



***Family Digest 8***  
***10<sup>th</sup> September 2015***

**Family Digest: Women, Families and Land**

Each August we remember the 1956 March of the women of South Africa in defiance of the proposed extension of the pass laws to women. While the 1913 Land Act and the migrant labour system had already done much to erode traditional family life, the introduction of the pass laws further regulated the movement of 'non-whites', and criminalized their presence in urban areas without the necessary documentation. The further extension of pass laws to women made it almost impossible for families to live together; those without permission to live in urban areas – mostly women and children – were confined to the 'homelands' and bantustans while their husbands and fathers worked on the mines or in factories far away. The apartheid regime decided that those remaining in the 'homelands' would live off the produce of subsistence farming, which would be augmented by money sent home by miners, domestic workers, manual labourers and gardeners. The elderly, children and women who did not have a pass allowing them to work in urban areas were responsible for farming, but the paucity of arable land compromised successful agriculture.

The struggle of women to access sufficient land to farm in order to provide food for their families and communities in rural areas has continued in post-apartheid South Africa. The geographical and spatial relationship of families and communities to land has been largely untransformed. Given high levels of poverty, particularly in the rural areas, this is cause for serious concern. The rural poor may now move freely to urban areas in hope of employment, but job opportunities are few. Investment in agricultural development would do much to address food insecurity, and to reverse the cycle of poverty.

Below please find links to further information regarding women, families and land.

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<http://www.southafrica.info/about/social/land-250213b.htm#.VSupUZMW76g>

[http://agi.ac.za/sites/agi.ac.za/files/fa\\_12\\_entire\\_journal.pdf](http://agi.ac.za/sites/agi.ac.za/files/fa_12_entire_journal.pdf)

<http://www.thoughtleader.co.za/christivanderwesthuizen/2013/04/09/you-have-no-right-to-own-land-if-youre-black-and-rural/>

<http://www.icrw.org/files/publications/Gender-Land-Asset-Survey-South-Africa.pdf>

<http://www.enca.com/south-africa/state-land-reform-sa-episode-2>

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/womens-rights-in-africa-land-reform-gender-equality-and-social-equity/5373866>

<http://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/five-pillars-guide-new-land-tenure-system>

[http://za.boell.org/sites/default/files/wlc\\_eye\\_on\\_the\\_money\\_2014.pdf](http://za.boell.org/sites/default/files/wlc_eye_on_the_money_2014.pdf)

<http://ijr.org.za/publications/pb16.php>

<http://www.censorbugbear.org/farmitracker/reports/view/3229>

[http://www.farmingportal.co.za/index.php?option=com\\_k2&view=item&id=2336:helping-women-become-farmers-in-south-africa&Itemid=5](http://www.farmingportal.co.za/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=2336:helping-women-become-farmers-in-south-africa&Itemid=5)

[http://www.grain.org/bulletin\\_board/entries/5179-south-africa-land-for-food-one-woman-one-hectare-rural-women-s-assembly-march-in-cape-town-on-21-march](http://www.grain.org/bulletin_board/entries/5179-south-africa-land-for-food-one-woman-one-hectare-rural-women-s-assembly-march-in-cape-town-on-21-march)

<http://tinyurl.com/ohbvbjw>