FARM WORKERS AND LAND REFORM[1]

Summary

1. Farm workers are an essential part of the productin equation in commercial agriculture. A change in their social condition is as important for the development of the economy as a whole as it is for the development of the sector.

2. The data reveals a systemic condition of injustice, exploitation and inequality that is structural.

3. There are about 36,000 people who are employed on the commercial farms. Although they are a minority of the economically active population (7,5%) they represent just under 1/5th (19,45%) of people in 'formal' sector employment. Thus, a significant proportion of waged workers look to commercial agriculture to provide them with their living, especially in conditions of structural unemployment. About another 200,000 people are largely dependent on these workers for their existence.

4. The predominant form of commercial agriculture in Namibia is livestock farming. This leads to very a very low concentration of workers with the number of workers (and workers' families) on each farm ranging from as few as one or three to 11 or 12. Larger concentrations of workers are found in arable production, but these are only in small pockets in the north and the south of the country.

5. There is both un- and under-employment on commercial farms.

6. There is a large number of workers who were born on or in the district of the farm where they are currently employed. Some farm workers are migrants, others have returned from the towns. Many workers change farms often to try and break often intolerable conditions.

7. All farm workers are black, drawn from every racial and ethnic group. Being black is important to the terms of exploitation on commercial farms, and although some farmers try to use ethnic divisions, it would seem that the only ethnic group which is systematically discriminated against are the "bushmen".

8. In general, most workers are in full-time employment and these workers are almost exclusively male and adult. Women make up a sizeable proportion of the part-time, seasonal, casual and domestic workforce. Thus, there is a gender hierarchy which both restricts and down grades women's employment in the sector.

9. Children work in Namibian agriculture, although the extent of their employment is unknown. The sector also uses prison labour. Both of these are forms of forced labour which violate the Constitution and International Law.

10. A skill and authority hierarchy is slowly emerging on the commercial farms, but it is largely unacknowledged. Farm workers are expected to do skilled work without training, without financial reward, without promotion and without leverage in the job market.

11. Wages levels on commercial farms are directly affected by the forms that pay takes and the methods of payment. Wages are paid in cash and in kind. The two main forms of payment in kind are the right to run livestock and rations. Most farmers restrict the number of animals a worker may keep and rarely do rations meet the monthly food requirements of workers. Workers live on a spare diet which is nutritionally deficient.

12. Housing, clean water and access to sanitation cannot be considered a payment in kind where the worker is obliged by his employer to live on his employer's premises. Nor does clothing or transport represent a payment in kind of any significance.

13. Payments in kind are important to workers' income and standard of living, but it is very difficult to give a cash value to this form of payment. Farmers who pay in kind tend to base the value of non-cash payments on urban retail market prices (and they include items in their calculations which are not payments in kind). According to their calculations, non-cash payment represented between 55 and 64 per cent of the average worker's monthly wage.

14. An estimated 20 - 30% of farmers pay in cash only.

15. Few farmers use any formalised procedure to determine wages. Most farmers set the wage according to "the going rate". This method also means that it is rare for workers' pay rates to come under regular review. Also few farmers use incentives and a progressive wage scale to encourage productivity and stimulate initiative.

16. Piece rates are particularly widespread in determining seasonal and casual workers' wages. Generally they work to the disadvantage of farm workers because, amongst other things, workers do not know what money they will get at the end of the work period or task.

17. Farmers often fine workers either to regulate work performance or to underline "who's boss" on the farms.

18. While most farmers pay cash wages in money, some farmers pay in "good fors" or tokens which can be exchanged for goods either at their farm shop or at another local shop where an arrangement has been made. Some workers never get to even touch their money.

19. Looking at wage levels in the sector, and using cash wages only, (as these are the most reliable and reflect real disposable income) there are a number of workers who receive no cash pay at all. This can include adult men in full-time employment, and particularly it affects women, children, sentenced prisoners and "bushmen". 90% of workers who do receive a cash wage, earn R300 or less a month and the average cash wage is between R130 and R150 /month.

20. Pay levels in the sector are lower than every other waged sector in Namibian society, and average household income is just under half that of the Communal Areas. Farm workers and their families, who represent a significant proportion of people employed in waged labour, live in relative and absolute poverty.

21. Farm workers work long and unsociable hours, often without mid-day or weekend breaks. Annual leave is a very recent development and is still a "privilege" of the few. Housing varies, but it is often self-built. Health care is only available for emergencies, and then often only after considerable struggle by farm workers. There is extensive illiteracy amongst farm workers and even fewer workers have any chance of acquiring formal technical skills training.

22. Farm workers are continuously ordered about and verbally abused. Many are still physically abused. Moreover, farmers often exercise strict control over the presence of "strangers" on their property. This often does include children. Few workers have written contracts which means that workers are generally subject to the arbitrary and authoritarian dictats of the farm owner or manager who hire, fire and punish at will.

23. Farm workers have no trade unions and most farmers obstruct organisation, eventhough the Nambian Agricultural Union, for example, does not oppose trade union organisation "in principle". A farm worker's union has yet to be organised, which under existing conditions will be very difficult to establish.

24. These facts carry profound implications. As it is presently organised, commercial agriculture fails to meet basic needs of about one fifth of formally employed people. A reform which is built on the existing order will perpetuate and expand these conditions of gross poverty, exploitation and rightlessness.

25. Many farm workers have established "lower order" tenure rights through birth and/or long service which need to be protected and guaranteed. Many are landless but wish to have a piece of land.

26. Pay and conditions are major grievances which destabilise the labour force. The shift to cash wages has seen a significant decline in payment in kind (and possibly, in overall pay levels) which further erodes the physical well being and sense of worth of farm workers and their families. For many, the cash wage received becomes their total source of sustenance.

27. There is a deep sense of grievance, considerable frustration and an overwhelming sense of powerlessness amongst farm workers. Their overriding concern is that they be assured basic rights and security. In the absence of a living wage, tenure rights and the right to run livestock become essential stepping stones towards their greater aspiration of a decent standard of living and a secure place.

28. The state needs to intervene to protect and defend farm workers so that they can develop the necessary countervailing strength to bring about a more equitable and just order in commercial agriculture. This can be created by enacting appropriate legislation and applied through existing national structures as well as regional and local authorities which have yet to be effectively established.

1. Introduction

1.1 The aims of this paper are threefold: to analyse the position and condition of farm workers in commercial agriculture in Namibia; to bring out some key issues which need to be addressed by land reform; and to examine possible policy options.

1.2 All too often the terms under which people work in the sector are considered secondary (or even irrelevant) to the "success" of both individual farming enterprises and the sector as a whole. This distortion stems primarily from the rightlessness and relative powerlessness of farm workers. Yet farm workers are an essential part of the production equation in agriculture. A change in their social condition is as important for the development of the economy as a whole as it is for the development of the sector.

1.3 The facts that have been teased out of a weak and uneven data base reveal an almost unbroken, universal experience of poverty, oppression and exploitation. Despite this picture, some argue very strongly that it is wrong to lump the good employers together with the bad. No doubt there are some "good" farmers. But the "goodness" or otherwise of individuals notwithstanding, what the data reveals is a systemic condition of injustice, exploitation and inequality that is structural. In other words, it is not simply a question of changing attitudes or relying on individual goodwill. As much as individual behaviour is at issue, what needs to be reviewed are the structural conditions which set the terms in which farmers operate and act.

2. Employment

Numbers

2.1 It is difficult to establish the exact number of workers in commercial agriculture[1]. In 1988, it was estimated that there were some 36,000[2] people engaged in the sector. This number, however, covers farm workers, domestic workers and white management. Perhaps a greater problem is that it excludes an unknown (and not necessarily small) category of labourers who are not recognised as workers because they are "relatives" or are "working for food". There has also been a change in the absolute number of farm workers in the intervening 4 years since the data was compiled. Farmers report that whereas, over the past 20 years the workforce has been relatively constant, there has been a significant shedding/exodus of labour during the past 6 - 8 months, even leading to a labour shortage in the south of the

country[3]. The reasons for this decline in numbers are political rather than structural. Farmers have been laying off workers in anticipation of the introduction of a Labour Code and workers who have received food and drought aid have resisted the poor terms of employment on the southern sheep farms [4]. Whether employment levels return to their earlier levels will depend on what solutions are found.

2.2 In overall employment terms, whilst commercial agriculture only employs a minority of the economically active population (7,5% in 1988), **a significant proportion of waged workers (19,45% of the total "formal sector" workforce in 1988) look to commercial agriculture to provide them with their living, especially in conditions of structural unemployment[5].**

2.3 The predominant form of commercial agriculture in Namibia is livestock farming. 4,251 farming units covering just over 35,8 million hectares are devoted to cattle, and cattle & sheep farming. With an average farm size of about 8,500 ha the average size of the workforce is 8-10 workers. A 1990 survey on central district farms found that there were on average 6 farm workers and 2,5 domestic/garden workers, for example[6]. The size of the workforce increases in arable production with a theoretical potential of 10 workers per 100 ha. However, arable production is limited to some 320,000 ha and only a very small proportion of this is located in commercial farming districts. In the Otavi highlands 153 farmers produce maize, wheat and sunflowers by dryland cultivation on just over 23,000 ha. Irrigation farming is concentrated at Hardap (1,900 ha) and along the Orange River in the south (900 ha)[7]. The theoretical employment level in agronomic production outside the communal areas is between 2,500 and 3,000 people.

2.4 There is both un- and under-employment on the commercial farms (see para: 2.6) although it is impossible to quantify the scale of either.

Composition

2.5 "I was born here, my father was born here. I want my children to feel this land is theirs.[8]" A large proportion of farm workers are born on or in the district of the farm where they are currently employed. In the National Survey, for example, 31% of respondents were born and grew up on commercial farms[9]. Some workers have been on their farm of current employment for 20, 30 and 50 years. Farm labourers often change farms to try and break from intolerable conditions, but they often remain in the same district and even return repeatedly to the same

employer. Some farm workers are migrants for whom employment in commercial agriculture is transitory, i.e., it is a stepping stone to the towns or for a few, to establishing themselves as peasant or small scale farmers. Others have returned from the towns in the face of unemployment, especially amongst unskilled workers.

2.6 In Namibia, all farm workers are black. They are drawn from every ethnic group and all racial categories (whites excluded). Whilst being black is an important factor conditioning the terms of employment in the sector, ethnic divisions do not appear to be generally significant, given universally arbitrary and generally poor conditions[10]. However, it would seem that as an ethnic group "Bushmen"[11] are at the very bottom of the labour hierarchy. The "common knowledge" is that "these people don't use money" and therefore they don't need to be paid any cash[12].

2.7 The sexual division of labour is largely shaped by the division between full-time and part-time (casual and seasonal) work. **Full-time employment is almost exclusively male and adult.** Of the 107 farm worker households interviewed in the National Survey, 95% were male headed and the primary earners were invariably men[13]. On cattle farms (the main stock farming and agricultural activity), for example, full-time workers are male household heads who live with their families or male breadwinners who live on their own but who invariably have social and economic responsibilities to people/families living in the communal areas. **Other than domestic work in the farm owner's or manager's house, full-time work opportunities for women are very few in number.**

2.8 Whilst **women make up a sizeable proportion of the part-time, seasonal or casual workforce,** they compete with men and children for work. Rationalisation on the southern sheep farms in the early 1970's, for example, reduced full-time and considerably expanded casual employment. Moorsom points out that "(b)y 1970/71 over 30% of workers were casual, in employment on average for only about a third of the year"[14]. Casual or seasonal workers are either drawn from the one or two full-time farm worker families resident on the sheep farms or from the pool of unemployed concentrated in the small towns in the region[15]. Sheep shearing (a major form of casual work) is exclusively male, which means that women compete with men and children for herding or any available piece work. In arable production part-time work is mostly seasonal (harvesting of cotton, groundnuts etc.) and casual (weeding). Usually this means occasional employment for women, children and some men.

2.9 The overlap between the division between full-time and part-time work and the sexual division of labour gives rise to a gender hierarchy which both restricts and downgrades womens' employment in the sector.

2.10 Children work in Namibian commercial agriculture even though employers are reluctant to admit this fact[16] (and to pay them appropriately) although the extent of their employment is unknown. Sometimes the labour of children is drawn on because their family's presence on the farm is conditional upon their members acting as a labour pool. Sometimes they are obliged to work to pay off their deceased father's "debt". Sometimes they work to assist "casual" workers meet piece-work targets and sometimes they are hired as individual "free" labourers[17]. They are expected to work as long and as hard and often under even more disadvantageous terms than adult farm workers.

2.11 Commercial agriculture in Namibia uses prison labour. At the state-owned Hardap Experimental Farm, for example, an irrigation worker reported that part of his work was to supervise 19 prisoners. He wasn't paid for this "extra responsibility", although he had been promised R260 a month. "The work is very risky as I am held responsible if the 'bandiete' go on strike or escape. Last time one of them escaped they deducted R100 from my pay." Private farmers in the area are also known to use prison labour. Research has yet to reveal the extent of its use, but as a labour form it is quite compatible with the sector's colonial legacy of contract, cheap and rightless labour. Some farms are also reported to have their own prisons.

2.12 There is evidence of the emergence of a skill and authority hierarchy in Nambian commercial agriculture but it is largely unacknowledged. The backwardness of relations in the sector coupled with the extensively favourable terms under which the state has historically subsidised capitalisation has meant that farm workers are expected to do skilled work - including driving vehicles (tractors, lorries, pick-ups, graders), constructing dams, fences and houses or maintaining and repairing pumps and other engines[18] - without training, without financial reward, without promotion and without leverage (certified qualifications) in the job market.

2.13 Similarly, the sector relies extensively on farm workers to see to the daily management of the enterprises. Whilst it is safe to assume that all lower and middle management functions are carried out by black workers, the same is not the case for senior management. Whether higher level management is black or white

depends on whether or not the farm owner lives on or near the farm. The 1,100 farm businesses run by hired management in 1982, for example, were run by whites[19]. Only a fraction of senior management is likely to be black. On FNDC agricultural schemes, for example, only one black man is employed as a section manager on their farms[20] and some resident farm owners employ black workers for higher level management. However, managerial delegation is only beginning to be formalised and to date it has been realised without commensurate training and pay. To wit: "If there was a need for the hierarchy, there would have been a more marked differentiation.[21]"

3 Wages

3.1 It is difficult to establish a wage value for work in Namibian commercial agriculture. This is not only because of an absence of data on a national scale but also because wage levels are complicated by the forms the wage takes and the methods of payment. These three dimensions (forms, methods and levels) which establish the real wage value are further complicated by an absence of standardisation in the sector. The only "standard" that is set is the "standard of minimum"[22]so that the variation that exists centres around this minimum. What is described below is drawn from the data that is available.

Wage Forms

3.2 By wage forms is meant the material form in which the worker is paid. It is normally presumed that "wages" means cash in conditions of commercial production. This is often not the case in commercial agriculture and it is certainly not the case in Namibia. Wages are paid in cash and in kind. While cash payment is relatively unproblematic, the same is not true for payment in kind. There are problems both with defining the content of wages in kind and determining their value.

Defining Payment in Kind

3.3 At present there are two main items which are generally paid as the in-kind wage. The one is the right to run livestock. This seems to be a right inherited from an earlier period when farmers made little or no cash payment. Many farm workers report that they are allowed to keep livestock. In the National Survey, for example, 43% of farm worker households kept stock on the farm where they worked and 21% had livestock kept for them by people living in communal areas or elsewhere.

3.4 The right to keep stock, however, is not universal. Many workers have been forced to sell off their livestock and are no longer allowed to keep animals[23]. On some farms, whilst some workers are allowed to keep stock, others are not. In other instances workers are only allowed to keep some kinds of animals[24]. Moreover, when workers are allowed to keep animals, farmers put a ceiling on the number and stipulate what type of animals workers can keep. The limit on large stock units is set at around 5 - 8 animals, whereas the number of small stock allowed ranges more widely[25]. In the National Survey, the 12% of households who had cattle at the farm had 11 animals[26] on average, the 26% who had goats had an average of 26 animals, the 5% who had sheep had an average of 6 animals and the 29% who had horses and donkeys an average of 4 animals. Most workers have acquired their stock as part of their inheritance, as part of their dowry, or through outright purchase. Rarely are workers given stock as part of their bonus.

3.5 It appears that whilst some farm workers still retain the right to keep animals, they are increasingly forced to pay "grazing and water fees"[27]. **This alters the terms from one of payment to the worker to one of payment by worker.** Under these conditions, **the right to run stock ceases to be a payment in kind.**

3.6 **Rations are the other main kind of non-monetary payment** to farm workers. The amount and content of rations are determined in a completely arbitrary (and irrational) manner[28]. They neither take account of family size nor of the dietary needs of workers. Mealie meal, sugar and tobacco are standard. There is a general absence of fresh vegetables or fruit. Many workers don't get fresh milk. On one farm it was withdrawn because allegedly workers "spent more time worrying about getting milk than doing their work". Milk was only for the whites and their dogs. Meat rations often include a lot of fat and bone so that the quantity "given" is deceptive. Moreover, in the absence of variety the quantity and quality of these staples becomes even more important.

3.7 Where rations are given, some workers receive none. This includes wives and children of farm workers who do domestic or seasonal work "because their husbands/fathers get". Sometimes workers only get half rations because they are considered to be either "young and single" or "old". In general, **all workers reported that the rations they received were too little to keep themselves and their families for the month and that they spend most of their cash wage on food.**

3.8 These are the two main forms of payment in kind. What about housing, water and fuel? Increasingly, farmers include these items as part of their in-kind payment. This is highly problematic. In the first instance, many workers live in houses they have built themselves. Zinc shelters are found in every farming district in the country. It is only recently that farmers are beginning to construct housing for workers and it is still on a small scale. Farmers also rarely make special water provision for workers. Boreholes are sunk to water livestock and crops. Sometimes, workers have to fetch water from the tanks, sometimes it is piped to where they live. And most farm workers cut and collect their own firewood at no direct or indirect cost to the farmer[29].

3.9 However, the second and more important point that the draft Labour Code will make clear[30], is that **housing, clean water and access to sanitation cannot be considered a payment in kind where the worker is obliged by his employer (and by the nature of the work) to live on his employer's land or premises.** It is a necessary provision of the terms of employment. Ironically, this fact is clearly understood by employers when it comes to attracting white management. For them housing, water and electricity "are free".

3.10 Other items mentioned by farmers as part of the payment in kind they make to workers include clothing and transport to town. Both of these items are highly dubious "payments". Many workers report that they have to buy the farmer's second hand clothes and shoes and if they do get "clothing", they get one overall and even more infrequently, a pair of boots/shoes a year. On a company farm, for example, where management included R14/month for clothing in its in-kind break down, workers received one overall a year. If they left or were fired they had to return the overall to management[31]. Equally and despite farmers' claims to the contrary, farm workers' children are rarely transported to and from school and workers seldom get any special transport assistance - and then only in cases of extreme emergency and much dispute. Workers reported that usually they could only get a ride to town when transport was going anyway. Many workers are forced to travel by foot or to use their own transport. The main means of rural carriage for farm workers are donkey carts[32]. Some workers also have bicycles. In general, **neither clothing nor transport constitute a payment in kind of any significance.**

Calculating the Value of In-Kind Pay

3.11 Even more controversial than what is defined as payment in kind is the cash value attributed to this form of payment. On the one hand, farmers tend to itemise every single possible item that may be counted as an in-kind payment (whether it is one or not). On the other hand, they tend to assign retail trade prices to all items, whether they have purchased them or not. There is a difference between actually buying in goods (e.g. dry goods rations) or services and having them freely available on the farm. In other words, the value of a Kudu shot on a farm or milk from stock, for example, cannot be equated to the purchase price of game meat from a butcher or milk from a dairy. Moreover, even when farmers do buy rations in, they generally buy in bulk. The wholesale or actual price paid for the ration is therefore invariably not the same as the retail price used in their calculations.

3.12 Given the general unwillingness of organised agriculture to release data from its 1990 survey of wages, it is difficult to establish a general picture of the proportion of the overall wage that farmers attribute to payment in kind. From one survey of farmers in central Namibia, for example, non-cash payments represented 64% of the average wage[33]. This high proportion is probably quite general as it is in keeping with conditions where cash wages are very low and labour costs are tax deductible[34]. In other words, farmers are trying to make a double saving by limiting direct capital outlay (paying higher wages) and by boosting the amount they declare as labour expenses.

3.13 It is against this background that some sense can be made of the Nambian Agricultural Union's calculation that wages make up 20-27% of commercial farmers' total expenditure. In this regard, the FNDC[35] estimation of labour costs (excluding management) as a percentage of the total cost of its labour intensive agronomy projects ranges from 3,80% (Shitemo) to 5,7% (Shadigongoro). This is far more in keeping with the low wages and conditions of poverty which permeate the sector.

3.14 At present about 20-30% of commercial farmers pay in cash only. This trend, which is strongly advocated by the Nambian Agricultural Union[36], is slow and far from generalised. Whilst paying wages in cash is generally to be welcomed, the significance of this trend has to be evaluated against both the method of payment and the fact that it can and often does mean a reduction in wages. Moreover, in the absence of any standard practice amongst or control over employers in the sector it doesn't make much difference to the general well-being of

workers. On one farm in the Rehoboth district, where workers were earning R30, R60 and R70 a month, respectively, they weren't paid in the winter months "because they could get meat" i.e. they were permitted to kill game[37].

Methods of Payment

3.15 By methods of payment is meant the way the wage rate is determined, the intervals of pay, whether workers are paid directly or through intermediaries, and the disciplining of workers through wage manipulation. Each of these aspects is relevant to the total pay farm workers receive.

3.16 Very few farmers use any formalised procedure for determining wages. The FNDC parastatal, for example, uses the Peromnes Job Evaluation System which has a 19 scale ranking order. This is rare and is likely to be confined to state or company farms. Most farmers tend to set pay based on "the going rate" in their area. Some devise crude and arbitrarily determined hierarchies. Often, these are based more on the willingness of a person to do any job demanded of him under any condition than on his skill or competence. The absence of any formal system of setting wage rates also means that it is rare for pay rates to come under regular review. Many workers report that the money they get has been the same since they began working on a particular establishment - which sometimes means for years.

3.17 Full-time farm workers tend to be paid on a fixed rate basis. Many also get an annual bonus (a xmas box) usually at year end. Sometimes this is in cash but often it is in kind (food and old clothing). In the survey of central district farms, for example, 86% of farmers gave bonuses and these were equivalent to 13% of the average monthly cash wage[38]. Bonuses are also used as incentives to control poaching and predators. On one farm[39], for example, management said that workers who identified and reported on thieves were paid between R300 and R500 i.e. between two and five times their monthly cash wage. In other instances, whilst workers may be paid bonuses for killing predators they also face pay penalties if stock are attacked. Shepherds and postmen report working into the night to care for stock. In general, few farmers use incentives and a progressive wage scale to encourage productivity and to stimulate initiative.

3.18 Piece rates are particularly widespread in determining seasonal and casual workers' wages. Piece rates are set in two ways. Either a quota is fixed at a given rate, i.e. workers

have to complete a specified number of tasks in order to get a wage, or a value is given to each "item" produced i.e. every kilo, bag or bushel has a "price". The wages of sheep shearers and seasonal harvesters in Namibia are often determined by piece rates[40]. Piece rates generally work to the disadvantage of casual and seasonal workers because, amongst other things, workers have no security that they will get a specific amount of money at the end of their working period. This problem is aggravated by the fact that seasonal and casual work is usually intermittent and for short periods. Often basic quotas are set too high and frequently workers are not paid in full for the number of pieces they produce. The fact that seasonal harvesters are said to use children to assist them picking cotton or lifting ground nuts at the FNDC agronomy projects suggests that all these constraints may be at play there.

3.19 The trend to pay wages in cash has begun to alter the intervals at which workers are paid. Most farm workers are paid at month end. However, with cash only payments farmers are increasingly paying wages out every week or fortnight. This change reflects both the low level of and a possible cut[41] in farm worker wages which accompanies the shift to cash only payment. Farmers have adopted this solution as a measure to counter the pressure from workers for loans to see them through to the next pay day. As one explained, "by paying weekly they manage their money better with much less shortfall".

3.20 A further, related problem is how and even whether workers actually receive their cash. In the first instance, most workers are not paid their wage in a proper pay envelope (which stipulates the amount due plus any deductions and which should also contain a detailed breakdown of the deducted amounts). Secondly, as most farmers run farm shops from which workers buy their supply (whether they receive rations or not) and most (possibly all) farm workers are forced to live on credit, the actual money workers receive is invariably minus deductions. Workers often only begin the next working month with R15, R20 or R50 cash in hand. Moreover, they have no control over deductions, which may also include penalties. In some instances workers actually never even get to touch their pay. Thus, for example, "the money is a problem. You don't know how the money is used up, because we are only using the money for food. When we are paid the money is put into glass jars and is kept in his store and you only use the money while it is kept there. No one can take out his or her money from the shop. They don't want us to take money home. You see, since the money is our hard work we must be allowed to buy the things we want and to take the rest

home.[42]" In this way, farm workers' wages become intangible. They are made hypothetical and abstract rather than real and concrete.

3.21 Some workers are not actually paid money but "good fors", or self-made tokens which they can use instead of money at the farmer's shop. In the Keetmanshoop district research found that five farmers, for example, had clubbed together to run a shop and all of them paid workers in "good fors".

3.22 All payment schemes are coupled with a parallel system of penalties. Workers are frequently fined for a whole number of reasons which are arbitrarily determined by the employer. Farmers feel themselves to be morally and socially justified in applying wage sanctions to discipline and control workers on grounds of both class and colour. They believe they have the right and the duty to assert magisterial power over black people present (in whatever capacity) on their property.

3.23 Farmers sanction workers in relation to work performance. At FNDC projects, for example, if a worker is caught stealing s/he is summarily dismissed and if a worker is drunk s/he is sent home for the day and loses that day's pay. Stockmen and shepherds often lose pay because of fines. There are many examples. In one instance a small stock farmer carries out "spot checks" and if an animal is found outside the pen, the worker is fined R10 (9% of his monthly wage).

3.24 Farmers also withhold pay from workers to underline and reaffirm power relations on the farms. Nothing evokes disciplinary reaction amongst farmers more than absenteeism (very broadly defined). Workers' absence without the farmer's permission because of health, family or social obligations or the general lack of free time is invariably perceived by farmers as an act of defiance and a challenge to their authority. Not only are workers abused verbally and sometimes physically, but they are also often fined - i.e. they lose some of their pay.

Wage Levels

3.25 Given the difficulties of translating the value of payments in kind into a cash equivalent and the fact that many workers don't receive a non-cash wage (48% in the National Survey), wage levels will be discussed here in terms of cash wages only[43].

3.26 There is no data at present to establish a national average wage for the sector. The evidence available, however, does provide an indicator of both the level and the range of cash wages paid to farm workers.

3.27 There are a number of workers who receive no cash pay at all. Farm worker dependents (women and children) who live on the farms and who are obliged to work as and when the farmer needs them, prison labour which is the most open form of forced labour, relatives or neighbours "who work for food" and sometimes shelter[44], old age pensioners and "bushmen" are the predominant categories of farm workers who work for no money.

3.28 It appears that a number of farmers are assisting old people apply for state pensions. Given that the pension is paid by cheque, that many farm workers live in isolated places and therefore have to rely on their employer's postal address and that they are illiterate, the pension cheque often goes directly or indirectly to the employer. In some instances, farm workers reported that they stopped being paid when the farmer knew they were receiving a pension - they were just working for a place to stay. Sometimes, when the farmer received the money directly, he deducted rations and items bought on credit and paid the worker the difference.

3.29 The "common knowledge" that "bushmen" don't use money, means that they are often not paid. Farm worker, Mr !Narugue eloquently reveals the plight of workers without pay. "He is useless. He doesn't pay me. He is just wasting me, absolutely wasting me. He doesn't pay me. He gives me nothing. He just feeds me like his child. He doesn't give me anything so that I can give it to my child. I am just living like a bird."[45]

Full-time workers

3.30 According to the National Survey, the average wage of full-time farm workers was R131.66 a month. Only 14% earned R200 or more a month and 4% earned between R260 and R290. More than 1/3 of the sample (37%) of the sample earned R100 or less. Farmers in the central district survey conducted in 1990 reported paying an average cash wage of R156 a month, plus an annual cash bonus of R288. Random interviews tend to confirm the average levels and the range. Many workers said they earned R50, R60 or R80 a month.

3.31 FNDC figures (1990/1991) suggest that the rates of pay for full-time workers on their projects are significantly higher than in the rest of the sector. At the Kavango Cattle Ranch, for example, the lowest grade workers earned an average of R394/ month and workers wages ranged from an average of just below R400 to just below R700. At the Mangetti West cattle ranch most workers averaged between R394 and R476 a month, and average wages ranged from just below R400 to above R1100. (One leather worker was earning a monthly average of R1,129). At the agronomy projects, average wages earned by workers are R509 (Shitemo), R524 (Vungu-Vungu), R562 (Musese) and R622 (Shadigongoro) with all workers averaging R400 or more a month.[46]

Seasonal or "casual" workers

3.32 There is no data on seasonal or "casual" wage rates, aside from data provided for FNDC projects. These pay an average of R4.64 per man-day worked, which on a 28 day working month gives a pay of R130. It cannot be assumed, however, that workers work every day or every month of the year. At peak employment times the Musese project employs 80 people (Dec - March), the Shitemo project employs between 104 and 210 (Jan - August) and the Shadigongoro project 120 and 223 (Dec - March) and 134 and 207 (May - July). But employment levels drop to as low as 9 and 10 workers out of season. Moreover, it cannot be as assumed that the same people work every day for the whole season, as this depends on how they are recruited. And although these are an indicator of average wages for some seasonal workers, it would be inaccurate to generalise from them to the sector as a whole, given the significant difference of wage rates already observed for full-time employment.

Comparative Incomes

3.33 The National Survey found that the average monthly cash income (from all sources) for farm workers' households was R181.48 or 48% of that of the average household in the communal areas. 90% of farm worker household incomes ranged from R50 to R350 a month. In a survey of Katutura in 1988-9 [47] only 23% of African households had incomes of less than R400 a month. The median monthly household income was between R600 - R700. Moreover the National Survey also noted the narrow range of income sources in commercial agriculture, i.e. the albeit complete dependence of farm workers on cash wages. It is clear why one of the primary grievances farm workers have is over pay.

3.34 It has been argued by some that the average position of farm workers is not worse than the average position of most people in the country as most people are poor[48]. What the data on wages in the sector reveals is that farm workers, a significant proportion of people who are working in waged employment, are living in relative and absolute poverty. For many Namibian farm workers, survival and basic conditions of existence are as elusive as water in the desert. Before looking at the implications of these facts, it is necessary to briefly detail some of the conditions of work for farm labourers.

4 Conditions

4.1 Farm workers work long and unsociable hours. Many work seven days a week from sun up to after sun down. Sometimes they have a mid-day break, sometimes they don't. Rarely do they get annual leave, and for the few who do, it is only very recent. Nor are there any structured arrangements for sick leave or to attend to personal matters. Hence, workers have very little free time. Whilst considerable overtime is common paying overtime is exceptional. One farmer, for example, said that he didn't pay overtime, but gave workers more time off. The workers, however, reported that without exception they worked "the normal day" whether they had been working overtime or not.

4.2 Housing varies. Many workers have built their own houses from zinc sheeting. Some farmers have built housing for workers, with and without state assistance. Sometimes water is close by, sometimes it is not. Almost no housing for farm labourers have electricity, even when farms have their own generators. It is rare for workers to have any kind of ablution facilities. In general, there is an absence of adequate housing and elementary services.

4.3 Health care is often absent. Mobile clinics rarely visit most farms and workers are almost wholly dependent on the willingness of the farmer to take them to get medical attention. Farm workers report a general negligence on the part of employers which often has left them unattended for days and has resulted in both long term disability and death[49]!

4.4 "Ek will leer om te skryf om te weet". There is extensive illiteracy (47% of the National Survey, for example) and a general absence of adult education for farm workers. The very limited skills training facilities available are provided by the NAU which began "technical skills training for farmers and their employees" in 1984. In the period 1985-1990 some 1,758 people

have completed short courses in pump and engine maintenance, welding, personnel management etc. Presently, it has two mobile training units operating in the commercial and communal areas, but attendance is entirely dependent on the willingness of farmers to pay for the training.[50]

4.5 Farm workers are continuously ordered about and verbally abused. It is commonplace for workers to be shouted at and called "kaffir". It is also commonplace for farmers' to restrain and even punish initiative.

4.6 Historically, physical abuse was routine in commercial agriculture. Older people report being chained and beaten, having salt rubbed in their wounds and then being beaten again if they lost stock or committed other breaches of the Masters' and Servants' Act (repealed in 1977). Presently, there are still some farmers who physically assault or threaten workers. On one farm, for example, the farmer, his wife and their son walk around with pistols. They shoot into the air or at workers' feet to hurry them up or just to intimidate them. In another instance, a worker's leg was permanently injured after his employer struck him for not loading a vehicle fast enough in the rain.[51]

4.7 Farmers generally control the presence of "strangers" on the farms. On some farms, they do not even allow the children of farm workers to visit. In other instances, workers have to report visitors and how long they will stay. In one case, for example, visitors were only allowed to stay 5 minutes and their visits were monitored by the farm owner.

4.8 Few workers have written contracts. In the small survey of farmers in central Namibia, for example, only 31% had formal contractual arrangements with their workers. Most are employed by verbal agreement between themselves and their employers. The NAU reports that there is a slow trend towards formalising the terms of employment. This leads to many abuses, for instances, most workers are subjected to summary dismissal. Frequently, they are driven off the farm with their belongings and dumped at the side of the road.

4.9 Although the NAU is not opposed to farm worker organisation "in principle" (and it opposed the exclusion of domestic and farm workers from labour legislation) "we are not going to organise farm workers". In practice, most farmers obstruct organisation and restrict farm worker participation in the political arena. Trade union organisers have to overcome enormous obstacles just

to gain access to farm workers. Even in researching for this conference, field workers were prevented from interviewing workers and sometimes they were chased off the farms. In the new language of independence, one irate small-stock farm manager intervened in an interview with a farm worker in Mariental to say that we were "violating his rights as an individual and as a private employer" by interviewing a worker (not employed by him) without his permission! There is, as yet, no farm worker's union in Namibia.[52]

5 Implications

5.1 A land reform programme designed to tackle issues of development and growth in Namibia has to address some of the consequences of relations and conditions in present-day commercial agriculture. In the next section we will look at some key issues which need urgent attention.

5.2 Commercial agriculture employs a significant proportion (+1/5) of the formal sector workforce. A sizeable proportion of the population, therefore, depend directly on the sector for their livelihood. As relations in the sector are presently constructed, commercial agriculture fails to meet their basic needs. A reform which is built on the existing order will perpetuate and expand these conditions of gross poverty, exploitation and rightlessness.

5.3 Many farm workers have established lower order tenure rights through birth and/or long service. They are conscious of these rights and expect a land reform programme to codify and protect them. Most farm workers, however, are without any land and many of these seek some security on the land. In the words of a black manager on a southern sheep farm, "sometimes I feel as if it is my own farm, but I know better. If only I could be given a place to live my life and stop being dependent on someone else's goodwill".

5.4 The sector uses racial, ethnic and gender inequalities to lower wages and depress the terms of employment. Child and prison labour (both forms of forced labour which violate basic human rights) act to force these down even further making work on the farms highly undesirable and "akin to slavery".

5.5 These labour forms also inhibit the emergence of a properly trained and adequately rewarded skill and authority hierarchy which is essential for the development of more sustainable and evenly developed commercial farming.

5.6 Despite the fact that people are working, they are starving. Many live in absolute poverty and compared to any other stratum in Namibian society, farm workers are relatively worse off.

5.7 **The shift to cash wages has seen a significant decline in payment in kind.** Many farm workers may no longer keep livestock and many no longer receive rations. Whilst many prefer wages in lieu of rations, if this in fact takes place, losing rights to run livestock is a major source of grievance for workers. It is a visible measure of their further impoverishment and directly undermines their capacity to continue culturally established practices (e.g. slaughtering to celebrate the birth of a child). In other words, **it further erodes their physical well being and their sense of worth.**

5.8 In the absence of any realistic alternatives to supplement their incomes, **the cash wage received becomes their total source** of sustenance. Rarely has this been raised to meet basic needs. Thus, for many farm workers, the shift to cash means they live under as harsh if not worse constraints[53].

5.9 **Indebtedness is endemic.** Invariably, workers are indebted to their employers since they are often obliged by distance and/or direct compulsion to buy at the farmer's shop. Although farmers are generally adamant that these are non-profit making, many workers report that prices are higher at their employers' than at those in the nearest towns. Thus, **petty exploitation goes hand in hand with debt bondage.** Their pay "just ends in the air".

5.10 **Conditions of work leave farm workers with little free time. They are also extremely isolated.** This is not only a matter of physical distance but also arises from an absence (or generally low level) of education, extremely limited resources (which means that many don't have radios), and perhaps most important of all, the feudal-like authority vested in the farm owning establishment. Employers believe they can intrude into and exercise control over every aspect of farm workers' lives. This is contrary to the Namibian Constitution and is a violation of their fundamental human rights[54].

5.11 **Pay and conditions in Namibian commercial agriculture also destabilise the labour force** as farm workers tirelessly try to improve their lot by moving from farm to farm. Most employers, however, are reluctant to acknowledge that they even have a high labour turnover, let alone recognise the causes which force workers to leave.[55]

5.12 In general, relations in commercial agriculture generate extensive rightlessness and insecurity.

5.13 There is a deep sense of grievance, considerable frustration and an overwhelming sense of powerlessness amongst farm workers. Farmers are indifferent to workers' complaints and intolerant of their protest. So "if you are being exploited" either "you just keep your mouth shut because you don't have any other choice, even if your heart is painful" or "you walk", often forfeiting pay and property and without redress for injustice done.

5.14 The overriding concern of farm workers is that they be assured basic rights and security. In the absence of a living wage, "lower order" tenure rights (rights of generational occupation of the land where they live and work), and the right to run livestock become essential stepping stones towards their greater aspiration of a decent standard of living and a secure place.

5.15 If these conditions (uniform poverty, arbitrary power and general rightlessness) are what the free market dictates, as some have argued, then the state needs to intervene to protect and defend farm labour so that it can develop the necessary countervailing strength to bring about a more equitable and just order in the sector. This requires creating a legal framework to establish basic conditions of employment (the Labour Code) and perhaps more significantly, providing mechanisms to monitor and ensure that these rights are upheld. This is particularly important given the poor state and difficult conditions of trade union organisation on the farms. The state has several institutions in place which can be directed to addressing these problems. In particular the Ministry of Labour and Manpower Development has begun to establish labour relations offices where officers are trained to advise workers and employers of the conditions of the Labour code, handle complaints and carry out inspections at the work place. At least in the initial period, however, this ministry is not likely to have sufficient personnel or resources to systematically attend to farm workers. It is conceivable that extension and other field officers of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development could assist in the monitoring of labour conditions on the farms. Both the Directorate of Rural Development and the Directorate of Agricultural Training would also need to look at farm workers' needs and how they could be integrated into their spheres of operation. Where state loans or drought relief are involved, for example, a clause on ensuring basic conditions and fair labour practice and could be added to the conditionality of loans

or assistance to farmers. In addition, the Ministries of Health and Education have to extend the reach of their programmes to farm workers.

5.16 National instruments need to be complemented by the development of strong local government structures which are representative and accountable. Their effective functioning is vital if any change is going to meaningfully affect the position and condition of farm workers.

NOTES:

1. This paper does not deal with the position of domestic workers in commercial agriculture. Although their terms of employment are intimately linked to those of farm workers, since they are invariably their wives and daughters, there is almost no data available at present to deal with the issue. In the National Survey, for instance, many of the people described as "second earners" were women in domestic employment. When they were paid, their wages ranged from between R20 and R110 a month. Workers reported having to work very long hours, without overtime, 7 days a week.

1. The reasons for these difficulties are several. The first is the general absence of census data. Notwithstanding the problem that farmers complete the detail of surveys' the last agricultural census was conducted in 1976. In 1989/1990 affiliates of the Namibian Agricultural Union (NAU) conducted wage surveys amongst their members to establish average wage levels. It seems that the results are so bad that they have been withheld for fear of a public outcry.

2. ILO (1991:23) Namibia: report of the ILO employment advisory and training policy mission ILO Geneva. This estimate is based on a 1988 Manpower Survey. The ILO report (28) observes that " it is likely that the figures for workers in commercial agriculture were unreliable on account of the large proportion of employers (about 30%) in this sector who were not actually interviewed for the 1984 and 1988 survey but (were) enumerated on the basis of estimates considered to be a "close approximation" of the real situation."

3. Interview with Mr A J Mouton, President NAU 20.4.1991

4. Interview with Mr Sylvester Gawaseb (National Organiser) and Mr Gabriel Nunyango (Coordinator) of the NUNW (National Union of Namibian Workers) 22.5.1991 and ibid.

5. It is worth quoting in full from N E Wiehahn (Chairman) (1989) Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Labour Matters in Namibia. Para:5.2.1.5. reads: "It is important to note that unemployment in Namibia is essentially of a structural nature, i.e. the structure of the economic activity and the increase in such activity, on the one hand, and the demand for labour, on the other, are irreconcilable, irrespective of the state of the economy. Typically first world capital intensive economic development cannot be reconciled with a rapidly growing workforce of unskilled workers."

6. Interview (25.5.1990)

7. Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (1991:8) "The Current Land Tenure System in the Commercial Districts of Namibia." Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development Windhoek. The number of farms units (6,123) is greater than the number of what has been termed "farm businesses" (4,205) as 30,9% of farmers own 2 or more farms (p23).

8. Interview

9. A further 51% were born in the communal areas, which suggests how important commercial sector is in the transition from town to countryside.

10. White farmers and management, however, think ethnicity is important. Some say that if they employ people from only one ethnic group, they have more control and "less trouble", whilst others hold that they like to "mix" their workers to prevent worker solidarity.

11. In the absence of any satisfactory alternative , the term "bushmen" is used in inverted commas to draw attention to the inappropriateness of this notion which has its origins in colonial conquest and racial oppression.

12. Interview with Mr Richard Pakleppa (22.5.1991)

13. National Survey of Socio-economic Conditions and Attitudes to the Land Question in Namibia (1991) Section "Farm Workers: socio-economic conditions." NEPRU (Subsequently referred to as National Survey)

14. Moorsom R (1982:33) Agriculture: transforming a wasted land IDAF London

15. Chinamana F., Field trip, May 1991.

16. Interview with Mr A J Mouton (20.4.1991)

17. Interview with farm worker at Erindi, Omaruru (28.5.1991), interview with farm worker, Mariental (22.5.1991), interview with G C van Dyk, FNDC (29.5.1991) and data gathered from the National Survey. The latter did not specifically ask if children worked on the farms, but data on child labour was gleaned indirectly from information on household income.

18. National Survey (op.cit)

19. Adams F.et al., (op cit:70). This figure does not necessarily reflect the level of owner absenteeism. The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development paper (op.cit. 30) reports that in 1991 just under 20% of individual owners did not live on their farms/businesses. Of these, only 28,5% stayed in towns in the district of their farm. The rest lived in another district (396 or 49%) or overseas (251 or 31%). The 55 company farms are also most likely to be run by white management. However all part-time/ absentee farmers do not necessarily employ managers. It seems probably that the proximity of their domicile to the farm and the size of the farming establishment are determining factors. This is a matter which needs further research.

20. Interview with Mr G C Van Dyk, First National Development Corporation Ltd. (29.5.1991). He reports that the man has been in this position for the past five years and that he comes from a "respected family". The FNDC runs an in-house formalised course for middle management which is mostly, but not exclusively black.

21. Interview with Mr A J Mouton (op.cit)

22. The concept of a "standard of minimum" should not be confused with minimum standards or the notion of a poverty datum line (PDL). Farmers are simply concerned to keep pay as low as it is possible to keep the worker working.

23. Thus, for example, an old man who had seen the farm owners' family through generations on the farm where he worked, was forced to sell all his cattle and was presently under pressure to sell off his goats. Why, he asks, should he not have milk for his coffee or slaughter a goat to celebrate the birth of his grandchild? (Interview with Mr Richard Pakleppa, 22.5.1991).

24. For example, in an interview with Mr Simon Skrywer, farm worker in Hochland (February, 1991) researchers were told that"We are forced to auction our goats, and some of us refused, but others didn't. That was ordered by the owner of the farm. We were told to buy cattle instead. (We) were really against that and decided to look for other places for my small stock." Asked why he couldn't buy cattle if the farmer allowed workers to do so, he replied : "with what money can we buy cattle, because even the workers whose goats were auctioned didn't get their money back. Only some got money and others are still waiting."

25. For example, at a farm in Omaruru district, the manager said workers could keep 5 large stock units (LSU) (cattle, donkey and horses) and about 50 small stock units (SMU) (goats and sheep). On an Otjimbuka farm the ceiling for LSUs was 8. (Interviews)

26. This average seems high and may be upwardly distorted given the small size of the sample who had cattle on the farms.

27. One farm worker reported having to pay R19 for grazing for his horse. On another farm workers' are given a heifer after 5 years service, but they have to pay for its up keep. A farmer said that he charged workers "half the market rate" for grazing, lick and water supply. "I shouldn't do this, because its patronising. I should charge them in full. But I do." (Interviews)

28. At a large company farm, for example, the standard ration was made up of 14 items including mealie meal (3 buckets), flour (1 bucket), sugar (2kg), 2 flat tins of sardines, tea (1pkt), coffee (1 small tin), 250g fat, Cremora (1 pkt), meat (approx. 16kg), a packet of matches, tobacco (about 25g), body soap (1 bar) and washing powder (1 small packet). A farm worker in the Rehoboth district reported that he only got ten "blikkies" (jam tins) of mealie meal a month. (Interviews) A Vital Household Product Distributors advert in The Times (29.5.1991) advertised a "Farmers - Labour Hamper" for R25. (See Appendix 1.)

29. On the contrary fuel collection can be interpreted as a dual saving for farmers, firstly in that they do not have to make any capital outlay for energy provision and secondly, because it can partially controls bush encroachment.

30. ILO (1991: 36, para 58) Technical Memorandum Submitted to the Government of the Republic of Nambia to advise on a draft labour code Geneva

31. Interview. On the day that their farm was visited by the researchers, workers had been instructed to wash their overalls. Some were in such a bad condition that they were issued with new ones which they were instructed to return at the end of the visit on penalty of not getting an overall as part of their next Xmas package.

32. It is unclear whether it is possible to assume that the 29% of farm workers found by the National Survey to have donkeys and horses all had donkey carts as well.

33. Interview

34. NEPRU Briefing Paper No.5 (1991:??)

35. Information provided by Mr G C Van Dyk, General Manager, First National Development Corporation.29.5.1991

36. The reason they give for this is that non-cash payments are patronising. Notwithstanding that some farmers are trying to break from the paternalist mould of colonial relations, the main pressures to shift to cash only payment are the rationalisation and cost saving effects it carries.

37. Interview (27.5.1991)

38. Interview

39. Interview with Mr H Kriel, Manager, Erindi.

40. The FNDC cotton project, for example, also sets an additional target bonus (R50/40/30/20/20) which is paid to the 5 most productive cotton pickers at the end of the season.

41. One worker observed, "we don't get food rations any more, since the fortnight system was introduced. When we were working for a month we did get rations and could actually save money. Although we had some debts we got some money back at the end of the month." (Interview)

42. Interview with Mr Uirab, Hochland.

43. This is not to suggest that non-cash payments are unimportant to farm worker households. On the contrary, they contribute significantly to household living levels in conditions of generalised (and often absolute) poverty.

44. In Corridor 18, for example, a farmer reported:"I have some who stays here that you can say he is my employee, a small little boy. All those people you see around here are just people I call to help me and we eat together and then they go. If I need someone to go and get cattle I pay him for the trip. There are no employees here. I only stay with my wife and children, because we don[t have money for employees. We want people to work for us but we don't have money to pay them. Where will we get the money from?" (Interview)

45. Interview with Mr !Narugue, Aminius (February, 1991).

46. Interview and documentation.

47. Pendleton W and Du Bois B., (1990:38, Table 5) Health and Daily Living Survey of Windhoek, Namibia (1988-1989 NISER Windhoek

48. For example, Mr Paul Smit, Chairman, Agricultural Employer's Association. (Interview)

49. Interviews

50. NAU paper "Production Training in the Developing Areas" (14.06.1990) and Interview with Mr Mouton. The NAU reports that its courses are heavily over-subscribed and they are not able to meet demand.

51. Interviews

52. Interview, Mariental Sheep Show (22.5.1991)

53. A farm worker employed in Otjipewa expresses his plight thus: "With this R40,00 I buy sugar, tobacco and soap. This means with this R40,00 there is nothing else to buy except the three I have mentioned. I can't buy shoes, trousers and a shirt. So to me this money has got no use."

54. This is most immediately evident in their insistence on being called "baas" not "mister". As an old farm worker cynically observed "if you call him "mister" he says you're a Russian".

55. Whilst most employers attribute the continual changing of jobs to the alleged racial or ethnic attributes of farm workers, if they cared to listen to the workers, they would soon understand why they frequently change jobs. To wit: "This R50 can't help me at all. That's why we always jump from place to place looking for better paying jobs." And "While I was working with cattle, I was told to carry a bag full of salt. Then I asked myself, while there are machines that can do that, am I going to carry it myself? That is not possible. So I decided to leave. That white man, my employer, told me that I must fuck off from his place and that he will not give me the money that he owes me, i.e. the money I'd saved as well as the my pay for the month." (Interviews)