western Cape, based on a literature study conducted.
- To conduct guided, semi-structured interviews with the 10 farm workers, and members of their families, who in 2002/2003 made a decision to stop their patterns of habitual drinking.
- To explore through the above-mentioned interviews and a survey conducted among farm workers (other than those mentioned above) the lived experiences of farm life, drinking patterns and the felt needs of farm workers.
- To discuss the various micro- and macro-levels of change and intervention in the field of rural social work.
- To compile a community profile based on information gathered from a needs assessment and surveys conducted.

1.4 CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Eight key concepts are described below. The sequence in which concepts are listed relates to the sequence of the chapters in this document.

1.4.1 Farm labourer

Individuals employed on commercial farms.

1.4.2 Paternalism

A relationship between farmer and labourer where there was an imbalance of power in favour of the farmer (Van Ryneveld, 1986). A highly authoritarian relationship based on servitude and dependence and maintained through various practises and institutions. These practises and institutions keep people bound to a particular farm and farmer Du Toit (1992:1).

1.4.3 Powerlessness and learned helplessness

Individuals who rely fully on others for help are said to be powerless. People who do not perceive themselves as masters of their own destinies or are unable in any way to bring about change in their own or their communities' lives have internalised helplessness as a way of being. Individuals or communities who are powerless abdicate responsibility to employers, social workers. Learned helplessness or disempowerment can sometimes be caused or reinforced by life circumstances that have disenfranchised or marginalised people. Chemical dependence may also foster such a condition.

Slavery, paternalism, peonage, political marginalisation, poverty and substance abuse discussed in this study are all factors which contribute to an individual and community's sense of disempowerment. Powerlessness and learned helplessness immobilise people.

Dependency in the context of this study is used interchangeably with powerlessness and learned helplessness referring to the individual and community's:

- reluctance/inability/fear to engage in decision-making or change initiatives;
- abdication of responsibility to teachers, employers, social workers, etc;
- low self esteem and lack of perception of his/her own inner strength;
- complete reliance on others.

1.4.4 Alcohol abuse

"The continued use of alcohol despite its negative consequences" (Fischer & Harrison, 2000:85).

1.4.5 Habitual problem-drinking

Habitual drinkers are defined as "People who use alcoholic liquor to such an extent that it becomes part of his/her lifestyle" (Defining Social Work, 1984). For the

purpose of this study, habitual problem drinkers are defined as *people who habitually use excessive amounts of alcohol and for whom the excessive use of alcohol has negatively impacted on their lives physically, socially, financially, in the workplace or in their families.*

1.4.6 Recovery

Recovery for the purpose of this study is defined as “A deeply personal, unique process of changing one’s attitudes, values, feelings, goals, skills and/roles” (Anthony cited in Saleebey, 2002:247). Hope is an indispensable element of recovery, but hope without action and purpose will not amount to recovery. (Saleebey, 2002:253). Recovery is an interactive process with the client/consumer central to the process. Recovery also demands a supportive environment and action taken at micro– and macro–levels of intervention (Saleebey, 2002:259)

1.4.7 Empowerment

“A process that involves changing power relationships between individuals, groups and social institutions. At the same time it is a process of personal change as individuals take action on their own behalf and then redefine the world in which they live. Self–perception moves from victim to agent, as people are able to act in a political and social arena and pursue their own interests” (Shragge cited in Gathiram, 2005).

Empowerment focuses on strengths and opportunities rather than on individual pathology. There is an emphasis on collaboration with clients and the full utilisation of resources. Empowerment is also concerned with addressing social and economic injustices which lead to oppression, exclusion and marginalisation (Patel, 2005:60).

Individuals who are personally empowered “...give direction to the helping process, assume more control in decision–making, learn new ways to think about their situations, and adopt behaviours that give them more satisfying and rewarding outcomes”. Similarly communities or groups that are empowered “... play an

important role in shaping their environment, and thus influence their own and others' lives" (Saleeby, 2002:108).

1.4.8 Strengths based practise

The strengths perspective is not yet a theory. It is a way of thinking about what you do and with whom you do it and is based on the following principles: "Everything the social worker does will be predicated in some way, on helping to discover and embellish, explore and exploit clients' strengths and resources in the service of assisting them to achieve their goals, realize their dreams, and shed the irons of their own inhibitions and misgivings, and society's domination" (Saleeby, 2002:1).

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.5.1 Research approach

The researcher wishes to understand dependency and the lived experiences from the participants' perspectives. The emphasis of the research is on understanding rather than on testing. The researcher wishes to explore the respondents' stories from an insider perspective. Therefore a qualitative design best fits this study.

However, in view of the fact that a questionnaire was distributed to farm workers and a community profile conducted, there is a quantitative component to the design.

1.5.2 Research strategy

A research strategy is "...the option available to the qualitative researcher to study certain phenomena according to certain *formulas* suitable to their specific research goal" (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delpont, 2002:272). A phenomenological strategy is the strategy that best fits this study "because it describes the meaning that experiences of a phenomenon, topic or concept has for various individuals" (De Vos et al. 2002:273). In this case it is important for farm labourers to tell their own story, to talk on their own behalf rather than farmers or farm managers deciding what the problems and needs of his/her people are.

This is the first step in empowering people to become masters of their own destinies by affording labourers the opportunity to tell their own stories. To date, applying "first world theory and practise" to problems such as addiction have not made much positive impact on the problem. A phenomenological study will enable practitioners and policy makers to gain insight into the *meaning* of social phenomena like habitual drinking and violence for farm labourers in order to design and implement indigenous, appropriate interventions.

Secondly, historically, farm workers have been a politically marginalised and socially isolated group of people. Information gathered in such a study can also be used to highlight the plight of farm labourers and bring the needs of labourers to the attention of policy makers and politicians.

1.5.3 Research method

1.5.3.1 Literature study

The intention to understand a particular individual or community cannot be limited to one aspect of life. For this reason the literature review was broad and was based on these principles:

- Farm labourers are a geographical–functional community, in the Western Cape, that have their roots in slavery. Literature relating to slavery and all subsequent landowner–labourer relationships was reviewed.
- Literature on the lived experiences of farm labourers on wine farms with a specific focus on habitual drinking was reviewed.
- Literature on working for change on micro–, macro– and mezzo–levels in rural communities in Western Cape.

1.5.3.2 Population and sampling

All people living and working on Farm A constitute the universe for this study. For the purpose of the study, sampling methods used will be Availability Sampling. All workers living on Farm A who have in the period 2001–2003 attempted recovery

from alcohol dependence were included in the sample (**Annexure A**). In that period, ten labourers, referred to here as *recoverees*, were known to the researcher. Of the ten *recoverees*, three people have remained sober. Follow-up/second interviews have taken place with five of the ten participants' to get a fuller understanding of the struggle to overcome alcohol dependence. There has been contact with all *recoverees* over the five years. Interviews were also conducted with the spouses (**Annexure B**) of two of the ten *recoverees*. In three instances, both husband and wife were attempting sobriety; interviews were conducted with both parties. and children of the above-mentioned ten people to get a different perspective on drinking in the home from their experiences.

Ten interviews with the children of the *recoverees* were conducted (**Annexure C**). Nine of the children were school going between the ages of eight and sixteen and came from homes where both parents were habitual drinkers. The tenth interview was with an adult child whose mother had recently stopped drinking.

The focus of the initial interview was habitual drinking and recovery. Subsequent interviews were broader and included questions and discussion on the lived experiences of labourers with specific reference to the individuals' sense of empowerment and strength and control over their own lives.

An interview was conducted with the health worker on the farm (**Annexure D**).

Questionnaires (**Annexure E**) exploring the drinking patterns of labourers were given to a random selection of labourers. All labourers available on a particular day were given questionnaires which they were asked to complete and return in a sealed envelope. Twelve completed questionnaires were returned to the researcher.

A Needs Assessment (**Annexure F**) was distributed to a random selection of labourers to complete and return. Twenty of a total population of 45 workers returned their questionnaires.

The study was conducted in Farm A because:

- it was feasible and accessible for the researcher; working on the farm she has the trust of the labourers;
- the researcher has the confidence and consent of the management of the farm for the research;
- there is greater control of variables such as working and living conditions/model of social work intervention and support available to workers wishing to stop drinking. Variation in these conditions would make results difficult to generalise.

1.5.3.3 Information collection

- **Semi-structured one-to-one interviews** were conducted in order to gain insight into the lived experiences of farm workers and to gain knowledge and understanding of habitual drinking on farms (De Vos et al., 2002:292).

The researcher made use of guided semi-structured interviews using a set of predetermined questions to facilitate the farm labourers' description and reflection of their experiences while allowing the interview flexibility and responding to issues raised by the interviewee (De Vos et al., 2002:292). No two interviews were identical.

Permission was sought from interviewees to record the initial interviews. Interviews were recorded to minimise interviewer anxiety over writing everything down, to be able to give the participant as much attention as possible and to be able to observe body language etc. The researcher did write some notes as a precautionary measure should the tape be difficult to hear or unclear. Keywords rather than verbatim were recorded.

Where possible, two semi-structured one-to-one interviews were conducted with each participant. Only one of the men were available for a second interview. These interviewees are referred to as the primary interviewees.

The first interviews established the context of the participants' experiences. The

second interviews allowed for further exploration of themes and also allowed for the participants' to explore meaning and follow-up on recovery. Knowing one is coming back to the respondent later relieves pressure to get all the information in the first interview. The process is then able to be more relaxed and allow the interviewee to introduce and expound on issues the interviewer may not have expected.

First interviews were conducted within three to six months of the participants' decision to stop drinking.

- **Debriefing**

At the end of each interview, debriefing took place. The researcher spent time discussing with the respondent about the day ahead, future plans of the participant and any current issues of concern for the participant.

A full description of how the semi-structured interviews were conducted is explained in Chapter 5.

- **Triangulation**

It was the intention of the researcher to seek out several sources to provide insight into drinking and living on farms and thereby achieve triangulation of results (De Vos et al., 2002:379). The sources used included:

- interviews with marriage partners and children of primary interviewees **(Annexure B & C)**
- an interview with the health worker **(Annexure D)**. The health worker has lived and worked on the farm for twenty years. She is the person who deals with after-hours crises as well as all health-related issues. The health worker is usually the first point of contact with regards to family and social problems. Her insight into the lived experiences of farm workers was considered very valuable to the researcher.

- questionnaires distributed to workers on the farm regarding drinking patterns and social problems on the farm (**Annexure E**);
- A community profile was compiled in order to firstly gain insight into this particular community and secondly to identify whether problems described in the literature were relevant in this particular community. Key problem areas are presented in Figure 1 which gives the reader an overall view of the profile.
- A survey was conducted among farm workers to gain insight into the lived experiences of the workers as well as their perceptions of needs and priorities (**Annexure F**).

1.5.3.4 Analysis and interpretation

Information gathered in the interviews and questionnaires was analysed according to eleven themes. These themes are listed in section 5.4.2. These eleven themes occurred repeatedly in both the literature study and the interviews conducted. Each theme is further analysed into male, female and children's perspective of that phenomena. Data gathered from the needs assessment and community profile has been presented in two figures. Figure 1 is a graphic representation of the households on the farm, indicating numbers of children, teenage pregnancies, domestic–violence, incidence of habitual drinking and the ratio of sober households to households where habitual drinking takes place. Figure 2 represents the sport and recreation facilities on the farm, services and amenities available to labourers. Actual use of facilities and services by labourers is indicated.

The researcher, as stated previously, is in this instance both researcher and practitioner on this farm. Initially a community profile was conducted to inform practise. Over the five years the study took to complete the community profile has been updated and was included in the study to give the reader an idea of the context of the study. Over time the researcher/practitioner has applied recommendations from literature reviewed in her practise on the farm and has included brief comments on the success thereof in the profile.

Tables are used to present data collected from interviews and personal questionnaires. Tables compare results from male and female respondents.

1.5.3.5 Data verification

- **Credibility** “the goal of credibility is to demonstrate that the enquiry was conducted in such a manner as to ensure that the subject was accurately identified and described” De Vos (2002:351). To this end the researcher made use of various interviewing techniques such as probing, restating and summarising.
- **Dependability.** The nature of a qualitative design is that it is flexible and changing which then places dependability in question. To remain true to a qualitative design while desiring dependability the researcher used a guided interview schedule. However, the question being researched is the lived experiences of farm workers. Each story will be different and is true for that individual.
- **Confirmability.** While appreciating that confirmability, if it is equated with objectivity, is unlikely in a qualitative design, the researcher used advanced interviewing skills to ensure as far as possible that her understanding of the respondents contribution was as accurate as possible (i.e. the researcher “heard” what the respondent meant).
- The researcher when interviewing other role players and experts confirmed what she was finding when interviewing respondents and studying relevant literature.

1.5.4 Limitations of the study

The following limitations were experienced.

1.5.4.1 Operational limitations

Participant willingness. The limitations discussed by De Vos (2002:305) refer mainly to participant willingness to share, co-operation and the possible frustration

that questions do not evoke the response the researcher is hoping for. The researcher and interviewees were well known to one another so the atmosphere was relaxed, warm and trusting. All interviewees were willing to share. Due to the fact that the researcher is employed on the farm where the researcher was conducted there is a power disparity between researcher and respondent which may have inhibited the respondents' freedom to refuse to participate.

Interviews are time-consuming and tiring. The researcher took this into account when constructing and conducting the interviews. Significant questions were rephrased and repeated and asked as early on in the interview as possible. Interviews were also kept within an specified time period. Interviews were conducted in a place where distractions were minimised.

The multiple role of researcher is a limitation of the study. Participants know the researcher is part of the farm management and did in some instances seem to be saying things they thought they should be saying rather than what they would like to be saying.

Social isolation and limited life experiences outside the farm made questions relating to possible interventions difficult for participants' to answer.

Expressing opinions or ideas on how things could be is outside farm labourers' experience. Farm labourers are concerned mainly with the present and found it difficult to suggest how they think problems could be addressed.

Interpersonal issues and jealousies of other workers, the supervisor or management influence the way stories are related on the farm. Needs assessments are "limited by the possibility that respondents may not be aware of the real needs and may not indicate whether or not they will use a facility if it were provided" (De Vos, 2002:379).

Interviews were conducted in Afrikaans, which is not the first language of the researcher. The farm workers speak a colloquial Afrikaans, which may not always be understood by the researcher. By the time second interviews were

conducted the researcher was much more comfortable with the particular Afrikaans spoken on the farm which made the responses easier to understand.

There is a high incidence of illiteracy on the farm which limited the completion of questionnaires. Questions that evoke answers by one respondent may not do so with another. Farm labourers are unfamiliar with answering questionnaires, so there is a possibility that some questions were misunderstood. One question was ambiguous and created confusion. Fortunately these limitations were identified promptly and rectified before the second batch was distributed. Labourers who are illiterate were given the chance to answer the questions verbally with the researcher.

1.5.4.2 Design limitations

- **Transferability:** This refers to the “applicability of one set of findings to another context” (De Vos, 2002:350). This study is to be conducted with a small sample on only one farm. It can be argued that transferability is limited. To enhance transferability the researcher will use triangulation.
- **Role of the researcher:** The researcher in this study has a dual role: researcher and field worker. She is part of the reality being researched/observed. In qualitative studies generally and in this study in particular, the research runs the risk of not being completely objective and value-free (Struwig & Stead, 2001:16).
- **The researcher-participant relationship:** The researcher and respondent in the interview process are involved in an interactive process. The researcher has her own values and biases to social phenomena such as habitual drinking and violence and although a conscious attempt is made to remain objective and focused on the participant there is always a risk that the researchers value system impact on the selection and interpretation of data. In this instance the researcher and participants are known to one another and will influence levels of trust and confidence (Struwig & Stead, 2001:17). The participants’ were relaxed and willing to share. At no time did the researcher feel respondents

were holding back because they felt judged by the researcher.

- **Interview focus:** Qualitative research is by design less structured and flexible. Flexibility can "... lead to the researcher being overwhelmed by data and losing focus of the aims of the study" (Struwig & Stead, 2001:17). In this instance the researcher is familiar with the environment and at no time felt overwhelmed by the data.

1.5.4.3 *Limitations relating to the availability of research*

Literature concerning farm workers was difficult to find, particularly academic literature concerning powerlessness and dependency. Parry and Bennetts (1998) recommend that alcohol abuse intervention strategies specific to special interest groups be formulated. The literature in this regard is limited.

1.5.5 The research report

The research report is presented in six chapters:

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION – includes a discussion of the motivation for the study. Aims and objectives of the study as well as a discussion of the design and a list of the limitations encountered are all included in Chapter 1.

Chapter 2: POWERLESSNESS AND DEPENDENCY – A LEGACY OF SLAVERY is the first of three literature review chapters. The chapter reviews the labourer–landowner relationship historically from slavery to current–day new managerialism. It includes a brief look at trade unionism on farms and legislation in respect of farm workers.

Chapter 3: THE DOPSTELSEL, HABITUAL DRINKING AND THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF FARM WORKERS ON WINE FARMS IN THE WESTERN CAPE – This chapter reviews the alcohol industry and its relationship with farm workers. A major focus of this chapter is habitual drinking on farms. Violence, women and children on farms, living conditions, poverty, education and interpersonal relationships between labourers are all discussed as elements of the

lived experiences of farm workers.

Chapter 4: WORKING FOR CHANGE ON FARMS is a review of the literature relating to social work practise on farms. To begin with the context of practise is described; thereafter working for change on macro-, micro- and mezzo- levels is discussed. A specific discussion on habitual drinking is included. Finally a specific list of partners in the process of working for change is included.

Chapter 5: EXPLORATION OF THE PERSPECTIVES, AND MEANING THAT FARM LABOURERS ASSIGN TO HABITUAL DRINKING – This chapter begins with re-visiting the design of the study before presenting findings according to eleven themes. Finally follow-up interviews conducted five years after the initial interviews and information gathered from a survey conducted are presented as male and female perspectives on habitual drinking on farms.

Chapter 6 revisits the aims and objectives of the study before summarising findings and making recommendations for social work practise.

The research reports includes a bibliography of all sources used and eight Annexures. Included in the annexures are all interview guides/questionnaires, the community survey and the community profile. Two figures summarising significant information gathered are also included as annexures.

CHAPTER 2

POWERLESSNESS AND DEPENDENCY – A LEGACY OF SLAVERY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Du Toit (2004) states that the story of the first farm labourers in the Western Cape is the story of slavery. The literature suggests that the early periods of slavery and paternalism had a profound effect upon the human potential, rationality and freedom of the labourer. One–hundred and fifty years later, farm workers continue to be trapped in a cycle of poverty, disempowerment and dependency, despite significant changes in the legal status of farm workers over the three hundred and fifty years of formal farming in the Western Cape.

Du Toit (2004) argues that chronic poverty in the rural Western Cape is attributed primarily to the social relationships between landowner and labourers. He argues that landowners remain the wealthy elite and their wealth is generated by the efforts of workers who remain poor. Physically, politically and socially, farm workers have been alienated, resulting in closed, marginalised, enmeshed and dysfunctional communities fraught with social problems, substance abuse and poverty. An understanding of the present begins with a look at the past and the relationship between the two (Du Toit, 2004).

This chapter looks specifically at the powerlessness and dependency amongst farm workers. By tracing the social relationship between labourer and landowner from slavery to modern–day farm management, the writer will argue that while slavery was abolished in the mid–nineteenth 19th century, labourers remained tied to the landowner. Slavery being the first formal social relationship between landowner and labourer, this chapter discusses the institutions and practises of slavery, paternalism and the subsequent farm management styles. Its specific focus is on the effect of these farm management styles on the labourers' capacity to become masters of their own destinies.

2.2 THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SLAVERY IN THE WESTERN CAPE

Slavery was introduced by the Dutch East India Company, known as the VOC, under the leadership of Jan van Riebeeck in 1652. Land was abundant and conditions favourable for the establishment of an agricultural settlement to supply provisions to fleets sailing the African coastline. The concern, however, was the sourcing of a labour force to work the land. The nomadic nature of the indigenous people and the conflict between themselves and the settlers over land made the indigenous peoples unsuitable as labourers (Van der Ross, 2005:22–33).

The VOC needed a large, cheap, and submissive labour force. However, a large labour force would place owners in a numerically vulnerable position so the landowner needed a work force that was compliant and dependent. The VOC decided to import slaves from East Africa, Madagascar, India, and the East Indies. Slaves were considered a cheap labour force, but they also represented a capital investment for the Colonists and therefore were a financial asset. Between 1652 and 1808, a total of 63 000 slaves were imported to the Cape (Van der Ross, 2005:33–40). Particularly in the farming districts the more slaves a farmer had, the better the output of the farm. Slaves were considered working capital. In some instances farmers used their slaves to raise finance. By the time slavery was abolished many farmers were overcapitalised (Giliomee, 2003:90). However while the primary concern of the slave–master relationship was economics, the impact of slavery extended beyond economics. From the arrival of the first slaves, slavery as an institution took a grip on the social and economic life of the Cape colony where it continued well into the nineteenth century (Giliomee, 2003:12).

Slaves were dependent on the landowner; powerless and threatened with brutal punishment if they fell foul of the law. From the early decades of the eighteenth century and well into the nineteenth century “the largest slave holdings were found among wine farmers” (Armstrong & Worden, 1989:137) and so it is no surprise that the agricultural sector would be where the legacy of slavery would linger the longest. This study argues that the influence of the practises and institutions of slavery discussed in the following section extended beyond the emancipation of

slaves and despite a change in legal status, created a legacy of powerlessness and dependency among farm labourers.

2.2.1 Practises and institutions of slavery in the Cape

Maintaining people in a position of bondage was made possible by an unequal power relationship and by slave owners exercising control over every aspect of a slave's life (The Slave Experience: www.museums.org.za/iziko/slavery/resources, [2005], May 5). Control over the life of the slave was exercised through the following practises.

2.2.1.1 *Renaming of slaves by slave owners*

From the moment the slave owner took possession of his slave he took control of the slave's life. The slave owner was not simply employer but took on a paternalistic role in the life of the slave. The first experience of slaves of being owned was being renamed by his/her owner. Renaming was rationalised as being a practical consideration because, coming from foreign lands and cultures, a slave's birth name was often difficult to pronounce by a slave owner. One could argue, however, that having bought a slave, renaming him/her had more to do with branding, ownership, identification of property and breaking people into their lives as captive, than the practical consideration of how easy or difficult the slaves' birth name was to pronounce (Van der Ross, 2005:75). Names are the "labels" by which humans are identified and recognised. Renaming people strips them of an essential part of their identity. Slaves were given new names and in many instances renamed every time they were re-sold. Children born of slave and master were given the name of the master. Many of the names given to slaves were descriptive, demeaning and insulting. Some slaves, sensitive to the ridicule they received from their given names would use their birth names among family and other slaves. (Van der Ross, 2005:74–75). Naming and ridicule through name calling, are practises that remains on the Cape Flats and within the farm community.

2.2.1.2 Provision of food, clothing and shelter in return for loyalty

The relationship between slave and master was a paternalistic relationship with the master providing food, shelter and clothing in exchange for servitude. The farm became home and workplace to the slave. Slave owners spoke of their workforce as their “*volk*”. At the most elemental level, slaves were expected to display loyalty and respect to their masters. The master acted as father providing the slave with food, clothing and shelter, rewarding faithful slaves and disciplining those who erred.

For the first 165 years of slavery the decision about the quantity, quality and nature of provisions was unregulated and completely at the mercy of the master. Only in 1823 did the government introduce regulations to standardise provisions and living conditions (The Slave Experience www.museums.org.za/slavery/resources [2002], May 5) The regulations were vague and open to a range of interpretation and dependent in most instances on the economic status of the farmer (Van der Ross, 2005:49).

Some literature suggests that clothing was provided in a way that kept slaves on the bottom rung of the social ladder in order to distinguish slaves from free people. The type of clothing a slave received depended on the nature of his work and status. Slaves working in the manor house or slaves seen by friends and colleagues of the master were better dressed (Van der Ross, 2005:49). Only Dutch speaking slaves could wear shoes and hats. (The Slave Experience www.museums.org.za/slavery/resources [2005], May 5).

In some instances where the farmer could not afford slaves, the farmer and local Khoisan entered into an agreement whereby the Khoisan family and his livestock were accommodated on settler land in exchange for labour. The Khoisan were seldom paid cash wages; instead they would receive food and wine in lieu of cash. This arrangement was the start of the “DOPSTELSEL” (Tot System), which will be discussed in depth in the next chapter. Being paid in kind rather than cash contributed toward the dependent and paternalistic relationship that has existed in

the farming sector for generations (Armstrong & Worden, 1989:146).

Much has been written on what slaves were fed and where they slept. However that detail is not of significance here. It is not so much the nature of living conditions the researcher wishes to highlight but the nature of the relationship between master and slave and the unequal power balance. Whether a slave was well or poorly dressed, ate well or not, lived in the manor house or in the barn outside, the slave was in all aspects of his/her life at the mercy of the master. Slavery by its nature affords no control to the slave over his or her life. The Slave was the material possession of the Master. From the slaves perspective he/she was provided for physically, but psychologically disempowered and dependent. Slaves had no responsibility other than doing what their Master or Mistress required of them. Such an existence is dis-empowering and creates little if any opportunity for practicing and learning independence.

2.2.1.3 The Slave Code of 1754

Ownership implies control and control is carried out through regulation and enforcement. The conduct of slaves was regulated by the Slave Code of 1754 (see Table 2.1). Of interest is that while slaves were imported primarily to work, not one of the items in the Slave Code relates to work, productivity or attitude to work. Instead, of great concern seemingly, was that slaves were kept separate from each other and were thereby unable to act collectively against owners. (*Interestingly the agricultural sector lagged far behind other sectors when it came to unionisation in South Africa.*) Secondly the code was concerned with the maintenance of social status through dress and other means (Loos, 2004).

TABLE 2.1: The Slave Code of 1754

- 1 Slaves to be indoors after 10 pm or carry a lantern at night. Thus slaves are not permitted to be on the street at night after 22h00 without a torch (1760).
- 2 Slaves are not to ride horses nor wagons in the streets.
- 3 Slaves are not to sing, whistle or make any sound at night. Thus slaves are not allowed to whistle loudly, and thereby entice other slaves from their master's houses.
- 4 Slaves are not to stop in the street and talk to other slaves.
- 5 Slaves who insulted or falsely accused a freeman would be flogged. Thus slaves are not permitted to be cheeky with any slave owner in public.
- 6 Slaves who struck a slaveholder were to be put to death.
- 7 Slaves are not permitted to own guns or to carry dangerous weapons (1686).
- 8 Free Blacks aren't equal to white Free Burghers.
- 9 Freed slave women are not to wear coloured silk or hoop skirts, fine lace or any decoration on their hats, or earrings made of gems or imitation gems (1765).
- 10 Slaves are banned from public assemblies in groups of 3, 4 or more in the streets or anywhere else. VOC law enforcement officials had standing instructions to disperse crowds of slaves of 3 or more (1696).
- 11 Slaves, nor anyone else, are permitted to walk about with a burning tobacco pipe in public – in order to prevent fires.

Source: The Cape Slave Code of 1754

2.2.1.4 Implementation of the Slave Code

According to Roman law, slaves were property and persona. (Van der Ross, 2005:57). Masters/Owners were legally within their rights to punish offences of a domestic nature. This form of punishment was referred to as *Domestic corrections*. The guideline for the type or extent of punishment an owner could inflict on a slave

was that the punishment be no more than what an owner would give his own child. However many writers comment that punishment was in most cases beyond brutal (Loos, 2004:103).

2.2.1.5 Torture and punishment

It was only in the nineteenth century that there was a growing influence of the concept of human rights. Up until then torture and physical punishment were considered acceptable practises of slave owners (Loos, 2004:1). Slaves were routinely whipped or flogged. Little space was given to slaves for expression of discontent or frustration particularly to slaves working under the Slave Mistress in the household. Muttering, sighing, banging of doors or pretending not to hear were seen as threats to domestic order and worthy of punishment (Loos, 2004:103).

Slave owners were scrupulous when it came to maintaining control of their subjects (Loos, 2004:103). Even though there was an unequal power relationship between labourer and landowner, in favour of the landowner, numerically the Slave–Master ratio was in favour of slaves. As a result landowners felt vulnerable and lived in fear of an uprising. In the rural areas farmers were physically isolated, on their own should they encounter difficulty and far from law enforcement, which increased their sense of vulnerability.

The physical isolation of farms also placed the slave at risk. The conduct of slave owners, and the punishment they enforced, was not monitored. In the event a slave did lay a charge against his/her Master it was difficult to prove the grounds for his/her dissatisfaction. Furthermore the law was biased in favour of Masters (Loos, 2004:103).

Legally Free Persons and white colonists were also punishable in the manner inflicted on slaves, however it seldom happened. The behaviour of slaves was under far greater scrutiny because of their situation and so had a greater “chance” of falling foul of the law and were therefore punished more frequently, often brutally (Van der Ross, 2005:62).

One hundred and fifty years after the introduction of slavery, the British authorities passed legislation, intended to change the status of slaves and tip the balance of power between master and slave (Loos, 2004:103). The century and a half of doing more or less as they pleased with regard to treatment of slaves was well engrained into Cape society. Technically the freedom of the Slave Master was curbed (Slavery @ the Cape, [Kamedien batavia.rug.ac.be/slavery/timeline.htm](http://Kamedien.batavia.rug.ac.be/slavery/timeline.htm) [2005], May 5). However the implementation of the law was not enforced as it was intended. Slave Masters remained politically and economically strong despite feeling vulnerable (Loos, 2004:65). Slaves for all intent and purpose remained powerless and dependent particularly rural slaves. Rural slaves particularly, led hard, monotonous, circumscribed lives and were frequently abused. (Loos, 2004:11). With emancipation round the corner and legislation in place to protect them, slaves were in a stronger position legally and politically, but economically and physically they remained dependent and powerless.

2.2.1.6 Resistance to slavery

The common experience of bondage was not enough to bring about organised resistance or collective action. The Slave Code forbade gatherings of more than three slaves. Slaves were a very diverse group speaking different languages and brutal punishment was a reality. The Colonists had extensive weaponry and slaves risked losing home and workplace. Slaves had received very limited education and were economically disadvantaged so the loss of work was a great threat (Van der Ross, 2005). Little surprise then that resistance was passive rather than organised or collective.

Without the possibility of collective action resistance took other forms, namely “mutiny, physical violence, pilfering, arson, damage to property, desertion, laziness, intoxication and insolence. In extreme cases they murdered rival slaves or resorted to infanticide or suicide, acts of desperation that deprived their owners of valuable property” (Loos, 2004:64).

2.2.2 The maintenance of the social status of slaves

Slaves though captives were also social beings. The following section illustrates how slavery as an institution maintained the status quo through the social isolation of slaves, control over the procreation of slaves, oppression and social levelling.

2.2.2.1 Social isolation

Slaves found themselves either alone or among other slaves who did not share language, culture or religion. Particularly in rural areas the slave found him/herself without companionship. Besides not having much opportunity for social contact, slaves were not authorised to marry but they could co-habit. In some instances co-habitation and procreation was encouraged, as children born of slaves belonged to the Master (Van der Ross, 2005:66). Social isolation creates a sense of vulnerability rather than a sense of strength and without a sense of strength, individually or collectively it is unlikely people will feel empowered to engage in working for change. Furthermore until people meet others in a similar situation it is likely that they will internalise their difficulties as peculiar to them and not perceive the possibility of collective action.

2.2.2.2 Social status of slaves

Free Burghers at the Cape came from Western Europe. “Burgher” was the same term as used for those at the centre of the seventeenth century Dutch world: prosperous, self confident burghers of the Dutch cities (Giliomee, 2003:6). Immigrating to the Cape Colony afforded Free Burghers status which they would not have had in their own country, an opportunity to prosper and a chance to be *Master*. Early Cape life was extremely class conscious and slaves were at the bottom of the social ladder (Giliomee, 2003:88).

“Almost everyone with some pretensions to status keenly aspired to the role of slave owner who abstained from manual labour” (Giliomee, 2003:15). While Free Burgher and slave co-habited so to speak there social status was clear and reinforced. Being bottom of the social ladder was yet another disempowering

factor of slave life.

2.2.2.3 *Gelykstelling or social levelling*

Four social groups made up the early Cape society: Company servants, Burghers, indigenous people (predominantly the Khoikhoi) and imported slaves. Each of these groups became a legal status group concerned primarily with economic survival. A legal, administrative and social system emerged characterised by interdependence and maintenance of the status quo (Giliomee, 2003:1–21).

No matter what the personal relationship was between slave and master or slave and mistress both parties knew their place. “Slave and burgher children played with each other as friends but when they grew up, each knew their place as slave and master. The burgher child became a master and the slave child a slave. Even in adult life a slave continued to be JONG or MEID, called by his first name and went about barefoot” (Giliomee, 2003:50). There was no right of passage for the slave into adulthood. The Slave, for all intent and purpose remained a child.

Slaves were included in family worship in their masters’ homes. For religious gatherings, slaves were accommodated in allocated pews in the *Groote Kerk* in Cape Town. Should a particular congregation have a large slave population a special building called a “gestig” was set aside for slaves to worship which further reinforced the social status of slaves (Van der Ross, 2005:70).

2.2.2.4 *Procreation in the slave population*

Women slaves were used as wet nurses to the wife of her master so that the owner family could extend their family. Working as a wet nurse negatively impacted on the slave’s own fertility. Female slaves were often expected to have sexual relationships with their owners (Giliomee, 2003:49).

Offspring from relationships between slave and master were the property of the Master. This situation meant the slave community, as a group independent of the owner, grew very slowly. Slaves had no sense of ownership, even of their children. Procreating with the owner also tied them to the Master on yet another level. Each

additional tie to the Slave Master strengthened the sense of dependency on the master and weakened the possibility of the slave breaking free or being independent.

2.2.2.5 *Acculturation of slaves into European culture*

The VOC was not only concerned with economic development in the colony but also the preservation and assimilation of Dutch culture, religion and language. Assimilation into Dutch and European culture was promulgated in such a way that slaves had little choice but to abide by the rules. The various promulgations and decrees used manumission as the carrot to abide by the rules and in other instances slaves were given tobacco and brandy to “encourage” compliance (Giliomee, 2003:19). The use of brandy and tobacco was no less harmful than the Tot System. In the name of religion, slaves were provided with substances that were harmful and addictive.

Implicit in this drive for assimilation of Dutch and European culture was the superiority of European culture (Giliomee, 2003:13). Being forced to assimilate the culture of another undermines one’s own culture and creates a sense of inferiority and disadvantage. During the period of Dutch rule in the Cape colony the Christian Church dominated the lives of the people. The Church dominated the Settlers’ lives and the Settlers dominated the Slaves life. Slaves, being possessions of their Master, were dominated by decrees passed by the Church. Manumission was attached to abiding by the rules of the Church and so slaves found themselves caught in a situation where they were trapped into assimilating Christian practises if they wanted to be freed.

Furthermore the government was not taking responsibility for education of slaves so the only education a slave child was getting was church based education, which further entrenched the influence of the Church over slaves. (Van der Ross, 2005:68–71).

The threat of punishment, the lure of manumission and the short term pleasure of alcohol and tobacco all served to enforce the acculturation of slaves into Settler

culture. However acculturation served no other purpose other than to reinforce the superiority of the ruling class and further dis-empower the slaves.

The Slave era did make a positive contribution to cultural life in the Cape Colony: The rich diversity of cuisine, music and culture in the Cape is as a result of the various cultures that came to the Cape in the Seventeenth century (Van der Ross, 2005:90–130). This document does not negate any of the positive contributions to Cape culture, however of interest to this document is the manner in which Slavery maintained people in a position of disempowerment and dependency. The situation of Cape slaves on farms is represented graphically in diagram 1 (overleaf). The situation the slave was in was all encompassing without opportunity to escape.

2.2.3 Emancipation of slaves

The Slave era lasted 182 years. In that time only a handful of slaves obtained their freedom. Of those that obtained manumission, only some were given full rights of citizenship. The conditions under which a slave was manumitted were rigid and difficult to attain. (The Slave Experience www.museums.org.za/slavery/resources [2005], May 5). It took the Cape Colony forty three years (1795–1838) to abolish slavery. The dilemma all along being; how to free slaves and protect ownership at the same time. There was sympathy for the plight of slaves and a political will that importing slaves should stop. However even among the protagonists of abolishment, there was contradiction. While championing the cause of slaves on one hand, the same protagonists continued to be slave owners on the other. (Giliomee, 2003:91).

To the Colonists, abolishing slavery would threaten public order, disturb the status quo and undermine the Masters' authority. Freeing slaves, the colonists feared, would encroach on their sovereign freedom and would create a labour shortage. Slavery it seemed had become entrenched in the society of the time. (Giliomee, 2003:90–92,111).

World Of The Slave

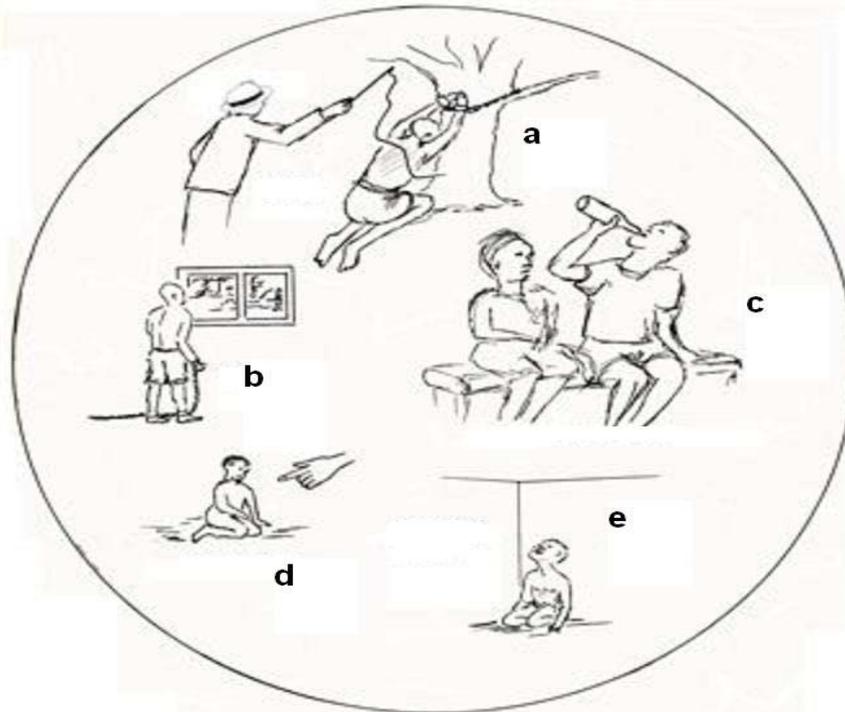


DIAGRAM KEY :

- a. slaves were brutally punished
- b. slaves were not free to move around
- c. slaves were socially isolated
- d. slaves were treated like children
- e. there was a lack of concern for human rights, health and welfare of slaves.

DIAGRAM 1

Despite the pleas of Stellenbosch farmers, abolishment went ahead and all the fears that the Colony would not survive without slavery, or that there would be a disruption of social order, proved groundless (Giliomee, 2003:116).

During the period it took for slavery to be abolished, several proclamations were passed by the then British rulers to stamp out maltreatment of slaves and place the authority of the Master in the hands of the Landdrost (Ordinance 50 of 1828). However, there continued to be political will to favour landowners and curtail the activities of workers. Legislation was passed that governed the movement of freed people and regulated the conduct of employees (Masters and Servants Act). The post slavery apprenticeship also gave masters four extra years of slavery (Giliomee, 2003:95–96).

Liberating slaves had little impact on the availability of labour or on the physical conditions of the Khoisan and freed people. Economically in particular, slaves had little choice but to continue working for landowners. Legally the Khoikhoi had recourse to the courts and could own land but in practise it amounted to little. Land was only granted to people who had sufficient capital. Almost no Khoikhoi had sufficient capital. Some free blacks did receive land in the Jonkershoek valley but few made a success of their farming ventures.

The Khoisan and freed peoples remained poor, dependent, powerless and indebted. Van der Ross (2005:84) argues that freedom in the Cape, unlike in America, did not compensate people for being enslaved. American freed slaves received forty acres of land and a mule as a start to their new life. Cape slaves received no compensation. Emancipation for Cape slaves, meant set “free to be poor” (Van der Ross, 2005:84).

2.2.4 The legacy of slavery

Slavery was abolished in 1834, but its legacy remains. Decades of oppression dis–empowered people. Decades of fear of brutal punishment immobilised people. Decades of ownership created dependency. Based on the arguments of Giliomee (2003) and Van der Ross (2005) this section illustrates how slavery although

abolished left a legacy of a racially polarized, diverse society, characterised by an unequal distribution of power and segregation.

2.2.4.1 A society polarised and defined by race

From the time of the Settlers the Cape was a multi-racial society. Slaves (predominantly black people and the local Khoikhoi people) were the labour and the Europeans were the slave owners, governors and landlord's (Giliomee, 2003:14). "More than in the Eighteenth century Cape Society was becoming polarized between whites and an undifferentiated category of people who were very poor, brown or black and who could do little but work for whites" (Giliomee, 2003:108). The government reinforced the correlation between class and race. Ex slaves, free blacks and Khoikhoi were much more likely to be suspected of disorder and crime. "The Masters and Servants Act 1856 came out firmly on the side of the Master. Provision was made for harsh penalties for desertion, absenteeism and breaches of discipline. Verbal contracts were considered legal" (Giliomee, 2003:122). Racial intermarriage was declined. Black and coloured people were regarded as children who needed courteous and kind paternalistic guidance and education adapted to their needs (Giliomee, 2003:128). The post slavery Colonists rejected "Gelykstelling" (social levelling) just as much as previous generations of Slave Masters (Giliomee, 2003:128). The polarisation of South Africa along racial lines continued until 1994 and the rise of democracy (Van der Ross, 2005:92).

2.2.4.2 A society characterised by an unequal distribution of power

The abolishment of slavery did little to change the power base in the labourer-farmer relationship or the nature of expressions of powerlessness and frustration. Land and business ownership has been, until recently, predominantly in the hands of whites. Colour continues to influence the organisation of labour. White South Africans have " become accustomed to leaving hard labour to people of colour, whilst they regard their work as supervisory" (Van der Ross, 2005:91).

The perception that white is better has infiltrated all aspects of social life including

education, business, finance and politics. On the one hand whites are the oppressors and (at least until 1994) on the other, employer and authority. There exists simultaneously trust and mistrust, hope and hurt.

2.2.4.3 A diverse society with a wealth of cultural and social influences

South Africa's rich cultural diversity can be regarded partly as a consequence of the diverse cultural backgrounds of the slaves who came from all corners of Africa and Asia (Van der Ross, 2005:90–116).

2.2.4.4 A western educational system based on segregation

The education system post slavery has four defining characteristics. Firstly it was a Western style education that led to the rapid acculturation of other cultures and “the norm after which others strove” (Van der Ross, 2005:113). Secondly Burgher and Slave children were taught separately. Thirdly the government abdicated the responsibility of educating Slave children to Mission organisations which received limited financial support or resources. Finally slave children and later farm children lived in poor economic and social conditions which made it difficult for very many to attend school, to stay in school and to profit fully by schooling. For a long time even after emancipation the descendants of slaves lived, and will continue to live in the shadow of slavery (Van der Ross, 2005:112).

2.2.4.5 A diverse society with a rich legacy of language, cuisine, music and song

Ghommaliédjies (songs to the rhythm of the GHOMMA drum), *Moppies* (genuine Cape songs with a comic intention within which is concealed a suggestion of a story) and *picnic songs*, *Christmas choirs*, and the *Cape Minstrels* (known as Coons) are all part of the rich musical heritage of the Slave era. Music was not the only legacy of the rich cultural diversity of the Slave trade. The various nations of the thousands of slaves imported to the Cape brought with them a language, cuisine, religion and culture which with time became *Cape Culture* (Van der Ross, 2005:103–130). Slaves weaved into their stories words which had one meaning to

fellow slaves and another to free burghers and slave masters. In this way messages were conveyed to slaves without the rest of the audience understanding it. In this way slaves made use of picnics and other gatherings where they were present alongside slave masters to convey messages to their fellow slaves. (A similar situation exists on farms. Colloquial language is used to maintain outsiders at a distance and facilitate communication between fellow labourers).

2.2.4.6 Creolisation/The emergence of the so-called “Coloured” people

Wherever white colonists have settled racial mixing known as *miscegenation* has taken place. Populations of mixed descent are known by different names in different countries. In South Africa there was contact between people from Holland, India, Africa, the Far East and the Indigenous people of the Cape. The emergence of a new population group resulted, later known as Coloured people (Van der Ross, 2005:96).

Once slavery had been abolished two status groups emerged in the Western Cape; The Dutch Afrikaners and the Coloureds. Serfdom continued to shape the history of the Western Cape in every respect of life; politically, socially, economically and culturally. Legally the status of slaves changed with the emancipation of Slaves but a change in legal status did little to empower ex slaves or set people free from the dependency and poverty to which they were accustomed.

Table 2.2 summarises the discussion presented above.

TABLE 2.2: The legacy of slavery

- *A labour force that is disempowered, powerless, immobilised and dependent.*
- *A society polarized and defined by race.*
- *A society characterised by an unequal distribution of power.*
- *A western educational system based on segregation.*
- *A diverse society with a rich legacy of language, cuisine, music and song.*
- *Law enforcement in rural areas left to landowners to monitor and control.*
- *Creolisation/The emergence of the so called “Coloured” people.*

Without receiving any compensation for slavery, many slaves found it difficult to break the bonds of paternalism immediately and so the ideology of paternalism remained under British rule and continues to be a relationship of which labourers and landowners have struggled to break free (Giliomee, 2003:116). A discussion of paternalism on farms follows:

2.3 PATERNALISM ON FARMS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

Slaves were freed in 1834 but, by and large, labourers remained tied to farms and farmers in a paternalistic relationship which was based on an unequal distribution of power in favour of the landowner. The labourer in the paternalistic relationship exchanges control over his life for employment and housing. This section explores paternalism and the influence that this form of social relationship had on the labourers sense of powerlessness and dependency.

2.3.1 Introduction to paternalism

After emancipation in 1834 people enslaved in the Cape Colony found themselves legally free to move around and protected from brutality, maltreatment and complete submission, but, still tied to landowners through debt (Peonage), tied housing and the Masters and Servants Act of 1856.

The notion of paternalism was an extension of the slave family model: "Slave owners had effective control over their subordinates who occupied the position of children within the family" (Kritzinger & Rossouw, 2002:3). The Masters and Servants Act of 1856 legally sanctioned a male of legal standing to have authority over minors within the family which included women and children on his property (Van Onselen in Kritzinger & Rossouw, 2002:3). In Peonage the Master would "supply the labourer with clothes, accommodation, food and other benefits. Mostly the benefits would come to more in money than the workers' wages and so the worker would always be in debt. A labourer would not be allowed to leave until his debt was paid off. But he never worked off his debt" (Van der Ross, 2005:87). A very disempowering and dependent situation.

Without access to land or capital, a change in economic status was unlikely. Most of the Khoisan and Freed People continued to be employed by farmers as day labourers, receiving low wages, being paid mostly in food, wine, clothing and stock. Slavery evolved into what Du Toit (2004:10) describes as *farm paternalism*. Technically, the farmer–labourer relationship was an employer–employee relationship governed by mutually accepted conditions.

In practise however, the relationship was a relationship wherein there was an imbalance of power in favour of the farmer (Van Ryneveld, 1986). It was a highly authoritarian relationship based on servitude and dependence and maintained through various practises and institutions.

The practises and institutions, summarised in table 2.3 and discussed below, kept people bound to a particular farm and farmer (Du Toit, 1992:1).

TABLE 2.3: Institutions and practises of paternalism

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tied housing 2. Self sufficient communities threatened by change and newcomers. 3. Farmer is Patriarch and ultimate authority over workers lives 4. Farm labourers are politically marginalised. |
|--|

2.3.2 Characteristics of paternalism

2.3.2.1 Tied housing

Tied housing has always been a key aspect of farm life and central to the labourer–landowner relationship. Van Ryneveld (1986) uses the word “weapon” when referring to the hold the provision of housing has over labourers. And so it is, whether intentional or not. The house, or rather the loss thereof, is a constant threat to many farm labourers. Should a labourer lose his job, he and his family become homeless, which in South Africa is critical. Many workers endure meaningless, low paid jobs and unhappy domestic lives because of the fear of loss of their house. The South African housing shortage makes tied housing as much a

threat as a perk. Another aspect of tied housing is that the house is often a perk of the man's job which leaves women vulnerable and dependent .

Traditionally female workers were not allocated houses. Interestingly, in a survey done among farm workers, the majority of women interviewed by (Sunde & Kleinbooij, 1996) indicated that fifty four percent of women and forty two percent of men would prefer to live off the farm. But few workers make the move.

Farmers, too are trapped in this situation. Tied housing is a financial responsibility, maintenance and upkeep a bottomless pit, and overcrowding and housing of extended family a constant battle. The current situation regarding housing on farms is explored in chapter 3.

In discussions with farmers about their choice of having workers live on the farm, farmers told researchers Kritzinger and Rossouw (2002:5), that having workers live on the farm creates a sense of cohesiveness and family, giving both farmer and labourer easy access to each other. In chapter 3, this research will give anecdotal evidence that shows that this cohesiveness is only relevant when there is a desire to keep outsiders out and to some extent when discussing landowner/labourer relations. The reality among the workforce is very different. Any project calling for cohesiveness of the community struggles against interpersonal rivalry and jealousy between workers.

2.3.2.2 Self sufficient communities threatened by change and newcomers

In a paternalistic environment the community is presented as a self contained community with its own culture and language. Verbal contracts are accepted and legislation considered unnecessary. *Mutual loyalty* is the binding factor and is expressed in the concept "**ons verstaan mekaar**" (*we understand each other*) (Du Toit, 1992:4). Implicit in this concept is the understanding that the worker remain loyal and respects the authority of the farmer and the farmer, in return, will be obliging when it comes to favours and gifts. The mutuality extends for both parties beyond the confines of the employee–employer relationship. Membership is at stake in the paternalistic relationship (Du Toit, 1992:2).

Having access to the farmer is crucial for workers. Farmers who are accessible are considered **good farmers**. To work for a “good” farmer means the worker has a *good relationship* with the farmer (Kritzinger & Rossouw, 2002:4). Workers come to rely on farmers to help them resolve personal problems.

Worker antagonism is not expressed against the farmer. It is expressed against any *inkomer/indringer*, newcomer or intruder. In many instances the so called intruders are organisations or individuals working for change; city lawyers, trade unions, legal centres, social workers and women’s groups. They are seen in the same light as a thief or urban gang. Equally any new worker of a different persuasion is given the same unwelcoming treatment.

Paternalism is based on an illusion of a harmonious community, maintained by mutual loyalty and a denial of antagonism, an aversion to change and outside influences and blind to the social ills and jealousies within the “*wit hekke*” (the farm gateposts (Du Toit, 1992:29). Du Toit (1992) challenges this perception. He argues that the picture of family is flawed, damaged and characterised instead by violence, conflict, jealousy and insecurity.

“Daily life and conflicts on the farm are played out almost entirely within the world defined by what the workers call the ‘*wit hekke*’” (Du Toit, 1992:1). The community exists co-dependently, separate it seems from the rest of the world. Social isolation of farm workers from civil society will be explored in greater depth in the following chapter.

2.3.2.3 The role of farmer as patriarch

In a paternalistic relationship the labourer has no authority or judgement. “In a traditional paternalistic relationship the opinion of the farmer is sacred. A court against which there is no appeal” (Du Toit, 1992:2). In a traditional paternalistic relationship a worker who disagrees with the farmer does best to keep their opinions to themselves.

The farmer as ultimate authority is so entrenched that the workers still expect the farmer to intervene and resolve family and personal difficulties. One farmer described the situation “being a landowner means you have to ‘PA STAAN’ (surrogate fatherhood)”. Central to the paternalistic relationship are mutual obligations and rights beyond cash and labour power. The labourers give loyalty and commitment of service not confined to any specific tasks (Du Toit, 1999:2).

The farmer in the paternalistic relationship is obligated to provide good treatment and benefits including housing, financial aid, protection and an old age pension. These benefits became known as “gifts” (De Kock, 2000:49).

Approval by the farmer is crucial. Labourers endeavour to be seen to be doing good and dread disapproval, considered a violation of membership of the family (Du Toit, 1992). The parental relationship on farms has simultaneously created security (if you remain in favour with the farmer) and dependency. Dependency in turn breeds powerlessness, insecurity and uncertainty (Kritzinger & Rossouw, 2002:5).

2.3.2.4 Political marginalisation of farm labourers

“Anthropological evidence suggests a tradition of limited mobility of the rural labour force in commercial farming in the Western Cape” (London, 1999:2). Politically the farm worker was marginalised. The Tot System, tied housing, and the unequal relationship with the farmer as the Master maintained the position of the labourer as the Oppressed. Furthermore labourers were classified politically as “Coloureds” and treated as second class citizens (Du Toit, 1992:3).

The experience of being treated as second class citizens leads to hopelessness, powerlessness and an absence of a united resistance and appeal to authority outside of the farm (Du Toit, 1992). Advice office workers have found it extremely difficult to help farm workers realise their legal rights. Legal advice centres, trade unions and worker organisations have not always had easy access to workers. Even where access has not been denied there appears a general reluctance to verbalise discontent and to mobilise in order to bring about change (Van Ryneveld,

1986). This sense of immobilisation, filters through the individuals whole life: political, social and personal. Labourers, given the chance, fail to engage in change processes, immobilised in the face of change, albeit positive change. There is anecdotal evidence that project after project has started and fizzled. Can it be that a whole community or population lacks the capacity to change or are we beginning to understand the legacies that hold the community hostage?

Paternalism, argues Du Toit (1992) has a strong hold on workers' views. The will of the worker is irrelevant. Agriculture, like any industry, is shaped by political changes and by the market economy. The political and economic changes in South Africa over the last two decades began to erode the entrenched paternalistic relationships on farms.

As with the abolishment of slavery, the move away from Paternalism has been slow, and can at best, be described as a wrestling with the past rather than a breaking free from it. The following section discusses post paternalism on farms.

2.4 POST PATERNALISM – THE FARM MANAGEMENT MOVEMENT AND THE “KOMITEE PLAAS”

In 1999 Du Toit wrote (1999:19) “The era of paternalism gave way for what became known as the *“KOMITEE PLAAS”* (committee farm). Altering relations between agriculture and the State; the impact of the South African economic crisis on agriculture since the 1970's, a new focus on productivity, an accent on training, motivation and worker participation were all factors that gave rise to the Farm Management Movement (Du Toit, 1999:19).

Farms under this new style of management introduced services and facilities for workers; used co-operative techniques to draw workers into lower levels of management and professionalised the employee-employer relationship. The shift from paternalism to farm management was realised through five major changes discussed below.

2.4.1 Five aspects of post–paternalism farm management

2.4.1.1 *The introduction of the workers' committee*

Farm workers were drawn into co–operative management through the election of the “*Plaas komitee*” or “*Workers committee*”. The intention was for the elected committee to meet with farm management on a regular basis and be given an opportunity to participate in decision–making. In practise this committee has an important communication and mediation role and is the voice through which concerns about living and working conditions are raised.

In reality, the final say on any matter lies with the farmer. While the worker has a voice through the committee, he/she has little power (Du Toit, 1992). The farmer did delegate some power to the worker when it came to social and community matters but for the most part the farmer remained “no less of an incontestable, personally authoritative father” (Du Toit, 1992:24). In many instances the role of “*pa staan*” was simply shifted from the farmer to the committee without any understanding of the dynamics in the community and the underlying dissatisfaction.

Jealousy and mistrust cast a shadow over democratic process. Many workers especially among women preferred to approach employers directly rather than work through the farm committee (Sunde & Kleinbooi, 1999). For many workers the committee came between them and the farmer creating a feeling of alienation from the farmer.

2.4.1.2 *Employer–employee relations formalised*

The farmer as manager, began to formalise and objectify the employee–employer relationship by using impersonal principles, scientific statistics, norms and judicial processes (Du Toit, 1992:24). Written contracts, administrative systems and personnel files replaced the informal, predominantly verbal contractual relationship of previous generations.

Records are kept of attendance and absenteeism. Information is used to

substantiate increases, promotions and disciplinary hearings. Facts and systems replace favours. Anecdotal evidence shows that what is primarily good business practise is perceived by workers as abandonment and change. The familiarity of paternalism is replaced by formality. Many workers are functionally illiterate and struggle to understand calculations and contracts which in the farm management movement are binding and used to make judgement.

2.4.1.3 Appointment of supervisors

Workers were drawn into lower levels of management through the appointment of supervisors. Historically, workers had had no voice. The intention of establishing workers committees and appointing supervisors and team leaders was to give workers a vehicle through which to express their views and concerns.

However, it seems workers were unprepared for this move. Instead the appointment of supervisors created jealousy, marginalised the appointee and increased social tension. Ambition became a new reality. The relationship with the farmer was depersonalised and to some extent the workers felt alienated from the farmer, and the supervisor from their co-workers. Supervisors were unprepared for their new status.

Labourers sent on training courses found their new roles difficult to embrace. Supervisors found the farmer's anger easier to face than the rejection of their peers, while workers preferred to face the wrath of the farmer/manager than be disciplined by a co-worker (Du Toit, 1992).

2.4.1.4 An end to gifts and favours

As the worker-farmer relationship was formalised so to were the gifts and favours of the paternalistic era. The so-called "gifts" of the paternalistic era – housing, transport, access to medical care and entertainment are in the post paternalistic period considered privileges, not rights, and easily withdrawn. Many workers felt abandoned by the farmer and longed for a return to paternalism (De Kock, 2000:50). Post paternalism/farm management has not necessarily been a positive

experience for workers. On the one hand the worker has lost or stands to lose so-called privileges and on the other “workers continue to feel powerless against whites even when there is space for them to voice their concerns.” (De Kock, 2000:50).

2.4.1.5 Attention paid to living conditions and services

With the shift to farm management many farmers began to focus on improving living conditions for workers and establishing services for their labour force. There is anecdotal evidence that with a focus on improving living and working conditions, productivity increased. Willie Geldenhuys, a farm manager in the Grabouw district expressed his insight of the shift in farm management style with the following words “fifteen years ago pay and housing were poor. But we began to realise our greatest assets were our workers. And the improvement on this farm has not only meant a better life for them and their families but their productivity has increased three fold” (Readers Digest, 1986.)

The shift to farm management has meant the farmer is more accountable for the treatment of his workers, living conditions have improved and workers have been given a voice. However workers have remained powerless to change their lives or become independent.

Tied housing, a shortage of housing and employment in South Africa, a high level of illiteracy among farm workers, the legacy of marginalisation and isolation, a lack of financial independence and the fact that the farmer remains in most instances incontestable; have kept farm workers tied to a particular farm and farmer.

Du Toit (1999:26) writes “It’s not so easy to move from paternalism to management discourse. It’s impossible to make a clean break from the past. Reformist strategies have to be deployed in a broader context and in this context paternalism is still a powerful tradition. In the Western Cape paternalism is not being replaced by management discourse it’s merely a re-articulation. Most modernised farms are liberated paternalism”. The farmer, through management discourse, has attempted to liberate himself from the responsibility of paternalism while the worker

has remained tied and dependent “The coexistence of modern and traditional labour practises has led some observers to describe this era of employment relations as neo paternalistic” (Barrientos et al., 1999).

Du Toit (1992) argues that the nature of the relationship between worker and farmer has crafted a complex social system between the workers. The perception of farmer as authority figure and judge of peoples’ lives and behaviours has created a social system where individuals compete for attention and favour and are hesitant and distrusting of their own judgement. Competing for attention and approval creates jealousy.

Feelings of bitterness and jealousy are easily expressed under the influence of alcohol. Lack of inhibition and dulled judgement give rise to conflict and social violence. What seems to simply be a working relationship between worker and farmer has a negative ripple effect on the lived experiences of farm workers.

“South African farm workers are faced with a legacy that embraces not only extremely poor living and working conditions but a social environment characterised by high levels of interpersonal violence and alcohol abuse” (Du Toit, 1992; London & De Kock, 2000).

Simply making a decision to remove the farmer as the figure of authority does not quickly change the lives of the workers. In many instances it is the workers who hold on to the traditional role of farmer as ultimate authority and judge. Furthermore a change in social relationships alone is not enough to drastically change the lives of workers. Meaningful change in economic status and in the distribution of power and new employment strategies are needed to facilitate change and empower people to cope with change.

2.5 NEW MANAGERIALISM/NEO-PATERNALISTIC ARRANGEMENTS

The landowner–labourer relationship has been governed differently in each phase of agricultural life in the Cape colony. Ownership and the Slave code governed the first formal relationships in the agricultural sector. Tied hosing, gifts and the mutual

dependency of landowner and labourer defined the next phase of agricultural life. Legislation was loose and the relationship defined by membership rather than statute. The next phase, new managerialism returns to formality and regulation with an emphasis on management practise.

2.5.1 Introduction to new managerialism

“Since the 1980’s the traditional paternalism on farms has been transformed into Neo Paternalism with a greater emphasis on management of human resources” (Kissinger & Rossouw, 2002:3). Farmers were under pressure legally and globally to change the very negative image of South African agriculture. The shift to neo paternalism was a shift in the role of worker from child to partner, a shift in the absolute authority and power of the farmer and a shift in operational methods, to methods focused on motivation and measurement. Reciprocal obligations were replaced by reciprocal rights (Kritzinger & Rossouw, 2002:3).

New employment strategies such as equity and profit share, the use of off farm labour, and the establishment of agri villages have begun to unravel the legacy of paternalism.

The pace and nature of change varies from farm to farm. In many instances the new practises are introduced but old traditional attitudes remain unchanged. (Barrientos et al., 1999). One of the so called new strategies of managerialism which has come under criticism and has, in many instances worsened the plight of farm labourers, is the trend of farmers to make use of contract labour.

Commercial pressure, political democratisation and a changing legislative environment has made the hiring of off farm labourers or contract workers an attractive option for wine farmers in South Africa (Barrientos et al., 1999). As a rule these workers are exempt from certain conditions of employment and benefits. (Du Toit, 2001). Contract workers do not receive housing, they have to rely for the most part on personal contacts to secure work, do not have signed agreements with contractors and are therefore not protected by labour legislation (Kritzinger & Rossouw, 2002:8).

Recruitment of contract labour is intuitive and informal rather than scientific and organised. The relationship between contractor and labourer is seemingly a paternalistic relationship without the security of permanent employment and tied housing. There are notions of the “good contractor”. There are examples of “peonage” style relationships and anecdotal evidence of the contractor loaning money to workers, buying food, assisting with burials and becoming involved in the personal lives of labourers. One contractor interviewed, described himself as “father” to his crew. Paternalism, in this instance has been reinvented (Kritzinger & Rossouw, 2002:17–18). Farm workers, it seems remain disenfranchised, powerless and dependent. Du Toit (1992) compared the farm management styles of paternalism and management discourse (Table 2.4 below).

TABLE 2.4: Paternalism vs management discourse

	PATERNALISM	MANAGEMENT DISCOURSE
LABOUR RELATIONS	Discipline is an intuitive discipline and is based on judgement of a workers character	Workers are drawn into lower levels of management Concerted effort to gain and centralise information about worker Administration of punishment is formalised Personal file for every worker
MANAGEMENT DISCOURSE	Power is vested in farmer or manager	Person of manager is removed from the exercise of power
MOTIVATION AND INCENTIVE	The will of the worker is relevant only if his/her desire leads to disobedience	An increasing concern with workers own desires, motivation and use of incentives
AUTHORITY	The farmer is an incontestable, authoritative father	The authority of the farmer is subordinate to impersonal principles, scientific stats and juridical processes. Worker is given right to make some decisions
WORKERS POSITION	The worker has no voice	Workers voices are given a real degree of weight
FARMING PRACTISE	Based on tradition and intuition	Knowledge based. Use of standards and measures. Compartmentalising and categorising of tasks and minimum standards of achievement
PURPOSE OF MANAGEMENT	To get workers to do what management wants	To get workers to want what management wants
BASIS OF MEMBERSHIP	Identification with the farm was through the figure of the farmer	Worker and owner relate to farm as enterprise

Source: Du Toit (1992:26)

The changed political climate since 1994 has brought about a shift in the balance of power between labourer and landowner. Unionisation and changes in legislation regarding the working conditions of employees has brought about change on farms. Trade unionism and the changes in legislation as they apply to farm workers will be discussed briefly in the following section.

2.6 TRADE UNIONISM ON FARMS

With the introduction of the trade union movement on farms in the Western Cape in the 1980's two major shifts in perspective took place. On the one hand, the farmer shifted from the father figure to the opponent. On the other, Du Toit (1992) writes, the workers have come more and more to a new understanding of their situation with a shift from favours and rewards to rights and entitlements. COSATU has an affiliate SAPAAWU, organising farm workers and there are a number of smaller unions servicing this group. However farm workers remain the least organised group in the country. The ability to organise is not automatic with being afforded the rights to organise, and farm workers have had great difficulty articulating their needs and organising themselves. (Theron in Kritzinger & Rossouw, 2002:7).

Historically there is no culture of collective action on farms. Farm workers have been socially isolated, fearful of losing what they have and until recently lived within the illusion of the farm as family. All these factors attribute to a sense of diffidence and powerlessness and only a minority of farm workers signing up with unions. Farms are generally patriarchal and the situation of women considered unimportant and so women farm workers doubt their interests will be represented (Barrientos et al., 1999).

Employers generally express strong scepticism and hesitancy with regard to the activities of trade unions. In many instances workers are forbidden to make contact with trade unions during working hours. Thirty eight percent of employers are strongly against trade unions, seventeen percent against and thirty eight percent neutral (Sunde & Kleinbooi, 1996).

There is anecdotal evidence that union members are labelled as trouble makers and in some instances a “us and them” scenario created. The union members are seen as the outsiders and non members and management as “family”. As an observer it has been clear that despite unions not gaining majority on farms their presence has certainly influenced management. The mere fact there is ‘someone watching’ has caused some farmers to ensure that they are law abiding. Geographically, farms are isolated but they are no longer a law unto themselves. A recent story in the *Cape Times* (September 13 2006) gives testimony to the fact that when farm workers are assured of support they will risk speaking out.

Over the last decade the political changes in the country have infiltrated into the agricultural sector. Legislation regarding the working conditions and treatment of labourers has accelerated change on wine farms. The following section mentions briefly some of the pertinent aspects of legislation regarding farm labourers.

2.7 LEGISLATION IN RESPECT OF FARM WORKERS

Since 1994 there has been a complete turnaround in legislation that protects and promotes the rights and conditions of farm labourers namely: legislation covering rights to collective bargaining, basic conditions of employment, social security benefits, Black economic empowerment and workplace health and safety. It is not the purpose of this document to discuss in detail the legislation but rather to discuss whether or not legislation has improved the lives of farm workers.

A similar conclusion is reached when discussing the impact of legislation on the lives of farm workers to that of unionisation on farms. Introducing legislation into a, by and large, unlegislated sector has mobilised change on farms but the implementation remains inadequate. London (2003) lists the following as problems regarding the implementation and monitoring of legislation; an understaffed and under-resourced inspectorate, fragmentation between government departments and role players, a culture of non-regulation entrenched over decades, the legacy of state sanctioned racial discrimination and the weakness of trade unions and NGO's in rural areas.

“Rights that exist on paper for farm workers have yet to result in practical changes in the lives of farm workers in the absence of effective worker organization or strong civil society institutions” (London, 2003:60). No matter how inadequate the implementation of relevant legislation and the fact that legislation alone will not erase the legacy of oppression and dependency; the inclusion of the working and living conditions of labourers into the statute books did not come soon enough.

2.8 CONCLUSION

Over time the dynamics in the farmer–labourer relationship have changed. The role of the farmer began as Slave Owner/Master, evolved into Father figure to Manager and then with the trade union to Opponent. The labourer began as slave and evolved into Dependant. Over the last decades there has indeed been a shift in the awareness of the needs, welfare and rights of the labourer. Through worker committees, appointment of middle management and trade unions, workers have been given a voice. Legislation has been passed that aims to shift the balance of power.

Despite a change in the legal status of farm workers two factors have remained constant. Firstly, farm labourers have remained by and large poor, dependent and disempowered. Secondly, paternalism is the thread that runs from Slavery to New Managerialism. Seemingly, dependency and powerlessness have become institutionalised. This chapter has traced the history of the farmer–labourer relationship and the relationship of the worker to the farm. Tied housing has always been referred to as the primary factor that holds people hostage to the farm but contract workers who do not have tied housing or the other so called benefits of farm labour are no less dependent or powerless. Seemingly it is, in large part, the labourer who is clinging to the traditional paternalistic relationship, stuck it seems in cycles of dependency and powerlessness. Contrary to the romantic notion that farm life is a life to be envied, the lived experiences of labourers on wine farms is fraught with struggle, interpersonal jealousy, habitual drinking and social violence.

Many scholars argue that the struggle of labourers on wine farms is the legacy of the Tot System, a system that arrived with the Dutch settlers, was abolished in the 1990s but whose legacy continues to enslave labourers to lives of dependency and struggle. The lived experiences of farm workers will be discussed in Chapter 3 with a specific focus on habitual drinking.

CHAPTER 3

THE “DOPSTELSEL”, HABITUAL DRINKING AND THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF FARM WORKERS ON WINE FARMS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Historically, alcohol was traditionally brewed and used by indigenous people in South Africa for social, political and medicinal reasons (Brady & Rendall–Mkosi, 2005:4). Drinking was primarily reserved as a communal and ceremonial activity, and not a daily nor solitary activity (Parry & Bennetts, 1998:4). The production of wine in the Cape colony soon became a successful agricultural practise, making alcohol readily available and accessible to the indigenous people. Elsewhere in developing countries the availability of commercially produced alcohol has changed drinking patterns within communities who traditionally brewed their own alcohol resulting in “... regular heavy drinking becoming a sustainable pattern” (Parry, 2000:217). Willis (2006:6) challenges the notion of “a pre–colonial past of harmonious, integrated drinking”. He also argues that there is no clear evidence of an overall crisis in Africa with regards to risky drinking. It is not the intention of the author to contradict this argument, but there is extensive evidence showing that habitual drinking is a huge problem among labourers in the Western Cape.

Jan van Riebeeck, and the early settlers introduced the use of alcohol as an incentive to work, attend church and learn Dutch. Alcohol became a currency of exchange between the Khoikhoi and the settlers. Alcohol was used medicinally by sailors to prevent scurvy on the long sea journeys, but that was not the only use the settlers and sailors had for alcohol. (Excerpts from the diary of Jan Van Riebeeck cited in Shell, 1994:79). The European men who worked for the VOC were hard drinkers and smokers. Drunkenness, smuggling of liquor, card playing and violence were part of the daily life of the Europeans and slaves alike” (Brady & Rendall–Mkosi, 2005:5). Clearly alcohol use was a key aspect of Settler culture

and alongside learning Dutch, going to Church and attending religious instruction drinking as recreation became part of the acculturation process. Before long slaves and indigenous people were acculturated into the settlers way of life.

This chapter explores the various aspects of farm life described in the literature. Historically the Tot system has played a major role in farm life and so the chapter starts with a discussion thereof. Farm labourers needless to say are dependent on the production of alcohol for economic survival and so the researcher looks at significant aspects of the alcohol industry. The bulk of the chapter is a discussion of habitual drinking and the impact thereof on farm life. Finally other aspects of farm life presented in the literature are reviewed namely violence, women and children, health and wellbeing, education and poverty.

3.2 THE DOPSTELSEL (TOT SYSTEM)

The practise of using alcohol as means of exchange for labour became known as the Tot System or Dopstelsel (Shell, 1994). The Tot System continued well into the twentieth century. Once Slavery was abolished farmers continued to give labourers a “dop” (tot) of rough or sour wine sweetened with sugar, sometimes five times a day. A “dop” (tot) was equal roughly to 200 ml. Consuming alcohol became daily practise for adults and children alike. Children as young as 12 were given alcohol, “*we were two bricks and a ticky high when we were given wine by our fathers*” (A.S. 2002). Workers came to expect the rations as their due. Drinking alcohol became a habit, reinforced every day” (Brady & Rendall–Mkosi, 2005:8). Habitual drinking and social wellbeing became synonymous (London, 2003:61). As a result many labourers became alcohol–dependent.

It was only with the emergence of the temperance movement in the Cape in the 19th Century that an anti–tot lobby arose in Stellenbosch. Talk of abolishing the Tot System created a clash of interests. While the temperance movement called for the closure of drinking establishments neither farmer nor drinker was in favour of abolishment. Farmers considered the Tot System a crucial element in maintaining a dependent rural labour force on the one hand, while on the other the local market

was very important in an industry where the export market was undeveloped. In the Western Cape, the wine industry opposed any legislation that prevented workers from having access to alcohol well into the twentieth century (Crush & Ambler, 1992). Alcohol at the workplace in sectors *other* than agriculture was outlawed under the Occupational Health and Safety Act of 1993 (Brady & Rendall-Mkosi, 2005:95).

3.2.1 The abolishment of the Tot System

The Tot System was outlawed in 1961 under the Liquor Act and thereafter the use of alcohol as remuneration became illegal. Trespasses of the Liquor Act could receive a fine not exceeding R1 000 or a jail sentence of not more than six months. However, there has not been a single reported prosecution (De Kock, 2000). There are varying statistics on the on-going practise of the Tot System.

Some researchers have published results indicating that only one percent of farms continue to practise the Tot System (Te Water, London & Mohammed, 1998), others claim that one in five vineyards, continue to practise the Tot System (U.S. News and World Report, Glasser June 2002 in Parenzee, 2003:9). The issue from the perspective of this study is the on-going struggle in farming districts related to risky and binge-drinking. The practise of supplying wine cheaply to workers on credit, giving wine as a bonus, or selling wine cheaply to workers, argues Brady and Rendall-Mkosi (2005:97) is simply an old practise with a new label. (See discussion on Papsak/Bulk wine, Section 3.3.2.2.)

A loophole in the legislation regarding the Tot System was that alcohol given as gratuity and reward was not outlawed (De Kock, 2000). Some farmers still argue that if they give workers vegetables or fruit from their crops why not wine?. In 2002 a large alcohol and fruit juice producer in the Winelands region provided its workers with a fringe benefit in the form of wine as motivation. There was no alternative to wine as the benefit; difficult for non-drinkers and people with drink related problems (Brady & Rendall-Mkosi, 2005:98). Producing wine on the one hand and judging its use on the other is for some a moral dilemma. *One producer*

who does not subscribe to the dopstelsel at all in a discussion said “While I can see that the Tot System is clearly wrong one feels like you cannot criticise alcohol use when we are making our living from its production” (Anon 2003).

In some instances workers refused to work without the Tot System. In other instances workers have left a farm where the Tot System is no longer practised and move to where it is (Scharff, 1987:19–25). On some farms, labourers began producing their own wine, known as *moer wyn* (home made wine), which lay in the vineyards until they “needed” it.

Farmers who have abolished the Tot System have been disillusioned by the absence of change regarding social problems on farms. Various scholars suggest, that a change in the statute book is not sufficient for there to be a significant change in social conditions on farms. Revised labour relations is a primary factor that will realise change on farms (De Kock, 2000). It is the researchers’ opinion that social norms relating to underage drinking, social violence and risky drinking as recreation on farms need to be addressed for any significant change to take place.

The abolishment of the Tot System, as with the abolishment of slavery in itself did not bring about significant change. From a humanitarian perspective change in both instances had to take place. Lobbying for abolishment in both instances was not a grassroots initiative but the effort of social activists and NGO’s. In the opinion of the researcher, social change will gain momentum when labourer and landowner buy into the promotion of a sober workforce and the vision of a new lifestyle. Until then farming communities will remain tied to the legacy of the Tot System.

3.2.2 Legacy of the Tot System

Scharf (1987) warns that the legacy of the Tot System will continue into the first decade of the twenty–first century. Many labourers will continue to drink, and will lose their jobs as a result of mechanisation and upgrading, but they will continue to drink, and their families continue to suffer. The first decade of the 21st Century is almost behind us and we are nowhere near to being free of the legacy of the Tot

System abolished more than forty years ago.

London (2005) argues that simultaneous to the abolishment of the Tot System there needs to be development programmes and organised effort to empower people to overcome their dependency on alcohol.

In many instances the abolishing of the Tot System has led to worse forms of social disintegration. Habitual drinkers, having had their supply of free alcohol cut off, go in search of alcohol in towns and shebeens (informal liquor outlets) close by. Habitual drinkers in many instances, spend all or more than they have earned. Labourers are known to change jobs in order to have easier access to alcohol (London, 2005). The only time the labourers on the farm on which the researcher works have downed tools was when the landowner put a stop to the Tot System.

3.3 THE PRODUCTION OF ALCOHOL – A BILLION DOLLAR INDUSTRY

On the one hand alcohol abuse enslaves people and renders them dependent and on the other hand the production, distribution and sale of alcohol creates employment, housing and income from taxes creating a billion dollar industry. Jobs are created in all aspects of the production, marketing and distribution of alcohol. Statistics range from 165 000 to one million workers formally dependent on the agricultural (production and distribution) sector in the Western Cape (Henn, 2001:78). There are 406 wine farms in the Stellenbosch district (Captain Williams, South African Police, October 2006). There is a move however, by landowners to reduce the size of the permanent labour force through casualisation and mechanisation.

3.3.1 Casualisation of labour in the agricultural sector

Historically women (wives, daughters, girlfriends of men working on the farm) were employed as seasonal workers. These women were known to the farmer and in many instances lived on the farm. Modern day casualisation has a different slant. Seasonal workers, living off the farm are engaged through the services of a Labour Broker or Temporary Employment Service (TES). In this instance the TES or

broker places workers with a farmer for a specific period of time for a particular task, for example harvesting. The broker has the employment contract with the worker but the worker takes instruction from the farm manager. The broker or TES pays the wages not the farmer. Often the TES or broker will administer UIF and sick leave but not always.

3.3.2 Mechanisation on wine farms

Mechanised harvesting is an attractive option to farmers who are seeking to do away with labour issues. However machines used to mechanically harvest grapes deprive people of their jobs and machine harvesting is considered by environmentalists, to be detrimental to the environment, particularly small animals, insects and reptiles. Anti mechanisation lobbyists also argue that the wine ends up being contaminated by this process (Pickering, 2006).

3.3.3 Working conditions on wine farms

Legally *all* agricultural workers are entitled to the same rights under the Basic Conditions of Employment Act and the Labour Relations Act. (Information produced by the Centre for Rural Legal Studies, Stellenbosch). In reality the monitoring and implementation of labour legislation in the sector is poor. Labourers remain vulnerable, marginalised and subject to the very oppression and discrimination that the law, NGOs and lobbyists have tried to reverse. In many instances the relationship with the contractor is a paternalistic relationship rendering the worker dependent and powerless. (Refer to chapter 2.5.2.1).

The Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) is an alliance of companies, non-governmental organisations and trade unions committed to working together to identify and promote good practise in the implementation of codes of practise (Taylor, 2001:2). The results of a pilot of the ETI code in the wine industry in 1998 shows that employer attitudes and compliance, varied from compliance and co-operation to reluctance. Some employers defend their reluctance to implement the code by predicting that imposition of the code will lead to greater casualisation of labour.

Other employers argue that South Africa has labour laws in place that cover everything that is addressed in the ETI code. While debate takes place at stakeholder level, some change takes place on the ground, the spin off of which will hopefully be better conditions for labourers, whether casual or not.

3.3.4 Wealth creation and the alcohol industry

The alcohol industry is full of complex and contentious issues, one of which is the taxes raised from the sale of alcohol. In 2002/2003 total taxes amounted to approximately R4.2 billion. Some activists lobby for the increase of taxes arguing that raising taxes will decrease spending on alcohol consumption while other scholars suggest that increasing taxes has the potential to increase spending on alcohol and increase the likelihood of illegal trade and brewing (Brady & Rendall–Mkosi, 2005:14). *Some years back a researcher asked a farm worker "wat sal jy maak as die prys van brood styg?" Ek sal minder brood koop meneer. En as die prys van wyn styg, wat sal jy maak? Minder brood koop meneer! (what will you do if the price of bread increases? Buy less bread, Sir and if the price of wine increases? Buy less bread, Sir).*

Some writers say that to get an accurate picture of the economic value of the industry, revenue should be compared with the cost of abuse. It is estimated that alcohol abuse costs South Africa R1,7 billion per year, three times more than the amount of revenue received by the government in the form of excise taxes (Parry & Bennetts, 1998). It is difficult to know how to balance the equation. In the face of such an economically viable industry there is sensitivity to any legislation aimed at control that may impact negatively on the industry, no matter how noble the intention of the measure (Brady & Rendall–Mkosi, 2005:12). Notwithstanding the economic value of the industry, authors (Parry & Bennetts, 1998, Brady & Rendall–Mkosi, 2005) argue that the government needs to take steps to address alcohol misuse through alcohol related policy and action. Some of these suggestions will be examined in the following chapter.

3.3.5 Housing for labourers – a benefit of working on farms

Most agricultural workers who are permanently employed, live on the farm on which they work. The provision of housing to employees is a major contribution in South Africa where there is a huge housing shortage. Housing on farms is an emotive issue which simultaneously creates a sense of security and threat. Housing will be discussed later in the chapter.

3.3.6 Advertising, funding and sponsorship by the alcohol industry

Another contentious issue in the alcohol industry is the money spent annually on alcohol advertising, funding of research and sponsorship. Through sponsorship, the industry is making a positive contribution to the cultural life of the country. On the other hand the aggressive marketing of alcohol encourages the use of alcohol to people who may or may not end up being enslaved by their consumption. (Brady & Rendall–Mkosi, 2005:12).

South Africa on the one hand, is economically dependent on the multi billion Rand liquor industry while on the other, the use and abuse of alcohol creates destruction and despair. For individual drinkers, farmers, the alcohol industry and the State, alcohol has weaved its way into South African life. We can say we have a co–dependent, love–hate relationship with alcohol.

Nowhere is the love hate relationship with alcohol more prevalent than on wine farms. The following section takes an in depth look at habitual drinking on wine farms in the Western Cape.

3.4 HABITUAL PROBLEM–DRINKING ON FARMS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

This section discusses the many aspects of habitual drinking including consumption patterns and the meaning of drinking for farm workers.

3.4.1 Consumption patterns of alcohol among farm workers in the Western Cape

Wine farming is one of the occupations where the incidence of alcohol misuse is

exceptionally high especially where access to alcohol is easy (Parry & Bennetts, 1998:7). Alcohol consumption and the incidence of alcoholism remains approximately twice as high among farm workers as their urban counterparts (London, 1999:2).

Alcohol use on farms “remains the most blatant survival strategy by both men and women. It is embedded in the farming context and despite concerted efforts remains deeply entrenched” (Hill & Lanz 1994 in Paranze, 2003:9). One study undertaken on Stellenbosch farms to investigate lifestyle and drinking patterns found that on average forty five percent of adults consumed alcohol mostly over weekends (Henn, 2001:79). In 1998 DOPSTOP established that between sixty five and eighty seven percent of interviewed could be classified as problem drinkers. DOPSTOP also established that forty two percent of women admitted to drinking during pregnancy. Seemingly, for many farm workers drinking to intoxication is the norm (Parry, 2000:216). The moderate consumption of alcohol has been promoted by some publications as having health benefits. The suggested benefits to health of drinking are inconclusive and, isolated, limited specifically to moderate drinking (Parry & Bennetts, 1998) and small compared to the relative harm of risky drinking, Dr R. Jackson (*Saturday Argus* 3 December 2005, 32).

In 2001 Parry states that despite there being a correlation between a high incidence of risky drinking and people living in non urban areas who have a low level of education, this is not to be interpreted as a racial phenomena. Instead he suggests that poverty, a lack of access to recreational and other resources, peer pressure, communal drinking among adults, availability of alcohol particularly in disadvantaged communities, legacy of the Tot System, lack of social controls to deal with abuses and social attitudes to drinking are all variables that influence habitual excessive drinking.

Many farm labourers drink to intoxication over weekends and in leisure time. They all believe they have control of their drinking and do not need any help to overcome their drinking. “*Dis niks om op te hou drink nie*” (*it’s nothing to stop drinking*) has been said to the researcher often. “*Ek drink net van griewelikeid*” (*I drink just to*

rebel) is also a common phrase. It is difficult to get an accurate picture of the alcohol consumption of the labourers.

When drinkers are interviewed, they underestimate the amount they are drinking. The same individual will report much higher alcohol intake when interviewed in a sober period of his/her life. *Recently, two women who consider themselves **not** to be drinkers openly admitted to drinking a bottle of Old Brown Sherry in one weekday evening between the two of them. Soetwyn (Sherry) is considered not harmful because “dis kerk wyn” (wine used for communion in Church). There is a similar perception that drinking beer does not classify one as a drinker. Women drink beer because it makes one urinate more; the perception being that one can drink more before getting drunk (D.D. July, 2006).*

*A male aged 21 said in a conversation with the researcher (E.H. September, 2006) in answer to the question “Are you a drinker?” “Nie eintlik nie. Ek vat wel ‘n bier” (not really, I do have a beer). After some discussion it emerged he drank twelve, seven hundred and fifty millilitre bottles of beer in one sitting, *four times* the recommended daily allowance for men (Brady & Rendall–Mkosi, 2005:232).*

3.4.2 Access to alcohol by farm workers

Earlier in this chapter reference was made to research that showed that there is a direct correlation between access to alcohol and the incidence of habitual drinking. The easier it is to obtain alcohol the higher the incidence of habitual drinking. (Brady & Rendall–Mkosi, 2005) Farm workers are primarily customers of the informal liquor industry and consume predominantly bulk wine. Access to alcohol by farm workers will be discussed in the following section.

3.4.2.1 Liquor outlets

The sale of liquor takes place from an estimated 5 300 licensed liquor outlets and an estimated 20 000–30 000 unlicensed outlets in the Western Cape (excluding retail and hospitality). The informal liquor sector until now has been unregulated but is currently under review (Parry & Bennetts, 1998:7). There is approximately

one outlet for every 190 people (Brady & Rendall–Mkosi, 2005). The majority of farm workers do not have access to transport and work long hours and so they purchase their alcohol from the informal sector, mainly shebeens which are close to the farm and open late.

Shebeens are not unique to the Western Cape but are almost exclusively the point of sale of alcohol for farm workers. Shebeens are simultaneously a point of sale, a viable business, a gathering place, a recreation facility and sometimes a place of criminal activity (Brady & Rendall–Mkosi, 2005:13). The close proximity of the shebeen to the farm means shebeen owners and the customers know each other well. Consumers are often given credit facilities by shebeen owners and as a result some labourers work purely to service their shebeen debt (SACCO representative, Stellenbosch). *One couple who gave up drinking took 18 months to pay off their debt.* (Practitioners Journal, August 2004). Shebeens are unlicensed and therefore not subject to regulation and law enforcement.

There is no control of where or how many shebeens are established in an area. By nature, shebeens are established in residential areas close to consumers making sale to under age minors easy.

A television documentary in 2005 (*Special Assignment*) on Foetal Alcohol Syndrome showed how children, including very young children were taken into shebeens with their parents. Currently a task team consisting of representatives of civil society, legal professionals, researchers and industry stakeholders, have formed the Policy Drafting Panel (PDP) which aims to “create a liquor–licensing policy which will facilitate commercial enterprise and entrepreneurship, but at the same time protect the community against any negative consequences arising from the abuse of alcohol.” (Epstein et al., www.polity.org.za/html).

There are many stakeholders and many social, political and economic issues to be considered and many lives at stake when considering the licensing of shebeens. It seems that within the farming community there is a perception that shebeens are a fact of life, and that shebeen owners are selling alcohol *om die pot op die stoof te*

hou (to keep the pot burning) (T.C. health worker, 2005). The work of the PDP is to balance the needs of all the stakeholders.

3.4.2.2 The sale and consumption of bulk wine

Another aspect to the wine industry is the selling off of surplus wine as what is colloquially called *papsak* or bulk wine: cheap semi-sweet white wine sold in unlabelled large bags and plastic containers ranging between 300 ml and 5l. The absence of information on the packaging of bulk wine, lobbyists argue, compromises the quality and standard of production. Bulk wine is sold as surplus wine although there is some thought that low quality, cheap wine is specifically produced for this market. Currently there is research taking place on all aspects of bulk wine in the Western Cape. Papsak wine retails between R25–R30 depending on whether the outlet is open long hours or not. The wine industry defends its position by arguing that it does not actively promote bulk wine (Henn, 2001:78). Nevertheless the bulk wine industry represents seventeen percent of the total domestic wine industry. Seventeen percent represents 48 million litres of wine (Van Rooyen, 2004:21). This is a considerable slice of the alcohol industry pie indeed.

Affordability of bulk wine is the major reason farm workers chose bulk wine over other alcohol. Respondents interviewed by Henn (2001:80) did not correlate negative consequences of drinking **to alcohol use**. Drinking in the consumer's mind had to do with the lack of recreational facilities. Many farm labourers drink to get drunk. If getting drunk is the goal then Papsak wine is the cheapest and quickest route resulting in regular overindulgence and risk drinking (Brady & Rendall–Mkosi, 2005). Notwithstanding the size of the market the bulk wine industry holds, the industry too has recognised that the lifespan of the Papsak is limited.

Dr Van Rooyen, Chief Executive of the South African Wine and Brandy Company was quoted as saying “the Papsak culture should be eradicated altogether ... not only does it contribute to alcohol abuse but it damages the reputation and integrity

of the South African wine industry” (Van Rooyen, 2004:21). Anti-bulk wine lobbyists have finally triumphed. An article on October 18 2006 in *Die Burger* (p.4) reported that (the Papsak is a thing of the past) “Papsak word binnekort iets uit die oude doos”.

A change in legislation regarding bulk wine may not have the desired effect. By banning the sale of wine in a Papsak or unlabelled container it is intended that the quality of wine sold will improve and that packaging will provide information on the origin and the content of wine. Consumers will be drinking better quality wine and be better informed, they will also, in all likelihood, be spending more of their disposable income should wine become more expensive. It is hoped that the change in legislation will lessen alcohol abuse. Legislation will be meaningless without regular testing of bulk wine production and conscientious law enforcement (Henn, 2001:80). Passing legislation to alleviate social problems is again an outside-in approach with the grassroots not necessarily buying into the change.

There is anecdotal evidence (see Section 3.2.4.2) that habitual drinkers will curb buying essential items in order to service their drinking. In the short term, from the drinkers' perspective, the new legislation is not perceived positively and may increase poverty and social problems. This concern does not outweigh the call for legislative change; it simply cautions stakeholders to pay attention to the prevention of binge-drinking and systematic alleviation of social problems.

3.4.3 Alcohol consumption among adolescents living on wine farms

Within the Boland area, teenage drinking on farms was found by DOPSTOP to be as high as twelve percent with drinking beginning in some instances at age 9. Once parents pass out after a session of binge-drinking children are unsupervised and have access to unfinished bottles of alcohol. Young children are often pacified by alcohol being placed in their bottles by their mothers. Farm children have been known to steal grapes and make their own wine. High schools in the Stellenbosch area have reported children coming to school intoxicated. Some children get involved in illegal activities to service their drinking habit and some are alcohol

dependent by their early twenties (DOPSTOP Information Package, March 2003).

Substance abuse among adolescents generally has received a great deal of interest in the press of late. The *Weekend Argus* (August 5, 2006) quoted SANCA (South African National Council For Alcohol and Drug Dependence) figures placing the incidence of addiction among adolescents in South Africa as one in three. Concern was raised in the article that the age of experimentation is as low as nine years. Children use drugs and alcohol to show they are “cool”. Other factors believed to contribute to teenage drinking and substance abuse discussed are socio-economic (child headed households, poverty and hunger, absence of role models, easy access to alcohol and low prices of substances and breakdown in family life) (*Argus*, August 5, 2006). Developmentally adolescence is the time of experimentation. One concern is that school goers have no difficulty obtaining alcohol. “Research has shown that school going youth find it easy to purchase alcohol from bottle stores, supermarkets, bars and shebeens” (Tibbs et al. in Parry & Bennetts, 1998).

Adolescents seemingly drink to get drunk with little or no cognisance of the potential harm. Teenage binge drinkers tends to be more inclined towards short term gratification and the pattern is embedded in a peer group culture. Teenagers have limited motivation to comply with parental wishes and few obstacles to obtaining alcohol. Adolescents have no serious moral objectives to binge-drinking. **“Engaging in frequent consumption of alcohol was found to be an important part of their self identity”** (Morojele, Knott, Myburgh, & Finkelstein, 1999).

Parry and Bennetts (1998) state that while there is little scientific evidence, there does seem to be a correlation between teenage drinking and school dropout. One does not know whether the correlation is between alcohol consumption and school dropout or the fact that teenagers who drink excessively are more inclined to short-term gratification and less inclined to parental compliance and therefore more prone to school dropout.

A disturbing factor is that, generally within the community, adolescent drinking is

perceived as normal and in many instances facilitated by adults. *At a community meeting held to discuss community needs one mother appealed to other parents to send her son home if he was drinking and not to give him alcohol or send him to buy alcohol or cigarettes. She was shot down by other community members, particularly men who argued that if they were not going to give a teenager a drink or cigarette he would obtain it elsewhere. Frequently minors are sent to buy alcohol* (Community meeting June 2006). Parents, particularly mothers when asked, will say they do not want their child to drink, but seem powerless to stop him/her. The researcher is frequently told by farm children and adults about teenagers who were seen drinking with either their parents, other young adults or peers. In this year, boys as young as thirteen and girls aged fifteen/sixteen have been found drunk.

3.4.4 The impact of habitual drinking on farm life

Habitual drinking impacts on every aspect of the individual and the farms' life, work, health and safety and family life. Table 3.1 lists some of the more pertinent consequences of habitual drinking. Each of these factors is a study on its own, beyond the scope of this document but important to mention nonetheless. Table 3.1 is based on the work of Louw (cited in Parry & Bennetts, 1998:72).

TABLE 3.1: The impact of habitual drinking on farm life

High incidence of absenteeism from work
High incidence of job turnover
High incidence of work related injuries
High incidence of alcohol related trauma
Increased use of medical aid , sick leave and workmens compensation benefits
High incidence of Foetal Alcohol syndrome (FAS)

Of the six factors listed in Table 3.1, five relate to adults. The sixth factor, Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) relates specifically to children. There is an abnormally high incidence of FAS in the wine farming region of the Western Cape and for this

reason a brief discussion follows.

3.4.5 Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)

FAS is defined as “a permanent condition causing many behavioural and health problems, learning difficulties, hyperactivity, growth stunting, liver damage and family disruption in children and in later life” (DOPSTOP Information Package, 2003; Brady & Rendall–Mkosi, 2005:18). Children of Western Cape farm workers have among the highest rates of FAS in the world with a prevalence of between five and nine percent. (DOPSTOP, 2003). The Pebbles Project, a NGO specialising in FAS, suggests the prevalence of FAS in the Stellenbosch area is as high as eleven percent.

Affected children need extra help at school. Many rural schools are under–resourced as it is, without having to cope with the special needs of FAS children. Parents cannot afford services that would assist children such as occupational therapy and remedial classes. Rural FAS children start off life being disabled and are further handicapped by poor schooling and impoverished home situations.

Most FAS children grow up in homes where their needs are not a priority, where there is little or no access to the necessary resources and where there are drink–related problems like financial difficulties, domestic violence and neglect. They often also attend schools that are under–resourced and historically disadvantaged. These children don’t have one but many disadvantages to overcome. It can be said that FAS children have multi–disabilities.

FAS has lifelong implications – there is no recovery. FAS children become FAS adults. There is very little, if any, literature specific to FAS adults. If we consider that eleven percent of children in the Stellenbosch area are FAS children, that habitual drinking on farms is historically a problem on farms in the area, and that few if any children are taught to manage FAS related problems, then it goes

without saying that a sizeable percentage of the workforce are FAS adults. These are workers who grew up with learning disorders, health related problems, behavioural difficulties and hyperactivity. There is, in the opinion of the researcher, a need for an investigation into the long-term implications of FAS.

*An occupational therapist visiting the crèche once commented that FAS children cannot cope with mainstream schooling and one is wasting time investing in them. But children become adults and need to function in the world as best they can. Surely they should receive **more** not less attention than children without this prognosis (Practitioners Journal, 2002).*

3.4.6 Perspectives on the meaning of habitual drinking on farms

Habitual drinking, it seems, causes nothing less than suffering and destruction of individual's, family's and community's lives. How is it then that people continue on this path of self destruction? World wide, family members, rehabilitation practitioners and policy makers spend billions trying to gain insight into habitual drinking patterns and effective recovery practises. On a micro level that has been the concern of the researcher. Individuals will only hold on to something that has meaning for them. This section grapples with the meaning of habitual drinking for farm workers. Habitual drinking is an enormous field and so literature has been limited, as far as possible to the specific context of wine farms in the Western Cape. The information found has been summarised in Table 3.2 and is based on the work of all the writers referenced in Section 3.4.6.

3.4.6.1 Habitual drinking on farms – a ritual

De Kock (2002) conceptualises drinking on farms as a ritual, giving us a theoretical framework to understand the hold drinking has over the community. Ritual provides structure and order in social life and presents interpretations of reality in such a way that they are accepted as legitimate (Falke et al. in De Kock, 2002:92). Drinking becomes a legitimate way of life that finds its roots in the fact that it numbs the suffering and struggle of the daily life experience. "Alcohol is an easily accessible form of reward and pleasure and escape from boredom, however the

pervasive nature of the social practise of alcohol consumption does not provide an easy context to escape” (De Kock, 2002:92).

Some farm workers have given up habitual drinking through a Christian conversion experience and are said to be “*BEKEER*” (religious conversion) (Henn, 2001:79).

Alcohol consumption and becoming *bekeer* are interwoven aspects of the lived experience of farm life in the Western Cape. Christianity is the dominant religion followed by farm labourers. Islam was the religion of many slaves in Cape Town but it never extended its influence to the farms (London & De Kock, 2003:93). “Being *bekeer* (religious conversion) means that the converted person becomes part of a broader community; they make visits away from home to attend church services (escape from farm life).

Often the decision to convert is precipitated by a life crisis which causes individuals to assess their lives and turn away from drinking (De Kock, 2002:97). Many women cite the welfare of their children as the reason for turning from alcohol to Christianity. In the Church, women support each other. All this helps the person to make a new set of friends who are not drinkers (Brady & Rendall–Mkosi, 2005:190). It is the researcher’s experience that significantly more women than men remain sober after becoming *bekeer*.

The binge and *bekeer* (religious conversion) phenomenon on farms raises the following question about the social and emotional needs of farm workers. Are drinkers looking for participation in an emotionally charged, communally shared ritual and shared belief system? Perhaps a new form of social organisation and communication might lead habitual drinkers to a new way of life. This should be a place where they can forget their troubles and experience community and communicate freely.

3.4.6.2 Habitual drinking – a norm on farms

Schotte (1996:17) argues that the dopstelsel has resulted in habitual drinking as normative with over indulgence taking place one generation after the next on farms,

and it is not so much a genetic inclination as a socio-cultural environment that maintains habitual drinking. Any predisposition of farm labourers to habitual drinking can be traced back to the first social relationships between indigenous people and colonial settlers. Three hundred years later, in 1962, this system of coercion and remuneration was outlawed – however, the legacy remains.

By suggesting that habitual risky drinking on farms is normative suggests that farm dwellers have a sense of acceptance of habitual drinking, resigned to the fact that people drink to get drunk and are powerless to change the practise (London, 1997). It is the researcher's opinion that it is the sense of *powerlessness and resignation* that needs drastic attention before any significant change in drinking patterns will take place.

3.4.6.3 Habitual drinking on farms – a means of escape

Scharf (1987), Schotte (1996) and London and De Kock (2003) make a strong case for environmental and social factors, listed below, being catalysts for habitual over-indulgence:

- few opportunities to finding betterment for themselves or their children;
- limited scope for upward mobility on most farms
- lack of acknowledgement for length of service;
- definite alienation from the fruits of their labour;
- feelings of political, social and occupational disempowerment;
- easy access to liquor;
- absence of other forms of recreation.

Workers are trapped in an environment which they find hard to escape and use habitual drinking as a means of escaping the meaninglessness of their lives Schotte (1996). Over indulgence masks boredom and creates a kind of fatalism. Workers feel trapped in a life where the quality of life is slow (Scarf, 11 May 1987).

A state of drunkenness can be an ambivalent means of publicity or domestically protesting against the stresses, frustrations or powerlessness of life as an underpaid and more or less overworked farm worker with very little in terms of life chances outside farm and work life “I look forward to my dop every night because of the moegheid (tiredness)” (De Kock, 2002:18).

3.4.6.4 *Habitual drinking – to surrender responsibility*

When considering alcohol consumption in Africa some writers suggest that “faced with the overwhelming multiple challenges of life in modern Africa, many individuals have taken solitary refuge in drinking spirits as a way of surrendering responsibility. They would rather be seen as victims of drink than as social and economic failures” (Akyeampong in Willis, 2006:17).

3.4.6.5 *Habitual drinking – an all or nothing affair*

Drinking in Africa is reported as “an all or nothing affair” (Partanen, 1990:26). Research shows that people drink to get drunk. This pattern is consistent in all developing countries and is an important determinant of types and levels of problems associated with drinking (Obot, 2006:27). Excessive drinking or binge–drinking is not the domain of men only. In Nigeria, South Africa and Ethiopia more women than men reported regular consumption of volumes of alcohol that exceed what can be defined as moderate drinking (Obot, 2006:28). Drinking that results in intoxication accounts for most of the acute problems like accidents, violence, and chronic health conditions and workplace injury (Obot, 2006:31).

Access to alcohol becomes the primary objective of the heavy drinker. Any other activity, no matter how beneficial it may be to the individual, takes second place. The drinker remains loyal to the system that services his/her desire for alcohol (De Kock, 2002). People are so focused on their drinking that even when there are opportunities to involve themselves in activities that would change their lives they are disempowered. Farm workers drink to escape daily life. Daily life would change if they stopped drinking. To stop drinking in order to create change is to give up immediate gratification for a vision of a new life. Somehow the vision is not strong

enough.

Several of the men that the researcher has worked with have saved to buy a car. In periods of sobriety they have tasted the freedom of self sufficiency. In all but one instance, the car stands on bricks – a monument to a time passed.

TABLE 3.2: A summary of the perspectives on the meaning of habitual drinking on farms

Habitual drinking – a ritual
Habitual drinking – a norm on farms
Habitual drinking – a means of escape
Habitual drinking – to surrender responsibility
Habitual drinking – an all or nothing affair

3.5 VIOLENCE ON FARMS

A correlation exists between habitual drinking and social violence on farms (Obot, 2006:29; Peden et al., unpublished). For adults and children alike, aggression and violence is an integral aspect of the lived experience on farms. Aggression and violence, like habitual drinking is a cycle and has meaning for the community which is not always easy to understand as an outsider. Children are given one message regarding violence at school and witness something entirely different at home. This section attempts to understand the cycle and meaning of violence and aggression on farms.

3.5.1 The cycle of violence on farms

In the rural community, there is a cycle of violence that is sometimes hard to understand and very difficult to break. Women in patriarchal communities are more vulnerable and at a greater risk of being victims of domestic violence. Women are seen as possessions and male domination encouraged. Rural communities are to a large extent patriarchal. Women are kept economically dependent and are predominately isolated. These societies implicitly and explicitly condone violence

against women. The seriousness of violence is dismissed. Dependency and isolation go hand in hand and make breaking free very difficult to women (Artz, 1998:30).

Having conducted various studies with female victims of domestic violence in the Western Cape, Gibson (2004:5) concluded that domestic violence is “something more than just the impact of dominant and unequal gender ideology and an oppressive history seemed to be at play”. Gibson (2004) grapples with the meaning and management of violence on farms and identifies the following as significant aspects of violence of farms.

Firstly Gibson identifies paternalism on farms (discussed in some depth in Chapter 2 of this study) as the social environment in which violence takes place. In this environment farm, farmer and labourer are bound to each other in an interdependent relationship as a community of shared interest. The farmer is simultaneously judge, employer and parent. On the one hand it is the farmer who has the power to intervene in incidents of violence, however the very act of intervening may place workers and families at risk of losing home and income. Gibson found that when people were badly hurt and absent from work, whilst everybody knew, nobody talked. Lest the perpetrator loses his home and workplace. In some instances complex stories are created that construe the injuries as accidents (Gibson, 2004:7). (*One woman known to the researcher is continually “falling” out the tree*). In this way farmer and community pretend the violence never happened and farm life continues as “normal” (Gibson, 2004:7). *In my early days as practitioner on the farm, Mondays were awful. There was this blanket hanging over everyone. Workers were sullen and heavy. Looks passed between people but little was said. The children were chaotic. Slowly I learnt to understand that the heavier the cloud the more violence there had been over the weekend. Slowly children and workers have opened up. Slowly people learned that breaking the silence didn’t automatically place jobs at risk but opened the possibility to seek help. Slowly, very slowly the picture is changing.* (Practitioner’s Reflections, 2001).

Secondly Gibson (2004) discusses the perception of the community that the individual is possessed by the devil. An outside force (the devil) is responsible for the drinker's behaviour. **Violent behaviour is not attributed to the drinker's decision to over indulge. Alcohol is personified and the drinker absolved.** When intoxicated the drinker is "allowed" to say and do things he / she cannot when they are sober. People are referred to as *nie mense* (non human) when they are drunk.

Not only does intoxication give the drinker the freedom to behave as he / she pleases, it is also socially acceptable for a relative, bystander or victim to retaliate to the violence in order to "leer vir hulle 'n les" (teach them a lesson) (Gibson, 2004:8). No social norms other than violence begets violence exists in the above-mentioned scenarios. A complete, disinhibited, free for all situation exists. A battle with the supernatural, devoid of human accountability.

In many homes on farms, both parties are intoxicated or "possessed" and an ongoing cycle of violence and retaliation is established. "Sometimes when he is drunk, I would hit him. With the pan or a piece of wood. Once I broke a jug on his head. But when he was sober, he would know that I knew he would repay me" (Gibson, 2004:10). "When the alcohol talks all hell breaks loose, then I really tell him off, even hit him. I know he will get me back and then the anger is out" (Gibson, 2004:13).

It is the researcher's experience that women on the farm do not support each other. Women who apply for and use interdicts are **criticised by other women**. They are blamed for their own injuries by other women. They are encouraged to hit back but not to use the law or make moves to move away.

In a joint study conducted by the Department of Criminology of UCT and the Black Sash of Knysna among rural women, it was found that there was complacency about domestic violence despite an incidence rate of eighty percent. The researchers found little intolerance for the violence. Assisting a woman who had been battered was uncommon. The problem is perceived as a "marriage problem"

and not a community problem. Women defended their apathy to seek help by saying it is weekend stuff when the men have been drinking and in the week things are different (Artz, 1998:13). Women are powerless in the face of alcohol abuse (Artz, 1998).

It is the researcher's experience that children dread weekends and holidays for fear of violence and neglect as a result of their parents' drinking. Children have approached our staff and requested that the crèche and after school be open on public holidays. After a one week post harvest holiday, children complained they were hungry all holiday" (Practitioners Journal, 2002).

Women interviewed by Artz (1998:14) cite the causes of violence as:

- men have no respect for women;
- problems with children;
- alcohol abuse;
- unemployment;
- suspicion and jealousy;
- culture.

Various writers have expounded various perspectives of violence on farms which are summarised in table 3.3 and discussed in section 3.5.2.

TABLE 3.3: A summary of the perspectives of violence on farms

<p>Violence on farms – weapon of the weak, sign of strength</p> <p>Violence on farms – the “nature” of man</p> <p>Violence on farms – the “lot” of women</p> <p>Violence on farms – tool of the oppressed</p> <p>Violence on farms – a legacy of poverty and marginalisation</p> <p>Violence on farms – a symbol of belonging and being loved</p>

3.5.2 Perspectives on the incidence of the violence of farms

3.5.2.1 *Violence on farms – weapon of the weak, sign of strength*

Violence and aggression is a way of life so much so on farms, that the non aggressive person is considered the outsider. Male and female farm dwellers alike talk aggressively, threaten aggression and behave aggressively. One interviewee told me he has never hit anyone but he has heard other men brag about hitting their wives, children and others. Strength and violence are bedfellows.

Diana Gibson (2004) grapples with the persistence of a high incidence of social violence in South Africa and particularly in the Western Cape despite the new democracy, constitution and the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act. She quotes the work of various writers, identifying various explanations, many of which ring true for rural communities in the Western Cape.

3.5.2.2 *Violence on farms – the “nature” of man*

Gibson (2004:2) expounds the work of Bourdieu who accounts for violence by arguing “...it is the result of male domination that is so embedded and pervasive it is taken as the norm”. This argument does not entirely account for why domination needs to be violent.

Some anthropologists on the other hand argue that “men are by nature aggressive, violent and unable to control sexual urges” (Cock et al., 1998–2001 in Gibson, 2004:4). Somehow being male meant / means “men are expected to either endure or mete out violence (Gibson, 2004:14). Intoxication disinhibits the drinker, removing constraints on aggressive behaviour. This (violent) behaviour becomes learned and reinforced by the fact that perpetrators who are drunk are not held accountable for their actions (Pareeze, 2003:11). Men always feel their violence is justifiable (Pareeze, 2003:26). Seemingly a man who does **not** express his displeasure violently is considered weak. One man said when he made a commitment to non violence “*Ek gaan nou muis wees*” (I will be a mouse) (A.S. November, 2006).

3.5.2.3 Violence on farms – the “lot” of women

Just as being a male somehow implies being violent so does being a women somehow imply that being the victim of violence is the lot of women (Gibson, 2004:14). Women too resolve their conflicts aggressively (Waldman, 1994). As practitioner I have witnessed women threatening each other, their partners and children. Women biting, scratching, throwing and stabbing is not uncommon. Physical aggression is considered the first and often the best way of resolving conflict. *One day the crèche supervisor and a mother of a child in the crèche started off arguing and ended up biting and hitting each other.* Is it that women are doing what has been done to them? (Practitioner’s Journal, 2003).

3.5.2.4 Violence on farms – tool of the oppressed

Yet other writers explain violent behaviour as the tool of the oppressed (Scheper et al., in Gibson, 2004:1) and “*weapon of the weak*” (Van Dongen, 2003 in Gibson, 2004). By behaving aggressively and often destructively somehow the powerless are empowered. The crèche supervisor mentioned earlier warned her superior that despite the culture of non–violence in the crèche, she would not stand for anyone hitting her. If she were hit, she **was** going to hit back.

*A was called into discuss his violent behaviour. He was furious that this wife had been advised to get an interdict. He was adamant that his violence was justified. Even when confronted with the law and the Constitution, he insisted that he is **not a coward**. He **will** react violently when he feels justified (A.S. 31 October, 2006).* Another women this week, spoke about her husband’s infidelity and said “*Ek sê vir juffrou, juffrou moenie verbaas wees as sy kom en ek het vir I gemoer!* (Teacher mustn’t be surprised if one morning she finds I have hit I (H.J. 14 November, 2006).

3.5.2.5 Violence on farms – a legacy of poverty and marginalisation

Violent behaviour, Borman and Cock argue “is a social pathology resulting from a colonial and apartheid history, state violence, social and racial inequality, the militarization of men, the legacy of poverty and marginalisation” (Borman & Cock in

Gibson, 2004).

Farm workers have until recently been marginalised and for many generations were treated violently, they are locked into cycles of poverty. In the workplace men are powerless. The only place they have power is in the home. Sadly they express that power through aggression and violence to maintain order in the home and to save face in the community.

3.5.2.6 Violence on farms – a symbol of belonging and being loved

Gibson found that the rural community assigned various symbolic meanings to violence. The emphasis placed by the community is not on the plight of the victim. In fact, having been at the receiving end of violence, the victim would be strengthened through his/her suffering (Gibson, 2004:8).

Violence seemingly is afforded to those the perpetrator loves. It is an act of disciplining of his/her loved ones. One of Gibson's respondents said her partner "*het die liefde so in my ingeslaan*" (has beaten the love into me) (Gibson, 2004:8)

Another respondent was concerned that she **had not** been beaten for some time, concerned that he no longer loved her or had another women (Gibson, 2004:15). Women report that when their men hit them, they know they are loved (Gibson, 2004:9). Parents hit their children (one women reported in the Gibson study that she had hit her son until he was unconscious) to prevent children becoming gangsters (Gibson, 2004:14). Violence affirms authority (Salo in Gibson, 2004:14). A mother explains her beating her child "*ek slat die vesta in hom in, hy soekit. Ek slat hom dat hy wiet* (I beat the understanding into him. He looks for it. I beat him so he knows) (Gibson, 2004:15). The discipline sometimes though seems inappropriate. A 12-year old one day showed us the welts on his back where his mother had whipped him because he "stole" bread from the food cupboard (Practitioner's Journal, 2003).

Men hit their women, men and women hit their children. Children hit each other. And so it goes round and round and round. However, Gibson (2004:16) concludes

“Through violence the interconnectedness between family members and between families and the wider community was maintained, patrolled and rectified.” Gibson suggests that violence in these contexts has come to symbolise belonging and importance. This is an aspect requiring further investigation. Is there perhaps a link between marginalised communities and an “acceptance of violence?” Is there somehow a search for belonging that the prevalence of violence meets and perpetuates?

3.5.3 Individual and community response to violence

Even people who are ordinarily not aggressive in times of crisis resort to aggression. *Our health worker recently tied up her adult son and kicked him because he was drunk and disorderly. She said that she didn't know what else to do* (Practitioner's Reflections, 2004). Despite painting a bleak picture of violence on farms, the picture is not entirely black. *One worker whom we know has been hitting his wife when she is drunk but the wife has been reluctant to talk. Recently he got scared when two other men were arrested and asked for help. A first!!* (Practitioner's Journal, 2006).

“Some women have developed their own way of responding. Some, most endure for a while, and then retaliate or instigate violence themselves. Others remove themselves and their children from harms way. One woman when she saw her husband was becoming abusive would lock him in a room and go away, returning when he would have sobered up” (Gibson, 2004:9). *One couple known to the researcher have for years been locked in a cycle of violence. Recently, tired of being the victim, the wife and a drinking buddy of hers retaliated and gave the man a “good hiding”. Nothing changed, the next weekend he burnt her clothes and the following weekend he hit her* (Practitioner's Reflections, 2006).

Non violent options such as obtaining an interdict and counselling are seen as soft options “sag” (soft). A sign of weakness. Of course for the women who does decide to report the abuse or move away, her problems are overwhelming. Access to telecommunication, legal services, transport, police, no alternative housing, high

rates of unemployment and a fear of community gossip all make the decision to seek help overwhelming and difficult (Artz, 1998:5, 20).

When women in particular seek help, social workers are one of the resources they use. However, what Ginsberg (in Schenck, 2004:2) found is that a paradox exists in rural communities. "On the one hand there is a need for social work service, yet on the other it takes a long time for social workers to gain the trust of the community". Various factors impinge on service delivery of social workers in rural communities and therefore deter people from seeking and using help. These factors are listed below:

- **Access to clients.** Travelling distances, inability to see people during work hours and lack of telecommunications are logistical problems making access to clients difficult.
- **Mistrust and self reliance.** Generally rural communities value their self-reliance (Schenck, 2004) and there is a mistrust of the outsider. In many rural communities, outsiders are unwelcome (Du Toit, 1997). The outsider is called the *Inkomer* (new person). (See Chapter 2 for further discussion).
- **Lack of boundaries and confidentiality.** When people live in close proximity to each other, private matters become public knowledge. Social workers are easily identified on the farm by their vehicles, they often have no private space and end up interviewing where they are visible to others. Calls to other agencies or services often need to be made in open plan offices or where other people can hear the conversation. The farm dwellers' life circumstances are, in many instances considered public knowledge by fellow workers and farm management. People are called away from work to "go and see the social worker". When they do go to the office of the social worker, they are most likely transported by the farm and the driver or whoever else is on the transport is not bound by confidentiality. Having knowledge of another labourers' problems, gives the listener a sense of power in the community. In some rural communities, the social worker lives in the community and people try hard to

discuss other peoples' business. Secretaries, receptionists, etc have access to confidential information and do not always treat such information accordingly (Schenck, 2004).

I spent today being visited by everyone but the person directly affected by the problem. Everyone had their opinion on what the problem is and what should be done. I listened. I was very careful not to give any opinion or divulge any information but there is no guarantee that is what will be communicated. Sometimes my silence is interpreted as "juffrou doen niks nie" (Teacher does nothing) or "juffrou wil niks van A hoor nie" (Teacher will not hear anything about A) (Practitioner's Reflections, 2006).

- **Great physical distance:** Distances between farms, makes collective work with people from different farms, encountering similar problems difficult (Schenck, 2004).

3.5.4 Child on child violence

Another aspect of violence in rural communities is the increasing incidence of child on child violence. The children have been socialised into the perception that violence is equated with discipline.

Recently some of the boys complained that the staff at the after school "doen glad niks nie" (do nothing about bad behaviour) because they do not hit the perpetrators despite several other punishment / correctional approaches being used (Practitioner's Reflections, 2007). Over the period of this research, there has been an increasing incidence of child–upon–child violence on farms and in schools in the area. Three very serious incidents (one fatal) have happened within a 15 km radius of each other. In December 2003, four boys under the age of 9 severely hurt and drowned one of their group. Four months later, five boys under the age of 11, killed 14 Black Springbok and seriously hurt and sodomised the "*piemper (whistle blower)*" (whistle blower). Within months of the above–mentioned incidents, a boy at the local school was hospitalised after being severely sodomised and injured when he was suspected of *piemping*. The examples are endless. Stone throwing

with intent to hurt is common practise among farm children and their parents.

There is no scope here for an in–depth study of child on child violence on farms, except to say it is a problem within the community. Different writers have different perspectives. Some writers suggest a U–turn needs to be made as regards the family. Drs Cecilia Jansen and Irma Labuschagne, an educational psychologist and criminologist respectively, both point towards the family as cause and solution to the incidence of child violence and crime (*Die Burger*, January 12, 2004). It is the researcher’s experience, that farm children are aggressive, quick to anger, have low tolerance and impulse control and unless stopped, resolve matters physically. Children are left unsupervised a large portion of the time, and are often given age–inappropriate responsibilities and choices. By the time the parents feel the need to take control, children are already exhibiting behavioural problems.

Rules and consequences regarding the child’s behaviour has there been input into developing an internal locus of control. In the article mentioned earlier, Dr Labuschagne (*Die Burger*, January 12, 2004) argues that many children do not understand the basic difference between right and wrong. Most of the children attending the early learning centre and after school managed by the researcher are concerned with retaliation. They struggle with the concept of doing what is right rather than hitting back and do not buy into non–violence at all.

To summarise: Violence on farms follows the pattern made by a set of concentric circles. Historically, socially, economically and politically, farming communities have been marginalised and oppressed. Oppression, marginalisation and a high incidence of alcohol–over–indulgence perpetuates a cycle of violence. Violence creates further oppression. To make sense of the violence, men, women and children have assigned symbolic meaning to the meting out of violence.

The symbolic meanings of violence, socio–economic factors such as financial dependence, a chronic shortage of housing and a high rate of unemployment maintain people in violent and disempowering situations. There seems like no way out. The circles seem so tightly interwoven that even systems working for change

somehow seem disempowered. The new Constitution and the Domestic Violence Act make it easier for victims to take a stand against violence.

There is, in some areas, support for victims of violence from NGO's, legal resource centres, farm management and the police. However these are all "outside-in" approaches to working for change. As with the abolishment of Slavery and the Tot System, an impetus for change has by and large not come from the grassroots. Domestic violence is being addressed via legislation, lobbying and development practitioners. Parenzee and Smythe (2003) caution development practitioners against the risk that empowerment and development work with women in some instances raises the incidence of violence. This raises a moral and developmental dilemma. What is the role of legislators and practitioners? Does one "meddle" with the status quo and risk exacerbating the problem? Are we correct in working from the premise that domestic violence is wrong? Or are we imposing a foreign value system and creating an even bigger monster than already exists? Some writers suggest that the absence of structural support services that is what impedes progress while others argue that structural support is not always the lack.

It is the researcher's opinion that real change will take place when there is an intolerance of violence from the grassroots with support from the State, Police and NGOs. The discussion on domestic violence has the potential to leave practitioners and legislators feeling overwhelmed and powerless. "Gender violence must be seen at best a challenge and at worst a complete barrier to development success" (Parenzee & Smythe, 2003:13). However, one cannot ignore structural and social inequalities and injustices such as waged poverty, literacy and housing.

3.6 THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF WOMEN ON FARMS

"Women farm workers can be identified as the most vulnerable group of South African Society" (Moeller, 1998–1999). Women, argues Waldman (1994) are oppressed by male labourers and by farmers. Male labourers interact with the farmer or management on behalf of their wife, daughter or girlfriend. In many

instances, women are only allowed to be on the farm by virtue of their relationship with a man.

Women are primarily employed as seasonal labour and are therefore constrained in obtaining livelihood security in their own right (Moeller, 1998). On some farms women living on a particular farm and employed as seasonal workers are not allowed to look for work elsewhere. In these situations women have access to continuous income only by virtue of men's wages, leaving women vulnerable and dependent (Waldman, 1994:12).

Research conducted by Sunde and Kleinbooi (1999) revealed that women on farms do not have equal opportunities to men. Women do not get equal pay for equal work, a glass ceiling exists. Many women experience sexual harassment in the workplace and more than half the women interviewed do not get paid maternity leave or are not made aware of their right to claim U.I.F. Women's work is not considered as valuable as men's work. Even where both partners work full-time, the man is considered the breadwinner. Domestic chores are considered the domain of the women even if she works the same hours as her husband. Women have been socialised into accepting without question the division of labour.

A couple came to see me about the violence and drinking in their home. The husband was adamant he wanted a sober wife who comes home from work to do her domestic chores. He saw nothing wrong with the fact that after work he went drinking. The fact that she would like a sober husband who came home after work to be with his family was an unreasonable request. Even when confronted with the unfairness of her giving up drinking and he continuing, he remained adamant (A and E.S, December 2005).

"On the farm, sex and violence are closely linked ... sexual violence often ends in rape" (Waldman, 1994:12). Men punish women when women drink. In some households men hand over their pay packet to the woman who then gives him pocket money. "Any woman who is known to use contraception is called an *oom* (*uncle*) or *mansmens* (*male*) because she cannot have children. Men in these

relationships are given consent to turn to other women (Waldman, 1994:16). Some men end up fathering several children by various mothers and are unable to support them.

When A got involved with P, she was only 14. In their sexual relationship he wanted to use a condom. Her mother said “geen kind van my gaan ‘n kondom gebruik” (no child of mine will use a condom). She fell pregnant and agreed to return to school. Her mother and sisters teased and mocked her for returning to school (Practitioner’s Reflections, 2003).

The oppression of women is so entrenched that few women are able to break free. Those that do, face further marginalisation and discrimination. Female learners are not expected to complete their schooling. In some instances, their mothers encourage them to leave school and manage the household chores. Teenage pregnancies are high. So too are pregnancies among young women who already have several children with different men, none of whom financially support the women. Some women continue to “give men a child” and by so doing become poorer and poorer. Few women will consider abortion for themselves or their teenage daughters.

Women on farms not only have to cope with discriminatory and oppressive treatment by the men in their lives but they do not always receive support from the women around them. *I talked to L about the fact she now has three children, from three fathers, none of whom support her financially. She struggles financially. We talked about the pressure she had been under by her mother and other women. “My ma en die mense het gesê daar moet iets fout wees – hoekom gee ek nie vir hom ‘n kind nie” (My mother and the people said there must be something wrong, why am I not giving him a child?) (L.J., 2003).*

3.6.1 The Employment Equity Act and women on farms

The objective of the Employment Equity Act (EEA, 1998) is to eliminate practises that are currently unfair or discriminatory and to implement measures to address disadvantages experienced by particular categories of employees for example

people of colour, women, and people with disabilities. In the agricultural sector, research shows that there is still widespread discrimination against women on farms. The EEA will be an important tool in addressing current discriminatory practises. However, the success of the legislation depends on both worker and workplace to be informed and willing to engage with the law (Taylor, 1999).

3.7 CHILDREN ON FARMS

There is very little in the literature on children on farms beside what is written about FAS and health issues. The insight and experience gained by the researcher is specific to the farm on which her work and experience has taken place and therefore will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

3.8 HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF FARM WORKERS ON FARMS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

3.8.1 Health problems relating to children on farms

Low birth weight, infant mortality and childhood stunting rates are two to three times more prevalent in than in urban areas. Chronic under nutrition as a child coupled with intrauterine insults with alcohol and tobacco products will curtail the lifetime potential achievable by young people entering adulthood on farms. As a result escape from the cycle is extremely difficult (London, 2003:64). There is evidence that undernourished children grow up to be undernourished adults. See 3.4.5 for a discussion of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome on farms.

3.8.2 The health problems of adult farm workers

Farm workers are at risk of exposure to pesticide poisoning and in some instances male workers have been used as human markers for aerial spraying.

The incidence of TB is three times higher on farms than in the city (DOPSTOP Research Report, 1998). Chronic disorders such as heart disease, liver cirrhosis and malignancy are assuming increasing prominence as problems. Almost one quarter of labourers are known to suffer from hypertension.

3.8.3 Lifestyle choices and health on farms

Smoking: one study revealed that 81% of male farm workers smoked (Husy & Samson, 2001; London, 1999; DOPSTOP Research Report, 1998).

Together with a lifetime of alcohol excess, head trauma and pesticide exposure, the workers' opportunity to bring about change and escape their dependency and passivity is threatened (London, 2003).

3.9 LIVING CONDITIONS OF FARM WORKERS ON FARMS

3.9.1 Housing

3.9.1.1 *Social aspects of farm workers' housing*

On just fewer than half the farms surveyed by Sunde and Kleinbooi (1999) did the farmers consider the houses as part of the contract of male workers. However, the majority of women understood that to be the case. Few women were aware that they had occupational rights. Despite paying lip service to the fact that the house is not the only benefit of the male worker, few farms allocate houses to single women or women whose husbands/partners do not work on the farm. Priority for houses are given to families. Should a woman be widowed, she is expected to move into a smaller house (Sunde & Kleinbooi, 1999). The house provides a sense of security for workers but there is simultaneously a constant threat to the worker that if he loses his job "*hy moet huis leegmaak*" (*vacate his house*) (Du Toit, 1999).

Within the context of the housing shortage in South Africa, having access to a house gives people a sense of status and power within their extended family. In many instances families living on farms open their house to extended family which in most cases creates a situation of overcrowding (D.S. Family, 2004). Adult children are reticent about leaving their parents' home for fear of not finding work or housing. Many farm workers say they would like to leave the farm but few do. In one house on the farm there are three couples (grandparents and three adult daughters, their partners and children). *There are numerous such examples.* Living **and** working on the farm creates an incestuous, enmeshed, isolated

community who do not have the opportunity to have a life independent and separate from work and colleagues.

3.9.1.2 Services and amenities in the houses on farms

Three quarters of farm dwellings were found to have electricity while less than half had flush toilets and only eleven percent had access to telecommunication. Almost one in five houses were considered overcrowded (Husy & Samson, 2001; Sunde & Kleinbooi, 1999).

Agricultural workers are out in the fields in the day, unless they have access to a cell phone it is difficult to attend to personal business. Historically the labourers business has been conducted via a third party such as the farmer or his spouse. Without access to telecommunications, workers are unable to contact emergency services after hours when they need them. Those workers who make use of phones in the office or request a third party to assist them with personal business have to contend with a lack of privacy and a complete disregard of boundaries by people around who hear their conversations.

Access to electricity is essential for access to information through radio and television and light by which to read and study. Were it not for television, farm workers would be even more isolated from the world outside the farm.

3.9.1.3 Childcare facilities on farms

In 1999 fewer than half of farm workers had access to childcare facilities. Of those who did have access to childcare, half of the farms provided free childcare services. On farms where parents were required to make a monthly contribution to the care of their children the amount was approximately R18,73 per month. In many instances a token amount. Some farm crèches that are registered with the State receive a monthly subsidy from the Department of Social Development. Access to childcare is crucial for women who need to work (Husy & Samson, 2001). Very little information was available in the literature on childcare facilities. On farms in the Stellenbosch district childcare is usually limited to a crèche staffed by women from

the farm who have no formal training in child care.

There are very few after school facilities on farms. Considering the high incidence of FAS, alcohol abuse, domestic violence, poverty and illiteracy on farms, the children of farm workers should be considered children with special needs and receive care and stimulation from people who are experienced and specially trained. The Department of Social Development initiated an after school pilot project in the Boland in 2007 in partnership with the Anna Foundation.

3.9.1.4 Land reform in the agricultural sector

Land sector agencies across South Africa are currently engaged in national debates regarding the future of the land reform programme and around how landless people may be able to access land reform programmes and engage in the available options in order to extend their security of tenure and enter into productive activities if they so choose (Tilley, 2003:5). This is an extensive topic beyond the scope of this study. However, the researcher considered it relevant to mention land reform as some farm workers have already been involved in various initiatives. More will be as the programme gains momentum. There is extensive literature available and any reader wanting to read further would do well to start with material available from the Centre For Rural Legal Studies, Stellenbosch. The Centre has documented and researched several initiatives.

3.10 THE CYCLE OF POVERTY ON FARMS

Poverty is more serious in rural areas than in urban areas in South Africa (Republic of South Africa National Report, 2000 in Gathiram, 2005). The following is a discussion on the various factors influencing poverty on farms.

3.10.1 Factors influencing poverty on farms

3.10.1.1 Waged poverty

A household survey in 1995 found that more than two-thirds of farm worker families in the Western Cape lived in waged poverty, collectively generating

monthly incomes of less than ZAR900 (London, 2003:60). “Real wages have fallen between 1991 and 1996 according to a confirmed study of workers in 1996” (Husy & Samson, 2001). Most farm workers have no retirement provisions despite working all their adult lives, often for the same employer (COSATU Submission on Farm Workers, September 1999).

3.10.1.2 *The Sectoral Determination Act (2002)*

This legislation seeks to ensure a basic minimum wage and working conditions for South African farm workers. Within a year of the Legislation being passed, the Department of Labour had over 1 300 applications from farmers seeking exemption from certain conditions of employment for various reasons. There were also many complaints regarding non compliance by farmers. The Centre For Rural Legal Studies conducted research on forty five farms in the Bo-Karoo and Southern Cape/Karoo region of the Western Cape that revealed:

- there has not been a significant gain in achieving minimum wages;
- there is a continued lack of compliance regarding issuing of pay slips;
- 22% of workers reported being forced to work overtime;
- a clear lack of awareness of worker rights with regard to overtime pay, sick leave and maternity leave and knowledge of how to claim for Workmen’s Compensation;
- none of the houses complied totally with requirements;
- farm workers are finding themselves having to pay for accommodation where in the past they lived for free;
- the SETA’s have not made a significant impact on the majority of workers interviewed (Centre For Rural Legal Studies, Stellenbosch).

3.10.1.3 *Reliance on social grants and pensions*

There is also a significant reliance on social security grants, including disability grants, child support and old age pensions. In the past, grandparents who raised

grandchildren could apply for foster care grants. Now that has changed. The childcare grant is available to parents and guardians who earn below a certain amount. The childcare grant is less than what the foster care grant used to be. As a result household incomes have been reduced. Social security is particularly important for seasonal workers (Dugard et al., 2005:39).

From the 1997 census figures, it appears that the majority of farm workers earned between R401–R800 per month (Henn, 2001:79). These figures are difficult to verify. In addition, the past ten years has been a significant period for the working conditions of farm workers and so these figures are expected to have changed and should not be considered accurate.

Men, who retire early because they no longer feel fit for the manual labour they have done for years, lose out financially. They cannot apply for the State pension before age 65 and if they have a private pension and they draw on it earlier, they get less than they would otherwise. Low literacy levels make understanding the complex nature of insurance and pensions very difficult for farm workers to understand. Often when they have been signed up by brokers, they have not fully understood the discussions and have not realised their expectations. Casual labourers do not have pensions.

3.10.1.4 *Childhood labour and household income*

Some of the change in the agricultural sector over the last decade has not been positive. A very disheartening article appeared in the *Cape Times* (October 19, 2006). Dr Levine had conducted research in Rawsonville in 1996 for a PhD. She returned to conduct a restudy in 2006 and found that hunger and poverty **are worse** than they were ten years ago. The *Cape Times* article raises a moral dilemma concerning rural poverty. Ten years ago child labour on farms was common practise, helping their parents in vineyards as a means to increase their overall household income. Since 2003 farmers have become afraid of hiring children due to the penalties associated with child labour infractions.

The abolition of child labour and the abolition of the Dopstelsel have had a

profoundly negative effect on child hunger. “Farm workers report they are now forced to spend nearly their entire cash wage on liquor” (*Cape Times*, October 19, 2006). For many children, their only food is one or two slices of bread and a glass of milk from school feeding schemes which are stretched beyond capacity. Dr Levine (2006) argues that despite conditions in 1996 being poor she did not find the levels of poverty she finds today. Levine accounts for the increase in poverty to the implementation of legislation without addressing adequately socio-economic inequality.

The implementation of minimum wages, the abolition of childhood labour and the legacy of the Dopstelsel have raised the levels of poverty and hunger to new heights. Without the option of supplementing family income by working in the vineyards and orchards, children are turning to sex work and crime to combat their hunger pains. Morally, Dr Levine argues child labour and the Dopstelsel **should** be abolished, but hunger in the Winelands means protective legislation has failed the people it is meant to protect (Levine, *Cape Times*, October 19, 2006).

3.10.1.5 Wages and gender on farms

Generally male labourers do better paid work than the work traditionally done by women. Women are perceived as supplementary wage earners resulting in a scenario where women labourers earn on average 25–50% less than men (Husy & Samson, 2001). *One female farm worker was deliberately not given an increase that would place her in a higher income bracket than her male counterparts* (R.J., 2004).

3.10.1.6 Farm workers and financial management

In Chapter 2 reference was made to Peonage: a practise where labourers buy products from the farmer on credit and cannot leave their job until their debt is paid off. In many instances the debt was out of proportion to the labourer’s income and so the labourer never got out of his debt. Peonage still exists on farms that are more isolated. There is very little in the literature about peonage but there is anecdotal evidence that it is a key aspect of workers’ lives and is relevant to the

discussion on poverty on farms.

When Mr X started here as a farm manager there was still a farm shop. Some peoples' debt was such that once their debt was deducted from their pay, they literally took home a few cents. That is why he closed the shop and made that we went to town to shop (J.C., 2004).

The researcher was unable to find any literature on the farm labourers' attitude to money management but it is an issue that is constantly spoken of by labourers. The stakeholders have changed. It is no longer the farmer who the labourers are indebted to but shebeen owners, loan sharks and furniture shops who offer lay byes and long term credit. Labourers hand over identity documents and bank cards to loan sharks and they have no sooner paid off a fridge when the retailer is nagging them to buy the next item.

Today a salesman from E.F.S. called looking for C. She has finished paying off her fridge; they want to know if she is interested in a washing machine. There is a special offer. If she takes the washing machine she gets a new kettle to the value of R100 (C.L. 2001). Labourers over commit themselves to various debtors to get them from one crisis to the next. There is little forward planning or delayed gratification. Promises to children are constantly broken. *My ma het my belowe sy gaan vir my iets koop vir my verjaarsdag, maar toe die dag gekom het daar was niks. Sy het niks gesê nie. Die dag het net verby gegaan.* (My mother promised me she would buy me something for my birthday. When the day came there was nothing. She said nothing) (C.B., July 2003). Promises made to children, school fees and even food take second priority. Children are **kept out of school because they don't have shoes**. Having school shoes is not a school rule. Parents do not want children to go to school without shoes because it is a bad reflection on the parent, but do not make a plan to rectify the situation. Recently a mother was planning to keep a grade one child out of school for a month. High school children played truant because they needed stationery which parents said they would buy on the weekend and didn't. Money received on Friday is gone by Saturday. Families are living in a constant sense of deprivation and a state of wishing away

the time until the next pay day. Establishing income generation projects on farm A have been unsuccessful.

Seemingly labourers seek short term solutions to their financial difficulties.

As ek my skuld kan betaal sal alles reg kom. Dis nie nodig om iets anders te doen nie. Het juffrou 'n casual werk vir my op 'n Saterdag nie. (If only I could pay off my debt everything will be fine. Not necessary to do anything else. Does Ms not have a casual job for me on a Saturday?) (D.C., 2002).

The local SACCO (South African Credit Co–Operative) is working hard to assist labourers with money management. They are finding that they become locked in a paternalistic relationship with farm workers where unless they become over involved and physically pay money to a loan shark, furniture shop, etc the money a labourer withdraws to pay off debt is used for something else and the debt remains unpaid. Recently SACCO, Stellenbosch conducted a financial management course for their members. The course attendance was very poor despite people being given some of the time as work time, child care organised and a meal provided to attendees. *“Nee ek gaan nie, ek weet hoe om my geld te hanteer (I don't need to go. I know what to do) (E.S., 2007).* This person gets paid on Friday and her money is GONE by Saturday.

SACCO encourages people to shop around for better deals or rather save for an item. Tied to the money management issue seems to be the absence of a sense of future, an inability to delay gratification and a need to hide their poverty and look good to others. *J.C. will over spend so that “ons mense is nie afgeskep nie (so that our people don't look bad).*

Children dropping out of school, adults missing out on events because they think they don't have the right outfits, etc are self imposed on themselves and not prescribed. The following is a success story. *A gave up drinking three years ago. A year ago he got a promotion to a responsible position which keeps him busy after–hours. A month ago he bought himself a new car. Over three years he had saved R20 000. The day before he got his new car he said to his manager “ek wil net*

dankie sê vir die werk. Dit hou my uit die kwaad. Die geld is my drank geld wat ek gespaar het nou dat ek nie meer drink nie. (I want to say thank you for this job. It keeps me from doing wrong. The money I have saved is the money I have saved since I stopped drinking) (A.M., September, 2006).

The local SACCO branch tells of traders who prey on farm workers' vulnerability. They arrive on farms at around 11h00 on a Sunday morning knowing that the non drinkers (those who are *bekeer*) have gone to Church. The drinkers have partied since Friday and need to start sobering up for work on Monday. They (the drinkers) realise they have spent all their disposable income on alcohol and there is no food in the house, or that they promised to buy the child a pair of shoes, etc. The traders come with a load of provisions along with complimentary bread, sugar and cool drinks. The farm workers are offered provisions on credit. For the convenience of credit, prices are higher than supermarket prices. Some farm workers never shop at regular supermarkets. They are unaware of the exorbitant prices they are paying. The same traders who give complimentary items to encourage buying on credit have been known to threaten workers at gun point on pay day.

The cycle of debt/poverty is more than a simple lack of skills with financial management. Woven into the way labourers use their money is their vision of their future and their own sense of self. These thoughts are unsubstantiated and I cannot find reference in the literature but it was explored in interviews and is discussed more in the following chapter.

3.10.2 Poverty alleviation

Internationally poverty alleviation initiatives have focused on economic development at the expense of capacity building and empowerment and as result have not had the desired effect. Many income generating and employment creation projects survive on small profit margins and are vulnerable to market forces. For poverty alleviation to be successful structural change needs to take place alongside empowerment and transformation. For empowerment and poverty alleviation programmes to be successful there has to be a change in power

relations between individuals, groups and social institutions. Once the labourer no longer perceives themselves as victim and they take charge of their lives personal change will occur (Gaithiram, 2005). Taking charge of their own lives is a foreign concept to the labourers.

Farm workers, as a result of paternalism have not learnt to take charge of their lives or see themselves as part of a solution. As long as they have been loyal and remained in favour with the farmer, he has taken care of them. What the farmer hasn't provided, the workers have done without. The physical isolation of the farm has prevented labourers from being exposed to people who despite their disadvantages have taken control of their lives. It is difficult for people to work towards something they cannot visualise.

3.11 EDUCATIONAL LEVELS OF FARM DWELLERS

3.11.1 Literacy

Illiteracy levels among farms workers are recorded as being at thirty percent in the Western Cape (Husy & Samson, 2001) while a survey in Stellenbosch revealed that half the sample were illiterate (London, 2003:60). Of the farm workers who have attended school, one in five have gone beyond Standard 5 (COSATU Submission to the Department of Labour, September 1999). Learners leave school because of poverty, teenage pregnancy, transport difficulties or the need to help support their families. Male learners typically leave school to find employment. **The benefits of higher education are negligible or unclear to learners and their families** and there has been a decrease in the availability of adult education courses (Husy & Samson, 2001).

3.11.2 Farm schooling

Research indicates that funding alone is not sufficient to promote the broader socio-economic aspirations of farm school learners. Western Cape farm schools are better funded than farm schools elsewhere in the country, yet the socio-economic prospects for learners from the Western Cape farm schools are

not much higher than those for learners in Mpumalanga.(Dugard et al., 2005:31).

Most learners do not progress much beyond primary school level. Those learners who do go to high school drop out within the first year. The Dugard study (2005) found that one learner in five years has gone to university and almost all end up back on the farm. London (2003) argues that few children of farm workers manage to leave the sector, because of inadequate educational infrastructure in rural farming areas, poor social circumstances, and childhood stunting of the order of thirty percent. The Dugard (2005) study revealed that farm schools generally were sufficiently resourced and had adequate facilities. What this study did establish when interviewing teachers at these schools was that the majority of teachers had a pessimistic and negative opinion regarding the ability and potential of the children they were teaching. The attitude of the teachers was defeatist claiming children did poorly as a result of inbreeding. Learners were labelled as lazy and uncommitted and unable to cope with OBE. Most teachers expressed the opinion that the expectations placed on children are too high, the support they have from home inadequate and their potential to become entrepreneurs limited. The majority of the teachers were fatalistic about the children's futures, predicting that few children would ever move away from farm life.

The above statements are the views expressed by the very people responsible for teaching farm children. Commenting on the above Dugard et al. (2005:37) argues "it is striking that none of the educators assumed any responsibility for bettering learners' opportunities ... it seems logical that such a defeatist attitude on the part of educators must impinge on the prospects of learners, feeding into a negative cycle of dependence on the farm system and an inability to break away to achieve higher education and opportunity". By placing the blame for poor performance so squarely on the shoulders of the children and their environment, educators absolve themselves of any accountability for the standard of education in farm schools.

Farm owners, principals and educators seem satisfied with that situation in schools. Learners on the other hand (38 of 40) overwhelmingly expressed a desire to move

off the farm. How will farm children ever realize their dreams if everyone around them considers them defeated before they have tried? Another reality needs to be considered. However, the reality is that formal employment on farms is decreasing. The Department of Labour's figures indicate that there has been a 10% drop in employment in the agricultural sector since 1998. The trend towards the use of contract labour will also influence the availability of employment opportunities in the agricultural sector.

The role, support and attitude of the farmer has always been key in the functioning of many farm schools. However, where an educational system that is dependent on goodwill and is subject to market forces and where the employment opportunities for parents are subjective and insecure is not conducive to sustainable development of educational outcome. It is crucial that priority attention be given to the education of farm children. Table 3.3 summarises research of Dugard (2005). Implicit in the summary are the factors regarding farm schooling that require attention.

TABLE 3.4: Findings relating to a study of farm schools in the Western Cape

<p>Schools visited were sufficiently funded and the buildings adequate with all the required amenities</p> <p>All learners living more than 5 km from school were being transported to school (5 km can take a young child more than an hour to walk each way).</p> <p>Most schools had government feeding schemes.</p> <p>Almost all the schools in the sample practised multi-grade teaching typically with two classes, Grades 1–3 and Grades 4–6.</p> <p>School governing bodies (SGBs) seem relatively peripheral to the management and governance of farm schools except when it came to the collection and raising of funds.</p> <p>All schools visited charged fees ranging from R30–R250 per annum. Few parents paid school fees. Children are not excluded from school if fees are not paid but none of the principals interviewed had made parents aware of the fee exemption system.</p> <p>Corporal punishment remains widespread in farm schools. There seems to be no serious endeavour to stop the use of corporal punishment.</p> <p>At least one-third of children learners come from single parent or non-parent families, many living with mothers only or grandparents.</p> <p>There is a high incidence of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome.</p>

Based on research done by Dugard et al. (2005).

3.11.3 Skills development

There has been a call for the recognition and accreditation of skills of farm workers. There is a sector SETA and employers are required to pay a skills levy as well as provide paid time off for skills development. An extensive discussion on SETA is beyond the scope of this study. However, irrespective of the actual success of the SETA what is significant is that there is political will to provide training opportunities to farm workers. Of concern to the researcher is the appropriateness, relevant and applicability of courses. Any training that does not include application and monitoring in its design, limits its own efficacy.

3.12 INTERPERSONAL ISSUES BETWEEN LABOURERS ON FARMS

A paradox exists on farms. On the one hand generation after generation work the soil creating (it seems) a sense of security and continuity. Simultaneously, there is an insecurity that hangs over everyone's existence. Insecurity has already been discussed in relation to housing. Another feeling of insecurity is created by interpersonal jealousy and the presence of the *piemper (whistle blower)* (whistle blower).

The *piemper (whistle blower)* is an informer who has devious intent and will even lie to achieve his/her end. He or she considers him/herself to have a place of favour or trust with the farmer. The *piemper (whistle blower)* maintains his/her favourable position by reporting the action of his/her peers with the intention of damaging the standing of the other. Should the farmer express displeasure with anyone it is the *piemper (whistle blower)* who is held responsible. If it were not for the *piemper (whistle blower)*, all would be well.

There is on farms an ever present search for favour and finding fault with one's neighbour which creates jealousy and insecurity even on well integrated farms. Interpersonal jealousy, is considered by workers, one of the biggest problems in the community (Du Toit, 1992:16). Approval of one labourer seems always to be dependent on the disapproval of another. Any personal achievements are bitter sweet; it's a matter of time before someone in the community has found a reason

to taint the others success.

Labourers who are promoted or given positions of authority or responsibility become targets for ridicule and back-stabbing. Supervisors find themselves marginalised and stigmatised and excluded, caught between doing their job and losing favour with their peers. Either way they stand to loose favour, with their managers or the farmer or their peers. Given the choice, supervisors choose relinquishing their position over earning more money (Du Toit, 1992). *After months of being asked to appoint a supervisor in the crèche we (in consultation with the educare team) appointed N. After six months one morning she gave twenty four hours' notice. She couldn't cope with the jealousy and interpersonal issues* (Practitioner's Reflections, 2004).

The implication of interpersonal jealousy is that the farm workers' sense of wellbeing depends on approving judgement that can never be guaranteed, and that can always be unilaterally withdrawn (Du Toit, 1992:16). It is the researcher's experience that the labourers sense of self is extremely fragile and easily hurt. Labourers will let go of things from which they would gain, simply because of a 'look' or a comment from another labourer. Labourers depend solely on other people for approval and feedback about their worth. Individuals decide whether or not to do something based on who is making the request, not on whether or not they are willing or able to do the task.

Fierce antagonism and resentment builds up between "less privileged" workers and peers who are ambitious, self reliant, interested in social advancement and forward-looking. The success of the latter group is perceived as being favoured or seeking favour rather than for what it often is – ambition, self-reliance, and responsibility (Du Toit, 1992:36).

The interpersonal jealousy that exists on farms makes it extremely difficult for individual to rise above their circumstances and bring about change in their lives. What has been interpreted as apathy and disinterest regarding development projects may be the fear of ridicule and marginalisation. There seems to be very

little in the lived experiences of labourers that prepare, motivate or support them to become masters of their own destinies.

3.13 CONCLUSIONS

Powerlessness of farm workers is both the cause and effect of the continuous cycle of mortality and morbidity suffered by farm workers and their families (London, 2003:59). Rights that exist on paper for farm workers have yet to result in practical changes in the lives of farm workers in the absence of effective worker organisation or strong civil society institutions (London, 2003:60). Labourers are afraid to leave the insular, relatively secure world of the farm, despite the work being poorly paid and the myriad social problems discussed in this chapter. To some extent farm workers choose their social role despite their exposure to alternative ways of life. Options open to them are less materially secure, if concomitantly less socially oppressive (Dugard, 2005:39).

The quandary that farm workers found themselves in is illustrated in Diagram 2. A toss up between independence and new opportunity on the one hand and security on the other. The personal cost of security is in some instances great.

The legacies of Slavery, Paternalism and the Tot System are found not only in the conditions under which workers work and live but also in the psychological and institutional barriers preventing the achievement of a better life through effectively using opportunities available to them. Poverty and marginalisation are formidable barriers to overcome (Husy & Samson, 2001).

This chapter has examined as far as possible the lived experiences of farm workers in the Western Cape and the various social, political, economic and personal issues that impact on workers' lives as well as some of the legislation relevant to farm workers. The following chapter examines some of the recommendations made in the literature regarding working for change on farms. Social work alone will not change the lives of farm workers. It is not only farm workers who are the targets of change which is why the next chapter is entitled "***Working For Change On Farms***" and not ***Social Work with Farm workers***.

Choosing Between Life Off The Farm OR Working On The Farm

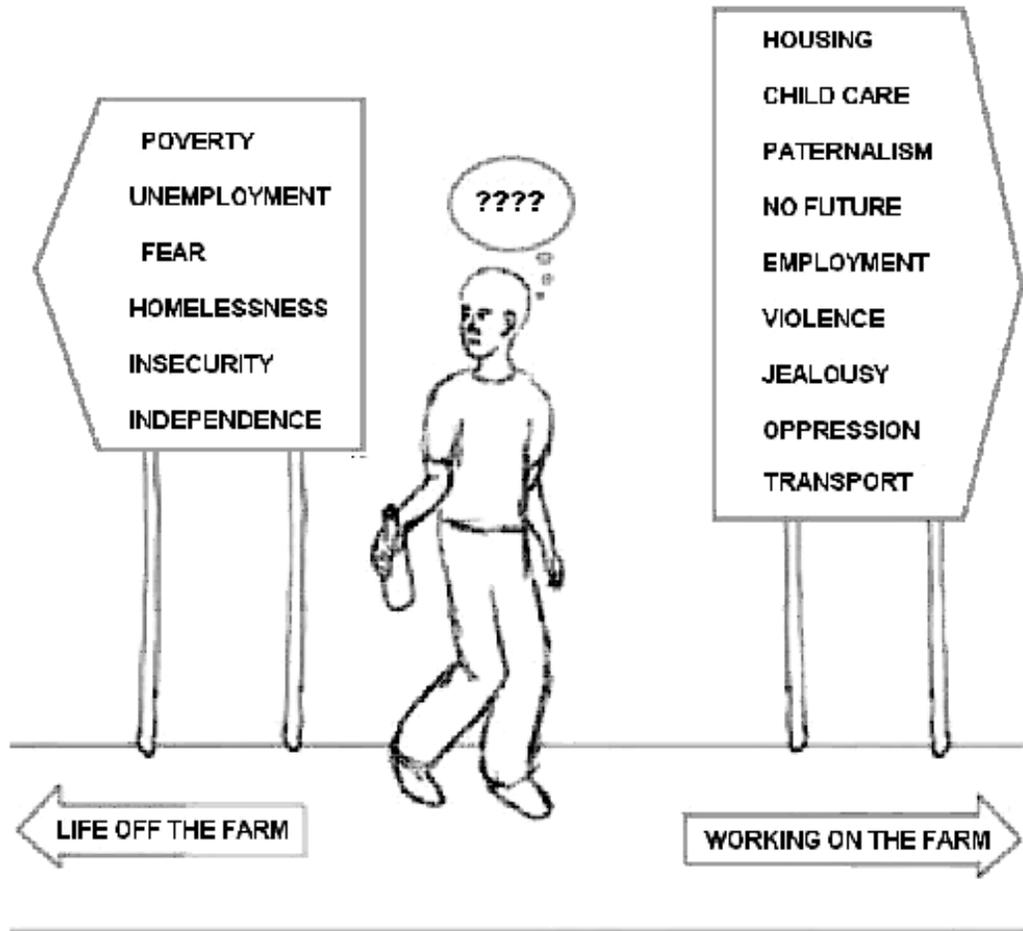


DIAGRAM 2

CHAPTER 4

WORKING FOR CHANGE ON FARMS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapters have established that there is on wine farms a legacy of dependency in respect of the paternalistic relationship between labourer and landowner, and a high incidence of habitual, harmful binge–drinking. This legacy of dependency coupled with political marginalisation of farm workers has resulted in a sense of powerlessness and fatalism among workers and creates the context in which social work services are to be rendered. Starting with a brief description of the context of practise for social workers, this chapter will unpack the various aspects of social work practise in the Winelands. This chapter is not a step–by–step guide to practise rather it aims to:

- briefly sketch the context of practise;
- list the social issues to be addressed by practitioners;
- suggest a practise paradigm;
- list some of the NGOs and other partners working for change in the Winelands;
- list relevant legislation pertaining to farm workers.

4.2 WORKING FOR CHANGE ON FARMS

Working for change on farms is not limited to working on a particular farm with individual labourers. Change needs to take place on macro and micro–levels of society and falls into the ambit of many change agents. Diagram 3 illustrates the four main change agents and the various elements of intervention that will effect change for labourers. Change agents are represented as keyholders and the elements of change doors or passages to enter. The labourer is not always sure of what is needed or which path to follow. The change agents join hands with one another and with the labourer to become partners in the change process. The next section focuses on the role of the social work practitioner in working for change on farms.

Working For Change

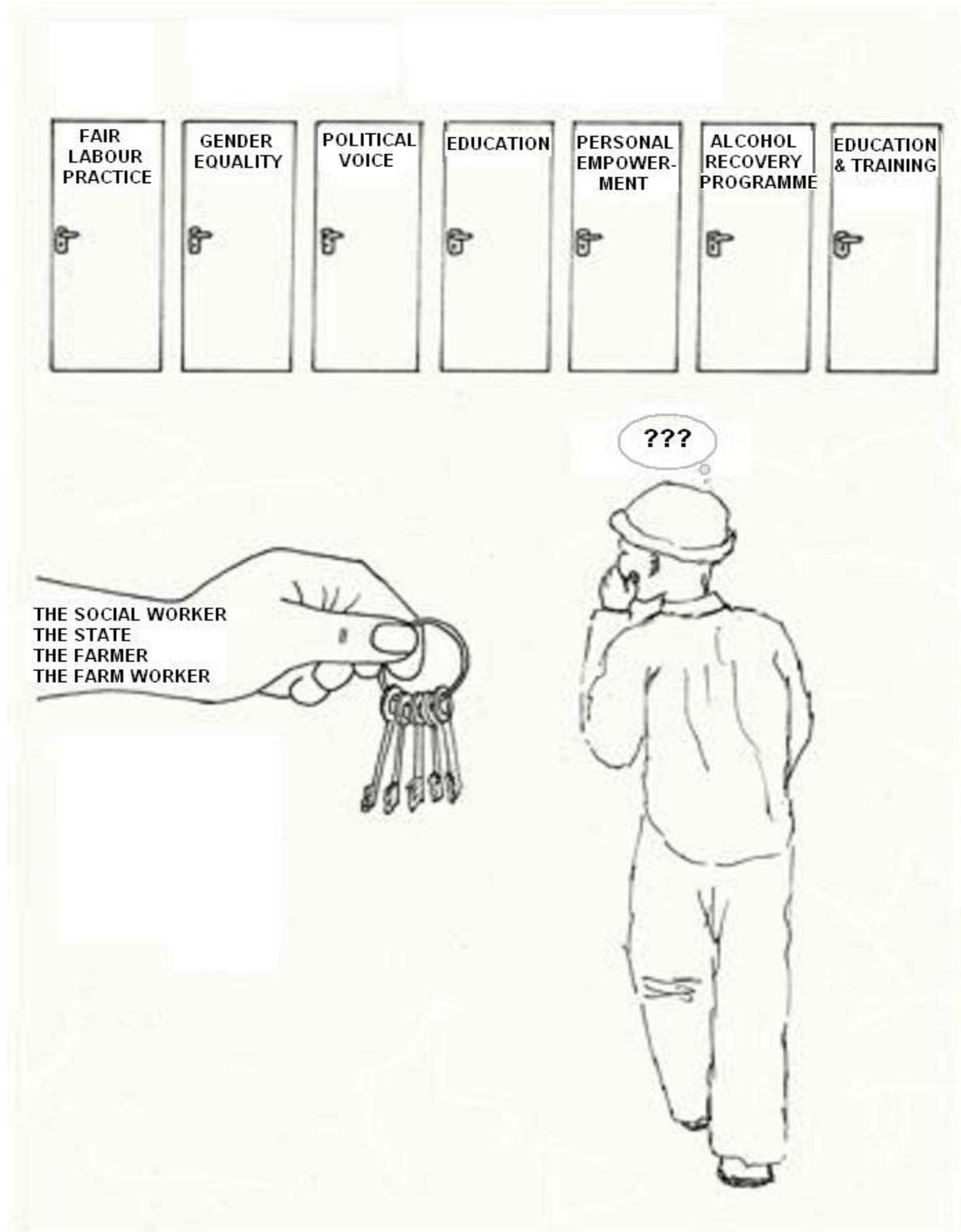


DIAGRAM 3

4.2.1 The context of social work practice on farms

4.2.1.1 *The socio/political and economic context of practise*

Without repeating much of what has been covered in the first three chapters of this study the following section outlines the environmental factors in which social workers finds themselves.

Firstly, there is an all but non–existence of black ownership, management or control within the wine industry, a history of problematic labour relations and a lack of social and economic networks and institutional bases necessary for the successful empowerment of workers (Transformation Charter, 2006:3).

Secondly, casualisation of the workforce has reduced the size of the permanent workforce and increased the threat of dismissals and eviction (Transformation Charter, 2006:3). Casualisation has created a sense of insecurity for the workforce, diminished the commitment to workers by landowners and farm managers and limits the willingness of workers to participate in development programmes or counselling.

In a recent catastrophic accident in the Boland 19 casual workers were killed while being transported to work 60 km away (December 2006, Faure). It is common practise for casual workers to be employed via a third party/broker and as a result farmers may not even know the names of the workers working on their farms. It is hearsay that the farmer concerned was extremely upset by the incident but he did not know the workers working his land. This is a far cry from the intimate, almost enmeshed and paternalistic relationship, traditionally found on farms in the Winelands (Practitioner's Reflections, 2007).

There is a thread that emerges as one comes to know and understand the farming community of the Winelands. Whether one talks of drinking patterns or concern for labour, there is an all–or–nothing theme. Workers are either teetotallers or habitual binge–drinkers. Farmers/landowners are either really involved in their workers' lives or completely detached.

Workers who are dismissed have no work experience other than manual labour, are often illiterate or at best have limited formal schooling. Once people leave the farm, social workers often lose contact with them. There is uncertainty whether workers follow up referrals to other agencies and counsellors.

Thirdly, changes in market control and South Africa's access to the global market have made the industry market driven (Transformation Charter, 2006:3). Most often, development work is costly, and the benefits reaped, only in the long term and in many instances benefits are not quantifiable, making development work unattractive to a market driven sector. Investment in development, unless seen as investment in the "greater good" is perceived in the researcher's experience as expensive and not yielding sufficient return. It is the researcher's experience that very often the people who do benefit from development projects are the ones that move off the farms into other sectors.

Practitioners working in the rural sector find themselves defending their interventions in an often hostile environment. What is "good" for the worker is not always "good" for the farm. Transformation and empowerment programmes, dependent solely on investment by the industry are vulnerable to market shifts and leaves workers vulnerable in times of downward economic trends.

4.2.1.2 *Social-cultural context of practise*

A fourth environmental factor influencing the context of practise is the legacy of the Tot System and a high incidence of habitual binge-drinking. "...such a tradition does not merely carry on because of some sort of mysterious momentum that we need to stop. Rather it is current conditions that help maintain such social-cultural practise" (Schotte, 1996). Central to Schotte's argument is the fact that it is the quality of life of the farm worker that keeps people enslaved to binge-drinking. Schotte identifies four elements of the farm worker's life that precipitate hopelessness and binge-drinking, namely: few life chances with regard to finding betterment for themselves or their children; relatively poor working conditions; feelings of political, social and occupational disempowerment and a paradoxical,

self-reproducing emotional cycle which combines an apparent positive emotional and knowledge-base identification with agricultural work and certain positive group work ethics and a definite alienation from the fruits of their labour.

When I ask people how they are, seldom do they answer with any kind of commitment. Most often the reply is “ons gaan maar aan juffrou (we carry on Teacher)” or “n mens mag nie klae nie (a person shouldn't complain)” or “die lewe is maar so (life is like that)”. These comments are not said with any positive sense of acceptance and contentment but rather a heavy disgruntled feeling of resignation and hopelessness. (These are quotes from the Practitioner's Journal, 2006).

All the above together with the legacy of paternalism create an overwhelming sense of powerlessness of workers over their own lives. This powerlessness not only impedes the individuals' ability to become masters of their own destinies, but it also negatively impacts on the helping process. The following are a few anecdotal examples of powerlessness.

“I went to find Mr N to tell him his 13-year-old was in trouble. He threw up his hands and started walking backwards away from me saying, “Juffrou moet gaan. Juffrou moet dit hanteer” (Teacher must go, Teacher must manage the situation) (A.N. April, 2002).

E approached me today about her marriage difficulties. I suggested we have a three way meeting with her and her husband. Teacher must speak to him. (E.S. January, 2007).

Repeatedly over the years I have discussed S's boys' behaviour with her. Her standard answer is “I don't know why they are so naughty, Teacher must whip them” (S.N, January 2007).

4.2.1.3 Social, health and interpersonal problems of labourers

The list of social, health and interpersonal problems of farm labourers in the Western Cape is long and overwhelming, and has been discussed in detail in

Chapter 3. However, it is helpful when discussing practise within a particular field to be reminded of the areas of concern. Table 4.1 lists these areas.

TABLE 4.1: Social, health and interpersonal problems of farm workers

Alcoholism, habitual binge–drinking, and other substance abuse, including TIK among teenagers and adults.

Social, domestic and child upon child violence.

Low levels of literacy, rising levels of unemployment and casualisation of the labour force.

Teenage pregnancy and a high incidence of "school drop out" among high school learners.

High incidence of FAS, malnutrition and childhood stunting.

Inadequate child and youth care.

Tendency towards corporal punishment in homes and schools.

Male dominated society and the oppression of women and children.

High incidence of TB and other chronic diseases such as Hypertension, heart disease, liver cirrhosis and malignancy.

A cycle of poverty, poor financial management and a high incidence of debt.

Limited access to telecommunications, transport and sport and recreation facilities.

Problems associated with farm schools.

Interpersonal jealousy and insecurity.

Low self–esteem and a general sense of powerlessness.

Maintenance and marital issues.

On the one hand is the huge and overwhelming need for social workers to render a service to farm workers. On the other the reality of practise. A study conducted researching the realities of practise in rural areas yielded some interesting data.

These findings are discussed in the following section.

4.2.1.4 Social work services rendered to farm workers on commercial farms

Schenk (2004:40) published a study of social work practise in rural areas. Of interest is that social workers working in rural areas did not regard farm workers working on commercial farms as part of their target population. In forty six percent of social workers were not delivering any service to this population group while a further thirty six percent rendered awareness–type programmes and limited casework when approached by farmers. The balance of the practitioners interviewed said there were no commercial farms in their area.

The fact that farm workers live on private property, argues Schenk (2004), means that they by and large go unaccounted for and are not included in State spending. Social workers find physical and logistical issues such as the distribution of farms, lack of transport and the need to see people after hours making service delivery to farm workers difficult.

Farmers interviewed in the study acknowledged the need for social work services and the work of development agencies such as the Rural Foundation. Social workers argued that despite farmers being pro–social work, they generally insisted that contact between the practitioner and the community take place outside of work hours which presents its own set of difficulties.

Over and above the lack of consent to render services in work hours there are other practise–related difficulties in rural settings namely; (Schenk, 2004):

- confidentiality,
- people value their self reliance,
- large distances social workers have to travel,
- weather conditions,
- insufficient number of people with the same problems ,

- lack of public and private transport, childcare and other facilities or infrastructure.

Social work practitioners and development workers in rural areas did not seem to be working collaboratively. Community developers were primarily responsible for poverty alleviation programmes and social workers were doing predominantly statutory work (91% of time) and social grant applications.

All of the above confirm for Schenk (2004) the fact that farm workers are a marginalised population receiving little if any services despite the overwhelming social, economic and political needs discussed extensively in this study. This highlights the situation in which qualified practitioners are overburdened with administrative functions.

While Schenk (2004) recommends a rural forum to address the problems in rural practise, Patel (2005) in her book *Social Welfare and Social Development* argues for a paradigm shift in service rendering and suggests the new development model as an appropriate paradigm of practise for practitioners in all fields of service. This model as presented by Patel is sketched in the following section.

4.2.1.5 Practise paradigm for social work practitioners in the wine industry

The development model of welfare in the researcher's opinion seems to be a well-suited and appropriate paradigm for service delivery in the Wine Industry. Without attempting an in-depth presentation or critique of the model, the researcher will discuss its applicability to social work practise in the Winelands. The applicability of the model is based on the researcher's practise experience and study of literature concerning the historical and current lived experiences of farm workers on wine farms in the Western Cape.

- **The new development model as a paradigm for practise**

The new development model encompasses the overall conception of social development while breaking completely with the remedial delivery model of the past. It is a rights-based approach to service delivery which tends "towards

services that are integrated, generic, decentralised, more accessible, have a quicker response and are focused on social treatment, early intervention and prevention. The intention of service delivery in the new development model is to meet the needs of and promote the wellbeing of individuals and communities” (Patel, 2005:158).

The new development model is a generalist approach to service delivery, based on the concept of *empowerment*, focusing on people’s strengths rather than pathologies and inadequacies. Generalist practitioners will draw on a wide knowledge base, will work with a diverse population and not be limited to any one method of work. Through the practise of critical reflective skills, practitioners and service delivery agencies in partnership with the individual, community or group will find the best way of meeting needs and promoting wellbeing (Patel, 2005:160).

- **The applicability of the development model as a paradigm of practise in the Winelands**

The development model is appropriate in the rural setting of the Winelands for a number of reasons.

Firstly, in Chapters 2 and 3 of this study the writer showed how farm workers have been marginalised politically, socially and economically, resulting in communities that are disempowered, demotivated and fraught with social problems. The human rights issues and the psycho–social problems in these communities are so interrelated that to attend to one without attending to the other is akin to treating the symptoms of an illness and not the cause. The development model addresses human rights issues while promoting wellbeing and meeting the needs of people using a variety of roles and skills.

Over the last 10 years there has been a large effort to address the economic and work related conditions of farm workers. The BCEA (Basic Conditions of Employment Act), among other legislation has made a significant contribution towards addressing the social, economic and human rights issues of farm workers. Community development practitioners have an advocacy role to play too in this

regard.

Secondly, the historical oppression of farm workers and the paternalistic relationship with employers has resulted in communities that do not perceive themselves as able to be masters of their own destinies seeing always that the cause and solution lie outside of themselves.

The development model places the individual and community at the centre of the problem-solving process making them partners in the change process. Practitioners focus their energy not on treating people's pathologies but on enabling and empowering people. Empowerment in this model is simultaneously a role of the practitioner and the ethos of the model (Patel, 2005:218).

Thirdly, rural communities are by nature isolated and have limited access to knowledge, services and resources. Limited access to telecommunications and transport makes access to resources difficult. In this regard the role of the development practitioner is to share knowledge, linking people with resources and mobilising action. The task of the practitioner may be to arrange transport or to help people set up interviews, complete form for social grants or work with a group to make representation to their employer.

Fourthly, the development model is a collaborative approach in which generalist services are rendered by a "variety of state and non-state organisations that are structured differently but provide the framework within which services are delivered, evaluated and monitored" (Patel, 2005:160). The Transformation Charter, too, refers to a collaborative relationship between state and non-state to address the needs of the people in the wine industry.

- **The roles of the development Model Practitioner**

Patel (2005:218–223), using the work of Kirst–Ashman (2003), Parsons (1994) and Hull (2001) identifies twelve roles of the development practitioner. These roles are listed in Table 4.2 below. Many of the roles are familiar to social workers across paradigms and so definitions and descriptions of the roles will not be discussed in

detail save to say that many of the roles are interrelated and practised simultaneously. The ethos underlying the practise of all the roles is empowerment and the goal is to meet the needs and secure the wellbeing of the individual, group or community through a partnership between the practitioner and the individual, group or community.

Table 4.2: Practitioner roles of the New Development Model

Working in partnership with individuals and communities does not detract from the professional role of the practitioner. It remains the role of the practitioner to systematically conceive, implement and evaluate new ideas of practise and service delivery in a changing social and global context and to mobilise action, protect the vulnerable and advocate on behalf of oppressed and marginalised populations (Patel, 2005:222).

A shift in paradigm comes with its own challenges. The huge demand for statutory services and grant applications remain, while the particular historical and environmental factors in the rural community may limit the applicability of certain practitioner roles for example the role of counsellor.

People jump out the vineyard to stop me to talk about an issue but when follow-up meetings are made, these appointments are seldom kept. Seemingly the concept of counselling as a process is foreign. Once the adrenalin of the crisis is over, the problem is buried until the next crisis. The complete lack of privacy and blurred boundaries on the farm make confidentiality almost impossible. Parents struggling with discipline issues with children turn down opportunities for parenting courses saying “the children are just naughty”. Parents are reluctant to let go of the familiar even when it seemingly is not effective (Practitioners notes, 2002).

Sometimes practitioners have to advocate for change without the support of the community, for instance with issue like the dissolution of the DOPSTELSEL or the discontinuation of the “Papsak” (bulk wine).

Working for change in the Wine Industry is not the exclusive domain of social work practitioners. Earlier in this chapter reference was made to changes in legislation regarding the working conditions of farm workers. The next section mentions some of the agents working for transformation in the Winelands.

4.3 WORKING FOR CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION AT A MACRO LEVEL

4.3.1 Industry initiated transformation

4.3.1.1 *The Wine Charter*

The wine industry published a detailed document in 2006 relating to empowerment and transformation in the industry. The majority of the objectives of The Wine Charter relate to economic and political transformation but included in the document is a call to facilitate social transformation by contributing meaningfully to gender equality, the alleviation of poverty and the eradication of social pathologies “which as a consequence will lead to enlistment and the restoration of human dignity” (Transformation Charter, 2006:6).

One of the 10 key principles of the charter is “a focus on human development as a key driver of sustainable economic empowerment (Transformation Charter, 2006:6).

The Charter recommends that transformation be a collaborative approach between State programmes and Industry initiatives.

The role of industry is to fill gaps and complement State programmes. Industry initiatives could include: training, education, networking, representation and social enlistment (Transformation Charter, 2006).

4.3.1.2 *Black Economic Empowerment*

Black Economic Empowerment on wine farms is known as WineBEE and seeks “Sustainable economic and black social black empowerment through growth in the SA wine and brandy value chain to achieve a representative, united and prosperous wine industry” (Transformation Charter, 2006:5). There have been several attempts at BEE in the wine industry, some more successful than others. It is not the work of this document to evaluate these BEE projects. Social worker practitioners working in the Wine Industry are well positioned to inform BEE projects as well as to empower, enable, mobilise and facilitate the participation of farm workers in BEE projects.

4.3.1.3 *Ethical trade initiative*

“Ethical trade covers the assurance of good labour and environmental standards in export production, within all developed and developing countries” (Barrientos et al., 1999). Put simply ethical trade is about concern for the labour conditions under which goods are produced. The Base Code of the Ethical Trade Initiative (ETI) incorporates the worker’s rights to collective bargaining, living wages and fair working hours. Harsh treatment, discrimination and child labour are disallowed. “The attitudes towards ETI of fruit growers interviewed varied. Some growers welcome the codes while others are more sceptical, seeing them as yet another burden” (Barrientos et al., 1999)

4.3.2 *Transformation through legislation*

Since 1993 economic pressure and legislation has begun to change the life situation of farm workers. “There are commercial pressures on farmers to raise

productivity, and hence modernise the more traditional employment practises that operate on farms. Recently, social and legislative changes have also stimulated changes in the employment relations and are beginning to disrupt some of the legacies of paternalism. Prior to 1993, little of the employment legislation in South Africa applied to agricultural workers” (Davies, 1990, in Barrientos et al., 1999). See Section 2.7, Chapter 2 for a discussion on legislation and transformation on farms.

For the purpose of this document the various pieces of legislation will be listed and not discussed. (The Centre for Rural Legal Studies in Stellenbosch has user–friendly documents explaining each piece of legislation.)

Since 1993 the following legislation has been introduced to protect agricultural workers.

- *The Restitution of Land Rights Act 1992;*
- *The Interim Protection of Informal Land Rights 1996;*
- *Land Reform Act 1996;*
- *Extension of Security of tenure Act 1997 (ESTA);*
- *The Basic Conditions of Employment Act 1998 (BCEA);*
- *The Employment Equity Act (EEA);*
- *Agricultural Labour Act of 1993;*
- *Unemployment Insurance Act (UIA) of 1993.*

4.4 WORKING FOR CHANGE AT MICRO AND MEZZO LEVELS

4.4.1 Working for change with regards to habitual drinking

Most drinkers and their families verbalise a desire for the drinkers to stop drinking. However, for many drinkers, the family’s call for change only angers the drinker. *“I came home towards nightfall more under the influence of liquor than ever before. The first glance at Mary’s face told too plainly that the arrow had entered her soul.*

This indication instead of softening my feelings irritated and angered me” (Crowley, 1999:35).

There are numerous theories about and approaches to recovery from alcoholism. binge–drinking and alcohol dependence is a way of life on wine farms, and the consequences thereof will most certainly form a large part of any social worker’s day. Domestic and social violence, child neglect, poverty and a lethargy to be involved in anything other than work and drinking are typical problems associated with binge–drinking on farms. The question of design for preventing and so–called treating alcohol dependency has been debated by many writers with models ranging from the medical model to the bio–psychosocial model. In this chapter specific attention will be given to farm workers and the various approaches to the prevention and rehabilitation of habitual problem–drinking.

In the six years I have worked among farm workers, almost every discussion about drinking habits includes the following statement “dus niks om te stop nie” (it is nothing to stop) in response to “ How can I help you? Would you like counselling? Or to attend AA meetings? (Practitioner, 2006).

Most of the farm workers choose to go "cold turkey". Some workers go cold turkey successfully.

For many “the call to drink” in the community is too powerful. There is almost no support in the community for the person wanting to change his/her drinking patterns. If anything, there is an all out attempt to lure the drinker back into the fold. The individual has nowhere to go to escape (Practitioner, 2006).

Demers, Room and Bourgaultt (2000) state that “Real change will occur when farm workers discover their own strength and take control of their own lives, using the knowledge, resources and opportunities available to them. There is no one solution to alcohol abuse prevention and rehabilitation. A multi–dimensional approach is necessary.”

London (1999) expands on the argument for a multi–disciplinary approach to

habitual problem–drinking on farms. The multi disciplinary should include counsellors, advocates, group workers, researchers and healthcare workers. The intention of a multi–disciplinary approach on farms is to provide a holistic prevention and rehabilitation programme. The different axes of a holistic prevention and rehabilitation programme as proposed by London (1999) are summarised in Table 4.3.

TABLE 4.3: The different axes of a holistic prevention and rehabilitation programme

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and training for farm residents and management with a view to early detection, support groups and prevention. • Training for health service providers and other caregivers. • Provision of clinical and counselling services for alcohol addicted adults. • Research advocacy to promote healthy policies and practises to raise community awareness and mobilise support , • Peer support, individual and group work (London, 1999:3). |
|---|

London’s perspective on prevention and rehabilitation of habitual drinking is a psychosocial approach, where change in the social circumstances of the drinker is as much a focus for change as the focus on the individual. De Kock (2000) proposes that the emergence of a rural civil society will be an empowering experience for workers in which different groups will organise themselves and articulate their respective needs.

The various role players in the rehabilitation field have different approaches to recovery. In some instances a broad psychosocial, developmental approach to alcohol dependency is the framework (DOPSTOP, Women on Farms) while others have a more medical model approach to recovery, focusing almost exclusively on the individual.

One organisation that bases its work on the medical model of drinking is Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). A brief discussion of the applicability of AA movement on farms follows.

4.4.1.1 *Alcoholics Anonymous and the temperance movement*

The temperance movement was a public attempt to address what is often kept as a private matter – *alcohol dependence* or habitual problem–drinking. The movement began as the Washingtonian Temperance Society in the 1800s followed by the establishment of Alcoholics Anonymous in 1935.

The movement is based on the classic disease model of alcoholism where one drink leads to another and the only hope for the drinker is total sobriety. Habitual drinking is seen as an illness. Sobriety is only possible once the drinker has surrendered to a higher power.

Followers of the movement make public confessions of their alcohol–related problems, sign a pledge to sobriety and thereafter attend regular support–group meetings. In the temperance movement an individual’s private problem becomes a public affair. In his analysis of the temperance movement Crowley comments that none of the above steps protect the drinker from relapse. In fact, Crowley’s (1999) collection of narratives give testimony to the fact that many habitual drinkers are caught in a continuous cycle of sobriety and habitual drinking.

Some farm workers themselves subscribe to the medical model of alcohol dependence, often personifying drink, or drinking, as the devil. For these workers it seems to be an all–or–nothing approach to sobriety.

Empowerment in this model comes from membership of the movement and an acknowledgement of one’s weakness. This is very different from the Strengths perspective where an individual focuses on his/her strength and capacity rather than on pathology.

There are AA groups meeting in and around the Winelands. Although meetings do not take place on farms, AA members will provide transport to farm workers wanting to attend meetings. I was told that few farm workers make use of this offer. However AA has not been a process of choice for farm workers generally. The reasons are unclear. What has been successful on one farm known to the

researcher is the work of ALANON. ALANON is the branch of AA working with children and teenagers living in homes where habitual drinking is a problem. ALANON has helped children find a nurturing, safe place to make sense of their experience. ALANON aims to break the cycle of dependency in families through education about dependency and the teaching/modelling of communication and conflict management skills.

4.4.1.2 Counselling and rehabilitation programmes

Counselling and rehabilitation programmes are not always accessible to farm workers because of cost, lack of transport and a no-work-no-pay approach to time off. Counselling as discussed earlier in this chapter is also not always an intervention of choice to farm workers.

For L, engaging in counselling with DOPSTOP was no longer a choice of her own – it became a condition of remaining in employment. This after more than ten years of excessive drinking and social violence.. She was very resistant but admits now it was the best thing that could have happened to her. Counselling takes place during work hours where only her immediate colleagues know. In other circumstances there may have been more resistance (Practitioner’s notes, 2007).

4.4.1.3 Becoming “bekeer” (Religious conversion)

Most drinkers when choosing sobriety go "cold turkey", some have had anti-abuse implants and a large majority go the religious conversion route. Drinkers who choose the religious conversion route refuse professional support, are not willing to join a support group and remain in the community where they are unable to escape the social context in which they have been drinking. These are all factors that theoretically are contra indications for recovery. However there is anecdotal evidence that religious conversion seems to be the most successful route to achieving sobriety on farms in the Winelands. In a sense, the religious conversion is similar to the ethos of the temperance movement. Most often the religious conversion takes place within a group which then becomes supportive of the individual’s decision. Although the “convert” still lives and works within the same

context he/she is now part of a sub group that encourages him/her. The drinker replaces the ritual of habitual drinking with the ritual of church membership.

4.4.1.4 Focus on community development and recreation as means of addressing habitual and binge–drinking

Earlier in this chapter the work of London (1999), De Kock (2000) and Demers et al. (2000) was referred to. All of these writers suggested a broader more holistic approach to the problem of alcohol dependence and binge–drinking on farms. One organisation that has taken a broad developmental approach to the eradication and reduction of alcohol abuse is DOPSTOP.

Two other organisations known to the researcher are concerned with the development of sport and recreation opportunities for farm workers in the Winelands namely:

- **Boland Netbal Unie**

There is a well established Netball league for farm workers catering for junior and senior players. The League takes place on Saturdays. Playing netball or any sport for that matter is a healthy, alternative form of recreation. Being part of a league gives workers something to look forward to on weekends. Players have a chance to get away from the farms and interact with people from other farms.

- **AGRIWASA** – Agricultural workers association – a body committed to the development and upliftment of farm workers through adult education, youth development projects, representation of workers' issues to relevant institutions and the establishment of self help projects.

No one intervention will solve the problem of habitual problem–drinking but each initiative will make a contribution. For the practitioner in the field the words of (Crowley) quoted below are an encouragement to find hope when there seems so much despair:

“Never despair of the reformation of any drunkard, however low he may have got in

his intemperance – however strongly the disease, for it is such fastened upon him, provided that when he is sober, there are any generous feelings in his bosom, any good motives, to which you can appeal with any sort of effect. If there be one chord that you can touch and awaken proper feeling, persevere in your efforts, though he fall and fall again. But if the drunkard be a disorganiser, a hater of good things, a bad citizen, a bad husband and father, aside from his intemperance – I his heart be exceedingly depraved, and his drunkenness is merely a consequence of his badness of heart – there is no hope for his restoration” (Crowley, 1999:108).

The four approaches to working for change with regard to habitual drinking discussed earlier each have a specific strength or focus. The core concepts found in the treatment strategies discussed above are presented in Table 4.4. Practitioners can use this summary when planning an intervention in their environment that is best suited to the community and possible with the resources available.

TABLE 4.4: Summary of strengths of different interventions

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability. • Personal growth and development of insight and opportunity for healing. • New social network and opportunity for support. • New focus with regard to leisure time and opportunity to engage in alternative activities. |
|---|

Fortunately for practitioners working in the Winelands there are several NGOs each with its own focus and strengths which are willing and able to partner any practitioner working on a particular farm or in an area. Table 4.5 gives a brief statement of intent of each NGO which practitioners can use to refer to. Contact details have not been included because over time they may change. However all these NGOs are well known in and around Stellenbosch, and easy to locate.

4.5 WORKING FOR CHANGE IN THE WINELANDS – PARTNERS IN THE PROCESS

Table 4.5 lists the organisations and NGOs working on farms in the Winelands. All these organisations are known to the researcher and are willing to partner in programmes. There may well be other organisations. Not included in the table are various church groups that conduct bible and prayer groups among adults and children, and support their members in times of crisis.

TABLE 4.5: Names and activities of NGOs

Names of NGOs	Activities of NGOs
ABET	A public–private partnership that aims to provide literacy and other learning opportunities for people wanting to improve their school qualifications.
AGRI Seta	A more recent initiative by the Agri Seta is to establish learning hubs on farms.
AGRIWASA	Collective action and bargaining on behalf of farm workers.
Anna Foundation	In–house training for staff relating to management and running of crèches and after–school facilities on farms. After–school clubs. Sport, art and reading programmes.
ARPWU	A trade union with a special focus on farm workers.
Boland Netbal Unie	Saturday netball league on farms in the Boland.
Cape Women’s Forum	Family and home management programme. Business skills programme. Health and Safety. Supervisors/team leaders programme.
Centre for Rural Legal Studies (CRLS), Stellenbosch	Research ,Training and Legal advice with regards to farm workers. Resource facility for students and researchers. The CRLS has translated relevant legislation into easy–to–read publications for farm workers and role players in the field.
DOPSTOP Organisation, Stellenbosch	Youth and community development on farms. Promotion of recreational activities, on farms. Individual counselling, advocacy, lobbying and research with specific focus on habitual drinking on farms.

Heldervallei Gemeenskap Forum	Adult literacy and adult education classes for farm workers. Organisation of sport and recreation and special events for farm workers
Legal Advice Office, Stellenbosch	The Legal Advice Office in Stellenbosch makes legal advice accessible to persons who otherwise could not afford legal services.
Matie Gemeenskapdiens	The “welfare body” of the University of Stellenbosch co-ordinates a literacy programme and evening school in and around Stellenbosch.
Pebbles Project	Specialist educational support for disadvantaged children aged two to twelve with special educational needs including FAS. Parent, crèche worker and teacher training.
Women on Farms Project	Assist women who experience physical assault and domestic violence.

4.6 SUMMARY

This chapter has touched on numerous aspects of social work practise in the Winelands. It has attempted to be realistic in terms of the realities of practise while maintaining a focus on working for change. Social Work It is a dynamic field and during the time it has taken to do the research, there has been an incredible change in the awareness and sensitivity to the situation of farm workers. There is on many levels a will to work for change among policy makers and NGOs. The wider the net of organisations working for change, the greater the chance that future generations of farm workers will indeed be able to become masters of their destinies.

The following chapter is a presentation of the findings of this study.

CHAPTER 5

EXPLORATION OF THE PERSPECTIVES AND MEANING THAT FARM LABOURERS ASSIGN TO HABITUAL DRINKING

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Habitual drinking on farms is the legacy of the Tot System and the first social relationships between indigenous people and colonial settlers. For generation after generation on farms, excessive over-indulgence and binge-drinking has become a survival strategy for both men and women. Despite concerted efforts to the contrary, habitual drinking remains synonymous with farm life (Hill & Lanz, 1994, in Paranee, 2003:9). Schotte (1996:17) states that habitual drinking on farms is not so much a genetic inclination, but a product of the socio-cultural environment that legitimises it. Farm dwellers have a sense of acceptance of habitual drinking, are resigned to the fact that people drink to get drunk and are powerless to change the practice (London, 1997). Access to alcohol becomes the primary objective of the heavy drinker. Any other activity, no matter how beneficial it may be to the individual, takes second place (De Kock, 2002). People are so focused on their drinking that even when there are opportunities to involve themselves in activities that would change their lives they are disempowered (see Community profile for examples).

Scharf (1987) warns that the legacy of the Tot System will continue into the first decade of the 21st century. Many labourers will continue to drink, and will lose their jobs as a result of mechanisation and upgrading, but they will continue to drink, and their families will continue to suffer. The first decade of the 21st century is almost behind us and we are nowhere near being free of the legacy of the Tot System, abolished more than forty years ago. Farm workers drink to escape daily life. Daily life would change if labourers stopped drinking. To stop drinking in order to create change is to give up immediate gratification for a vision of a new life. Binge-drinking allows people to surrender responsibility for their actions and any

problems people have as a result of drinking, is “blamed” on the alcohol. Once people are sober they are confronted with the responsibilities that binge–drinking helped them escape. The decision to stop drinking is just the beginning of making life changes. Many habitual drinkers do not have the personal skills to manage their difficulties or to create change in their lives and so they return to the only problem–solving technique they know, habitual drinking.

The study was conducted on a wine estate in the Stellenbosch district where habitual drinking, social violence, powerlessness and apathy are all social phenomena. The focus of the study initially was to gain insight into the decision that ten labourers took in 2002 to stop drinking and to better understand the meaning of drinking for labourers and the struggle between habitual drinking and sobriety. It became clear from the literature review that habitual drinking on farms cannot be studied without an investigation into the lived experiences, aspirations and “felt needs” of workers. For this reason the investigation included a survey and needs assessment.

5.2 DELIMINATION OF THE INVESTIGATION

Permission was granted to conduct the investigation on the farm concerned.

Initially the researcher conducted a literature review and preliminary discussions with other role players working in the field of habitual drinking on wine farms, in order to get as broad a view of habitual drinking on farms as possible. A needs assessment was conducted among farm labourers in 2002 and again in 2007, and a community profile compiled (see Annexure G) Thereafter, an interview schedule was drawn up and arrangements made for ten semi–structured interviews.

The population was obtained by means of availability sampling (De Vos et al., 2002:334). The population consisted of all ten farm labourers who in the course of 2002 had given up drinking.

5.3 GATHERING AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

5.3.1 Data gathering

5.3.1.1 Needs assessment and community profile

Information from the needs assessments conducted in 2002 and 2007, together with information from records of development projects that are currently operational or have been conducted over the period 2002–2007, was used to compile a community profile (Annexure G). The profile contains information regarding the services and amenities available to farm labourers, as well as information regarding the aspirations of the labourers and development efforts made over the last ten years.

Farmers who have abolished the Tot System have been disillusioned by the absence of change regarding social problems on farms (De Kock, 2000). This particular farm has over the last two decades, and in the last ten years particularly, been committed to social development, upliftment and fair labour practice.

Yet there remains a sense of powerlessness and dependency among the labourers and a high incidence of habitual drinking, school drop out, teenage pregnancy and interpersonal jealousy. For this reason the community profile includes information of *what is available* and *what has been done*, to illustrate that despite providing services and alternative recreational activities, habitual drinking remains a social problem.

5.3.1.2 Semi-structured interviews and personal questionnaires

Data was collected by means of a semi structured interview with the aid of an interview guide (Annexure A). In order to achieve triangulation (De Vos et al., 2002:341) additional interviews and a personal questionnaire (Annexure E) were also used as methods of data gathering. The additional interviews included interviews with the primary health care worker on the farm (Annexure D) and interviews with ten children of the recoverees mentioned earlier (Annexure C). The

spouses of two of the recoverees were interviewed (Annexure B).

All the interviews were conducted in Afrikaans which is the home language of the farm labourers. All initial interviews were audio-taped with the consent of the participants (De Vos et al., 2002:302–303).

The researcher had a therapeutic relationship with all the participants and so the participants were known to her. Participants were approached individually and asked whether or not they were willing and available to participate in the study. The purpose of the study and the planned use of the findings were explained to the participants. Care was taken to use language that the participants understood. Confidentiality was discussed with all participants, assuring them in particular that none of the information would be made available to the farm management or any other labourer. All ten of the potential participants agreed to be interviewed.

The interviews were conducted away from any other activity on the farm and in some instances, after hours to accommodate the participants. Before starting with the enquiry the participants were put at ease and once again reminded of the purpose of the study, and confidentiality. Permission was granted from the participants to use a tape recorder. All participants were assured that they were free to not answer any question they wished and should ask for clarification of anything they did not understand. At the end of the interview the interviewer summarised the conversation to make sure she had correctly understood the interviewees' comments. This was especially important as the interviewer was not interviewing in her mother tongue. Time was spent debriefing participants after the interview.

No two interviews were identical as no two stories are identical. The interview schedule served as a guide and a control to make sure all areas of enquiry were covered. All ten participants were interviewed in 2002. Those that were available for a second interview in May 2007 were again interviewed. This was done in order to follow up on whether or not interviewees had remained sober and to gain insight into the meaning of drinking and sobriety for the interviewer. Only five participants

were available for a second interview. The second interview (Annexure H) was not tape-recorded. The second interviews varied in length. All the interviewees discussed their drinking and sobriety openly, some reflected more on what it meant to them than others. There was a relaxed, trusting atmosphere, the researcher took notes and checked at the end that she had understood the interviewee accurately. Confidentiality, the purpose of the interview and expected use of the information was clarified.

Interviews were transcribed as soon as possible. Comments were identified that correlated with the topic and sorted into themes (De Vos et al., 2002).

Data gathered from the personal questionnaires was analysed according to themes (see Section 5.4.2).

5.4 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

What follows is an investigation into the perceptions and meaning farm labourers assign to habitual drinking on farms. Findings are based on data gathered from personal questionnaires distributed to all farm workers as well as data gathered from semi-structured interviews. Interviews were conducted with ten labourers or farm dwellers who decided to go sober in 2002. In May 2007 second interviews were planned with all ten participants. Two of the participants had moved away in the last year, having lost their jobs and homes as a result of drinking and violence. One of the males was unwilling, has relapsed and refuses to discuss his drinking with the social worker or health worker anymore, and two of the women were busy with domestic duties and did not have the time to be interviewed. Several attempts were made to accommodate them at different times but they seemed unwilling. It was therefore possible to interview only five of the participants a second time.

Questionnaires were compiled in Afrikaans and distributed to all farm workers with an envelope in which they could return the completed questionnaire. Respondents were requested *not* to write their names on the documents. Workers who are illiterate were given assistance if they asked. However this contaminated

confidentiality.

Questions referred to the labourers' perception of needs and problems in the community, drinking patterns among labourers, and participation in development and recreational activities.

Data gathered from the questionnaires are presented in the community profile, Figure 1 and 2 and the discussions of themes in Section 5.4.2 of this chapter.

5.4.1 Identifying details of participants

The age range of participants was between age twenty six and fifty seven. There were three male and seven female participants. All the interviewees had a long history of habitual drinking, were raised in homes where there was excessive habitual drinking, regarded counselling as unnecessary for their recovery and were certain, at the time of the first interview that *this was the time they were going to stay sober*.

5.4.1.1 Employment details of the participants

At the time of the initial interviews, five of the interviewees (three male and two females) were permanently employed on the farm. Of the remaining females one woman was unemployed because she did not have an identity document, two had lost their jobs because of drinking and fighting on duty and the remaining two women had retired.

One of the men had been promoted to the position of farm driver, once he gave up drinking. Sadly he relapsed a year later and was demoted. One woman was employed in the crèche but lost her job a few months later for arriving at work drunk. She was replaced by another of the women who had been sober for a year. This woman had lost her job previously due to drinking. Since being employed in the crèche this woman has seesawed between sobriety and binge-drinking. By December 2006 she had received several warnings regarding the impact of her drinking on her job.

5.4.1.2 Interviewees' choice of recovery path

Sobriety is more than just a decision; it is a path that people follow that is meant to facilitate their recovery. The various options available to people wanting to stop drinking were discussed with the ten recoverees. Farm management sanctioned time off, made transport available and financed any costs of treatment. Where an individual decided on an Ant–abuse implant they were expected to attend a stipulated number of counselling sessions once receiving same. All recoverees were encouraged to make use of counselling. No one went to more than two sessions of counselling. The three recovery paths chosen were: religious conversion, Ant–abuse implants and cold turkey.

5.4.1.3 Significant data regarding the families of the recoverees

The ten individuals represent six families. In four of the homes, both parents at the time of the first interview were habitual drinkers. In periods of sobriety, all habitual drinkers spoke of how their children suffered when they were drinking heavily. All six families each have at least one child who has dropped out of school and in each house there is at least one child who drinks excessively, some of whom are under–age. Each of the four families has a daughter who dropped out of school and is a teenage mother.

5.4.1.4 Sobriety success rate

Three of the ten interviewees have remained sober, two of the women are sober for varying lengths of time, fluctuating between periods of drinking relapse and periods of sobriety. The remaining five participants (two men and three women) have relapsed and have no intention of stopping.

5.4.2 Presentation of findings

The empirical evidence of this study together with the findings from the literature has been analysed according to eleven themes (De Vos et al., 2002:334) namely:

- the legacy of the Tot System;
- habitual drinking on farms: an accepted, normal way of life;
- habitual drinking – an escape and surrendering of responsibility;
- habitual drinking and violence on farms;
- the cycle of habitual drinking on farms;
- habitual drinking and paternalism on farms;
- previous attempts to stop drinking;
- perceived success of the decision to be sober;
- motivation to stop drinking;
- the meaning of sobriety;
- sobriety and relapse.

These eleven themes were repeated over and over in the empirical evidence and literature review and met the objectives of the study to gain insight into the lived experiences of farm workers and the meaning labourers assign to habitual drinking and to inform social work practice. The evidence for each theme is further differentiated between evidence gained from interviews with children, male and female participants and the health worker.

A short paragraph is included on each participant stating whether he or she has remained sober.

5.4.2.1 *The legacy of the Tot System on modern-day wine farms*

Cape Town, from the time of the settlers, was known as “The tavern of the seas”. Drunkenness, smuggling of liquor, card playing and violence was part of the Cape daily life (Brady et al., 2005:5) The legacy of the early Cape life was the Tot System;

resulting in wine farming becoming one of the occupations where the incidence of alcohol misuse is exceptionally high especially where access to alcohol is easy (Parry, 1998:7), making regular heavy drinking a sustainable pattern (Parry, 2000:217). The Tot System was abolished in 1961 but the legacy remains. The practice of selling wine to workers on credit, as a bonus, or selling wine cheaply to workers is simply a modern form of the Tot System (Brady et al., 2005:97).

Once the Tot System was abolished many workers refused to work without it, leaving the farms they were on and going in search of farms where it remained a practice or where alcohol is more easily available. The first decade of the twenty-first century is almost behind us and we are nowhere near to being free of the legacy of the Tot System.

The following statements are evidence that the legacy of the Tot System lives on in the labourers' desperate search for alcohol at the expense of all else.

(a) *Habitual drinking on farms – children's perspective*

The Tot System was abolished long before the children interviewed were born, yet the legacy which writers talk about is a very real experience for these children. The children interviewed spoke freely about their experiences of living with habitual drinkers. The following statements are their reflections:

Children of habitual drinkers feel neglected by their parents:

1. *Hulle worrie nie oor ander mense nie, solank hulle net lekker voel.*
2. *Hulle het nie oor ons geworrie nie.*
3. *Ek het gevoel ek wil nie my skoolwerk doen nie.*
4. *'n Mens kry nie lus om skool toe te gaan nie. Daar was nooit geld vir klere en boeke nie.*
5. *Ek dink ek wil nie meer skool gaan nie.*

The children's perception is that their parents are only concerned about is access to alcohol and drinking:

1. *As my ma geld het, dan hardloop sy smokelhuis toe. Sy moet eers dronk drink voor sy huistoe kom.*

Two of the children expressed the opinion that alcohol was very accessible on this farm and that was the reason their parents drank so much:

1. *Hier is die wyn te naby.*

Most of the children interviewed commented that their parents spent their money on alcohol rather than on food, clothing and things that they (children) needed for school:

1. *Daar was nooit geld vir gooiie goed nie, skool fondse of boeke of skoene nie. Daar was altyd net geld vir drank.*
2. *Die meeste van die tyd, het hulle ons geld, selfs ons broodgeld, uitgedrink.*

One teenager told how her parents were forever breaking promises that they made, especially promises for a birthday gift or school related items, reinforcing the feeling that the child is not nearly as important as the parents' desire to drink:

1. *Sy het altyd vir ons belowe sy gaan iets vir ons koop (skool kleure, verjaarsdag iets) maar sy het nooit haar beloftes nagekom nie. Veral naweke.*

The primary focus of the adults life, according to their children, was their drinking, especially over weekends. Children spoke of parents spending all their money on alcohol and never having enough money for food, clothing and school items. A common experience for the children was that parents made and broke promises to them very easily.

(b) Habitual drinking on farms – women's perspective

In many instances the abolishment of the Tot System has led to further social

disintegration, with labourers spending their salaries on purchasing alcohol (Scharf, 1987:19–25; London, 2005). Two of the women reflect on the fact that they spent all they had on alcohol. The needs of the family were not considered. Even money for food was used to buy alcohol. Children got nothing of what their parents earned:

1. *Ek het al die geld wat ek gehad het gebruik vir drank, ek het niks gegee vir kos nie. Ek drink net so. Die kinders kry niks.*
2. *Al my geld het ek opgedrink.*
3. *Ek het kosgeld gebruik vir wyn.*

One woman spoke of getting into debt in order to buy alcohol. When she received her wages her first priority was to settle her alcohol debt so that she could buy alcohol again. Her debt consumed her money for food and so, in order to feed her family, she had to beg here and there from friends and neighbours. Habitual drinking brings the drinkers' private life into the public domain – for some of the families on the farm survival has only been possible because of the kindness of neighbours, the support of the primary health care worker and the Children's Programme. To have one's private life constantly exposed as a result of violence or begging is degrading and damages a person's pride. The following words touch on this issue:

1. *Ek het altyd baie kort in my huis, die kinders het klere gekort. Vrydagaand toe ons gepay is, moet die geld gebruik word vir drankskulde wat ons gemaak het. As ek inkopies gaan doen, is daar altyd so min ek kan nie inkopies doen nie en dan moet ons vra – 'n stukkie van hier en 'n stukkie van daar.*

Scharf (1987) warns that many labourers will continue to drink, and will lose their jobs as a result of mechanisation and upgrading, but they will continue to drink, and their families will continue to suffer.

For this woman the consequence of her and her husbands' habitual drinking meant

the loss of home, job and material possessions, but they continued to drink:

1. *Ons het alles oor wyn verloor; blyplek, job – alles.*

Management of the Children's Programme has debated the support given to families where habitual drinking is the root of the suffering. The question raised is "Does the support given (food parcels mainly or clothes to a woman whose husband repeatedly burns them) enable the habitual drinking?" A decision was made not to give food parcels, the children receive meals Monday to Friday and should they be hungry or afraid, they are able to go to one of several safe houses identified within the community. Even that, though, enables habitual drinkers to surrender their responsibility and continue with excessive drinking. The dilemma is that children cannot be allowed to go hungry.

(c) *The legacy of the Tot System – men's perspective*

Workers came to expect the rations of wine as their due, and drinking became a habit, reinforced every day (London, 2003:61). It was the male labourers on this farm who received free drink as part of the Tot System. For them it was a crisis when the Tot System was abolished. Male labourers were used to several tots of alcohol during the day and a bottle of wine to take home. On a regular basis they received a five-litre can of wine. Suddenly one day the Tot System wine was stopped, leaving the men dependent and desperate. Some labourers have been known to leave a job and move to another farm where access to alcohol is easier (London, 2005).

One of the men in this study accounts how the Tot System had created such a dependency on alcohol among the men, that once the Tot System was abolished the men had to use their meagre wages to buy the quantities of wine they were accustomed to:

1. *Daardie Dopstel het die ouwens gewoon gemaak. Toe dit gestop was, was jy gewoon aan 'n 5l – nou moet jy koop, met min geld.*

The abolishment of the Tot System was the only time the labourers on this farm have used collective action to register their protest. One man spoke of how labourers will endure a lot just to have access to wine:

1. *Hulle sal enige iets aanvaar net om die elmboog te lig.*

The primary focus of the drinker becomes: when, where and how am I going to get my next drink? Any money a habitual drinker has, is used to buy alcohol; irrespective of what the drinker or his family may need. Not only do habitual drinkers spend all they have to buy alcohol, but many buy on credit, placing themselves in a never ending cycle of debt (London: 2005):

1. *As jy geld het, sal jy dit vir drank gebruik. Sodra jy geld in jou sak het sal jy drink koop, maak nie saak wat jy nodig het nie. Alles gaan oor drank. Jy sal alles aanvaar, net om die elmboog te lig. 'n Mens kom nooit uit die skuld nie.*

Habitual drinkers become so desperate to drink that they will trade in valuable possessions for cash or steal money to buy drink:

1. *Ek verloor toe alles, my eerste ryding het ek verloor.*
2. *Sy (my dogter) het baie kwaad gedoen toe sy gedrink het. Sy het kos gesteel en dit geruil vir drank of geld om drank te koop.*
3. *Mense steel van mekaar, die mense wat saamry en sien jy werk met geld, gaan die geld gebruik. Dan drink ons, en ek kan nie sê wat ek met my geld gemaak het nie.*

Something that emerges out of discussions with habitual drinkers is the lack of control of their lives. For the man quoted earlier, lack of control was to do with money. At the start of the evening he had money, when he looked again it was gone. The same man related this story:

1. *My swaer het ander aand verjaar. Ek het net soetwyn gedrink. Ek kan nie onthou dat ek die party verlaat het nie. Ek kan nie onthou wa'antoe ek gery het*

nie. Maar vroegoggend skrik ek wakker, ver van die huis, langs die pad, in my kar. Ek weet nie hoe ek daar gekom het nie.

Lack of control also has to do with chaos, most often evident in the homes of the drinkers – children talk about that. In other accounts, lack of control is to do with behaviour:

1. *Ek wou haar nie slaan nie, maar die volgende oomblik het ek haar amper doodgemaak.*
2. *Toe ons opgehou het, was daar nie een breekgoed (breakables such as cups and saucers) wat nie stukkend was nie.*

(d) *The legacy of the Tot System – the health worker’s perspective*

From the perspective of the health worker the abolishment of the Tot System caused as much social disintegration as the system itself; mainly because what had been a perk was now an expense (London, 2005). On this farm, labourers were first given maize in place of alcohol and then later their wages were increased. The health worker felt that while the Tot System was practised there was not the violence and social disintegration that there is today. The health worker felt that access to alcohol is too easy. When people were receiving wine, they drank what they were given, got drunk and went to sleep until the next day. On modern day farms if people have money they can gain access to alcohol. Alcohol is very easily accessible. Various writers have established that where access to alcohol is easy, habitual drinking becomes a sustainable pattern (Parry, 1998) Abolishment of the Tot System created an opportunity for people to trade informally in alcohol within their communities. It is the health worker’s opinion that the easy access to alcohol has resulted in an escalation of domestic violence on the farm. However, contrary to the health worker’s perception, other people remember violence being an issue in the days of the Tot System. The fact that people binge drink is the cause of violence (Obot, 2006), not whether or not they paid for the alcohol. The health workers perception is that during the time of the Tot System, the men were drinking

at the workplace and arriving home drunk. The women did not have ready access to alcohol and there was less alcohol in the home, not to say there was no alcohol in the home. All the people interviewed recall growing up with habitual drinking in their homes, which for many of those people during the days of the Tot System.

1. *Die manne het alleen drank gekry, maar daar was nie soveel geweld toe hulle gratis wyn gekry het nie. Hulle was te moeg en gesuip. Die mense het net tyd gehad vir suip en sex! Vandag is daar meer toegang tot alkohol. Wyn is in die huis gedrink.*

The health worker spoke of how the men reacted once the Tot System was abolished. First they protested by striking. The landowner never reacted to the strike; he allowed it and waited for the labourers to return to work.

1. *Die manne het gestaak oor die einde van die Dopstelsel. Dit was die enigste staking op die plaas. Die boer het hulle laat staak.*

Realising that the landowner was not negotiable on the issue of free wine, the labourers set about making their own. They would gather grapes that were not good enough for harvesting, put them in sacks and wait for them to ferment, crush them and make *morswyn*. The men were not going to take abolishment lying down. By continuing to drink excessively they would service their need to drink while showing the powers that be they still had access to wine. "A state of drunkenness can be an ambivalent means of publicly or domestically protesting against the stresses, frustrations or powerlessness of life as an underpaid and more or less overworked farm worker with very little in terms of life chances outside farm and work life *I look forward to my dop every night because of the moegheid*" (De Kock, 2002:18).

1. *Hulle het morswyn gemaak.*

Some people began trading informally in alcohol in order to generate income. There was now a market (people in desperate need of alcohol) who would use whatever money they had:

1. *Die mense het begin smokkel om geld te maak.*

Illicit alcohol sales have never been allowed on the farm, but in residential areas close by there are liqueur outlets selling cheap wine. The researcher was also told that from time to time people come on to the farm selling alcohol or delivering what has been bought elsewhere. Men on the farm who have their own cars buy and bring back alcohol for other farm dwellers.

At the time access to free alcohol was abolished, some farm workers were already alcohol dependent and their primary focus became access to alcohol. They would use all the money they earned and in some instances get into debt in order to drink until they were drunk. While men and women continue to drink, children are forced to take on the responsibilities their drinking parents surrender and are victims of neglect as a result of their parents drinking.

Clearly the Tot System had to be abolished. Unfortunately, at the time that the system was abolished labourers were in no way assisted with their dependency. They were, so to speak, thrown into a collective “*cold turkey*”. The reaction of the labourers was a desperate search for that to which they had become accustomed (London, 2003). Men who had been on the Tot System had been receiving between one and a half to two litres of wine per day and an extra five litres for the weekend. The alcohol was stopped overnight with no organised plan to address the consequences of this habitual drinking.

Alcohol was a part-payment for labour so there had to be some other form of payment. On this farm labourers were initially given maize in place of wine and then later the maize was stopped and wages increased. As a consequence of the Tot System being abolished, labourers began producing their own wine (*moerwyn*) and some farmers began producing bulk wine. Labourers, then, as long as they had money, had access to wine or alcohol. Labourers were no longer given free wine but habitual drinking had already become so entrenched on farm life that it continued (Brady et al., 2005). The labourers’ desperate search for alcohol caused them to use whatever money they had on alcohol, in many instances getting

themselves into debt or stealing in order to service their dependency (Scharf, 1987).

Had there been a better understanding at the time that the Tot System was abolished of the complexity and extent of the dependency, perhaps there would have been more attention given to rehabilitating people. Forty years later labourers remain desperate to drink at the expense of all else. Food, clothing and school related expenses take second place to the need for alcohol. As a result habitual drinking has become synonymous with farm life.

5.4.2.2 *Habitual drinking on farms: an accepted, normal way of life*

The Tot System has resulted in a socio-cultural ethos among farm workers where, for generation after generation, drinking is considered normative. This is not so much a genetic inclination as a socio-cultural environment (Schotte, 1996:17). Habitual drinking is synonymous with farm life, despite concerted efforts to reduce it. It has become a legitimate way of coping with the boredom, struggle and suffering of daily life (De Kock, 2002).

From young, children learn that farm life and habitual binge-drinking are bedfellows. Labourers drink not only to be part of the group but to avoid being teased and ostracised by the community when they do not drink. When people do stop drinking there is very little, if any, community support for them.

(a) *Habitual drinking on farms: an accepted, normal way of life – children's perspective*

All the nine children interviewed were asked why they think their parents drink to the extent that they do. Younger children were unable to answer this question. All the older children (eleven to twenty year olds) expressed the following thought:

1. *Ek het gedink dit was normaal dat mense so gedrink het.*

One of the boys emphasised that drinking is excessive on farms:

1. *Die plaasmense drink baie.*

Another expressed the opinion that alcohol was readily accessible:

1. *Hier is die wyn volop.*

All the children were asked if they thought life would be better if they lived somewhere else. All of the children said “No”. The older children all felt that living off the farm would mean hardship. Paradoxically, their feeling was that in urban life there would be more access to alcohol and less support for them.

(b) *Habitual drinking on farms – an accepted, normal way of life – women’s perspective*

In one way or another, all the women interviewed commented that habitual drinking is a given on the farm – an “activity” that can be considered the norm rather than the exception. Habitual drinking on farms is not so much a genetic inclination as a socio-cultural environment that has legitimised drinking as to be the expected way of life (Schotte, 1996):

1. *Die meeste plaasmense lewe self daaraan (habitual drinking).*

2. *Op plase is drank ‘n tradisie.*

3. *Almal rondom my drink.*

The following statements are evidence that these women consider habitual drinking on the farm is the norm:

1. *Ons drink baie HIER (hierdie plaas).*

2. *In ander plekke, soos Macassar as jy nie geld het nie, dan kan jy nie drink nie. Mens moet wag totdat jy geld het. Hier is die wyn volop. Op ander plase het ek nie soveel gedrink nie. Dit was ‘n bietjie ver van die smokelhuise af.*

3. *Ons het altyd oor die naweek gedrink– Vrydag tot Sondag.*

4. *Toe kom ek hier en ek begin weer.*
5. *Dit was altyd so dat ons oor die naweke drink.*

Irrespective of how an individual or family have suffered as a result of habitual drinking, fellow farm-dwellers encourage each other to binge-drink. Habitual drinkers who decide to stop drinking are teased and encouraged to start again. When individuals stop drinking they let the group down:

1. *Baie mense help jou dieper in die kwaad, veral as ek dronk was, dan maak ek grappies, dan lag hulle. Hulle hou van die een wat gesuip is, hulle moedig 'n mens aan om nog te drink.*
2. *My vriende spot vir my, hulle wil hê ek moet met hulle saam drink. Toe ek gedrink het wou hulle nie wyn gee nie; nou dat ek nugter is, nou wil hulle gee.*
3. *Toe ek besluit om te stop, toe het van die mense my probeer terug hou. Hulle wil hê ek moet drink.*

In order to fit in socially on the farm, farm dwellers feel they have to drink in order to be accepted by others. Being on the outside is not a passive experience. People that do not drink are teased and treated badly by the “in” group. Women, particularly drink for the social aspect of drinking.

1. *Ons drink om saam vriende te drink.*
2. *Ek het gedrink om deel van die groepe te wees.*
3. *As 'n mens nie drink nie dan pas jy nie by hulle nie, ek wil by hulle wees. Hulle hou van my.*
4. *Om saam my vriende te wees.*
5. *Ek was vyf en twintig jaar oud toe ek begin drink het. Ek het die eerste keer by 'n dans begin drink. Ek was die enigste een wat nie gedrink het nie.*

6. *As 'n mens drink, het jy baie vriende, as jy dit los het jy glad niks vriende nie.*

The aspect of habitual drinking that is most consistent for all these women is the aspect of acceptance by the group, of being “in”. This applied to women of all ages. Peer pressure is huge. The psychological need is to be “in” and the fear is of being teased or criticised for being “out”. Few of the women had a strong enough self esteem or sense of self to ignore or cope with the negative comments that are made when they do not drink. For at least two of the women, the fact that people liked them when they were drunk and telling jokes was very important. Other social activities do not seem to be able to meet that need.

(c) *Habitual drinking on farms – an accepted, normal way of life – men’s perspective*

Twenty five of the thirty economically active men on the farm are habitual drinkers. For most of the men there is never a question of whether or not they should imbibe. Habitual drinking on farms, according to the men, is just the way things are, especially for men. Children are drawn into the culture of drinking on farms from a young age. Once males reach adulthood, habitual drinking is part of their manhood. To not drink is to be not manly. Men perceive their role of father to include initiating male children into binge–drinking. No father on this farm has ever been willing to counsel his boy child against binge–drinking. When boys do drink, the concern is more about what they did, their behaviour when drunk, than the fact that they were drunk:

1. *Ons het van kinsbeen af altyd vir pa die bier geproe. Ons was altyd in kontak met drank. Drank was vry. Dit was nooit dat mens gesê het, “jy mag nie drink nie”. Jy was somer gestuur om drank te gaan koop, loop tot die smokellhuis en later drink jy bietjie–mondvol. So het dit gegaan.*
2. *Hulle voel dit is 'n man se reg om te drink. Hulle drink seker om 'in' te voel.*
3. *Die manne drink om hulle manlikheid te bewys.*

4. *Ek drink omdat almal rondom my drink.*
5. *Ek het voorheen opgehou drink, toe kry ek hier 'n werk. Oor 'n tyd toe ek tussen mates gekom het, toe begin ek weer.*
6. *Ons het altyd tussen vriende gedrink.*

One man who regularly alternates between hitting his wife and burning her things said things would change if his wife stopped drinking:

1. *Dit is nie reg dat my vrou drink, as sy in die aande net huistoe wil gaan en haar werk doen. 'n Man wil nie 'n dronk vrou hê nie.*

This man was confronted with the fact that his wife did not want a drunk husband either and that he too has domestic responsibilities. He completely ignored that and simply repeated:

1. *Dit kan nie wees dat man en vrou drink nie. 'n Man moet tussen sy mates wees.*

There is a lot at stake for the group when an individual decides to stop drinking. Often communal drinking takes place where each drinker makes a financial contribution, so the bigger the kitty the more alcohol available. Secondly the greater the majority of drinkers the weaker the position of anyone discouraging drinkers. It is in the interest of the drinking majority that the individual who tries to stop drinking, fails.

1. *Toe ek gestop het, hulle (vriende) het gesê ek gaan dit nie maak nie.*

The decision to stop drinking is in part a decision about the loss of the group experience versus the health and wellbeing of the individual. One of the men interviewed made a decision in favour of sobriety, sacrificing the group. He was able, after some time, to realise that he had gained more than he had lost.

1. *Ek het altyd gedink dit is lekker om vriende te hê. Maar as die wyn jou van binne af gevreet het en jy's nugter, hulle is nie met jou nie.*

(d) *Habitual drinking on farms – an accepted, normal way of life: the health worker’s perspective*

The discussions with the health worker reinforced the evidence obtained from other participants that habitual drinking is a norm on farms and that people drink to feel part of the group.

1. *Almal drink, dit is ‘n gewoonte.*
2. *‘n Man wat nie drink nie is nie deel van die groep nie.*

Habitual drinking is so much a norm on the farm that weekends are evaluated on the incidence of violence. That people are going to drink is a given. A good weekend is when nobody got so badly hurt, they needed to be taken to hospital:

1. *Die naweek was rustig, niemand het seer gekry nie. Hulle het wel gedrink maar hulle was rustig.*

The fact that a drinker was drunk and unavailable to his/her children and used all his/her money on alcohol rather than food for the family are not considerations when measuring the impact of habitual drinking. The measure is the incidence of violence:

1. *Hy was gesuij maar hy het vir niemand gepla nie.*

Habitual drinking has becoming legitimised to the extent that farm labourers and their families consider excessive drinking normal. There is no understanding that habitual drinking is a choice that is made and the consequences of the choice to drink excessively are poverty, violence, child neglect, ill health and the possibility of losing home and work. Somehow the relationship between cause and effect is not made until an individual stops drinking. Repeatedly during this research what became very clear is that the habitual drinking is only considered to be problematic when the drinker gets into trouble of some sort as a result of a binge.

Men whose wives drink consider their drinking a problem only when it means she

has not done her domestic chores. These are attitudes expressed by drinkers and non drinkers alike. Even the health worker when asked about the weekend on the farm will report that it was fine unless someone got hurt or arrested. Farm dwellers have a sense of acceptance of habitual drinking, resigned to the fact that people drink to get drunk and are powerless to change the practice (London, 1997). It is the researcher's opinion that it is the sense of powerlessness and resignation that needs drastic attention before any significant change in drinking patterns will take place.

5.4.2.3 Habitual drinking – an escape and surrendering of responsibility

Habitual drinkers, when faced with overwhelming challenges seek refuge in alcohol. They would rather be seen as victims of drink than as social and economic failures (Akyeampong in Willis, 2006:17). Farm labourers are trapped in an environment which they find hard to escape (Schotte, 1996). Over-indulgence masks boredom and creates a kind of fatalism. A state of drunkenness can be an ambivalent means of publicly or domestically protesting against the stresses, frustrations or powerlessness of life as a lowly paid farm worker with very few opportunities outside farm and work life "*I look forward to my dop every night because of the moegheid*" (De Kock, 2002:18).

Alcohol gives people who are normally submissive and quiet, courage to say things they would otherwise not say. Should they get into trouble for having said something or for fighting, they once again surrender responsibility and blame the alcohol. Labourers use alcohol to numb the pain of their lives (Gibson, 2004).

(a) Habitual drinking – an escape and surrendering of responsibility: children's perspective

Surrendering responsibility creates chaotic environments, especially for children:

1. *Ons huis was altyd deurmekaar.*
2. *As ek in die middag uit die skool uitkom, dan lyk die huis net so.*

One child spoke of having to seek refuge for his younger sisters in the middle of the night when his parents were fighting. They would climb through bedroom windows and run to the health worker, a neighbour or a place of safety:

1. *Ek moet vir J hulle wegneem aan aunt T. Ons het deur die venster geklim. Ek het terug gegaan en buite gesit om te hoor of hulle lewe nog of het hulle mekaar doodgemaak. Een aand het ons in die creche geslaap. My pa het vir ons kom soek. Ons het tjoep stil gebly. Hy moenie hoor ons is daar nie.*

Children are left to care for themselves:

1. *Hulle het nie by die huis gedrink nie, hulle het ons net so gelos en gaan drink.*

The children whose words follow all commented on the fact that their mothers in particular surrendered their domestic and family responsibilities while they were drinking habitually. There is a feeling of abandonment for children:

1. *My ma het nooit haar werk gedoen nie.*
2. *As my ma nie werk nie, dink sy nooit om haar huiswerk te doen nie – sy gaan liewers suip.*
3. *Op 'n manier, het ek groet geword sonder 'n ma. My ma het nooit haar werk gedoen nie.*
4. *Soms as hulle gedrink het, was daar nie kos vir ons nie.*

Children end up taking on the responsibility for domestic chores and caring for younger siblings:

1. *Alles was altyd op my skouers.*
2. *Ek moet alles doen.*

The oldest daughter in this family expressed her feelings of overwhelming powerlessness over the fact that her parents were drunk on weekends:

1. *Ek voel asof ek niks kan maak nie.*

This ten year old boy expressed the idea that if his parents took their responsibility of being parents seriously they would stop drinking, as if their drinking continued because they did not care:

1. *Ek het gedink as hulle oor my bekommer, sal hulle ophou drink.*

When children were asked why they thought their parents drank, four of the ten children said:

1. *Om hulle probleme te vergeet.*

The message children are getting is that the best way to manage your problems is to do what you can to forget them. Positive and proactive problem solving skills are not being modelled for children. Children are not witnessing their parents strength and ability to manage their lives situation. They are witnessing adults who become overwhelmed easily and run away from challenge. Problems are never presented as something we can manage or something for which we seek help. Children enter adulthood having learned that life is too difficult to face.

(b) *Habitual drinking – an escape and surrendering of responsibility – women’s perspective*

Farm labourers, when faced with problems, choose to escape by drinking:

1. *Ek drink om my probleme te vergeet.*

2. *Ek het gedrink om weg te kom van die probleme.*

When things got too much for these women they turned to what they knew best – alcohol (Schotte, 1996). This woman did not feel strong enough to stand up to her adult children who live in the house and cause problems for her. Her only way out was to drink:

1. *Toe voel ek, ek gaan nou drink. Ek weet nie wat ek moet doen nie.*

Ek het 'n klomp probleme in die huis. Wat kan ek maak? Ek het nie krag vir hulle nie ... hulle is almal op my. Hulle almal drink en dan is hulle onbeskof teenoor my. Ek drink om te vergeet ... om vir my krag te gee. Krag om vir hulle te sê. Met drank in, voel ek sterk.

Alcohol is perceived as comforter, numbing the pain (Gibson, 2004) especially in situations in which the women feel trapped. They do not feel they can leave the men but they are being hurt in the relationship:

1. *Die drank het verligting gegee, Hy (haar man) begin vloek en my minderwaardig laat voel. Die woorde het my so seer gemaak. Die drank het my getroos. As ek drink dan vergeet ek van alles.*
2. *Ek het begin drink toe my man 'n gemeenskap gehad het met n ander vrou.*
3. *Toe hoor ek R het gejol (buite egtelike verhouding) Die wyn was my toe vlug.*
4. *Drank is 'n toevlug.*

For this woman being drunk brings love, joy and lightness into her life. She also finds strength to say things she would otherwise not say. In those moments when she is shouting at her husband, children or neighbour she feels strong. This woman wants to drink. She wants the feelings she has when she is drunk. She has got too much to lose by giving up alcohol:

1. *Ek wil drink. Ek drink om probleme te vergeet. Die man is nie eg met ons nie. As ek gedrink het is ek lief vir almal. As ek gedrink is dan sing en dans ek. Ek is baie lief vir dans, maar as ek nugter is, dan kan ek nie dans nie. Ek raak gou kwaad as ek lekker wyn in het. Die wyn maak 'n mens sterk voel.*

Women speak of how when they were drunk they surrender responsibility for their children and household duties. Two of the women spoke of how they felt hurt when their children rejected them. One of the women admits she never made the connection between her drinking and her children's reactions. The other woman

said she felt bad that her children did not want to come home. She never expressed feeling bad that her children felt the need to go to someone else to escape their parents drinking. While she was drinking she never even came home, she slept wherever she collapsed:

1. *Naweke het ek nie kinders gehad nie. Ek het in die blomme geslaap. Die kinders het by D geslaap. As sy hulle huistoe bring, huil hulle. Hulle wil nie kom nie. As ma, voel dit nie lekker nie.*
2. *Ek het gedink my kinders hou nie van my nie. Ek het nie gedink dit het om die drink gegaan nie.*
3. *Die kinders moet vir hulle self oor die naweke sorg. Die grotes vir die kleintjies.*
4. *Daar was altyd kos, maar die kinders moes vir hulle self sorg. Self kos maak.*
5. *Ek was elke aand dronk. Ek vloek lelik. Ek bakklei. Ek was nie 'n voorbeeld nie.*
6. *Jy kan nie kos maak as jy dronk is nie.*

A grandmother accounted how her adult daughter would be missing from Friday evening to Sunday night. The grandmother described how the children coped:

1. *As ons drink, moet die kinders vir hulle self sorg, veral naweke. Ons almal het gedrink.*

Once women had given up drinking they were able to understand the impact of their drinking on their children:

1. *My kinders het verskriklik onder gely.*

One grandmother noticed how children's school going was affected by their parent's drinking:

1. *Die kinders wil nie skool gaan nie.*

This mother stated that once she had stopped drinking she saw the world

differently:

1. *Nou dat ek nie meer drink nie, 'n mens se oë is nou oop.*

Surrendering responsibility is not only about neglecting domestic chores and parenting responsibilities. It is also about surrendering responsibility for oneself, for communicating when you are unhappy, about decision making, and waiting for other people to solve your problems. Farm labourers on many levels in their lives surrender responsibility. The following statements are evidence of this:

1. *Die implant het gemaak dat ek nie weer drink nie.*
2. *Dit is nadat die mense nie meer uitgekóm het om vir ons kerk te kom hou nie, dat sy weer begin het.*
3. *My man maak dat ek drink. Hy dwing my.*

When asked what caused one of the women interviewed to relapse she replied:

1. *Dit kos moed om op te hou.*

Habitual drinking and drunkenness absolve people of behaving responsibly:

1. *Ek kan lekker goed sê as ek 'n drank in het.*

(c) *Habitual drinking – an escape and surrendering of responsibility – men's perspective*

All three men who were interviewed stated that while they were drinking they were not concerned about their family and domestic responsibilities:

1. *Ons (hy en sy vrou) het saam gedrink. Dan vergeet 'n mens jy moet kos maak. Dit gaan lekker as jy drink.*
2. *Voorheen het ek nie oor hulle (die kinders) geworrie nie.*

One man spoke of how, once he stopped drinking he saw things he never saw

when he was drinking:

1. Ek sien dinge nou raak wat ek nle tevore gesien het nie.

Two of the men interviewed were very clear that domestic chores and family responsibility is the responsibility of the woman in the house. For this reason women should not drink, the woman should focus on her work (in the house). It is the fact that women drink that the house is chaotic and children neglected. It is not habitual drinking per se that is wrong. Implicit in this argument is that the man's place is with his mates:

1. Dit is glad nie reg as n vroumens drink nie. Dinge raak agter in die huis. Sy doen nie haar werk nie.

Two of the three men interviewed spoke of how alcohol affected their perceptions of reality and how those changed once they had stopped drinking. Only once he had stopped drinking, could one man see he had not been concerned about his responsibilities while he drank. Acknowledging how things were when he drank, one men felt it was as if going sober was like having some new fact revealed to him:

1. Jou oë word vaal. Definitief dit maak asvaal oë.
2. Jy besef nie jy drink te veel nie. Jy drink net. Toe ek opgehou het en terugkyk en sien hoeveel ander mens drink, dan sê ek: Mense! Ek was net so! Toe ek die wyn gelos het sien ek baie dinge wat ek nog nooit gesien het nie. As jy nugter is, dan kom daardie skaam gevoel, maar as jy dop weer in het, dan gaan jy weer aan.
3. Dit was as of ek nuwe oë het.

Habitual drinking gives the drinkers a sense of freedom; they do and say as they please and neglect what they do not feel inclined to do. If someone is hurt by their behaviour while drinking, they surrender that responsibility too:

1. *As ek nou drink, dan besef ek, ek kan maak en doen soos ek wil.*
2. *Ek kan goed sê as ek 'n drink in het.*

(d) *habitual drinking – an escape and surrendering of responsibility – the health worker’s perspective*

The health worker stated that farm people, especially women, drink as a means to block out their difficulties.

1. *Hulle drink om hulle probleme te vergeet.*

The health worker discussed another aspect of powerlessness and surrendering responsibility among farm people. She spoke of the farm people as always looking for someone else to resolve their problems. There is a sense that the farm people feel they are not able to manage their own affairs:

1. *Die plaasmense vra altyd vir iemand om saam te gaan as hulle iewers moet gaan. Hulle kan self gaan, maar hulle wil net nie. As iemand hulle pla sê hulle “Ek gaan vir die baas sê en hy sal jou uitsort”.*

Half the men and half the women interviewed stated that while they were drinking habitually, all that mattered was the present and the immediate gratification of drinking. They had no sense of future. For the majority of the women there is very little chance of any kind of career advancement. They are tied financially to their men, which perhaps explains their sense of resignation and lack of concern for the future.

Labourers use habitual drinking to surrender responsibility for many aspects of their lives: family and household responsibilities, managing their finances, confronting issues that worry them or becoming involved in projects that would help them escape the cycles of poverty, violence and dependency.

Powerlessness pervades the labourers’ lives – powerless over their situation and then powerless against the influence of alcohol (London, 1997). There is always

something or someone that is assigned blame for causing an individual to drink or to relapse. Once individuals stop drinking and they reflect on their lives, while they were drinking, they themselves can see how drinking distorts the drinkers sense of reality. Once they are sober and they have overcome the power of alcohol over their lives they begin to take some responsibility. All the respondents spoke about “seeing” what they needed to do in a way they hadn’t seen before. Once sober, parents are more in touch with their children’s needs.

5.4.2.4 Habitual drinking and violence on farms

“In Africa and in the Western world binge–drinking accounts for most of the acute problems like accidents, violence, and chronic health conditions and workplace injury” (Obot, 2006:31). Alongside habitual drinking on farms is a high incidence of domestic and social violence. These interviews will demonstrate that farming communities implicitly and explicitly condone violence. Intoxication disinhibits the drinker, removing restraints on aggressive behaviour and “empowers” the woman to stand up for herself. Farm dwellers, and particularly women, have become so resigned to habitual drinking and violence being the norm on farms, the fact that they have a choice whether or not to drink and the broader society belief that violence is wrong, is not part of their consciousness. Perceiving domestic violence and habitual drinking as normative renders abused women as powerless in the face of alcohol abuse (Artz, 1998).

(a) Habitual drinking and violence on farms – children’s perspective

A correlation exists between habitual drinking and social violence on farms (Obot, 2006:29). The children gave the following reasons why they believed their parents resorted to violence.

1. *Hulle het bakklei omdat hulle dronk was.*
2. *Die wyn werk in die mense, dan raak hulle kwaad vir mekaar. Dan baklei hulle.*
3. *Soms was daar mense my ma hulle kom Sandrine. Miskien nou is die auntie se*

man jaloers. Dan bakklei hulle. Miskien oor kos baklei – as daar niks kos gemaak is nie.

4. My pa vra iets en my ma wil nie gee nie, dan vloek my pa – Hy gaan haal iets en slaan vir my ma.
5. Hulle baklei omdat hulle lelik met mekaar praat as hulle gedrink het.
6. Ek weet nie rêrig hoekom hulle baklei het nie. Maar partykeer dink ek, hulle gaan mekaar doodmaak. Hulle het met skerpgoed baklei, soos grawe, vurke, messe.

Implied in the following account by a fourteen year old is that her mother's behaviour caused her father to be violent. The child never expressed any indication that she thought the violence was wrong. (In this particular house the children often miss school because they are so exhausted from the noise, violence, fear and disruption over the weekend.) The child does not end the story where it actually ended – she leaves that detail out, but she knows everyone knows the ending:

1. My ma kon nooit sag praat nie. Dan praat sy kliphard. Dan speel hulle dams en sy is lekker dronk. Dan praat sy kliphard. Almal hoor sy raas en skel. Dan hoor my pa. Dan kom hy. Dan vloek sy hard. Dan praat hy met my ma. Dan skreeu sy kliphard. Dan vloek sy. Dan raak pa kwaad.

The children were asked to account how they felt when their parents fought. The following account is from a sixteen year old, the oldest child in the house:

1. Die kinders was al vrees bevange. Hulle was bang. Elke keer hulle my ma hulle dronk sien, het hulle omgegaan na 'n ander auntie toe. Ek het probeer met my ma hulle te praat. Ek het net slegte woorde gekry. Ek kan nie 'n stop kry nie. Hulle het net gesê ek moenie vir hulle sê nie. "Dus nie jou besigheid nie. Bly uit ons besigheid". Ek wil my ma help maar sy bly sê dus nie my besigheid nie. Ek het sleg gevoel. Hartseer. Ek kan niks maak nie.

The following is the statement of an eight year old of how she felt when her parents fought:

1. *Hartseer. Somtyds baklei hulle dan gaan ek kamer toe en lê op my bed en maak my styf toe. As hulle buitekant baklei, dan hardloop ek na M of S. As Aunt S gesuip is dan speel ek saam met O.*

Two sisters each talk about the violence in the house:

1. *Ek het net nooit gekeer nie. D het 'n knop op haar kop gekry van keer. Sy was een keer hospitaal toe.*
2. *Ek was hartseer en bang as hulle baklei. Ek het nooit gedink dit was my skuld nie. Soms hardloop ek weg. Soms probeer ek my pa keer as hy my ma wil seermaak. Dan staan ek in die middel, al kry ek seer. Ek hardloop alleen weg, die kleintjies bly by E in die kamer en huil.*

One twelve year old boy said children should speak out against their parents. He would always go looking for help when his parents were fighting:

1. *Kinders met dieselfde probleme moet rêrig praat.Hulle moenie bang wees nie. Daar is mense wat kan help en verstaan hoe hulle voel.*

This boy said of his parents fighting:

1. *Ek het hartseer gevoel. Al die mense het na ons gekyk. Hulle hou nie van ons nie. Hulle was bang. Hulle was nooit in ons yard nie.Niemand het besoek nie. My ma se vriende, my pa se vriende. Hulle het gedink ons is skandalig.*

This child perceives a sense of rejection and judgment of his family as a result of his parents excessive fighting.

(b) Habitual drinking and violence in farms – women's perspective

For this woman the domestic violence had to do with her husbands feelings for her. She felt his violence expressed his feelings. He never communicated that verbally

to her. The alcohol empowered him to communicate his feelings. Domestic violence is perceived as an indicator of marital problems rather than a result of intoxication. Violence is not perceived as wrong (Artz, 1998).

1. *Hy sê hy haat my. Hy het nie rerig gesê waarom hy my haat nie.*

In the absence of a reason for the violence that she can relate to she added that she thinks her husband uses violence to show his masculinity.

1. *Ek dink hy moet sy manlikeid bewys.*

Violent behaviour becomes learned and reinforced by the fact that perpetrators who are drunk are not held accountable for their actions (Parenee, 2003:11). When women are drunk they have the courage to hurt anyone who has hurt them. When this woman was sober and her husband was argumentative she would walk away, take her children and go to a neighbour and wait until he was asleep before they returned. In this way she avoided conflict. When she was drunk she had the “courage” to fight back even if it meant getting badly hurt:

1. *Ek het terug geslaan omdat ek te seer gekry het.*

The seriousness of domestic violence is dismissed, particularly by women (Artz, 1998:30). When the woman above was asked why she stayed with a man who hit her so badly she answered:

1. *Die kinders. Ek kry hom jammer. Ons het van ver af saamgekom tot hier. Ons is 'n gewoonte. Ons is agtien jaar bymekaar.*

Gibson (2004) discusses how alcohol absolves bad behaviour. There is a perception of the community that the individual is possessed by the devil. An outside force (the devil) is responsible for the drinker's behaviour. Violent behaviour is not attributed to the drinker's decision to over indulge. Alcohol is personified and the drinker absolved. When intoxicated the drinker is “allowed” to say and do things he/she cannot when they are sober. People are referred to as

“nie mens nie” (not human) when they are drunk. In many homes on farms, both parties are intoxicated or “possessed” and an ongoing cycle of violence and retaliation is established. This woman, once sober, reflected on how “the devil” had caused her and her husband to destroy everything they had when drunk. They would throw crockery and breakables around when they were drunk and fighting:

1. *Ja, want die tyd toe ek ophou met drink, die duiwel het my so te sê kaal gemaak. Toe ek nugter word toe het ek net twee koppies in die huis met ore. So het ons aangegaan. Ek moet nou weer koop.*

In a joint study conducted by the Department of Criminology of UCT and the Black Sash of Knysna among rural women, it was found that there was complacency about domestic violence despite an incidence rate of eighty percent. The researchers found little intolerance for the violence. Women who had been battered were seldom assisted by their community. Domestic violence is perceived as a “marriage problem” and not a community problem. Women defended their apathy to seek help by saying it is weekend stuff when the men have been drinking and in the week things are different (Artz, 1998:13). This woman stated that her husband hit her because she was uncooperative when she had been drinking (this particular woman has been hurt repeatedly but refuses to report her husband and always defends his violence).

1. *Die drank het my wreed gemaak, hy was nie gelukkig oor die drinkery nie. Ek was ‘n bietjie ongehoorsaam met hom.*

(c) Habitual drinking and violence on farms – male perspective

Somehow being male meant/means “men are expected to either endure or mete out violence” (Gibson, 2004:14). This man indicates that to not hit, is to be meek. Seemingly a man who does **not** express his displeasure violently is considered weak.

1. *Ek gaan nie meer slaan nie. Ek gaan nou muis wees.*

2. *Ek het nooit geslaan nie, maar ek hoor ander manne brag daaroor. Hulle slaan om hulle manlikheid te bewys.*

Men always feel their violence is justifiable (Pareeze, 2003:26). This man said he hit his wife because she behaved badly when she was drunk. He felt he did not know what else to do to control her:

1. *Ek slaan altyd vir haar omdat sy so aangaan. Ek weet nie hoe om te maak nie.*

This man, whose wife, had it not been for the health worker intervening, would have died, said once he was sober he felt bad, but at the time believed his wife's behaviour caused him to hit her. He was not going to endure the shame of his wife's adultery without standing up to her. Suspicion and jealousy are reasons men give to justify their violence (Artz 1998):

1. *As jy met jou vrou praat en sy wil net nie glo nie, of maak asof sy nie hoor nie. Die tyd toe sy die verhouding met J gehad het, ek wil net ontslae raak van my probleme (his wife's unfaithfulness). Ek sal my straf doen. Dit was altyd so. As ek nou drink, dan besef ek, ek maak net soos ek wil.*

This man reflected on the cycle of violence. His statement touches on the fact that violence is a sign of strength, the weapon of the weak (Gibson, 2004).

1. *Dit gaan altyd lekker as jy drink, Maar in the meantime dan strei ons oor kos of so iets, dan baklei jy. Dan voel jy skaam, dan slaan jy weer.*

One man was able to see the link between his drinking and the violence in the home:

1. *As ek in die huis instap was daar altyd bakleiery – oor onnodige goed.*

In a workplace, such as a farm which is predominantly patriarchal, there is a policy of uninvolvement when it comes to violence unless the workplace somehow is affected. A farm manager made this comment

1. *Ek gaan nie in hulle persoonlike probleme inmeng nie.*

The patriarchal manager will by nature defend the male perpetrator and imply that male on female violence is justified:

1. *Hy sê vir my sy was dronk en onbeskof.*

(d) *Habitual drinking and violence – the perspective of the health worker*

In discussions with the health worker she states that she is anti-violence. The health worker always does what she can to prevent violence and has often come between two parties who are fighting. However, she is known to use violence herself in situations where she feels powerless, indicating that she will not be made to look weak:

1. *Ek en L het hom geslat. Ons het gemoer! Ons moet vir hom sy les leer. Hy gaan dit voel, dan kan hy dink – wat het hy aan haar gedoen.*

She used violence against her own son when she found him doing something she was displeased with:

1. *Ek het hom vasgebind en op die grond laat lê en hom geskop en geslaan. Hy moet sy les leer.*

The health worker used violence when she felt a teenager had crossed the boundary and she felt she had to assert her authority.

1. *Toe ek uitvind waar was die kind, ek het vir haar geslaan dat sy kan nie sit nie. Ek moet vir haar les leer.*
2. *Jammer, maar ek het hom geslaan. Ek kan nie toelaat dat hy vir meisie kinders so praat nie. Hy moet leer.*

Most of the farm dwellers consider corporal punishment good parenting:

1. *Jy moet vir die kind slaan, moenie sag wees nie.*

The health worker's husband is a habitual drinker. She talks very proudly of when she hit him:

1. *Hy het begin met sy nonsense. Ek het die pan gevat en hom net een keer geslaan. Ek het vir hom gesê "laat die polisie kom". Ek is nie bang vir hulle nie. Hy het nooit weer vir my probleme gegee nie.*

The evidence gathered in this study suggests that farm dwellers assign meaning to violence that personifies the alcohol and justifies the violent act. Violence as an act is not considered wrong. It is rationalised as an indicator of the state of the marital relationship, the result of the women's behaviour and a consequence of drunkenness. Committing violence on farms is a sign of strength, the tool of the oppressed and evidence of masculinity. The meaning assigned to violence on farms condones the act of violence and individualises the problem. Violence on farms is not perceived as unlawful, nor against the constitution nor a communal problem requiring attention. This understanding of violence renders victim and practitioner powerless to act against it.

5.4.2.5 The cycle of habitual drinking

Generation after generation on farms, excessive over-indulgence and binge-drinking has become a survival strategy for both men and women. Despite concerted efforts to the contrary habitual drinking remains synonymous with farm life (Hill, Lanz, 1994 in Paranee, 2003:9).

(a) The cycle of habitual drinking – children's perspective

Children who suffer growing up in homes where there is habitual drinking, hunger, poverty and neglect vow they will not drink. These are statements made by nine of the ten children interviewed in 2002:

1. *Ek sou nooit drink, ek sien wat gebeur, netnou misbruik 'n mens die drank.*
2. *Nie, ek is nie 'n drinker nie. As ek sien wat dit aan my ma-hulle gedoen het.*

3. *Ek is nie 'n drinker nie, die wyn veroorsaak probleme. Dit verwoes 'n mens se lewe. Dit kan goed wees maar 'n mens moet weet tot watter mate.*
4. *Ek stel nie in drank belang nie.*

The one adult child interviewed was at the time of the first interview (June 2002) an habitual drinker.

Of the nine children that vowed in 2002 they would never drink, seven are now habitual drinkers. Only three of the seven are over eighteen. Five of the seven girls interviewed have had teenage pregnancies in the last two years.

(b) *The cycle of habitual drinking on farms – women's perspective*

All the adults who became habitual drinkers and were interviewed in this study had parents who were habitual drinkers.

1. *My ouers het sekerlik gedrink.*
2. *Toe ek jonk was en my ouma gedrink het, ek het na die bottel gekyk en gedink, dit is stink goete. Ek het nie gedink ek sal eendag dit ook ervaar nie.*
3. *My pa het altyd gedrink en dan het my ma begin.*
4. *My ma het later gestop, maar pa het altyd gedrink.*
5. *Ja, my ouers het gedrink.*

The women were asked how it felt for them when their parents drank:

1. *Hulle het gedrink, dit het my nie so gepla nie. Hulle was nie so wild soos ons nie.*
2. *Ek kan nie onthou oor die kinderjare nie.*
3. *Ek was skaam toe my ma begin drink het.*

4. *Alles het agteruit gegaan as my ma gedrink het. Sy het lelik gevloek.*
5. *As my pa dronk was het dit my baie gepla. Hy was baie onbeskof. Ek wou uit die huis uitgaan. Nou gesels ons en maak jokes. Hy is heeltemal 'n ander mens.*
6. *Ek was bang gewees. Vrydagaand was ek bang. Ouma het my grootgemaak. Sy het gedrink. Ouma het my altyd geslaan. Hulle het altyd gesê ek hou vir myself hoog. Naweke het sy verskriklik gedrink. Ek het gedink. "Vanaand gaan ek pak kry". My ma ook. Ek het gedink hulle hou nie van my nie. Ouma het haar geld uitgedrink. Ek moet haar help om by die huis te kom, sy was so dronk. Ek het altyd vir haar gehelp. Ek het my ouma so gehaat. Min het ek geweet.*

(c) The cycle of habitual drinking on farms – men's perspective

Men recall how their parents drank:

1. *Ek het groot geword by my auntie, sy en my pa het gedrink. Van Vrydagaand af moet kinders vir hulle self sorg.*
2. *My ouers het gedrink Ja.*

(d) The cycle of habitual drinking – perspective of the health worker

The health workers response to the question about whether or not her parents drank was:

1. *Almal het gedrink, maar hulle was nie so wild soos ons nie.*

It is many years now that the health worker has not drunk alcohol.

The health worker herself is not a drinker. She stopped drinking more than twenty years ago. She is married to a habitual drinker and her three adult children are habitual drinkers.

Six families are represented in this study. In all six families there are at least three generations of habitual drinkers. The adults interviewed all said that they never thought they would drink. They had all suffered as children as a result of their parents' drinking. The children interviewed all vowed they will not drink. Seven out of nine are engaged in habitual drinking. All the adults when interviewed in 2002 said that this was the time they were going to stay sober. Only three adults have kept their resolve. Generation after generation habitual drinking continues (Schotte, 1996). The cycle of abuse persists.

5.4.2.6 *Habitual drinking and paternalism on farms*

Gibson (2004) identifies paternalism on farms as the social environment in which social and domestic violence takes place. In this environment, farm, farmer and labourer are bound to one another in an interdependent relationship as a community of shared interest, in which responsibility is placed in the hands of the farmer and the worker is absolved of responsibility. On the one hand it is the farmer who is given the power to intervene in incidents of violence, while on the other the very act of intervening may place workers and families at risk of losing home and income. Gibson found that when people were badly hurt and absent from work, whilst everybody knew, nobody talked, lest the perpetrator lost his home and workplace. In some instances complex stories are created that construe the injuries as accidents (Gibson, 2004:7). (*One woman known to the researcher is continually "falling" out the tree*). In this way farmer and community pretend the violence never happened and farm life continues as "normal" (Gibson, 2004:7).

On this farm a decision has been made to expose the violence, break the silence and facilitate empowering the victims. The intention is to break the paternalistic roles of the farmer as judge and parent. The community however, resists change and continues to cling to the role of farmer/farm management as "Pa" (father figure) and the perceived authority of the father figure to resolve domestic disputes persists.

(a) Habitual drinking and paternalism – children’s perspective

The farmer is simultaneously judge, employer and parent (Gibson, 2004). Farm people have this overwhelming sense that if the landowner attends to a problem all will be well. Involving the landowner in a labourer’s personal problems is never seen as a partnership of equals. The request for help is not phrased in a way that the labourer is asked for advice or suggestions. The problem is handed over to the landowner and left with him or her to solve.

1. Die eienaar het ernstig met my ma hulle gepraat, dus die rede hoekum hulle gestop het.
2. Die plaas het my ma hulle gesê hulle moet ophou.

Farm people have the utmost faith that once the landowner has spoken to their parents/spouses, things will change.

(b) Habitual drinking and paternalism – women’s perspective

Approval by the farmer is crucial. Labourers endeavour to be seen to be doing good and dread disapproval, considered a violation of membership of the family (Du Toit, 1992).

1. Die plaas mense (plaas bestuur) gee om, hulle doen iets oor probleme. In ‘n ander plek sou dit rook loos gewees het. Ten minste het die kinders ‘n plek om te gaan. In ‘n ander plek sou die kinders hulle een, een uit die skool gebly het.
2. Ek het ‘n vrees in my gehad. Ek wil dit die nie weer doen nie, met die understanding van die bestuur.
3. As iemand vir jou omgee, gee dit jou ‘n geleentheid om jou lewe te verander.
4. Die eienaar hulle het vir my gesê, kyk hoe mooi lyk jy, dit het my ge motiveer. Hy het my stukkende lewe heel gemaak.

It is a finding of this study that the paternalistic relationship is a key factor for

people who decide to stop drinking. What has become clear over the five years is that labourers do better at something when they feel farm management or the landowner is watching over them. This way of thinking is also consistent with the psychological need to be in favour. When asked a year after being sober, what kept D sober, D answered that the letter from the landowner congratulating her on her decision had helped keep her sober. Going to the library and attending adult education classes are also better attended when the social worker or landowner reminds people weekly and follows up the next day. While the labourer feels he or she is pleasing the “parent” by being sober, attending class and going to the library; he or she is motivated to attend. However being dependent on approval as a means for success is not sustainable and does not empower people to become masters of their own destinies.

(c) *Habitual drinking and paternalism – men’s perspective*

The parental relationship maintains the power imbalance between landowner and labourer. The landowner is “all knowing and all powerful” while the labourer remains weak and unable to take responsibility for him or herself. Labourers are always looking to someone else for help (dependent). They lack the confidence to tackle their problems (insecurity). Labourers who depend on paternalism have never mastered the skills of conflict management, budgeting and communication (uncertainty). As a result labourers remain dependent, insecure and uncertain (Kritzinger & Rossouw, 2001:5).

1. *Ek dank die een (bestuur) wat dit moontlik gemaak het, en selfs die Here ook.*
2. *In die laaste drie jare het dinge baie verander op die plaas, hulle tree nou op om mense te help. Daar is nie meer soveel vloekery nie.*
3. *J het altyd met haar gepraat. Ek is seker dit het baie gehelp.*
4. *J moet vir haar sê dan sal sy ophou.*

Placing such emphasis on the shoulders of the landowner for the individual’s

recovery is to surrender responsibility and to remain in a position of powerlessness. Often the farm manager or landowner is not the one with the time, insight or inclination to invest themselves in the labourers personal problem. Often labourer's are seeking short term solutions that meet their need for immediate gratification (help with clothing, money, food) which in the long run does not change the situation. Relying on someone else to affirm, acknowledge or encourage your efforts at bettering yourself or staying sober is risky. The motivation is to please rather than to engage in efforts that would bring about change and may in part explain the high relapse rate.

5.4.2.7 Previous attempts to stop drinking

(a) Previous attempts to stop drinking – children's perspective

1. My ma het stukkie–stukkie probeer. Maar nie rêrig nie. My pa het net gedrink.
2. My pa het ophou drink. Kerk geloop. By Kersfees, kry hulle wyn in die plaas. Die bottel wyn. Ek sê hulle moet verkoop. Dan sê hulle nee–ons gaan dit wegsit. As ek weer kyk, is dit op. My ma begin te skel. Dan begin hy ook te drink.
3. Sy het oor die jare probeer. Sy het kerk geloop. Daar was baie probleme in die kerk en die kerk het opgebreek. Toe gaan sy weer drink.
4. Ek het haar nie geglo nie. Sy het baie keer so gesê.

The older children were able to recall that their parents had tried before to give up drinking. The children tend to want to protect their parents by looking for reasons to account for their parents inability to stop. One child blamed the fact the labourers receive a bottle of wine at Christmas time. Another child blamed the problems in the church.

(b) Previous attempts to stop drinking – women's perspective

1. Ja dan kon ek nie.

2. *Ja dit het baie keer gebeur. Ek het gestop. Toe hoor ek my man jol. Toe begin ek weer. Die wyn was my toevlug.*
3. *Na die kind se geboorte het ek dit gelos, toe die kind drie jaar en 'n paar maande oud is, toe begin ek weer.*
4. *Ja, ek het dit gelos en dan weer gedrink.*
5. *Ek het in die verlede opgehou en dan weer begin.*
6. *Ek het baie keer probeer.*

One woman said this was the first time she had tried to give up drinking:

1. *Ek het nie voor dit probeer nie.*

All but one of the women had tried to stop drinking previously. In at least two instances they blamed their husbands' infidelity for their failure.

(c) Previous attempts to stop drinking – men's perspective

1. *Ek het ophou drink toe ek my eerste ryding gekry het. Maar dan begin ek weer te drink.*
2. *Toe los ek dit vir twee jaar, toe kom ek hier en ek begin weer. Toe het ek weer opgehou en weer aan die drank geraak. Tot hierdie tyd.*

One of the men side-stepped the question about previous attempts.

Nine of the ten interviewees stated that this time they would be successful. All interviewees were asked why they considered this time to be the time they would be successful.

5.4.2.8 Perceived success of the decision to be sober

(a) Perceived success of the decision to be sober – children’s perspective

1. *Ek was bly toe hulle gesê hulle gaan ophou. Maar hulle het net naweke gedrink. Ek glo hulle gaan ophou, want hulle sê hulle gaan ophou.*
2. *Ek het gedink hulle kan! Ek het geglo hulle sal.*
3. *Ek was bly toe hulle sê hulle gaan ophou. Ek het hulle geglo.*
4. *Dit was ‘n verligting toe hulle sê hulle gaan nou stop. Ek het goed en bly gevoel.*

The older children were suspicious of their parents’ decision:

1. *Dit was ‘n verligting toe hulle sê hulle gaan ophou. Ek het eintlik hulle in die begin nie geglo nie. Toe die eienaar met hulle praat toe dink ek hulle gaan nou verander.*
2. *Ek was net bly. Ek het hulle eintlik nie geglo nie. As my ma beginne kerk loop hier in ER toe besef ek hulle is ernstig. Dit was ‘n verligting.*
3. *Sy jok! Het ek gedink. Dit is so anders. Sy het nooit so lank uitgehou. Die kerk help baie. Ek is gelukkig maar nie te gelukkig te vinning. Wag en sien.*

These two children believed this decision was genuine. In the first instance once the landowner had spoken with her parents and in the second instance once the mother had started going to church. Children wanted to believe their parents. It was a relief when it seemed that this time was genuine.

(b) Perceived success of the decision to be sober – female perspective

1. *Die gedagte ek gaan siek word as ek drink (this person had had an implant).*
2. *Ek het gevoel ek wil dit doen met die understanding van die bestuur.*

3. Ek het gebid. Die Here het my gehoor en gehelp.
4. Ek voel ek wil graag dit los.
5. Toe sê ek, dit is vir my kinders.
6. Ek het besluit omdat ek gevoel het my kinders raak vir my skaam.
7. Vir my was dit baie belangrik om so 'n besluit te neem weens my toekoms, my kinders se toekoms, my werk. Alles het 'n baie belangrike rol gespeel in my besluit.

(c) Perceived success of the decision to be sober – men's perspective

1. Ek het net besluit ek gaan dit los. Ek het vir die Here gevra om my te verlies van die drink.
2. Deur my kinders se onthalwe Dinge kan nie so aangaan nie. Ek het gekyk en gedink. Los maar een keer.
3. Ek worrie nie met drank nie.

Implicit in all these answers is a belief that this time they would be successful, stating faith in the implant, in God or in their own resolve. Few of the participants had insight into why this time was any different to any other.

5.4.2.9 Motivation to stop drinking

(a) Motivation to stop drinking – female perspective

Children were not asked why they thought their parents had stopped drinking so in this subsection only male and female perceptions will be stated. Participants were asked to discuss what it was that motivated them to stop:

1. T (gesondheids werker) het gesê as ek nie ophou drink nie, en as ek siek kry sy gaan nie vir my hulp nie.

2. *Ek het besef ek gaan nou alles verloor, huis, man, kinders.*
3. *My man het my gedreig – of ek moet ophou of ek moet loop.*
4. *Die gedagte dat ek gaan siek word as ek drink terwyl ek die implant in het.*
5. *Die welsyn was hier. As ek nie ophou nie gaan hulle die kind wegneem.*
6. *My pa is a pastoor, hy het my eenkant geneem en gesê ten wille van my kinders moet ek stop. Ek het ja gesê.*
7. *Die omstandighede in die huis, my kinders, my man. Hy (die man) was nie gelukkig oor die drinkery nie. Hy het gesê ek moet dit los.*
8. *Die dokter het gesê as ons weer drink, sal ons dood gaan.*

For all of the women quoted earlier, someone had precipitated the decision– farm management, the health worker, husband or family member. They were responding to a request, suggestion or threat. It was not a decision they had come to on their own.

For many of the women the welfare of the children was an important consideration:

1. *Dit (drinking) het vir hulle (kinders) seer gemaak. Ek het gevoel hulle raak skaam vir my. As hulle iets vir my wil vra soos kos of iets, dan sê ek nee of ek beledig vir hulle. Dit was nie lekker vir my as hulle sê vir my, as ek nugter is, alles wat ek vir hulle gesê het.*
2. *Ek het gesien ek is nie 'n gooie voorbeeld nie. Ek het aan my kinders en kleinkinders gedink.*
3. *Toe sê ek, dit is vir my drie kinders.*

Only one of the women was motivated by a need to improve things for herself:

1. *Ek wil my toekoms verander. Ek wil netjies wees. Ek wil mooi lyk en my kleredrag verander. Ek wil 'n gooie ma wees.*

(b) Motivation to stop drinking – men’s perspective

This man, because of a very serious incident of domestic violence, had been given an ultimatum by management to either stop drinking or social welfare would be asked to investigate the situation.

1. *Ek het ‘n verantwoordelikheid, groot verantwoordelikheid. My toekoms, my kinders se toekoms, my huwelik, my werk, alles het ‘n rol gespeel.*

There did not seem to be a precipitating event in the next examples except that one couple in the community had stopped drinking and it seemed to motivate others initially.

1. *Ek het net gevoel die drinkery werk nie, want die wyn werk nie vir my nie. Daar was altyd bakkeiery in die huis. My vrou het gepraat. Toe dink ek in my gedagte “wat sy sê maak nou sin”. Ek is die hoof in die huis. Toe ek gedrink het was daar geen respek in die huis nie. Ek bly dronk.*
2. *Ek het vir myself gesien die dinge is nie reg nie. Ek gaan al aan, al met die drinkery. My kinders lei daaronder.*

Finances were a greater concern for the men than for the women:

1. *Geld het nooit gehou nie. Jy leen geld, jy werk vir geld. Jy leen daagliks. Jy bly in die skuld. Toe besef ek ek gaan vir niemand anders werk nie. Die geld wat ek kry moet ek daagliks uitbetaal. As jy die drank los het jy altyd geld. As jy nie drink nie en kyk hoe ‘n ander een drink, hy is later so pap. Hulle strei oor wyn.*

Often the decision to convert is precipitated by a life crisis which causes individuals to assess their lives and turn away from drinking (De Kock, 2002:97). In the case of three of the participants, there was a precipitating event which in turn motivated the people around them to assess their drinking. The threat of loss was a precipitating factor in some of the families. After a particularly bad incident of domestic violence one man and his wife were given an ultimatum by management to decide to stop

drinking be handed over to social welfare. There was also a risk that the man would lose his job and therefore his home if changes were not made. One woman stood to lose her marriage. The decision to stop drinking was out of fear – a response to a threat rather than the fact that the individuals had taken stock of their lives and decided to stop drinking.

These people said their circumstances caused them to decide to stop.

Some of the participants expressed their children's welfare as their motivation to stop drinking. It was not clear why at this point in their lives their children's welfare became a concern for them. Participants were asked that question but none of them gave any more information than they had already given.

5.4.2.10 The meaning of sobriety

(a) The meaning of sobriety – children's perspective

For many of the children, the change in the conditions in the house was significant. The children talk of the peace and order in the house and the fact that their mothers were doing their "work" (cooking and cleaning). For many of the children, the noise over weekends is so bad that by Monday they are absolutely exhausted:

1. *Die huis is nie meer deurmekaar nie.*
2. *Die huis is rustig. Almal gaan vroeg slaap. Eet vroeg. Ma staan vroeg op. Pa gaan elke oggend werk toe. Daar is nie kopseer en sulke goed nie.*
3. *My ma doen haar werk. Die huis is stil.*
4. *Die huis is nou stil. Ek is altyd bly.*
5. *Ma sien alles wat gedoen moet word, dan gee sy vir my die werk.*
6. *Huis is nou netjies.*
7. *My ma doen alles.*

8. *Ma maak kos dan sit ons buite.*

The change in relationships in the house is also significant to children:

1. *Die lewe het heeltemaal verander vir ons. Daar is 'n hele gooie huishoudelike verhouding tussen ons almal. Dinge is nie soos hulle was nie.*
2. *Daar is liefde. Ons praat. Saans praat ons.*
3. *Sy neem my saam kerk toe. Sy sê vir my sy het my lief. My pa praat nie baie nie. Hy is anderste maar ek weet nie hoe nie.*
4. *Dinge het baie baie verander. Sy is nou 'n ander mens. Sy is lieflik. Sy is nou die beste ma wat 'n mens kan hê.*

Children relate feeling relieved, happy, no longer worried and anxious:

1. *Ons huis is nou gelukkig. Ek's nie meer hart seer nie.*
2. *Ek's nou gelukkig. Nou worrie ek nie meer nie.*
3. *Ek is gelukkig.*
4. *Ek voel nie meer so bangerig en bekommerd nie. Ek kan beter op my schoolwork konsentree.*
5. *Ons is nou nie so uitgeskel nie.*
6. *Daar is nie meer bakkleiery nie.*
7. *Ek kan sien daar is 'n verandering. Ma skel nie meer so nie.*

This boy relates how things have improved financially for his family:

1. *Baie dinge het verander. My pa is 'n gooie werker. Hy het 'n nuwe werk gekry. My ma het nie gewerk nie. Nou het sy werk. Ons is altyd saam as 'n familie. Naweke gaan ons uit. Nou kan hulle klere vir ons koop. En genoeg kos.*

Volgens my is dinge beter.

Change for these children is evident in new activities:

1. *Oor die naweke ons speel en gaan shopping.*
2. *Nou het baie verander.*
3. *Sy gaan nou kerk toe.*
4. *Ouma gaan kerk toe.*

(b) Meaning of sobriety – female perspective

All the interviews took place three to six months after the participants had made a decision to stop drinking. Participants were asked how sobriety had changed their lives. Each participant's reflection on sobriety is stated below, followed by an indication of whether or not he or she has been successful.

1. *Snaaks as 'n mens drink, jy het baie vriende. Nou sit ek alleen. Maar vir my is daar baie voordele. Die kinders het nou respek. Ek sit altyd by die huis. 'n Mens weet nou wat jy gesê het. Ek het baie dinge in my dronkenskap gesê. Nou doen ek lekker my huiswerk. Daar is nie nou klagtes van "die kos is nie reg nie!" Jy kan nie kos maak as jy gesuip is nie. Nou as die mense van die werk afkom is alles reg. Ek is trots. Die klein kind bly by my. Hulle het dit nie toegelaat nie. Ek het die kind een keer laat val. (This woman has remained sober.)*
2. *Ons gaan doen ons shopping of ons gaan kuier. Die kinders gaan saam. Ons het 'n kar gekry. Nou gaan ons uit as 'n gesin. (This woman is on a constant see-saw between habitual drinking and sobriety.)*
3. *Die kinders, hulle stel nou belang. Hulle gee drukkies en soentjies. Hulle sê bye ouma. Dit het nie tevore gebeur nie. My oudste seun se kind sê ek is die beste ouma in die wêreld. Hulle het laas Sondag vir my kom haal. Ek het altyd*

gesê hulle hou nie van my nie. Ek het nie besef dit het met die drank te doen nie. (This woman seesaws between sobriety and habitual drinking, although she reportedly drinks less and there is no longer fighting in the house.)

4. *Die kinders is nou rustig. As ek werk het dan doen ek my werktjies klaar. As ek voel om te gaan lê, dan lê ek en tv kyk. Ons sukkel nog met geld. Ek kry nog lus. Die drank het my wreed gemaak. Nou die Here maak my sag met sulke goetes. My nuwe lewe is nou kosbaar. Ek verlang om myself besig te hou. Ek wil vir myself 'n kitaar of 'n keyboard kry. (Three months later this woman had relapsed and has no intention of not drinking. Her husband drinks and there is regular conflict. She denies that he hits her. He is afraid of the law and has stated his intention not to hit her.)*

5. *Ek kan nou baie uitgaan na familie. Hulle nooi my uit om te kom vir naweke. Nou kan ek die verskil sien. Daar is geld vir wat ons nodig het. Ek kan genoeg kos koop. Al die geld wat ek uitgegee het in die shebeen, kan ek in die huis gebruik. Vir mekaar hulp waar nodig. Mense sê ek lyk nou mooi. EK wil nou oud word op die plaas. Ek wil net hier bly. Ons bly lekker hier. (Three years later this woman relapsed and has no intention of stopping. She took back her husband whom she had divorced. She lost her job as a result of drinking on duty and excessive absenteeism and has lost her house. Two of her children dropped out of school and her daughter is a teenage mom.)*

6. *Die kinders kry nou klere en kos. Alles wat hulle moes gehad het. Alles wat gevra word, word gegee. Die meisie kind het heel verander. Sy was baie stout gewees. Die seun bly stout. Ek het baie verander. Ek het besef ek het nie wyn nodig nie. Ek werk in die huis. Dit wat ek nie tevore raak gesien het nie, nou doen ek. Ek en my ma is nou amper soos susters. Nou gesels ek en my pa. Ons maak jokes. Die huis is verander. (This woman has remained sober).*

(c) Meaning of sobriety – men's perspective

1. *Die nag ure is te kort, ons kuier. ons gesels. Ek werk in die huis en in die tuin.*

Ek het 'n spaar rekening uitgeneem by Metropolitan. Ek spaar by SACCO. Tevore het ek nie oor hulle (kinders) geworrie nie. Maar ek wil hê hulle het 'n gooie kursus (This man has relapsed. His wife took out an interdict against him and divorced him. He was arrested, put under house arrest, arrested again, imprisoned for six months, lost his job, released, still drinks.) Both his children dropped out of school and his daughter fell pregnant at sixteen.

2. *Baie dinge het verander. Finansiële sake is nie heeltemaal beter nie, maar ek het nou darem beheer en kan order hou. Ek is trots oor my tydelike werk (weekend job) en werk opgewig (promotion) so die gemeenskap kan my 'n beter oog kyk. Ek het besluit om met my skoolloopbaan aan te gaan. Hier's nou 'n boerdery skema wat ons op grond wil kry. Ek het hoop en lus vir die toekoms. Ons is meer rustiger. (Within seventeen months this man had relapsed. He lost the promotion he had received. Despite getting outstanding results in the course he was doing he dropped out of the course. The community farm project was left to waste. He burns his wife's clothes on a regular basis and there have been several incidents of violence. He has been arrested, imprisoned, released and continues to drink. He has no intention of stopping.)*

The two men who have relapses continue to drink excessively and meet out violence. Violent behaviour, Borman and Cock argue “is a social pathology resulting from a colonial and apartheid history, state violence, social and racial inequality, the militarization of men, the legacy of poverty and marginalisation (Borman & Cock in Gibson, 2004).

3. *Ek werk in die tuin. Maak skoon waar dit vuil is. Ek sien dinge raak wat ek nooit raak gesien het nie. Die huis is nou rustig. Ons verhouding is baie lekker. (This man has remained sober).*
4. *Nou dat sy nie meer drink nie het dinge verander. Sy doen haar werk, dinge is rustig. (This man never really gave up drinking. His concern was that his wife stopped).*

5.4.2.11 Sobriety and relapse – lessons learned

Ten people in the course of 2002 expressed the desire to stop drinking. Every one of them had attempted sobriety previously and relapsed. Below are the statements of the participants and their children regarding previous attempts to stop drinking. Some of the participants had been sober for as long as three years. There was not much discussion about why they relapsed. The question was asked to establish whether or not habitual drinking/sobriety was a pattern or not. Evidently it is. Only one of the participants commented that she had not attempted sobriety before.

5.4.3 Follow-up interviews – five years later

Five of the original ten participants were re-interviewed. Those participants who were still on the farm and were willing and able were interviewed a second time. Second interviews took place in May/June 2007. The two women who have remained sober were not available to be interviewed. None of the children were re-interviewed. None of the men who had relapsed were available. One of the men has moved off the farm and the other was unwilling to talk.

5.4.3.1 Five years later – women’s perspective

The remaining five participants who were interviewed have all relapsed. They are all women. They were all asked what it is that caused them to relapse.

For these women the desire to drink is great. Drinking is simply part of their lives. They enjoy the feelings they have when they are drunk. “Alcohol is an easily accessible form of reward and pleasure and escape from boredom, however the pervasive nature of the social practice of alcohol consumption does not provide an easy context to escape” (De Kock, 2002:92).

1. *Ek drink net om aspris te wees. Die lus gaan nie oor nie. Dit is vir my ‘n gewoonte.*
2. *Die wyn maak vir my lekker rustig. As ek die wyn ‘in’ het dan kan ek lekker*

grappies maak.

3. *Ek is aspris. Ek wil drink.*

The social aspect of fitting into the community is important for this woman. The drinker remains loyal to the system that services his / her desire for alcohol (De Kock, 2002).

1. *As 'n mens nie drink nie, pas jynie by hulle (plaasmense) nie.*

2. *Ek drink saam om met vriende te wees.*

All four of the women felt that drinking helped them cope with their problems. Alcohol numbed the pain and it gave them strength to stand up to partners or children who were hurting them in some way. Dependency and isolation go hand in hand and make breaking free very difficult to women (Artz, 1998:30).

1. *As ek drink dan vat ek dinge nie so groot nie.*

2. *Ek het 'n klomp probleme in die huis. Wat kan ek maak?. Ek drink om te vergeet. Om vir my krag te gee.*

Violence against women is the result of male domination. It is so embedded and pervasive it is taken as the norm. Women consider violence something they have no power against, they simply need to endure it (Gibson, 2004).

1. *Toe het my man weer begin. Eers het ek nie saam gedrink nie. Hy het my begin vloek en minderwaardig laat voel. Die woorde het my so seer gemaak. Die drank het verligting gegee. As ek gesuip is dan vergeet ek alles. Die skel het my nie so sleg laat voel nie. Die bier troos my. Ek kry vertroosing daar uit.*

2. *Die wyn laat my sterk voel. Ek raak baie gou kwaad (she does not allow people to hurt her). Ek is nie een wat praat as ek nie wyn in het nie. As ek nugter is dan bly ek stil. Women too resolve their conflicts aggressively (Waldman, 1999).*

3. *Ek drink om probleme te vergeet. Die man is nie reg met ons nie. As ek gedrink*

is dan is ek lief vir almal. Ek sing en dans. Ek is baie lief vir dans. Maar ek kan nie nugter dans nie.

For these two women it is their husbands that cause them to drink. They feel trapped and powerless. Workers are trapped in an environment which they find hard to escape and use habitual drinking as a means of escaping the meaninglessness of their lives Schotte (1996).

1. *Hy maak dat ek drink. As hy huistoe kom dan sê hy altyd “jy het gedrink”. Al het ek nie, dink ek “hoekom nie?”*
2. *Hy het my gemanipuleer om te drink. As ek nie bier het nie dan forseer hy my om wyn te drink. Dan word ek so dronk ek weet nie wat aangaan nie. Ek drink tot ek hom nie kan hoor nie.*

5.4.3.2 Five years later – men’s perspective

The one man who has remained sober and was willing to be interviewed, repeated much of what he had said in his first interview:

1. *Ek is bly ek het die besluit gemaak, die wyn het nie vir my gewerk nie.*
2. *Ek het niks lus gekry.*
3. *Ek kom nie meer tussen mense wat drink nie. Kyk ‘n mens kan nie twee beloftes maak nie. As jy dit gaan los, dan moet jy dit los. Alles is nou stil in die huis.*
4. *Ek werk in die tuin en in die huis. Daar is hulp vir mense hier maar hulle wil nie.*

The participants who had the most to gain by remaining sober in terms of job opportunities and providing for children were not the people who stayed sober. The people who have stayed sober are the people who are content with the change in their home. They derive satisfaction from nurturing their families and taking care of home and garden. They thrive on the positive feedback they get from family members. The women who have remained sober are in homes where the man of the house is sober. That seems to be an important factor.

Women who are in homes where the man is a habitual drinker feel trapped and powerless. Women, more than men drink to forget their problems. They do not feel they are strong enough to face their problems any other way. There is a sense of fatalism. These women are overwhelmed by what faces them. Women who have a religious conversion are more successful at staying sober. Many women cite the welfare of their children as the reason for turning from alcohol to Christianity. In the church, women support each other. All this helps the person to make a new set of friends who are not drinkers (Brady & Rendall–Mkosi, 2005:190).

5.5 CONCLUSIONS

The ten habitual drinkers who were interviewed in this study all had a long history of habitual drinking, were raised in homes where there was excessive habitual drinking, regarded counselling as unnecessary for their recovery *and* were certain, at the time of the first interview that *this was the time they were going to stay sober*.

Half the men and almost half the women state that habitual drinking heightens the individual's aggressive behaviour, causes social and domestic violence and distorts the drinker's perception of reality. The same sample of men stated that while they were drinking habitually, all that mattered was the present and the *immediate gratification of drinking. They had no sense of future*. Their compulsion to drink, they all reflected, caused them to neglect their role as parent, placed them at risk of losing home, job and children, and caused them to use most if not all of their income on alcohol.

Every one of the adults interviewed could see how their relationships with their children, their finances, their marital relationship, their sense of self– respect and their health improved when they were sober. Yet, seventy percent of the participants have relapsed and remain in cycles of despair, poverty, dependency and powerlessness.

Despite the despair, loss and destruction caused by habitual drinking, it remains a legitimate way of life on farms, rooted in the now–abolished Tot System. Farm

dwellers have become resigned to the fact that there is regular habitual drinking and violence on farms. Over-indulgence masks boredom and creates a kind of fatalism (Scharf, 1987).

Violence is not considered unlawful. Women remain victims of violence while men express their masculinity and power. Families go hungry, children drop out of school because they have no school shoes, books or school clothes. This is the legacy of the Tot System that Scharf (1987) warned of. Forty years after the abolishment of the Tot System many labourers continue to drink, and lose their jobs, but they will continue to drink, and their families will continue to suffer.

Farm workers drink to escape daily life. To not drink is to place yourself on the periphery of the farm community. Any attempt to stop drinking is met with disdain and ostracism from the community. Daily life would change if labourers stopped drinking. To stop drinking in order to create change is to give up immediate gratification for a vision of a new life. binge-drinking allows people to surrender responsibility for their actions and any problems people have as a result of drinking, are “blamed” on alcohol. Once people are sober they are confronted with the responsibilities that binge-drinking helped them escape. The decision to stop drinking is just the beginning of making life changes. Many habitual drinkers do not have the personal skills to manage their difficulties or to create change in their lives and so they return to the only problem-solving technique they know: habitual drinking. Generation after generation, habitual drinking becomes the labourer’s compulsion, consuming all he earns, all his energy, keeping him stuck in hopelessness and despair, out of touch with the reality of how his drinking is destroying his life. Habitual drinking becomes simultaneously heaven and hell.

Generation after generation children are raised by adults who in the face of personal problems turn to alcohol for an escape and for comfort. Dependency and powerlessness go hand in hand. The landowner or farm manager remains the father figure without whose encouragement or approval change is not possible. Labourers, as a result of the legacy of paternalism, have not learned to be masters

of their own destinies.

When asked about their reasons for drinking and their aspirations, labourers express a desire for sport and recreation facilities, opportunities to learn new skills and complete their schooling. Some writers argue that habitual drinking will be lessened if working and living conditions are improved and alternative sport and recreation activities are provided on farms. On this particular farm over the last two decades, attention has been given to upgrading housing conditions and improving working conditions. There is a commitment to fair labour practice (the labourers earn above the minimum wage). Sport and recreation facilities, a crèche and after school centre and a primary–health care facility are available to labourers. Several development projects have been initiated over the last five years.

However, habitual drinking and violence remain a legitimate and accepted way of life on the farm. The majority of men and a large percentage of women are habitual binge–drinkers. There is an overwhelming sense of powerlessness and immobilisation. Opportunities to engage in development projects are traded for drinking sessions. The legacies of Slavery and the Tot System have created a society that is powerless and immobilised, unable to become masters of their own destinies.

Efforts to upgrade living conditions practise fair labour practice and provide opportunities for social development and alternative recreational activities must not be abandoned. Landowners, NGO and social work practitioners must guard against being sucked into the hopelessness and immobilisation that overwhelms the sector and remain committed to the upliftment and development on wine farms in the Western Cape.

This study has investigated the meaning of habitual drinking and violence on farms in order to gain insight and inform social work practice. Chapter six takes into consideration the findings of this study and makes recommendations for addressing the dual legacy of dependency and powerlessness among farm labourers on wine farms in the Western Cape.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Farm labourers are not owned by the landowner as they were in the days of Slavery nor do they receive alcohol as part payment for labour. Living and working conditions on farms have received attention by landowners, academics, NGOs and policy makers over the last two decades. On some farms efforts have been made to provide alternative sport and recreation facilities and on many farms in the Winelands, social development and Black Economic Empowerment is a priority for farm management. Paternalism has been replaced with a new management style which has freed the landowner of his paternalistic responsibility. Old methods of management have been replaced with new but, according to Barrientos et al. (1999), traditional attitudes remain unchanged. Trade unions have been legalised but collective action on farms remains uncommon. “Rights that exist on paper for farm labourers have yet to result in practical changes in the lives of farm workers in the absence of effective worker organization or strong civil society institutions” (London, 2003:9–60). Labourers remain tied and dependent, clutching desperately on to the remnants of paternalism (Barrientos, 1999). Paternalism has been reinvented in the contractor–casual relationship with the contractor taking on the role of “PA STAAN” (father figure) that slave masters and landowners held previously (Kritzinger & Rossouw, 2002:24).

Habitual drinking and the consequences thereof continue to enslave labourers forty years after the abolishment of the Tot System. Alcohol consumption and the incidence of alcoholism remains approximately twice as high among farm workers as their urban counterparts (London, 1999:2). Parry (1998) argues that easy access to alcohol contributes to the high incidence of alcohol abuse on wine farms. Bulk wine or the *Papsak* as it is colloquially known is cheap, accessible and meets the needs of the binge–drinker, which is to become drunk as quickly as possible.

There has been considerable controversy surrounding the *papsak* and in the course of 2007 has been outlawed. There has been a lot of resistance on the ground level among labourers. The resistance is similar to that expressed when the Tot System was abolished. The primary focus of the habitual drinker is access to alcohol. Spending more on alcohol, rather than discouraging the habitual drinker simply further impoverishes him/her and his/her family (De Kock, 2002).

6.2 AIM AND OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This study was undertaken with one aim and four objectives.

The aim of the study was to present information on the lived experiences of farm workers in the Western Cape so as to gain insight into the dual legacy of dependency and powerlessness.

The **first** objective was to describe the nature of dependency and powerlessness among farm workers on wine farms in the Western Cape.

The **second** objective was to conduct interviews with the ten farm workers, and members of their families, who in 2002/2003 made a decision to stop their pattern of habitual drinking.

The **third** objective was to explore through interviews and questionnaires with farm workers (other than those mentioned earlier) the lived experiences of farm life, drinking patterns and the felt needs of farm workers.

The **fourth** objective was to discuss the various micro–and macro–levels of change. Thus, the objectives were meant to gain insight into the lived experiences of labourers and to explore the various elements to be considered when working for change on wine farms in the Western Cape.

The first objective was dealt with in Chapters two and three. These chapters covered the historical aspects of the landowner–labourer relationship and the lived experiences of modern–day labourers on wine farms in the Western Cape. The legacies of the two systems were explored extensively in these chapters, namely

the legacy of Slavery and the legacy of the Tot System. Included in the study was a study of habitual drinking.

Chapter four covered the micro– macro– mezzo–levels of practice to consider when working for change in the Winelands.

Research findings from interviews, a needs assessment and a survey regarding habitual drinking on farms are presented in chapter findings. Resulting from the literature review and the findings discussed in chapter five the researcher has come to certain conclusions and will make recommendations in this regard.

This study has described the nature of dependency and powerlessness among the study group and has explored the group’s lived experiences, drinking patterns and perceived needs. From the study the following insights have been gained.

6.3 FINDINGS OF THIS STUDY

Findings are presented according to the themes discussed in Chapter five.

6.3.1 The dual legacies of Slavery and the Tot System

The evidence indicates that the legacies of Slavery and the Tot System have resulted in the primary focus of the majority of farm dwellers being habitual drinking especially over weekends. In some instances habitual drinking meant the loss of home, job and material possessions, but farm dwellers continue to drink. Not only do habitual drinkers spend all they have to buy alcohol; but many buy on credit, placing themselves in a never ending cycle of debt (London, 2005). Habitual drinking creates chaos and a lack of control. For the men particularly, lack of control was to do with money. Men and children complain that when the women in the house is a habitual drinker the house is chaotic.

6.3.2 Habitual drinking – a normal, legitimate way of life on farms

Habitual drinking is synonymous with farm life, despite concerted efforts to reduce it. In order to fit in socially on the farm, farm dwellers feel they have to drink. Being on the outside is not a passive experience. People that do not drink are teased and

treated badly by the “in” group. Women, particularly, drink because of the social aspect of drinking.

It was evident in this study that men considered it their right to drink. Habitual drinking on farms, according to the men, is just the way things are, especially for men. To not drink is not to be not masculine. These same men expressed the desire that their wives should not drink excessively. They were unable to see the contradiction and were floored by the fact that their wives would want them not to drink excessively. Habitual drinking on wine farms is the norm; a ritual that has been so entrenched that the community cannot imagine life any other way.

6.3.3 Habitual drinkers surrender responsibility

Consistently found in this study, farm dwellers surrender responsibility for their children and homes. It was also evident that clinging to the paternalistic relationship was a surrendering of responsibility for managing their own lives. By drinking to forget their problems, farm dwellers surrender their responsibility for finding a solution to their problems. Labourers do not participate in opportunities which would result in upliftment. On an interpersonal level people wait until they are drunk to express their feelings or talk about their difficulties.

6.3.4 Habitual drinking and violence

There is evidence in this study that farm dwellers have assigned meaning to violence that legitimises it and underplays violence as a consequence of habitual drinking. Men stated that to not be violent was synonymous with meekness (Gibson, 2004). Women too stated that it is a sign of strength to express their displeasure aggressively. Being aggressive makes people feel strong. People interviewed stated that binge–drinking gave them courage to be aggressive and absolves them of the responsibility for the consequences of their violence (Pareeze, 2003). It has become socially acceptable to use violence in order to “*leer vir hulle ‘n les*” (*teach them a lesson*) (Gibson, 2004:8). No social norms other than violence begets violence exist in the above mentioned scenarios. A complete, disinhibited, free–for–all situation exists.

6.3.5 Paternalism on farms

The findings of this study indicate that farm dwellers continue to cling to the remnants of paternalism. Where farm management or the landowner has shown an interest in an individual or where controls are built into a programme, success is greater.

6.3.6 Cycle of habitual drinking

There is evidence in this study that habitual drinking continues generation after generation. All the adults interviewed had grown up in homes where there was habitual drinking. All the children interviewed vowed that they would not drink. More than half of the children interviewed are already binge-drinking, some of them have not reached eighteen years of age.

6.3.7 Sobriety

With the exception of two of the participants in this study, people gave up drinking because of a threat of one sort or another. People are being pushed to give up drinking rather than assessing their lives and deciding that it would be in their and their families' interest to give up drinking.

6.3.8 Summary of findings

For numerous reasons – the Tot System, Slavery and paternalism, a communal acceptance of drunkenness, and the personification of alcoholism – the individual are absolved of responsibility for their habitual drinking and the consequences thereof. Once individuals are absolved of responsibility for their habitual drinking, greater tolerance is shown for misbehaviour both within the home (micro-level) and by the community (macro-level).

Such misbehaviour leads to further social dysfunction, manifesting as physical abuse, neglect of dependents, aggravated poverty and unemployment. Such social dysfunction in turn, is blamed on alcohol abuse, thereby once again absolving the individual and perpetuating the cycle of non-accountability. The

researcher concludes that alcohol abuse is a catalyst for the social dysfunction found amongst this group. Analysis of the motivation to stop drinking shows greater response to the fear of the consequences of continued alcohol abuse, rather than to benefits of sobriety. This may be a contributing factor to the high relapse rate. The researcher concludes that while achieving sobriety is a key intervention in achieving social harmony, in isolation the outlook for sustained success is poor.

6.4 WORKING FOR CHANGE ON WINE FARMS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

Empowerment is the key to any intervention on farms. There has to be a change in power relations between individuals, groups and social institutions. Once labourers no longer perceive themselves as victim and they take charge of their lives, personal change will occur (Gathiram, 2005).

6.4.1 Introduction to working for change

Working for change on farms needs to take place on a political, legislative, social and individual level. The empowerment and social development with farm labourers is not a domain dominated by one discipline or methodology. The literature review gives guidelines on the various role players to be included in the change process and the strategies to be used.

Farm labourers are resistant to move away from paternalistic relationships with landowners. Empowerment and development initiatives need to take into account the empowering and strengthening of labourers to become masters of their own destinies if the dual legacies of powerlessness and dependency are to be erased.

Farm labourers seek immediate gratification and not a long-term process to creating change. Social development and empowerment is a process and not a “quick fix”. Practitioners need to find the balance between engaging labourers in the helping process and ensuring that any intervention is based on a social development and Strengths based model with labourers as partners in the process.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

Based on the findings of this study, recommendations are divided into five areas namely social development and empowerment, habitual drinking, services to children, primary health care and research.

6.5.1 Recommendations regarding social development and empowerment

- Social work practitioners should work in partnership with policy makers and NGOs in order to bring about change on micro– mezzo– and macro–levels as discussed in Chapter four.
- Any social development, income generation or social work intervention should be based on empowerment and Strength perspective principles.
- In all dealings with farm labourers, farm management and social work practitioners should ensure that labourers are assisted to become masters of their own destinies.
- Social work practitioners, the State and NGOs partner in geographical areas should formulate a comprehensive plan for farm workers in the area and be alert to addressing gaps and overlaps in existing services.
- The above mentioned partnership should advise agricultural colleges, farmers groups and farm management on social development and empowerment strategies on farms.
- Workers committees should be given opportunities to workshop conflict management, communication and community development skills in order to empower them to bring about change on their respective farms.

6.5.2 Recommendations regarding habitual drinking

- Social work practitioners and NGOs working in the field of substance abuse, should formulate a strategy that is specific and relevant to farm labourers. Together with farm management they should work out incentives that

encourage sobriety or responsible drinking and discourage habitual binge–drinking.

- Social worker practitioners should establish positive relationships with habitual drinkers, focusing on confronting the problem but simultaneously building the self–esteem of the drinker and discussing matters pertaining to the drinkers sense of future for themselves and their children.
- Social work practitioners and farm management should take a zero–tolerance approach to women– and child abuse and social violence, making use of legislation and law enforcement agencies.
- Social work practitioners and NGOs should advise farm management on alternative ways of managing habitual drinking in the workplace and on farms.

6.5.3 Recommendations regarding services to children on farms

- Early childhood development and after–school programmes, employing qualified staff, should be initiated on all wine farms. Where crèches and after schools are already in operation, unqualified staff should be placed or a graduate be appointed to manage the facility.
- Social work practitioners should forge good working relationships with the primary and high schools that the farm children attend in an effort to identify problems that particular children are having timeously and prevent school drop out.
- Parents should be empowered to forge good relationships with the relevant schools and thereby take an interest in their children’s schooling and future. Empowering parents in this regard includes empowering labourers to negotiate with farm management to arrange transport and time off work to see teachers and attend school meetings.
- Social work practitioners, teachers and parents should collaborate to find alternative approaches to disciplining and creative effective ways of responding to child–on–child violence.

6.5.4 Recommendations regarding primary health care on farms

- Social work practitioners should collaborate with health workers to provide family planning and other primary health care education to adults and children that takes cognisance of community attitudes to contraception and pregnancy and other health–related issues.

6.5.5 Recommendations for future research

The following research is recommended:

- Research should be conducted into appropriate and efficient social work practise on farms, with a specific focus on empowering farm labourers to become masters of their own destinies.
- Further research be conducted into an appropriate intervention strategy relating to habitual drinking and violence on farms.

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Annexure A**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE : FIRST INTERVIEW WITH PARTICIPANTS**

The following questions are a guide to be used to facilitate the interview and enable the participants to tell their stories. The questions cover each participant's drinking history; understanding of the meaning of habitual drinking ; the decision to stop drinking and his/her perception of who or what has or hasn't facilitated their sobriety.

The interviews were conducted in Afrikaans. Permission was sought by the interviewer to record the interviews. Participants were assured of confidentiality. Debriefing took place at the end of each interview. Interviews were conducted more as conversations than interviews.

1. How long have you been sober?
2. What made you decide to stop drinking? (explore answer)
3. What made you see that your drinking was a problem?
4. Did other people talk to you about your drinking?
5. Was there an incident that caused you to stop drinking or had you been thinking about stopping for a while?
6. Was drinking an "all-or-nothing" situation for you?
7. Did you have an implant?
8. Did you try drinking on top of the implant?
9. Did you have a desire to drink?
10. For how long have you been drinking?
11. At what age did you start drinking?
12. Do you have any idea why you started drinking?
13. Did you drink alone or with friends/others?
14. What was the influence of alcohol on you? When you had been drinking what kind of person were you?
15. How did other people react to that person? What did people say about you?
16. When you are sober what kind of person are you?

17. Over the years did you try to stop drinking?
18. Why do you think it seems to be working this time?
19. Who encouraged or motivated you to stop drinking?
20. The day you stopped drinking did you have any idea how your life would change?
21. How did your life change?
22. When the children were little did you ever use wine to pacify them?
23. How has your decision to stop drinking affected the children?
24. Did you drink while you were pregnant?
25. Has your decision to stop drinking affected your finances at all?
26. Have you changed in any way?
27. Do you have the same friends you had when you were drinking?
28. Is there anyone on the farm who encouraged you to stay sober?
29. How have they helped you?
30. Did you drink on weekends or during the week or both?
31. How do you spend the time you used to spend drinking?
32. Have your children said anything to you about the change in you?
33. Did the farm management support you in any way?
34. What is your dream for yourself? (explore)
35. Your children's father – is he also a drinker?
36. Who took care of your children while you were drinking?
37. Was it helpful having a crèche?
38. Were your parents also drinkers? (explore)
39. If you were ever to stand in front of people who drink what would you want to say to them?
40. How was it for you when your parents drank?
41. Are you a churchgoer?

Each interview ended with the researcher thanking the participant and spending some time debriefing him/her.

Annexure B**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE:****INTERVIEW WITH MARRIAGE PARTNER OF HABITUAL DRINKER**

1. For how long have you been married?
2. Has your partner always drunk?
3. Why do you think he/she began drinking?
4. Are you also a drinker? (explore)
5. How was the home situation while your wife/husband drank? (explore)
6. Did your spouse ever use food money for alcohol?
7. How did he/she pay for his/her alcohol?
8. Did your partner ever try to stop drinking?
9. What do you think motivated your partner to stop drinking?
10. Was there an event or incident that he/she said "That's it!"
11. When X said he/she was going to stop drinking what were your thoughts?
12. Do you think religion has made a difference to your partner?
13. Do you think if you didn't live on a farm his/her drinking would be more or less?
14. When do you drink?
15. How do you think your family feels about living here?
16. What all has changed now that your husband/wife is no longer drinking?
17. How is your marriage relationship now?
18. How do you think the children see X's decision to stop drinking?
19. When X was drinking did she make food for the children?
20. Were there people around who supported your family in those years?
21. Was there someone for the children to go to if they needed to?
22. Where could they go when you and X were fighting?
23. What is the difference between and a man and a woman's habitual drinking?
24. Do you think it is fair that men drink but they don't want their wives to drink?
25. What message would you like to give to other families struggling with this problem? (explore)

26. Have there been times when you have wanted to walk away from the problem?
27. What kept you from going? (explore)
28. Is there anyone who has supported you over the years?
29. Do you think the farm can do anything more for families with drinking problems?
30. Do you think Alateen is a good thing for the children to attend?
31. Now that your partner isn't drinking, what keeps you busy? How do you spend your time?
32. Are you interested in going further with school or learning something new?
33. Where did you grow up?
34. Did your parents drink?
35. Was the DOPSTELSEL still being practised when you started working? (explore)
36. Anything else you would like to say?

Thank you

Debriefing

Annexure C**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE : INTERVIEW WITH CHILD OF HABITUAL DRINKERS**

All children interviewed were over the age of seven. Children were selected from the families of the habitual drinkers who were interviewed. All children were given a choice whether or not they were interviewed. At least one child per family, in some cases more than one child and in the case of one family there was not a child over the age of seven.

The interview schedule was used as a guide. The interview explored answers to questions where it seemed possible and appropriate.

To begin with, all children were put at ease; the purpose of the interview was explained to them and they were assured that they were free to refuse to answer any questions. All children were assured of confidentiality and encouraged to ask for questions to be explained if they weren't sure they understood.

1. Tell me how it was at home when your parent(s) drank. (explore answer)
2. How were things in the house ... neat, untidy, organised, quiet?
3. Was there always food for you?
4. If not, what did you do when you were hungry?
5. Did you feel as if your parents cared for you?
6. Do you remember when they started to drink?
7. Did they drink every night? Or on weekends?
8. Who cared for you while they were drinking?
9. What did you do if there was no food?
10. How did you feel all those years while they were drinking?
11. What were your thoughts?
12. Who encouraged and cared for you?
13. How did he/she show they cared?
14. Did you ever try and stop your parents drinking?
15. What did you try?
16. How did they respond to what you were doing?

17. Did they ever try to stop drinking?
18. Do you think if you stayed anywhere else, not on the farm, things would have been any different?
19. What would have been different for you and your siblings, here or there?
20. Has there been anyone who has cared for you?
21. How has Aunt T helped?
22. Do you think the farm owners/management have helped at all? (explore)
23. What do you want to say to children in the same situation?
24. Has Alateen helped you?
25. Who or what has brought you through the years? (explore)
26. Why do you think your parents fought with each other?
27. What are your thoughts about fighting?
28. Did you talk about what was happening, to anyone else?
29. How did you feel when there was fighting?
30. What did you think other people thought about your family?
31. What did you do when your parents fought?
32. Did you ever think it was your fault?
33. How did your parents' drinking affect your school work?
34. When your parents said they were going to stop drinking, what did you think?
Did you think they could?
35. When you saw they did stop, how did you feel?
36. Since they stopped, what all has changed?
37. Is there a difference in the money situation at home?
38. Is there someone you would like to say something to?
39. Do you think things have changed on the farm over the last few years?
40. Have things improved for the children on the farm? (explore)
41. What does the after-school mean for the children?
42. Is there something else you would like to say?
43. Time was spent in general chatter and discussion about what they were going to do next to debrief the children.

Annexure D**INTERVIEW GUIDE:****INTERVIEW WITH HEALTH WORKER**

1. How long have you lived on this farm?
2. Why do you think people drink?
3. Have farm people always drunk so much?
4. Tell me about the “Tot System”.
5. At the time of the “Tot System” was there a lot of violence? (explore)
6. How have things changed?
7. What was the reaction when the “Tot System” was stopped?
8. How did the end of the “Tot System” change drinking patterns on the farm?
9. It seems women prefer to drink beer ... why is that?
10. How does the community react to a man who does not drink?
11. It seems to me, over and above the problem of habitual drinking, our farm people are in general very dependent people. They don't seem to have much self-confidence. What are your thoughts about this?

Annexure E**PERSONAL QUESTIONNAIRE**

The purpose of this questionnaire was to use information to identify drinking patterns on the farm. Arrangements were made for completed questionnaires to be returned confidentially. Questions were translated into Afrikaans.

1. Age
2. Section where you work:
 - 1 Vineyard
 - 2 Cellar
 - 3 Office
 - 4 Crèche/After-school
 - 5 Manor House/Garden
3. How many years have you been on the farm?
4. Did you grow up on a farm?
5. Are you married?
6. If you are not married, do you have a girlfriend/boyfriend or partner?
7. How many people stay in your house? (including children)
8. (a) Are there adults in the house who are unemployed?
(b) If you answered "Yes" to question 8(a), why do they not work?
9. How many children under the age of five live in the house?
10. How many children between the ages of six and thirteen live in the house?
11. How many children between the ages of thirteen and eighteen live in the house?
12. (a) Are there children in the house who do not attend school?
(b) If you answered "Yes" to question 12(a), explain why the child does not attend school.
13. (a) Do you have children?
(b) How many children do you have?
(c) How old were you when you had your first child?
(d) Are there any teenage mothers in the house?

14. How old were you when you drank for the first time?
15. How did you feel after your first drinking session?
16. Indicate how regularly you drink:
 - 1 Every day
 - 2 Weekends
 - 3 Special occasions
17. Indicate your drink of choice:
 - 1 Wine
 - 2 Beer
 - 3 Sherry
 - 4 Brandy
 - 5 Other
18. For what reason do you drink your drink of choice ?
19. (a) Indicate which of the following “reasons to drink” apply to you:
 - 1 To relax.
 - 2 It is a tradition that we drink over weekends.
 - 3 I can say things when I am drunk that I am too shy to say when I am sober.
 - 4 To forget my problems.
 - 5 To have something to do. Weekends are boring.
 - 6 Everyone around me drinks.
 - 7 To be with my friends.
 - 8 I drink to keep my husband/wife company while they drink.
- (b) Over the last five years, have you drunk more or less than before?
- (c) What caused the change in your drinking pattern?
- (d) If you have stopped drinking within the last five years, write a few lines about your decision to stop. Who encouraged and supported you? What made it difficult to keep to your decision?
- (e) Roughly how much money do you spend on alcohol?
- (f) If you one day discover your child is drinking, how will you feel?
- (g) What would you like to say to fellow workers and children with regards:

- Alcohol
 - Farm life
 - Marriage
 - Conflict
 - School
 - Money
20. What school year did you complete?
 21. Are you satisfied in your work?
 22. If you could choose, what sort of work would you like to do?
 23. Would you like to leave the farm?
 24. If you got the chance, would you leave the farm?
 25. Do you think it is easier to live in the city or on the farm?
 26. If you left the farm, what would you miss?
 27. What would you definitely NOT miss?
 28. When your child misbehaves, what do you do? Indicate on the following list:
 - Hit
 - Shout
 - Talk
 - Punish with extra work around the house
 - Other
 29. Would you like to study further?
 30. Which of the following are you interested in?
 - Night school
 - Computer literacy
 31. What keeps you busy over weekends?
 32. Does your spouse drink?
 33. If he/she has been drinking, do they hit you?
 34. Does your child live in the same house as his/her biological father?
 35. Does your child's father pay maintenance regularly?
 36. What do you like most about the farm?
 37. What don't you like about the farm community?

Participants were thanked and reminded that the door is always open for them to discuss their problems.

Annexure F**NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

People were assured of their confidentiality. They were given return envelopes and thanked in advance for completing the questionnaires. Questionnaires were translated into Afrikaans.

1. Age
2. Number of years on Farm A
3. Section where you work:
 - 1 Vineyard
 - 2 Cellar
 - 3 Office
 - 4 Crèche/After school
 - 5 Manor House/Garden
4. Below is a list of problems on farms. Indicate which you think are present on this farm:
 - 1 Alcohol and drug abuse
 - 2 Family violence
 - 3 Teenage pregnancy
 - 4 A shortage of sports activities, hobbies and after hours activities
 - 5 Jealousy
 - 6 Feelings of powerlessness in respect of personal problems
 - 7 Marital/relationship problems
5. Are there other problems you would like to add?
6. Below is a list of activities that take place on the farm. Indicate which you participate in:
 - 1 Soccer
 - 2 Netball
 - 3 Night school
 - 4 Computer class

- 5 Library
- 6 Dominoes
- 7 Church and Bible study
7. Are there other activities you are interested in which you would like to see on the farm?
 - 1
 - 2
 - 3
8. When you have a personal problem what do you do first?
9. Is there someone on the farm you feel you can trust enough to discuss problems with?
10. If tonight you got the chance to write a letter to the farm management, what would the main points be?
11. If the farm gave you the chance to solve any more problems on the farm or gave you a community project to work on, what would you like it to be?
12. How do you feel about the children's programme on the farm?
13. Do you think the farm does enough for its workers and their children?
14. What else do you think should be done for the children?
15. Write down / list what you consider the three biggest problems on the farm are.
16. If you have the chance, what would you like to say to the owner of the farm?

Annexure G**COMMUNITY PROFILE**

The farm on which the research took place is one of the original wine farms in the Stellenbosch district. This profile describes the living conditions on the farm, the major social problems on the farm, and services and amenities available to children and adults. Efforts that have been made to partner with the community to address recreational and social needs, are also briefly described.

Over the past two generations of farm management there has been an effort to upgrade living conditions and provide support to the farm families. In 2002 when the first needs assessment was conducted **one hundred percent** of the farm labourers report growing up in homes where there was habitual drinking and **every one** of them reports having been habitual drinkers. Social violence was a norm every weekend. These are facts that should be kept in mind when considering the current levels of habitual drinking and violence. Sadly however a large percentage of the community remain trapped in cycles of poverty, habitual drinking and powerlessness.

This is not an analysis; it is a description of the community. The purpose of the profile is to create for the reader a context in which the research took place. So much of the literature suggests that improving living conditions on farms and providing alternative sport and recreation activities will alleviate habitual drinking. This profile illustrates that on a farm where attention has been paid to upgrading living conditions and providing recreation facilities and opportunities for personal and social development, farm labourers remain powerless to effect change in their own lives, trapped in cycles of habitual drinking, poverty and violence.

G.1 HOUSING AND HOUSEHOLDS

There are **thirty four** labourers cottages on the farm, accommodating in total **one hundred and eighty one adults and children**. **Fifty** of the one hundred and eighty one farm dwellers are gainfully **employed** on the farm, **seventy six** children

under the age of eighteen, **twenty seven** either **retired** labourers or unemployed wives of male labourers. **Twenty eight** of the one hundred and eighty one people are extended family or adult children who are not employed on the farm, but live/squat on the farm. It is thought by farm management that the number of people they have been told about that are living on the farm squatting is a conservative figure. Fewer than a third of the population on the farm are economically active on the farm. The landowner covers the cost of housing, electricity, water and other services. For every one employee the landowner is supporting three to four other people or children. The implications of the relatively large percentage of people squatting on the farm are discussed below.

G.1.1 Extended family of labourers squatting on the farm

For a long time, a blind eye has been turned towards the “squatting” of extended family, partners of children, and grandchildren living in the farm dwellings, because of the general housing shortage in South Africa. However, in many homes, accommodating extended family members creates overcrowding, which reflects negatively on the landowner. Evicting people also gives landowners bad press. Extra people in the house, especially if they are employed, bring extra income into the house, potentially raising the quality of life for the family concerned. There is concern on this farm that the extra people impact negatively rather than positively. There is not evidence to support the prediction that extra income in a house raises the quality of life. When people are living on the premises it is logistically difficult to exclude them from making use of services and amenities available to the legitimate dwellers. However, this situation does create a fair amount of resentment and jealousy among labourers. Some labourers feel if one family is accommodating extended family they will too and so the “farm family” gets bigger and bigger.

G.1.2 Services and amenities in the houses.

All houses have electricity, flush-toilets, running water and their own garden in which residents are free to plant as they wish. Refuse removal takes place every

Friday and recently all domestic animals were screened and inoculated at the farm's expense. Telecommunications in the houses is the personal expense of the household. There is a public telephone within walking distance of the houses for after hours use. During work hours, labourers have access to telecommunications at the farm office. Many labourers have cellphones.

G.1.3 Heads of households

Of the twenty eight households in figure 1 (See page 240), **ten** of the heads of households are women and **eighteen** are men. **Three** of the men are pensioners. In the households headed by women the biological father of the children is absent. A large percentage of the children on the farm have **NO** contact with their biological fathers. Farming communities are very patriarchal. There is little, if any, respect for women. In the households where there is a female head, discipline regarding children, particularly teenagers, is a problem. In isolated cases the biological father pays maintenance. In most households the couple have children living in the house who are not their own. There is often conflict regarding children living in the house who are from previous relationships of either the male or female. The men are particularly detached emotionally and most of the men are habitual drinkers so there are few positive male role models.

G.2. AGE, GENDER, EDUCATIONAL LEVEL AND EMPLOYMENT DISTRIBUTION OF FARM LABOURERS

G.2.1 Gender distribution of labourers

There are currently **twenty four** males formally employed and **twenty six** females.

G.2.2 Age distribution of labourers

TABLE G1: Age distribution of workforce (2007)

20–30 year olds	30–40 year olds	40–50 year olds	50–60 year olds	60–65 year olds
*****	*****	*****	*****	*
****	*****	*****	*****	
	*****	****	*	
9	15	14	11	1

N = 50

The majority of the labourers are between 30 and 60 years old. In the past children of labourers were certain of getting a job on the farm once they were eligible to work. Mechanisation in the agricultural sector and casualisation of the work force is changing that pattern. There is no guarantee that all the children on the farm will be employed. This is evident in the above table with the size of the twenty to thirty year old group of the labour force being considerably smaller than other age groupings. Traditionally on wine farms there have been families who have been living and working on the farm for generations. This has created a sense of loyalty and family. With fewer and fewer jobs available to offspring of labourers, some children will need to look for work off the farm and so families will also begin to be split up.

G.2.3 Educational levels of labourers and children

Of a total of fifty labourers employed, the vast majority of the labour force have no more than a primary school qualification. **Three** labourers are **illiterate**, having attended no formal schooling. **Thirty–seven** labourers have attended primary school only; not all of them completed primary school, the majority went as far as grade three or four. **Six** labourers completed Grades 8 to 10. **No** labourer has a matric. **Three people** have NQF qualifications.

Currently there are **fifteen** crèche children, **twelve** grade 0 – grade 2 children and

twenty five children in primary school. **Five** children attend high school regularly. Low levels of schooling and training in any other field limit the labourers' choices of alternative jobs. Often farm people feel they want to leave their jobs but struggle to find alternatives. Du Toit (2004) speaks of the total institution of the farm. This is evident in the fact that farm people do not have to get themselves to work, have never been through an interview process and not been exposed to other work environments. The isolation and the fact that almost every aspect of their lives are taken care of on the farm has handicapped them, trapping them to a large extent. Few people who have left the farm have done it successfully, either not finding the jobs they thought they were going to find or losing one job after another. One matriculant who was accepted at UWC found the jump from farm life to academic life very overwhelming. A child who did really well in primary school made application to a school in Stellenbosch for high school instead of attending the school the other farm children attend. After eighteen months he moved to the high school that the other farm children attend. He struggled not so much academically but socially and with planning and organising his life (train schedules and assignment planning, for example).

G.2.3.1 High incidence of school drop out

There is a very high, secondary school drop out rate (see Figure 1) after Grade eight. Of the twenty eight houses represented in figure 1 there are thirteen children who have dropped out of school in the last five years. One of the two children has not completed primary school. Seemingly children begin struggling with the workload or do not complete tasks and once they have stayed away for a while they are too far behind to catch up. They leave the farm on the bus in the morning and either get off the bus along the way or wonder around the residential area closest to their school.

G.2.4 Employment distribution of labourers

TABLE G.2.: Employment distribution of labourers

Vineyard	Cellar	Manor house	Children's program
***** 18 Men	***** 5 Men	** 2 Men	* 1 Man
***** 15 Women		*** 3 Women	***** 6 Women
33	5	5	7

N = 50

Over the last two years one male and one female labourer have moved into administration and sales respectively on the farm. The majority of the labourers work in the vineyard. Among the labourers, those people working in the manor house or in the children's program are considered by the others as having "soft" jobs seemingly because they are indoors, are in smaller teams so they get to know their manager better and are perceived to have more privileges. Manor house staff are also considered to be receive more favours because they work closer to the landowner.

Cellar jobs are considered more interesting as they are more technical and the cellar staff have more opportunity to attend courses. Cellar staff are at the coal face of producing wine and in that respect not so alienated from the fruits of their labour.

The highest incidence of absenteeism is among the women in the vineyard. Their jobs are probably the most tedious and physically tiring. Labourers working in the children's programme or the cellar have more learning opportunities because of the nature of their work. Working with children is rewarding in that one can see the fruits of your labour.

G.3 SOCIAL PHENOMENA ON THE FARM

G.3.1 Teenage pregnancies

The primary health care worker ensures that there is community education in respect of family planning and she makes sure contraceptives and condoms are freely available. Despite that, there is a high incidence of teenage pregnancy (see Figure 1). Of the twenty eight houses represented in Figure 1 there are **ten** teenage mothers. In two houses there are two teenage mothers. All these girls have been given the option of abortion but their parents strongly oppose abortion on religious grounds. In all but one case, has a teenage mother returned to school. Her family protested strongly but with the support of her boyfriend and the social worker she completed another three years of school, giving her a Grade 10 rather than a Grade 7 qualification. The young mother and her baby are taken in by her family. The young mother earns her keep by doing housework for her parents and where she can find casual employment. Returning to school or becoming qualified in something else is not considered an option by the girl or their parents. Male children who drop out of school are expected to find work. No effort is made by parents to encourage or motivate the boys to return to school or go for any training in any field. Immediately they are assimilated into becoming a manual labourer.

G.3.2 Incidence of habitual drinking

Figure 1 indicates the incidence of habitual drinking on the farm. Habitual drinkers are indicated by a red circle. Of the **twenty eight** households, **eight** are sober households. That is not to say that Noone in that household drinks, it means that the members of the household are either teetotallers or drinking is kept to a minimum and then mostly done on high days and holidays. In the remaining twenty houses habitual or binge drinking takes place, mainly on weekends. In **four** of the houses where habitual drinking takes place there is associated **regular domestic violence**. In **half** of the houses the **head of the household** is a regular **habitual drinker** (10 men and 4 women). In **fourteen** out of twenty eight houses there is **more** than one regular habitual drinker.

G.3.3 Teenage drinking and drug abuse

In **seven** of the households there is at least one teenage who drinks habitually. Teenage drinking tends to be under-reported to the social worker. It often takes place in the company of the adults and in many instances is instigated by them. Two years ago, one of the mothers on the farm was very concerned that under-age children were being sent by adults to buy alcohol from liquor outlets close by. The same mother had witnessed one of the senior men on the farm initiating teenage boys into binge-drinking.

A community meeting was held and this mother appealed to fellow farm dwellers not to sell alcohol or cigarettes to any under-age child or send under age children to buy alcohol or cigarettes. The same mother requested that, should her son be drinking in someone's yard or home, either she be called or her son escorted home. Finally this mother stated that encouraging binge-drinking should not happen. **Not one other member of the community supported this mother.** One of the men stated his lack of support quite clearly. He argued that if he did not give the child a cigarette or drink, the child would either steal it or get it from someone else.

Recently some of the boys were found in possession of dagga at school. The school principal referred the matter back to the farm. The children are receiving one message from school and the social worker on the farm and **experiencing the exact opposite at home.** Many of the men on the farm smoke dagga and defend this vehemently. Dagga seems to be freely available in the community.

Tik and other drugs are also being used but the extent of the problem is difficult to establish. One adult admitted to using Tik and went for treatment.

Figure 1 is a graphic representation of the community. All the houses in two of the groups of houses are represented. Twenty-eight houses are represented. Each household is represented by a picture of a house made up of a triangle and a square. Details about the head of the household are contained in the triangle. The head of the household is the person in the house who is permanently employed on the farm, in whose name the house has been allocated and the person who has

signed a contract regarding the house.

The gender and age of the head of the household are indicated (*F–female/*M–male). Should the head of the household be a retired worker it is indicated with a P. The age of the head of the household is shown in brackets. Where the head of the household is a habitual drinker it is indicated by a red circle around the F, M or P. Houses on this farm are not only allocated to men. Should a man lose his job, and his wife or common law wife is employed on the farm, the family are entitled to remain in the house. Single parent households are also allocated housing in this same order as nuclear families are allocated houses. The square part of the houses in the diagram indicates the number of children under the age of eighteen, the number of children in the house who have dropped out of school and the incidence of teenage pregnancy in a house. The numbers of adults employed, unemployed and pensioners living in the house are also indicated and where any adult is a habitual drinker the E or P is circled in red. Children under eighteen who are binge–drinkers are also shown with a red circle. The yellow houses indicate sober households, that is households in which habitual drinking is not a factor. These are also houses that have been identified as **safe houses** which children and women can run to, should they need to escape the drinking and violence in their own homes. Three of the houses are outlined with a black rectangle indicating that regular domestic violence is a factor in those houses.

G4 SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES, SERVICES AND AMENITIES AVAILABLE TO FARM LABOURERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

G.4.1 Utilisation of services and facilities

Figure 2 (see page 241) shows all the services and amenities that are available to the labour force. Actual attendance/use of facilities is indicated in red. Despite an indication in all discussions with the labour force and responses in surveys indicating a desire for sports and recreation facilities the actual participation in recreation, projects and development opportunities is very low. There is an extremely high level of apathy and lack of perseverance in activities that the

labourers have suggested.

There have been numerous attempts to workshop these feelings but no matter what emerges and is tried a general sense of apathy and disinterest pervades. The only community activity that is well attended is the various church gatherings. Most of the labourers attend church fortnightly and a large percentage attend regular bible study and prayer groups.

G.4.1.1 Regular use of transport to Eersterivier library

At the beginning of 2007, six out of forty seven workers indicated they would like to visit the library regularly. Fortnightly transport was arranged for adults and high-school children. Within two months the attendance had dwindled to Noone going except one of the educarers in the crèche. Currently the educarer and one other labourer loan books from the library. Any activity that requires regular commitment, does not have tangible results, involves a schedule or is regulated in any way is very foreign to farm people. The concept of taking out books, taking care of them and returning them two weeks later has been incredibly difficult for the farm people to internalise. Books are passed on to others, lost, pages torn out of and then, instead of coming either to the social worker or going to the librarian the individual stays away and fines mount up. Reading, as an activity for pleasure, even in the first world where information is available on television, is decreasing.

G.4.1.2 Night school and literacy class attendance

At the beginning of each year, large groups of people sign up for various adult education classes. By the middle of the year the group has all but dwindled. Labourers who are learning to read and write for the first time are committed to the process because the results are immediate and life changing. Even with a short term and time-limited courses such as computer literacy and driving lessons, perseverance is limited. There is little meaning attached to learning and the benefits are hard to conceptualise so when people are weighing up whether to stay home and socialise, do their housework or watch television or go to class, they choose to not go out. Learning is also difficult for many farm people. It is a long

time since they left school and many have the shadow of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome hanging over them.

Admitting to not understanding is difficult psychologically. It's easier to give up than fail. The possibility that becoming computer literate or learning to drive is going to change their life considerably is small. People who sign up for courses sometimes do so simply to have the opportunity to go out, and break away from the farm.

G.4.1.3 Use of community hall for community functions organised by the community

There have been four community dances held over the year (2007) to raise funds for the netball and soccer teams. Interpersonal jealousy and conflict have threatened many of the functions, but fortunately the latter have taken place and hopefully success will breed success.

G.4.1.4 Participation in sport

There is an active junior and senior netball club, an active junior soccer club and a Friday evening dominoes club. The netball, soccer and dominoes clubs all participate in a regular league and generally do well. Within the netball club there is a lot of conflict and jealousy but there is strong leadership from within which keeps the club afloat. The senior soccer lacks leadership. Every couple of years, interest emerges and, there is a lot of discussion about soccer kits and the fields are prepared, and then interest fades.

There are fewer habitual drinkers among the women which facilitates participation in Saturday activity. Saturday is a popular drinking day for the men.

G.4.1.5 Use of primary health and social work services

The farm people make use of both these services mainly in crisis situations. Parenting courses, weekly counselling and health-related education courses are not attended. People resist a development approach to social work practice; they resist being involved in problem-solving and seek short term, immediate solutions

rather than a more sustainable approach.

G.4.2 List of activities which workers would like to have available

Between one and three respondents indicated that they would like to participate in the following activities: bowls, cricket, tennis, rugby, cooking classes, needlework, billiards, dance classes, relaxation activities, a support group for women and outings for old people. Effort needs to be placed in establishing some of these activities in partnership with the community.

G.4.3 Participation in development and income generating projects

In the period 2002–2007 there have been various income generating and development projects. Some of these are briefly mentioned below:

G.4.3.1 Women's group

A Saturday afternoon women's group was initiated in 2004 in response to a request from the community. The main objective was to be a support/self-development group. Between six to ten women attended the first few sessions, after which interest seemed to fade and eventually the facilitator stopped the sessions. At a later stage there was talk of resurrecting the group but there was some resistance to the particular facilitator and the project was dropped. In the 2007 needs assessment there is request for a support group for women. Interpersonal jealousy seems to be the cause of the lack of interest.

G.4.3.2 Craft projects

In 2004 the farm was offered the services of two women who would teach crochet and papier mache on the farm with the view to assisting the women to sell their products. There was also an opportunity for the farm women to sell their work from the farm shop. After some discussions with the women on the farm, fortnightly Saturday classes were arranged and after full attendance the first week the classes dwindled and Noone completed anything.

Fortnightly classes were arranged to alternate with fortnightly shopping trips and to

provide a focus on what is known as “dooie naweke” (weekends when people are not paid). These weekends are dreaded by the farm people. They have no money and a cloud of despair hangs over them. The craft projects would then serve a dual purpose; people would learn something new and have something to look forward to.

There would always be some form of refreshments available which would also help with the fact that on **dooie naweke** there is very little food around. None of these factors was enough to motivate the people to see the course through.

G.4.3.3 Garden projects

Three different vegetable garden projects have been initiated over the last 6 years. The first was an attempt to interest workers in making vegetable gardens using the organic methods of the Food Garden Foundation. A member of the community who showed an interest in gardening was sent on a training course offered by the Food Garden Foundation with the intention of training other interested community members. Noone was interested in changing from what was familiar and seemingly requested less effort (use of pesticides and commercial products versus the use of waste and natural products) was to the new method. Change is very difficult for farm people.

The second garden project was simply an offer to those workers who had vegetable gardens or an interest in vegetable gardening to sell their surplus crops to the crèche/manor house and office workers to supplement workers incomes. Noone took up the opportunity. Planning and organisation skills are not skills farm people have had the opportunity to develop.

Thirdly, a large piece of ground was made available to workers as well as the use of farming equipment for an income generating project. There was an initial interest and effort which lasted a few months. Nothing further has been done for over a year.

Interpersonal jealousy is one factor given. These men have the knowledge and

skills that they need. Apart from the cost of seed, the men had no financial outlay. All the equipment they needed is available. All of these men are willing to do piece work over the weekend, should the opportunity arise so it did not seem that they were not willing to work. Investing in this project is a long-term matter which competed with the immediate gratification of habitual drinking.

G.4.3.4 Annual farm workers festival

In 2007 the second, annual farm workers festival took place in the Boland. This was an opportunity for to all farm workers to make and sell their hand made products. In the three months prior to the festival training in costing, packaging and marketing of their products was available to all participants. **One** labourer from the farm in question participated in this event. The teenagers and youth group were also given the opportunity to participate but did not attend the initial meeting or come with any ideas for what they would like to do.

G.4.3.5 Fundraising opportunity to raise funds for school tour

Parents of grade seven children were given an opportunity to be involved in a project that would help to raise the funds for the grade 7 children to go on school tour. Work opportunities were made available to children and their parents to raise the money. The cost of the tour for 11 children was raised through the work of five of the girls and six parents. Some parents did not participate at all and some projects were not completed. None of the farm parents has had the privileges that the children on the farm have. The farm people have not been exposed to the benefits of educational outings and extra-mural activities. The decision to spend money on schooling and related activity which are tangible. The rewards are difficult to quantify and some will only become evident in the future. Spending money on education is a first world concept. Parents prefer to spend money on clothing, elaborate twenty first parties, matric dance clothes, expensive hair do's and items that are tangible and immediate. Immediate gratification is again an issue.

G.5 WORKERS COMMITTEE

Since the mid nineteen nineties there has been a workers committee elected by the people, for the people. The role of the committee is threefold. Firstly any request for housing or a reshuffling of houses goes via the committee. Secondly, it is the function of the committee to organise community events. In seven years there has been no more than three events.

Thirdly the chairman of the committee attends part of the monthly management meeting where he or she is given a chance to communicate with management on behalf of the people. The chairperson is voted in for a year. In the last seven years the committee has either been completely inactive or there has been a constant change of chairperson. When a chairperson has been active in community affairs he/she does not last longer than six months. As soon he/she is elected and starts carrying out his/her duties, there is back-stabbing and sabotage until he/she resigns and a new person is elected. There have been regular courses for the committees to learn communication and conflict management skills but as a result of the high turnover of office bearers, not much progress is made. There has been a similar experience with the parent committee in the children's programme.

G.6 SATISFACTION WITH FARM LIFE

Fifty five percent of respondents indicated that they are satisfied in their work, while the split to stay on the farm versus moving away was exactly a fifty/fifty split. Factors for staying on the farm include: opportunities and benefits from staying on the farm and feelings of safety and peacefulness of being in a rural setting. One aspect of farm life where there was complete agreement across respondents and interviewees was the dissatisfaction with the interpersonal jealousy, feelings of being out of favour and the tendency of farm workers to spread "skinner" stories.

G.6.1 Felt problems on the farm

Workers were given a list of problems and asked to tick those they saw as problems existing on the farm (all the women and a random selection of men were

given questionnaires; 20 labourers responded) (refer table G.3.). Respondents were free to tick more than one problem.

TABLE G.3.: Felt problems as expressed by farm dwellers

Felt problems as expressed by labourers	Incidence out of twenty respondents
Alcohol and drug abuse	19
Domestic violence	14
Jealousy	14
Shortage of recreational opportunities	12
Teenage pregnancy	9
Marriage and family problems	9
Powerlessness in respect of personal problems	7

N = 20

Respondents were asked to indicate what they perceived to be the **three major problems** on the farm. Their answers correlate to previous surveys namely **alcohol and drug abuse; domestic violence and interpersonal Jealousy**. Respondents were given a chance to add other problems to the list. The problems which they added are (each of the following problems were mentioned **once**) a lack of unity, feeling out of favour, labourers swearing and bad mouthing each other (all interpersonal issues), financial difficulties, problems in the workplace, school drop out and problems with children. The conditions of housing and poor communication were listed **twice**. **Not once in this research process** did any labourer complain about working conditions or wages earned. Clearly labourers may feel they are not free to complain but what is interesting is that where there complaints was to do with being in or out of favour– “X has a work cell phone and Y does not, type of comparison”.

There is a high incidence of job absenteeism, especially among the women in the vineyard. There may be a link to habitual drinking but alienation and meaninglessness are also factors to consider. In the manor house and the

children's program where there is more of a sense of meaning absenteeism form work is much less.

What is interesting in the above responses is that interpersonal jealousy and domestic violence are afforded the same magnitude in terms of being problems on the farm. The incidence of school drop out and teenage pregnancy, two factors which have a direct effect on their childrens' future ad not afforded the same magnitude.

G.7 CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

G.7.1 Services and amenities available to children

A full-day crèche and nursery school and an after school is available for the children of farm workers. Full-day children receive breakfast, lunch, mid morning and afternoon tea, sandwiches before going home and a daily portion of fruit. After school children receive a cooked lunch, tea, a portion of fruit and sandwiches before going home. The after- school program includes a range of extra-mural activities including: bible study, **dance classes** (ballet, hip-hop, and ballroom), **sport** (soccer, netball, cricket), membership of a marching band, and fortnightly visits to the **library**. All children are also transported to weekly computer literacy classes. As an extension to the life skills and socialisation programme all grade three to grade seven children are taken on a restaurant outing for their birthday.

Another aspect to the children's programme is the educational support aspect. The majority of the children struggle with maths and reading and so with the help of a member of staff of the Educational Department at the University of Stellenbosch a maths literacy programme was initiated at the beginning of 2007. Grade R to grade three children are included in a daily maths programme. A reading programme for the same age group is planned for 2008.

G.7.2 Parental involvement in children's programme

Parents make a monthly contribution of R1.50 per day for full day care and R0.75 for half-day care. The facility is managed by a social worker and seven adults.

None of the other adults has any formal training in child care, they are farm labourers who have been either placed by farm management or have chosen to work in the child care programme on the farm. The staff complement includes the manager, three educators, a primary health care worker, a cook, a driver, an after-school assistant and a community theology student.

There is no parent committee. One was established but within a few months it was disbanded due to the members lack of interest.

G.7.3 Significant information regarding children attending the programme

The crèche accommodates between fifteen and twenty five children, depending on whether or not there are casuals working on the farm. A total of forty children are accommodated in the after-school facility. The crèche and after school are open throughout the year, school holidays included. The facility is closed when the labourers take their leave. Outside facilitators are used to teach ballet, hip-hop and soccer. A local church runs the bible study groups and a volunteer facilitates a weekly Alateen group for the children of habitual drinkers.

A large percentage of the children who attend the programme are foetal alcohol syndrome children. There is a high incidence of aggression and learning difficulties.

G.7.4 Objectives and outcomes of the programme

The focus of the children's project is fourfold; Firstly, there is an emphasis on creating a safe, happy environment where the children feel they are loved and cared for. The second objective is the self-esteem of the children based on the belief that children who feel good about themselves will learn better. Thirdly, the programme is primarily a life skills and socialisation programme and fourthly and lastly it is an educational program.

Some of the outcomes of the children's programme have been:

- Children who five years ago had no sense of future are now talking about what they would like to do once they finish school.
- The extra mural activities are planned in such a way that children are learning about commitment and perseverance and the benefit of attending classes regularly.
- Primary school children attend school regularly. Systems have been set up on the farm to monitor school attendance and deal immediately with absenteeism. This is not only vital for their school progress but prevents them from wondering around aimlessly on the farm and becoming vulnerable to destructive practices.
- Children receive a regular meal and fruit five days a week.
- Children are exposed regularly to life outside of the farm and taught how to communicate with people they do not know but need to ask help from.
- Children are learning alternative ways of managing conflict.
- Children are learning, through the programme, self discipline and about taking responsibility for themselves and material possessions.
- The children are learning compassion and care for each other rather than jealousy.

CONCLUSION

There exists on this farm opportunities for social and personal development. Effort is being made to facilitate change. Some change is happening but there remains an overwhelming sense of powerlessness and apathy. Habitual drinking, social violence, teenage pregnancy, school drop out and poverty remain cycles that enslave the farm people. Twenty years ago Scharf (1987) predicted that the legacy of the Tot System will continue well into the first decade of the twenty first century. Scharf, it seems, was accurate in her prediction. Farm people have a sense of

resignation and acceptance of the fact that people drink to get drunk, rendering themselves powerless to change the practice (London, 1997).

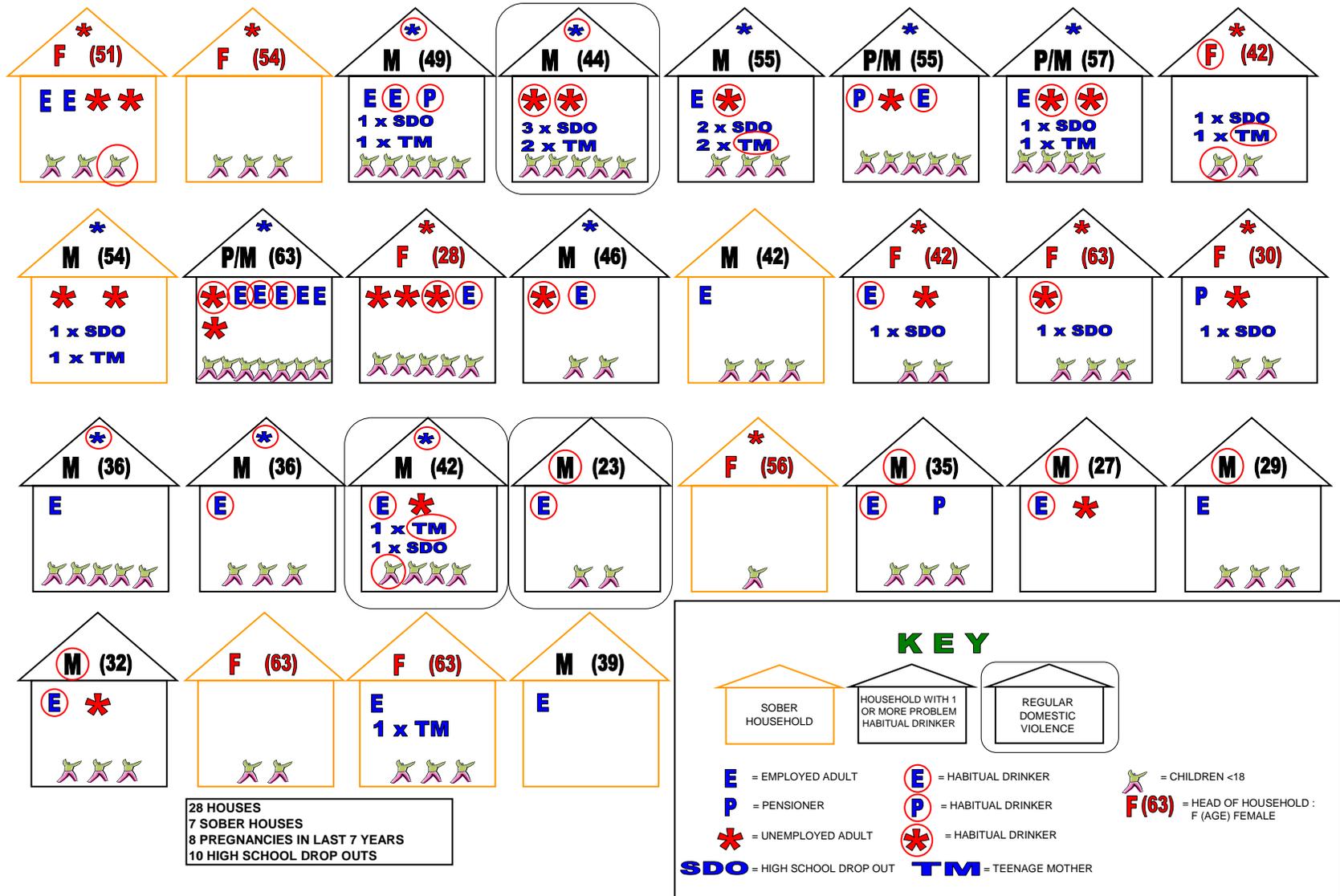
Access to alcohol becomes the primary objective of the heavy drinker. Any other activity, no matter how beneficial it may be to the individual, takes second place (De Kok, 2002). Habitual drinking remains a legitimate practice on farms (Schotte, 1996:17). The legitimacy that maintains habitual drinking on farms also hinders development projects, creating an overall sense of powerlessness in the sector.

Annexure H**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

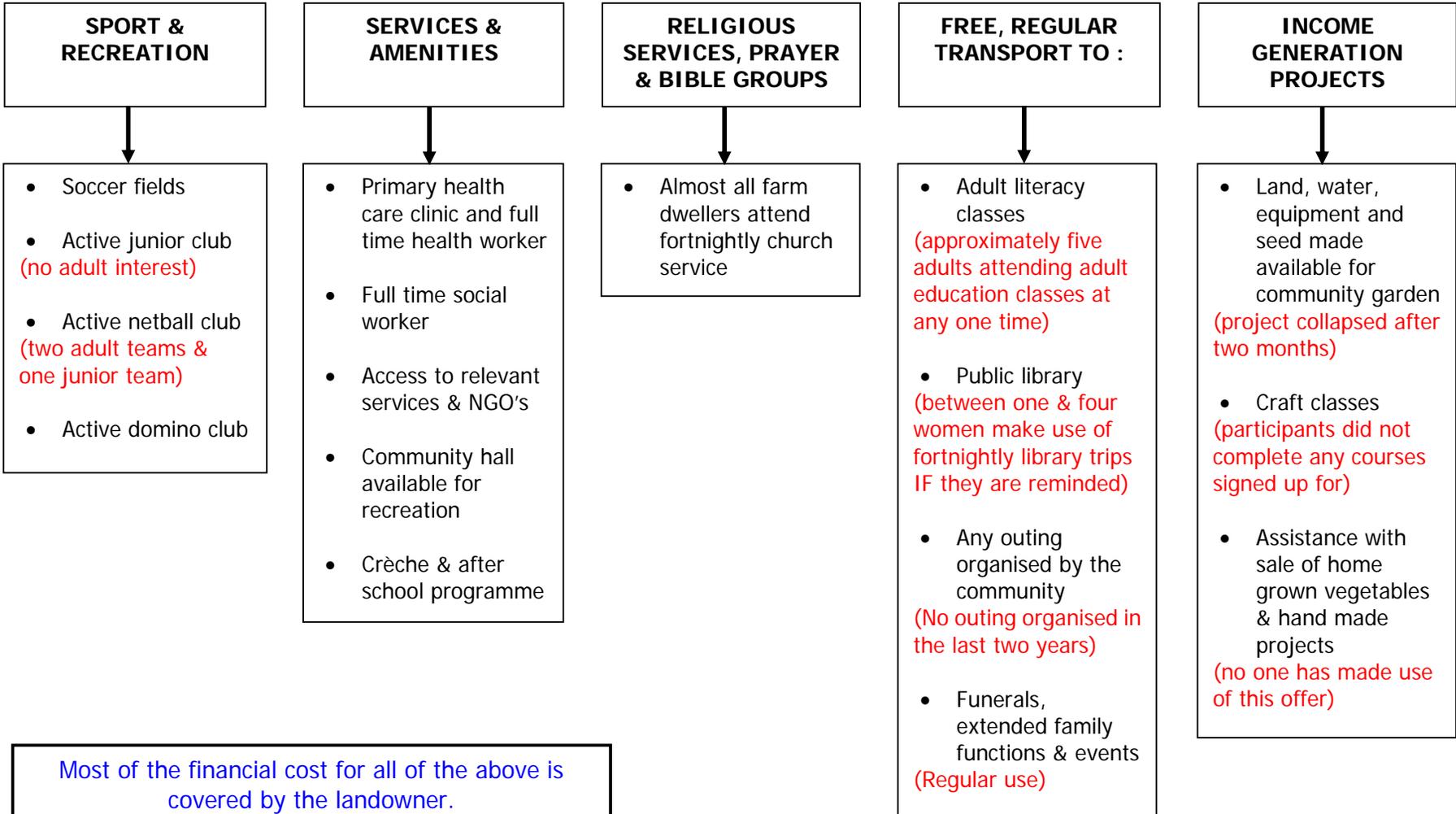
Second interview with habitual drinkers.

1. Vyf jaar gelede het jy 'n besluit geneem om op te hou drink. Op daardie stadium, wat het vir jou die moed gegee om op te hou?
2. Jy het amper jaar nugter gebly. Wat het vir jou die krag gegee om nugter te bly?
3. En wat het toe verkeerd gegaan? (Explore story)
4. Wanneer drink jy nou? (Explore story)
5. Hoe laat die alkohol jou voel? (Explore the meaning of drinking)
6. Jy het berading gekry? Wat dink jy daarvan?
7. Saam met wie drink jy?
8. Vertel so 'n bietjie oor toe jy weer begin drink het? (Explore sobriety and relapse)
9. Hoekom dink jy, is daar so 'n drank probleem op plase?
10. Hoe sien jy jou pad vorentoe?

FIGURE 1 : Community Analysis



SPORT, RECREATION, SERVICES AND AMENITIES AVAILABLE TO FARM DWELLERS



Most of the financial cost for all of the above is covered by the landowner.

Financial contribution of farm dwellers to the above mentioned activities is kept to a minimum

Figure 2