



EMANCIPATING WOMEN THROUGH LAND AND AGRARIAN REFORM AND FOOD SECURITY

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“We are interested in fundamentally altering the agrarian structure in post-apartheid South Africa in order to serve the interests of the poor and marginalised sections of our society. This imperative continues to be the cornerstone of our struggle for total emancipation and advance towards socialism.” (Lechesa Tsenoli, 2014)



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- As the SACP celebrates its centenary – part of the celebration is the appreciation of the role the Party has played putting at the centre of its struggles - **The Land Question**
 - In the words of Comrade Alex – “the Communist Party, long ago, became the first political organisation in South Africa to put forward expropriation as a policy for restoration or restitution of land to the colonially expropriated people of South Africa, as well as security of tenure and land redistribution to those who work it”.

Women and rural women in particular are part of the marginalised sections of the society who find themselves in the periphery when issues of land ownership **ARE DECIDED** but strangely remain central in food security initiatives

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- Key elements of land reform that remain a challenge for rural women are:
 - R2TR (restitution, redistribution and land tenure reforms): are rural women benefiting ?

The issue of Ingonyama Trust, land leasing, izinduna

NEED FOR LAND REFORMS TO BENEFIT RURAL WOMEN

- Land reforms are about rural development meant to benefit the rural poor (SARS)
- This call has been seen as a possible response to the initial challenges
- In my view the land question presents itself in three fold- class, race and political power
- With women facing triple oppression: they never escaped marginalisation on issues of land
- Therefore our discussion today is more about the struggle to place social needs above private profits through correct positioning of rural women

For this to be realised we need to revisit and remember the NDR as a direct route to socialism possible capable enough to overcome deep-seated and persisting racialised inequality and poverty in our society.

Be used to overcome the vicious impact of patriarchy sharpened and integrated into capitalist relations of production over a century of CST-based accumulation

Locating the role of rural women in agriculture

Participation in agriculture for:

- Increased food security
- Poverty alleviation
- Healthy society

The burden of social production proven to depend more on rural women whom with nothing have to make ends meet for their families

The contributions of rural women to the economy

Reproduction

- The reproductive role comprises child bearing and rearing responsibilities and domestic tasks undertaken by women, required to guarantee the maintenance and reproduction of the labour force. (**helping capitalism to flourish**)
- It includes not only biological reproduction but also **the care and maintenance of the workforce** (husband and working children) and the future workforce (infants and school going children).

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- Rural women are mostly involved in household production in which they are forced to unpaid labour in Agriculture
 - We can't talk of rural women emancipation without addressing the patriarchal property relations in agriculture as well as Labour relations in Agriculture

Challenges as they obtain currently

- Women (rural) are excluded from land ownership
- Mostly excluded in paid employment in non-agricultural sectors
- These gendered patterns of land ownership and production relations in Agriculture shape socio-economic transformation agenda
- Rural women are largely excluded from land inheritance (ethnicity based oppressions - not having wills)
- Use of violence and intimidation to limit women access to resource and land inheritance

STRONGER WOMEN LAND RIGHTS LEADS ENHANCED WELL-BEING

However,

Fergusson & McNally (2014) argue that Rural women continue as enablers of working class reproduction through them being shifted to the corner of:

1. Pregnancy
2. Childbirth
3. Lactation

State of affairs as it relates to rural men and women

Rural men often abandon the land themselves maybe as a result of the lack of necessary support on the use of land

Resulting their migration for paid employment mostly to non-agricultural sectors
(personal experience: the case of Umzimkulu)

It is during these times that rural women sometimes get access to abundance of land which they work on to feed their families

Political power vs land ownership

- Increase buying of land by the political elite mostly men
- More of a fashion: to showcase accumulation made one must count the number of farms he owns
- It is the political power these leaders wield that facilitate this accumulation
- Where is the rural women? Are they not politically involved?
- This goes back to the centrality of patriarchy in land ownership.

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- With the growing rate of unemployment, rural women have to take care of their families with or without their husbands, brothers or fathers
 - Thus reducing the risk of health problems and poverty, and well being
 - In doing this rural women have to fight hunger in any means possible : and most of the time engage in subsistence farming

The above notion is confirmed by the UN-Women which declared in 2013 that many rural women, especially small landholders and heads of household, depend on subsistence agriculture.

Rural women today

- Continue to have limited access to land,
- Still have limited access to water, fertilizers and seeds, finance, and skills development programmes.
- And this discrimination not only makes their role in food production much harder than it should be; it violates their basic human rights and threatens any collective food security.

- For example in KZN:

- The most affected areas on issues of water scarcity are Zululand, King Cetshwayo and Ugu – these are mostly rural

Rural Women being self-aware

Rural women are aware of these realities which are an obstacle on their growth path

To counter the effects of hunger and poverty rural women resolve on unsustainable temporary solutions like forming stokvels for end of year food bulk buying.

These stokvels if well advised and guided can form the basis for sustainable food production as they can use these financial resources already at their disposal to engage in agriculture.

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- Through this, rural women can defeat the belief that only men and few elite women can own land, they can decide on whether they do plant or animal production both for subsistence and commercial purposes.
 - Women must continue to see their way to platforms in communities and political organisations that can provide them with opportunities to influence decisions that will empower them through making available all the resources and assistance necessary for agrarian and land reform beneficiary to rural women.

In conclusion:

Rural women must be assisted to realise the power and wealth in the land that when accessed and properly worked hunger, food insecurity and most diseases will be the things of the past.

Rural women must be inspired by that young girl that grew up in rural Transkei - Mama Dora Tamana who had her early life centered mainly on the many tasks demanded of a young girl growing up in rural South Africa.

“ Tamana and her four sisters had to help work on their father’s plot, before and after school, where they cultivated potatoes, pumpkins, peas, cabbages, and chillies, as well as keeping some livestock. Every Saturday the girls would go to Idutywa, the nearest town, to sell their produce to make “money so that we could buy cookies and tea and so on” - South African History Online



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AMANDLAAA!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

HAPPY 100 YEARS SACP