

RIDING THE TIGER:
LESOTHO MINERS AND
PERMANENT RESIDENCE
IN SOUTH AFRICA

SECHABA CONSULTANTS

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SOUTHERN AFRICAN MIGRATION PROJECT
1997

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The dependence of Lesotho on migratory labour to the South African mines is deeply entrenched. Basotho men have been working on the South African mines since the mid- nineteenth century. Currently, around 100, 000 Basotho men are migrants in the gold, platinum and coal mines. In 1994 these workers remitted R329 million to the country (over 75 per of total earnings). About 40% of the male Basotho labour force are employed in South Africa, and remittances account for 40–50% of Gross National Product. Many Basotho households are dependent on the mine wages are generally worse off than those that do.

The end of apartheid has opened up new opportunities and challenges for the people of Lesotho. Access to South Africa, for both men and women, has become much easier and the incentives to cross the border are much increased. Basotho are buying land in the Free State, moving freely back and forth to do business, attending school and seeking medical care. At the same time, the mine workforce has been downsizing since the peak employment years of the 1980s. New workseekers can no longer automatically anticipate a mine job. Existing opportunities for young men. A systematic examination of these changes in migrant households was one of the objectives of the current study.

In 1994, the initial fear of many Basotho was that the new South African government would expel Basotho from the mines to create jobs for South African citizens. This has not happened. On the contrary, the Mandela government, at the instigation of the National Union of Mineworkers, has taken steps to try and humanise an inhumane and unjust labour system. One of these measures was an offer of permanent residence to miners who had worked on contract on the mines for 10 years or more. A large proportion of the current generation of Basotho mineworkers started work in the 1970s and 1980s and were immediately eligible for permanent residence. There were serious bureaucratic problems in the implementation of the amnesty and the NUM continues to push to have amnesty reopened and extended to miners with 5 years service.

The “miners’ amnesty”, as it is known, caused consternation in Lesotho and in certain circles in South Africa. Some in Lesotho feared that miners would now relocate to South Africa and abandon their own country and those who were still living there. The loss of remittances would be catastrophic economically. Within South Africa, many feared that miners would relocate with their families putting further strain on the country’s overburdened health, education and social welfare systems.

The present study set out to examine how Basotho miners and their spouses were reacting to the amnesty; what did they understand it to be? Would they take advantage of it and why? Did they really intend to abandon the country in favour of South Africa? And what did they think of the system which forced them to defer large proportion of their earnings home?

In this study conducted by Sechaba Consultants for the Southern African Migration Project, a total of 493 miners and 127 wives were interviewed to determine their socio-economic and demographic experience, migrant behaviour, work experience and attitudes towards possible permanent residence in South Africa. The interviews were conducted in Maseru, Mafekeng and Hlotse in Lesotho, and in Welkom in South Africa. Some wives were interviewed in rural and peri-urban areas in the Lesotho lowlands. Unstructured interviews were also conducted with miners in Welkom to determine their general attitudes to migrancy, to Lesotho and to South Africa.

The major findings of the survey are:

- In general, miners and their families are better off than typical families but face a very uncertain future should the miners lose their jobs or should they cut off their relations with home. Mean monthly income per mine household member is M165 (R165). the average number of people totally supported by each miner is very high, at 6.9. Only 22% of households report other sources of income to supplement miners' remittances.
- The highest proportion work of interviewees work on Anglo American mine (62%), in underground jobs (90%) and in supervisory (40%) or skilled technical (34%) positions. Almost 50% of Basotho miners work in the neighbouring Free State mines. Most have worked on the mines for many years (average o 15.6). Some 90% have served for 5 years or more. This pattern of long and continuous service is very different from the 1970s. Most Basotho miners are very experienced and skilled.
- With fewer restrictions on movement, miners visit Lesotho far more often. They used to go home only once a year. Now 60% of men go home once a month. Spouses and families also visit the mines more often. Some 55% of spouses have visited the mines. Some have spent more than a year there with a maximum stay of 2 years.
- Basotho miners remitted R162 million in compulsory deferred pay and a further R168 million voluntarily in 1994. Miners are not generally in favour op compulsory deferred pay, while their spouses favour the system. Both agree that they are deprived of

interest. Men would like to see the system become optional. Women are concerned that if this were to happen, they would benefit much less from remittances.

- A total of 52% of miners believe they are eligible for permanent residence in South Africa although only 23% of the sample have applied or been granted status. In Total, 33,630 Basotho miners applied for permanent residence (or a little under a third of the total workforce).
- Our survey shows that only 6% of miners seek to become South African citizens and leave home for good. A further 4% wish to hold dual citizenship and 9% would take up permanent residence in South Africa without becoming South African citizens. Thus, only 19% of miners wish to live in South Africa permanently but most of those would retain strong ties with Lesotho. The remaining 81% wish to maintain their status as residents of Lesotho and do not wish to move permanently to South Africa.
- Basotho miners and wives hold generally negative opinions about life in South Africa compared with Lesotho although some express concern that Lesotho's government is uncaring, incompetent and corrupt. There is an undercurrent of fear of political instability and violence in South Africa. Even those who take permanent residence will probably eventually return home. As one pointed out “clouded promises about permanent residence and benefits is a ride on a tiger and those who take the ride will sooner or later change their minds.”

The principal policy implications of this study are:

- Only a relatively small proportion of miners plan to take up permanent residence in South Africa and the majority of those would not sever ties with Lesotho. There would certainly be a loss of income and skills to Lesotho, but it would not be as significant as some have feared.
- Miners need better information about the legal requirements for permanent residence or their rights as miners. A number of miners, and even more wives, do not understand permanent residence and citizenship is not clearly understood.
- The pension rights for those who do not take up permanent residence must be clarified. There is something of a contradiction between the small number who would take up permanent residence and the broad desire for a pension after completion of mine service. The difference between state and mine pensions needs to be made clear.
- There are conflicting interests and opinions around compulsory deferred pay with spouses in favour and miners against. The

implication of this study is that even if it were abolished miners would continue to remit large sums home voluntarily. If it were made optional, as the majority of men desire, wives would be given greater access to pay deferred through other channels.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Lesotho's dependence on migratory labour has been a basic fact of life since the opening of the diamond and gold mines in the 19th century. As the World Bank points out: "Most important is Lesotho's export of human capital to South Africa, hence, its reputation as a labour pool for South Africa's mines. The 1986 census found that nearly half of Lesotho's adult male workers were employed in South Africa. In the 1980s, remittances from Basotho labourers working in South Africa accounted for about half of the country's gross national product (GNP), and equalled 100% of its gross domestic product (GDP). Today, about 40% of the Basotho male labour force is employed in South Africa, and remittances account for a third of GNP."¹

Our current estimates of the mine labour force in South Africa are based on interviews with officials at TEBA (which hires men for gold and platinum mines), E R Ramsden Bleskop (which hires workers for platinum and coal mines, and also hires shaft sinkers for all mines), Anglo-Colliery Recruiting Organisation (which hires men primarily for collieries, but also for diamond mines, and for specialised tasks in all mines), and Ribaneng Recruiting Agency (which hires shaft sinkers as well as workers in the coal mines). The number of recruits for 1996 is a projection to the end of the year, based on the numbers reported at the time of the survey. For the four most recent years, the numbers of Basotho men working at all the mines served by these four companies are as follows: 102 376 in 1993, 102 479 in 1994, 100 840 in 1995 and 96 618 in 1996. There is a slight but steady decline in the numbers, a trend which has continued since the peak years of the mid-1980s. Mhlanga reports slightly higher figures than our own figures, giving the 1993 and 1994 totals of men employed in the South African mines as 116 100 and 111 000 respectively, but the trend is the same.²

The problem of Lesotho's dependence on its workers in South Africa is made more serious by two "amnesty" offers from the South Africans. This means obtaining the right of permanent residence after having lived and worked in the country for a certain minimum period. The first offer, made from November 1995 to March 1996, was confined to miners who had worked for at least 10 years. The second offer of permanent residence, made in June 1996 and later extended to the end of November 1996, was for any SADC citizen who had worked for at least five years in South Africa. As of November 1996, 21 000 Lesotho citizens had been granted permanent residence and another 13 000 applications were being processed.

This report is based on research conducted from late August 1996 to early October 1996 among mineworkers and their wives. The purpose of the research is to assess the numbers of miners and families who may wish to take up the offer of permanent residence, and to assess the potential impact on Lesotho. Throughout the report reference will be made both to the survey and to relevant evidence obtained from other sources.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire was developed in collaboration with researchers in Mozambique and Canada for use with the miners and their wives. The questionnaires were administered at TEBA offices in Maseru, Mafeteng, Hlotse and Welkom. The first three are major district towns in Lesotho and the fourth is a mine centre in South Africa's Free State Province.

The enumerators interviewed miners chosen at random from those present at TEBA offices during the period 31 August 1996 to 2 October 1996. For two reasons it was not possible, or even necessary, to select persons in a systematically random way. First, people came to TEBA offices without any predetermined plan, thus making the population already well mixed. Second, people visiting TEBA offices wanted to finish their business as fast as possible, so that no one could be asked to wait until their turn came to be interviewed. Rather the enumerators simply took one person, interviewed him or her, and upon completion of the interview took the next person available.

Enumerators went out to rural and peri-urban villages in Lesotho's western lowlands to interview wives of migrants, who were also selected on a haphazard, first-come first-interviewed basis. Within the time available it would not have been possible to find them in a strictly random way. Moreover, we did not feel that the availability or non-availability of a miner's wife at the time of the interview would have biased the results in any significant way.

The original plan was to interview 500 miners and 125 miners' wives. In the end the numbers were 492 miners and 127 wives. The plan was to have equal numbers in each of four TEBA centres. For reasons of office administration, it proved much easier to obtain miners in Maseru and Hlotse than the other two centres, so that the final sample consisted of 259 miners in Maseru, 146 in Hlotse, 30 in Mafeteng and 57 in Welkom. Some of the wives were found in the Maseru TEBA office, but others were interviewed in villages near Maseru when it proved difficult to interview enough wives at the TEBA office.

When an interview was completed, it was coded and the data entered on computer, using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Data

Entry package. The data was cleaned and then analysed, also using SPSS. All tables and charts in this report have been produced in this way.

2. BASOTHO MINERS: A MATERIAL PROFILE

This section provides a social and economic profile of the sample of miners interviewed for this study. We indicate where these findings differ from or confirm those of other recent studies. Detailed statistics can be found in the tables in the Appendix.

2.1 PLACE OF RESIDENCE OF MINERS

Miners in the sample were mostly from the districts where they were interviewed. This probably does not introduce a significant distortion in the sample, because attitudes toward migrancy and residence are very little influenced by the miner's home district, as will be shown later in this report. Table A1 compares the percentage of miners in the sample from each of the ecological zones with the 1996 projected population based on the 1986 census. There is rough agreement between the 1993 poverty study and the present study that the great majority of miners come from the lowlands and the foothills instead of the mountains/Senqu Valley or the urban areas.³ This preponderance of the lowlands/foothills goes beyond the basic population split, for adult men from the lowlands/foothills area are more likely to be miners than those from the mountains and Senqu Valley and the urban areas. This confirms the general experience that migrants tend to move down from the remote areas to be closer to their workplace. As a corollary, since there is more paid employment in the urban areas than in the rural areas, the percentage of miners from urban areas is lower than the percentage of the general population in the cities.

2.2 HOUSEHOLD DEMOGRAPHY AND ASSETS

Table A2 lists basic facts about the household members in the sample. Miners were asked how many persons were either totally or partly dependent on them, whether in the household or not. The number of persons totally dependent on the miners is very high, with a mean of 6.9 persons. Only a small proportion of the households had independent incomes that they were willing to report. Moreover, most miners supported other persons outside the household. The maximum reported was 11 persons outside the immediate household, the minimum was 0 and the mean was 2.1 persons.

As the population of Lesotho grows and the number of mine jobs decreases, the level of dependence on mineworkers will increase. Cobbe points out that: “The number of people in Lesotho per migrant worker has ... grown from a low of fewer than 10 in 1977 to over 16 in 1992.”⁴ As recently as 1991, the number of people supported by each miner was only 5, as pointed out by Setsabi, Lesoana and Molefi: “On the average a Mosotho miner supports himself and 5 dependents. Thus, 14 202 men losing their jobs actually affects more than 85 000 Basotho people.”⁵ Our estimate of 6.9 persons dependent on each miner makes the situation even worse.

One reason why miners might wish to remain in Lesotho is that they have assets in Lesotho which they would not wish to leave behind. The level of possession of these assets is much higher in the urban and nearby areas than in the mountains and Senqu Valley. Tables A3-A6 provide details of various household assets.

Clearly the people in the mountains/Senqu Valley have poorer water sources than those in the rest of the country, with the urban areas and the lowlands/foothills having the best water sources. In the case of sanitation also, the urban and lowland/foothill areas are better off than the more remote areas, with the mountains/Senqu Valley having the poorest sanitation facilities. The material indices in Table A5 confirm that the mountains/Senqu Valley is the poorest area in the country.

Livestock ownership by miners is clearly much higher in the mountains/Senqu Valley than in the remaining areas. However, the number of bags of cereals harvested in 1996 is lower in the mountains/Senqu Valley than in the lowlands and foothills. Naturally the production of cereals in the urban areas is quite low. On the other hand, the urban areas have slightly more garden crops planted during the present year.

It has often been stated that miners invest in livestock as a kind of savings bank. The mean number of animals reported by miners in this survey is overall about 50% higher than the means reported by the 1993 poverty study for all households. This difference might be due to wealth rather than to a conscious choice by miners to purchase livestock. However, the data shows the opposite. Households in the 1993 poverty study with a monthly income of at least M50 overall have slightly fewer smallstock and equines than the overall mean for all households, and only slightly more cattle (1 Maloti = R1.00). A further check on these statistics is found in the Central Bank survey of miners conducted between April 1992 and March 1993. The data they report corresponds very closely to our data.⁶

An additional confirmation of the desire of miners for livestock rather than other possessions concerns housing. The mean number of rooms in the household for the miners in the present survey is about 20% higher

than for the 1993 poverty survey. On the other hand, the mean number of rooms for households with a monthly income of at least M50 per member in the poverty study is almost exactly the same as that for the miners in the present survey. In other words, the miners follow the pattern of their income group in providing more space for their family, but buy more animals than other families who belong to their income group.

2.3 HOUSEHOLD FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The households of miners surveyed are in general not poor (Tables A6-A8). They have resources with which they can survive in times of need, they have a substantial investment in housing, their fixed assets are not insignificant and they have livestock which could be sold in an emergency. In addition, they have household incomes per member that are far above the average in Lesotho. The figure they themselves quote has a mean of M127 per month. Moreover, if we adjust that figure upward by the 30% suggested by World Bank consultants (an adjustment based on expenditures in excess of reported income, with which we concur), this gives a mean monthly income per member of M165.⁷ It is not enough for a lavish lifestyle, but it is enough to allow children to attend school and family members to receive medical care. In short, there is much to tie them to their homes in Lesotho.

One significant fact is that only 22% of the households report some source of income other than the miner's remittances, and only 10.9% report an income greater than M200 per month from other sources. The miners' households may be living reasonably well, by comparison with other Basotho families, but they depend greatly on the miners keeping their jobs. It is clear from other evidence that these jobs are indeed insecure, and there is no guarantee from one year to the next that the miner will be re-employed. The World Bank makes the lack of other formal sector employment very clear: "In 1993, opportunities for formal employment fell far short of need ... Altogether only 28% of the workforce, or an estimated 225,000 people held formal wage jobs."⁸ Overall they estimate that "for the population as a whole, an estimated 25 to 30% of the workforce is unemployed."⁹ The bank report goes on to point out that "remittances from migrant workers fell 17.2% in real terms between 1987 and 1992, sharply reducing national income".¹⁰ The situation is no better in the informal sector, casual labour or agriculture. Sechaba Consultants state that "only about 22 800 households in the informal sector have income of at least M50 per month per member, leaving the remaining 169 200 with very minimal income. Similarly, we estimate that only 6 100 of those in casual labour (7.8% of the total)

have a living family wage. Finally, we estimate that a very small number, perhaps less than 2 000, receive an income which can support a family from agriculture. Almost all of those who depend on agriculture alone are far below the economic cut-off point for full employment.”¹¹ The figure of M50 per month as a minimal income was derived by the authors through an intensive and qualitative analysis of the way in which a small number of destitute families actually survive.¹² The obvious conclusion is that miners and their families are well off but face a very uncertain future should the miners lose their jobs. Seidman interviewed a number of retrenched ex-miners in Lesotho and the Free State, whose lives are harsh indeed. Only one of those she interviewed in Maseru was able to use a skill learned at the mine in order to make a living, and she concludes that these men have few options for making a living, other than trying to be re-engaged.¹³ Setsabi et al report the same phenomenon: “Nearly 70% of the returning miners were reported to be without employment. Returning miners were sustaining themselves mainly by agriculture (55%), some odd jobs (23%), and savings (7%).”¹⁴ We will return to the very important theme of how the men can expect to earn a living after their mining careers are finished.

In the meantime the miners must do their best to support their families, realizing that it will be very difficult for them to return to any form of self-support or even subsistence in Lesotho. Even as long ago as the mid-1970s, Van der Wiel pointed out the difficulty of reintegrating into a successful way of life in Lesotho: “Even if the migrant has brought back a ‘desire to change’ caused by the widening of his perspectives he will probably be confronted by the practical impossibility of carrying out his projects, because on the large scale the distortion in the allocation of resources to his region deprives him of the elementary framework required for success.”¹⁵ As a result, Moodie points out that “modern black mineworkers with rural homes may indeed be ‘men of two worlds.’ It makes better sense, however, to conceive of them as professional miners whose families continue to reside in the countryside. That is, they have become rural commuters”.¹⁶

2.4 MINE EMPLOYMENT

Miners are employed in a great variety of jobs on the mines. Table 1 lists the percentage in each of the basic categories: surface work and underground supervisory, mechanical, engineering and basic, as well as their more important sub-categories.

It is likely that the miners who listed their occupation as “miner” were not necessarily referring to the technical category of “miner”, which implies the ability to do blasting. Some of these may have fallen into

	Employment category %
Surface work	9.9
Driver	1.5
Security	1.5
Clerk	1.1
Cleaner	1.1
Kitchen worker	0.9
Underground supervisory	39.9
Miner	25.2
Stope team leader	10.8
General team leader	2.6
Gang supervisor	1.1
Underground mechanical	29.1
Winch driver	15.7
Locomotive driver	6.3
Drill operator	2.8
Underground engineering	4.7
Electrician	1.7
Boiler maker	0.9
Plumber	0.9
Underground basic	16.4
Timber worker	5.4
Mining team	5.0
Spare gang	4.1

Mining corporation	Sample %
Anglo American (AA)	61.9
Goldfields (GF)	12.3
General Mining (GM)	10.1
Rand Mines (RM)	6.4
Johannesburg Consolidated Investment (JCI)	3.6
Anglovaal (AV)	2.9
Lonrho (L)	1.6

that category, but others probably used the term to imply a general mine worker. There were also a few miners in specialized more highly-paid positions, including personnel assistants and computer operators. However, the vast majority of the Basotho in our sample, which is presumably representative of the overall labour force, work underground at productive and difficult tasks.

The vast majority of miners interviewed (61.9%) work for the Anglo American group (Table 2).

In addition a few workers stated that they were employed by collieries, despite the fact that TEBA does not recruit workers for coal mines.

The dominance of AA as an employer of Basotho miners is reflected in the fact that the top six mines on which they work all belong to this group, as evidenced in Table 3, where there is also a considerable concentration of employment with 68.7% of the miners working at only 10 mines.

Another 33 mines are reported by the men who were interviewed, all with less than 2% of the sample. Vaal Reefs, President Steyn and Western Holdings are by far the most popular mines for the men in our sample.

In 1990, almost 50% of miners from Lesotho worked at the neighbouring Free State Goldfields around Welkom, within easy weekly commuting distance of most parts of Lesotho. This pattern was confirmed in our own study since many of the most popular mines are in this region.¹⁷

Figure 1 gives the length of service of the miners in our sample. As is clear, these miners have been working on the mines for many years. Few are really newcomers, particularly since the time for recruitment of novices is largely over. Some 90% of the men in our sample had served five or more contracts.

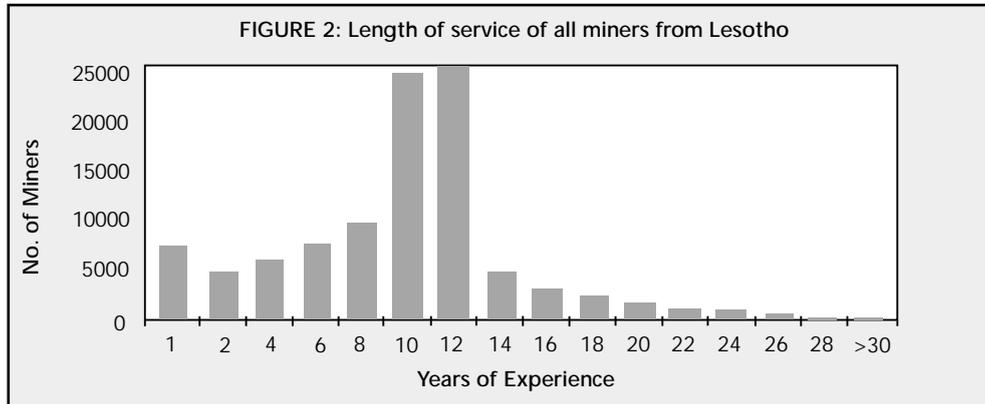
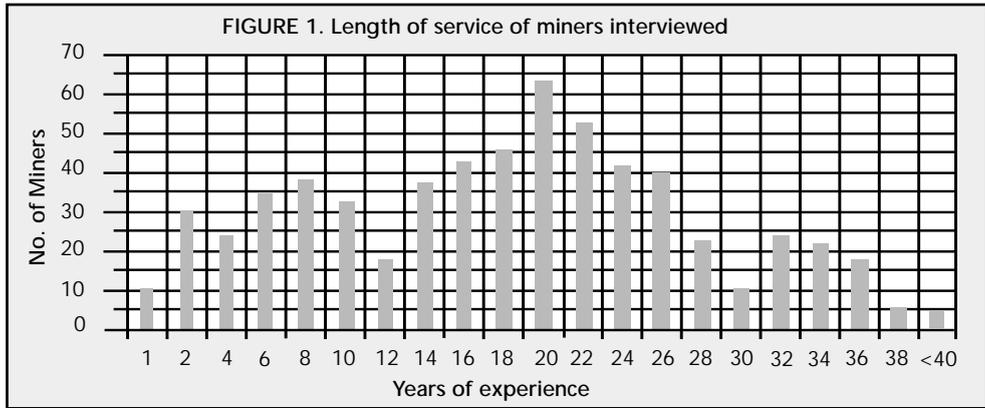
TABLE 3: Major mines worked on	
Mine	Sample %
Vaal Reefs (AA)	14.0
President Steyn (AA)	10.9
Western Holdings (AA)	9.8
Freddies (AA)	6.4
Western Deep Level (AA)	5.4
Saaiplaas (AA)	4.6
Harmony (RM)	4.1
Hartebeesfontein (AV)	4.1
Kloof (GF)	3.3
President Brand (AA)	3.1
Beatrix (GM)	3.1
Lorraine (AV)	2.9
Free State Geduld (AA)	2.3
East Driefontein (GF)	2.3

Note: Percentages in this table do not add up to to 100, because of rounding errors.

Length of service data supplied by TEBA confirm this pattern of long service in Lesotho as a whole with almost two-thirds of Basotho miners having more than 10 years of mining experience. See Figure 2.

The long service of men on the mines is in stark contrast with the situation in the mid-1970s, as reported by Van der Wiel. He calculated that “the real average length of his working life that a migrant worker spends outside Lesotho is estimated to be 16 years for those coming from the lowlands and 13 years for those from the mountain zone”.¹⁸

It is possible to calculate a comparable figure for the men in our survey, by assuming that they will remain in



Source: TEBA

their jobs until a retirement age of 55 years. That this retirement age is not unreasonable is indicated by the fact that 4.6% of our sample is at present 55 years old or older. The expected mean years on the mine for the men in our sample, assuming no premature retrenchment, would be 33 years, with a median of 34 years. Even if some retrenchment or early retirement takes place, the resulting time on the mines would be much greater than the 16 or 13 years reported by Van der Wiel. Even at present, the average number of contracts is already 15.6 for the men in the survey.

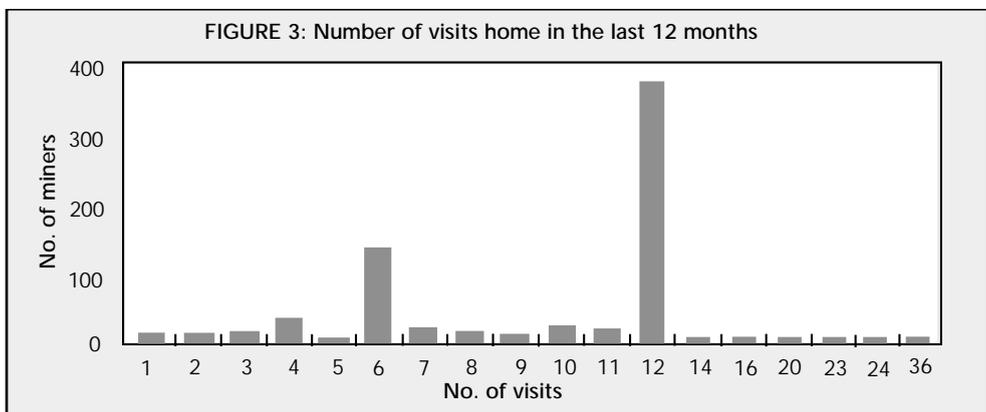
Only eight of the men had worked elsewhere in South Africa before taking their first mine contract, of whom seven had worked there prior to the critical year of 1975 when mine wages were greatly increased. Their previous work was in such activities as farming, the railways, construction, machinery and casual labour.

A total of 88.8% of the men reported belonging to a union, almost all of whom named the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) as their union. Only five named a different union, in all but one case a union at the managerial level.

2.5 FAMILY LIFE OF MINERS

One of the principal concerns over the years has been the destructive effect of migrant labour on family life. Increasingly, miners have been able to return home more regularly as a result of better transport facilities and adjusted working periods, particularly the 11-day-on, 3-day-off arrangement. With fewer restrictions on movement, spouses and families visit the mines more often. Figure 3 gives data on the number of times in the last year that the miners returned home, with the average visit lasting 16 days.

The system is still not good for family life, but there are many more



opportunities for visits now than in the past. No miners reported never visiting home. However, we have no records of the times when miners might have visited Lesotho but not reached their actual homes. Some of the figures in Figure 3 may include visits of that type which miners were not willing to admit. The most common number of visits was once a month, reported by 60.5% of the men. The situation reported by Van der Wiel in the mid-1970s was very different, where 67% of his sample of miners made no home visits during an average contract length of 9.6 months, and only 4% of the miners made four or more visits during an average contract length of 18.3 months.¹⁹

It must be borne in mind that there were almost as many women (44.5% of the total) who did not visit at all as there were women who visited their men at the mine. Yet it is striking that altogether 5% of all wives had spent at least a month at the workplace in their last visit. Some have even spent more than a year there, where the maximum stay was 624 days. This, of course, is a radical change from the old apartheid days, when the issue of women visiting their husbands does not even arise in the literature.

Two major studies of women in relation to migrant labour do not even mention the possibility that the wives could visit their men. Judith Gay reports that “the average married migrant made 2.8 visits and spent 9.5 weeks at home” in 1977, but visits in the other direction clearly did not happen.²⁰ Elizabeth Gordon provides an in-depth analysis of the strain experienced by women in the absence of their husbands, but does not even consider the idea that they might have reduced the strain by visiting the men at the mines.²¹

Only about 30% of the miners do productive work when they come home. The remaining men apparently simply rest. Of those who do productive work at home, 77.3% engage in farming. This proportion corresponds closely to the report of Van der Wiel in 1977 that “approximately 20 percent of the fields were ploughed by a household member on leave in Lesotho”.²² The most common other activity is construction, mentioned by 8.2% of the miners. Other activities are generally focused around businesses of one form or another, including driving, hawking, knitting, making and selling medicine and sewing.

Only 5% of the miners are unmarried. The situation was very different in the mid-1970s when 26% of the miners were unmarried.²³ Since that time, migrancy has become a lifetime occupation.

It has often been rumoured that married miners keep second families in South Africa. In fact only eight, or 1.3% of the total sample, admit to having wives in South Africa, while 5.0% acknowledge that they have girl friends there. All of these who say they have wives in South Africa are also married in Lesotho, and of that number five have children they

must support in South Africa. All but one of those with girl friends in South Africa are married at home in Lesotho. It is very likely that the number with wives or girl friends or children in South Africa is higher than the figures we have obtained. Our enumerators noted that the men were often embarrassed by this question, and felt that many of the miners were hiding the real truth. This question is discussed in greater detail later when we summarize informal interviews held with the miners in Welkom in the Free State Province.

3. CHOOSING BETWEEN LESOTHO AND SOUTH AFRICA

3.1 OFFERS OF PERMANENT RESIDENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA FOR MINERS

In October of 1995 an agreement was struck between the NUM, President Nelson Mandela, and South African Minister of Home Affairs Mangosutho Buthelezi to offer mineworkers from other countries the opportunity to apply for permanent residency status in South Africa. The offer was valid from November 1995 until March 1996, and was open to those mineworkers who:

- i) had entered the Republic of South Africa before June 13, 1986;
- ii) were ordinarily resident in the country before that date;
- iii) were not prohibited persons at that stage; and
- iv) were in possession of a voter's eligibility document which allowed them to vote in the April 1994 elections²⁴

A subsequent decision by Cabinet in June 1996 broadened this offer of amnesty to any citizens of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).²⁵ They had to be:

- presently residing in the Republic of South Africa (RSA) and who qualify in terms of the conditions stated hereunder to apply for exemption in terms of which permanent residence in the RSA may legally be acquired:
- a) can demonstrate or provide evidence of continuous residence in the RSA as from 1 July 1991;
 - b)
 - i) are engaged in productive economic activity in the country (either formal sector employment or informal sector activity); or
 - ii) are in a relationship with a South African partner or spouse (customary marriages included); or
 - iii) have dependent children born or residing lawfully in South Africa; and
 - c) have not committed a criminal offence listed in

Schedules I and/or II of the Aliens Control Act, 1991 (Act 96 of 1991) as amended.

For the purposes of this exemption the spouse(s) of the principal applicant as well as dependent children under the age of 18 years will be included.

The aim of the Department is to give the citizens of the SADC an opportunity to apply for exemption, in terms of which permanent residence in the RSA may legally be acquired. Full details can be obtained from Home Affairs offices throughout the country.²⁶

This second amnesty was initially offered between 1 July 1996 and 30 September 1996, but was later extended to November 30, 1996.

3.2 ATTITUDES TOWARDS PERMANENT RESIDENCE

The miners and their wives included in our survey were asked a number of questions concerning permanent residency and a possible move to South Africa. These questions are given in detail in the questionnaire in Table 4, which gives the breakdown between miners and wives as to the basic questions concerning permanent residency.

	Miner			Wife		
	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
Eligible for PR or not	52.0%	21.3%	26.7%	15.9%	0.0%	84.1%
Granted PR or not	3.4%	96.6%	0.0%	0.8%	28.6%	70.6%
Applied for PR or not	11.9%	87.9%	0.2%	4.8%	10.3%	84.9%
Wants to live in RSA	17.6%	48.7+33.1%	0.6%	0.6%	32.0%	35.7+41%

Note: Percentages in this table do not add up to 100 because of rounding errors.

Table 4 gives the percentages of the total sample of men and women, rather than the percentages of those who answered the question. The double figure in the column indicating those who do not wish to live in South Africa reflects the way the question was asked. The first number is a firm “No”, while the second number is implied by the fact that these miners and wives did not answer the question. The latter group consists almost entirely of men who said they had not applied for permanent residence and women who were not interested in further questions about permanent residence after having initially indicated their lack of knowledge.

The percentage of miners who say they have been granted permanent residence differs from the percentage that might be expected from the figures supplied by the South African Department of Home Affairs.²⁷ The Department reports that by March 1996, 16 278 Basotho mineworkers had been granted an exemption. It is not clear to us why this difference exists. We believe that most of the miners to whom we spoke were telling us the truth. In fact, one of the research assistants said that men who were not interviewed approached him to be interviewed, thinking that he might be able to help them. Men were generally open and frank, and were even willing to discuss the strategies they used to get the best advantage out of having both a Lesotho passport and a South African ID or residence permit.

One possible explanation is that some men may not have been informed about their status. One of the research assistants reported that men were complaining that they had registered at the mines, but had not heard anything yet. Another is that a few may have been deterred from admitting the truth after being warned in an induction course (which a research assistant overheard) that if they took permanent residence they would not be able to get back into Lesotho. In fact, some men with IDs stamped into their passports have been told at the border that they must get a visa to enter Lesotho, and one even said that men will tear up passports stamped in this way in order to return home. Some also say that if they have an ID they will be refused service at the TEBA office. If this last statement is true, then perhaps our sample was biased away from those who already possess an ID and have been granted permanent residence. We do not know the real truth, and thus have no choice but to report what the men themselves said.

The large proportion of women who are not sure about their husbands' plans is an important fact about relations between miners and their wives. There is a slight tendency for the wives who know about their husbands' plans to be better educated, but in general there is not much difference between the two groups of women.

Many men also do not know if they are eligible, a fact which is surprising given the large amount of publicity on the issue. These are more likely to be men with fewer years of schooling, a mean of 3.4 years, as opposed to 4.3 years for those who know they are eligible, and 4.9 years for those who know they are ineligible.

There are many possible relations between social, economic and attitudinal facts about the miners and their eligibility for permanent residence, making an application for permanent residence, and wishing to live in South Africa. Table 5 lists the most significant of these relations. Those who do not know about their eligibility are omitted from this and further analysis.

TABLE 5: Society, economy and attitude and eligibility for permanent residence

	Eligible	Ineligible
Members in household	5.9	4.8
Dependents	7.2	6.1
Total number of contracts	18.4	9.7
Value of fields	M512	M655
Value of livestock	M5 911	M4 168
Monthly income from non-mining sources	M72	M27
Gross monthly pay	M1 480	M1 233
Wishes to live in RSA	23.8%	10.5%
Believes years in mine is principal criterion	87.4%	61.4%
Informed by union about eligibility	80.6%	86.8%
Believes all Basotho should be eligible	19.0%	45.8%
Believes local passport and ID should be criteria	27.8%	20.8%
Believes immigration credential should be criterion	17.8%	8.3%
Believes years in mine should be criterion	6.4%	8.3%

Those who believe themselves to be eligible for permanent residency in South Africa are significantly different in several ways from those who think they are ineligible. Their households are larger, with more dependents. They have served substantially longer on the mines. They have higher income and more livestock. Their fields, however, are of less value, using our earlier definition of field value. The miners themselves have a greater desire to live in South Africa than their ineligible counterparts.

The principal source for information about permanent residency is the NUM. It is striking that the message as interpreted by miners differs by whether they believe themselves to be eligible or not. Those who say they are eligible are more likely to believe that years of service on the mine is the principal qualification for permanent residency. Miners gave several different figures for the number of years required, the majority believing that at least 10 years of service are needed before the miner can apply. The fact that some miners believe the period is 10 years and others only five years arises from the fact that the first amnesty for miners, which was offered from November 1995 to March 1996, specified a period of 10 years, while the second general amnesty specifies a period of five years²⁸. Despite the knowledge on the part of both groups that years of service is the main criterion, neither group thinks it is the correct criterion. The dominant criteria stressed by these miners are that all Basotho should be eligible, or that local passport and identification papers or other immigration credentials should suffice.

Table 6 gives comparable information for miners who have actually applied or are not applying for permanent residence.

TABLE 6: Society, economy and attitude and application for permanent residence		
	Applying	Not Applying
Members in household	5.6	5.2
Dependents	7.1	6.7
Total number of contracts	19.1	16.1
Value of livestock	M2 826	M5 669
Monthly income from non-mining sources	M31	M63
Monthly savings	M20	M49
Monthly value of goods and money sent home	M655	M582
Wishes to live in RSA	46.2%	14.6%
Wants the benefits of life in RSA	57.4%	0.6%
Don't want permanent residence in RSA	3.3%	49.2%
Not decided	4.9%	31.0%
Have investments in Lesotho	4.0%	15.8%

In this case also there are clear distinctions between the miners who apply for permanent residence and those who do not. Those who apply have larger families, with more dependents. They have worked in the mines longer. On the other hand, they have fewer livestock, less monthly income from non-mining sources and lower monthly savings. They spend more money on goods to send to their homes. Those who have applied wish to live in South Africa, and want the benefits of life there. On the other hand, those who have not applied have, in about a third of the cases, not yet decided. Some also have investments in Lesotho that deter them from moving.

Thus, comparing Tables 5 and 6, it is clear that large households made more prosperous by years of mine labour are both more eligible for permanent residence and yet less likely to want to acquire it.

Coplan and Thoahlane report a similar pattern of responses to their interviews. They point out: "The willingness of migrants and ex-migrants and their wives to leave Lesotho and live in South Africa varied with their social and material investment in their homesteads. The greater the investment, the greater their commitment to remaining labour migrants and keeping their families on their homesteads in Lesotho."²⁹ This pattern of reasons for applying for permanent residence makes sense. These less well-off men are in greater need than others and have less resources with which to meet those needs. They see real benefits across the border. Finally, they do not have investments in Lesotho that make it attractive to remain.

TABLE 7: Society, economy and desire to live in South Africa by miners and wives		
	Wishes to live	Does not wish
Highest schooling of miner	4.7	4.0
Gross monthly income	M1 530	M1 268
Monthly income per member	M131	M120
Value of livestock	M3 717	M6 281
Value of fixed assets at home	M5 897	M7 681
Monthly value of money and goods sent home	M661	M575
Wants to live there only while working in RSA	38.1%	9.5%
Sees benefits in RSA	34.0%	1.9%
Likes Lesotho, not RSA	5.1%	44.0%
Has assets in Lesotho	3.1%	17.8%
Wishes to start a small business after retirement	22.7%	5.8%
Wishes to farm after retirement	17.0%	37.2%

Those who wish to live in South Africa are better educated and have a higher cash income than those who wish to remain in Lesotho (Table 7). They send more money and goods home than their counterparts. On the other hand, those who prefer Lesotho have substantially more assets, particularly livestock, than those who wish to move. Reasons for the desire to move include the benefits which can be gained from living in South Africa, in particular the opportunity to have a small business there. Reasons for remaining in Lesotho, in addition to simply preferring one's home country, include assets present in Lesotho and the intention to farm after retirement. These reasons make good sense, since those who have the money and the education and business skill see South Africa as potentially more profitable, while those with less money and education, but with agricultural assets see Lesotho as a place to make a living in farming.

Certain factors which might be expected to influence the decision to live in South Africa are unrelated to the decision. They include where the miner comes from in Lesotho and the access to modern amenities at home (water supply, toilets). Nor is the migrant's willingness to do productive work when he is at home a factor, despite the fact that such work is almost always agricultural. Age of the miner is also not a relevant factor, although there is a slight tendency for unmarried miners (who are usually younger than their married counterparts) to express more interest in South African permanent residence than married men.

3.3 PERMANENT RESIDENCE AND THE MINER'S FAMILY

An important influence on the decision about whether to go or stay is the miner's relations with his family. Table 8 displays the percentages of those miners who have and have not had family discussions, family visits to South Africa, and second families in South Africa, who are (a) eligible for permanent residence, (b) have applied for permanent residence, and (c) are willing to move to South Africa.

TABLE 8: South African residence and family activities			
	Eligible for permanent residence	Applied for permanent residence	Wishing to live in South Africa
Has the miner discussed moving to South Africa with his family?			
Yes	93.2%	57.9%	75.3%
No	67.6%	14.5%	41.8%
Has the miner's family visited him in South Africa?			
Yes	78.7%	27.8%	33.9%
No	65.6%	15.6%	22.0%
Has the miner created a second family in South Africa?			
Yes	77.8%	35.7%	46.7%
No	65.4%	10.4%	22.0%

Each of these factors is closely related to eligibility and application for permanent residence, and to desire to live in South Africa. The strongest relation is between discussing moving to South Africa and eligibility, application and preference. The presence of a second family in South Africa is the next strongest, and visiting the miner in South Africa is third, but by no means insignificant.

Are families or dependents of eligible miners likely to move to South Africa? Just under half (49.5%) of the families are prepared to move to South Africa. This figure

is well below the worst-case scenario of the South Africans who assume that all people granted amnesty will inevitably bring all of their dependents to the country. The main reasons why the families would want to move include keeping the family together (35.8%), seeking benefits in South Africa (17.0%), finding a better life than Lesotho offers (13.2%) and getting employment (11.3%).

By far the strongest reason why the family would not move is that they like Lesotho better than South Africa (61.8%), followed far behind by the desire to stay with family (9.1%). Coplan provides an in-depth explanation of the reasons for miners' loyalty to Lesotho:

There are powerful reasons why Basotho migrants cling to Lesotho's national sovereignty, no matter how impoverished. The proud history of Lesotho with its distinctive institutions, social structure, and resistance to incorporation is a hard thing to abandon. ... [A] married man is theoretically entitled to pasture and fields for cultivation as 'free goods,' and in genuine practice to some ground on which to build his house. ... [T]he rights to residential stands, fields for cultivation, and pasturage

that attach to social identity as a member of a Basotho family, clan, and chieftaincy, as well as that identity in and of itself, represent precious entitlements to a great many migrants, the more so as they have to spend so many hard years away from them. ... Those who would prefer to carry South African identity documents still resists the idea of ‘incorporating’ Lesotho into its hegemonic neighbour, just as they prefer not to relocate their families to the workplace. ... ‘That would be the end of *Sesotho*,’ they protest. By *Sesotho* they mean far more than their ‘language and culture’, narrowly conceived. It means a social identity and its entitlements, reciprocities and their resources, investments of the self and substance, a personal as well as communal, genealogical, and national history, and a secure-self-comprehending way of life.³⁰

There are differences as to which members of the family would move. If the family were to decide to live in South Africa, some 86.2% of the wives of men who would like to live in South Africa would move with him, only 25.4% would take only infants out of all their children, 32.2% would take only schoolchildren, and 64.5% would take all children. Only 8.2% of parents would join the miner in South Africa. Thus it is clear that in most cases the nuclear family of wives and children would go with the husband, but the extended family would usually remain behind in Lesotho.

Closely related to family matters is the possibility for the miner who takes up permanent residence in South Africa of maintaining a home in Lesotho, where these members of the family or extended family might live. Some 68.3% of the miners and wives who claimed they would move to South Africa said that they would keep a home in Lesotho, while

31.7% said they would cut their ties with their original home. Table 9 displays the factors which relate to a decision to keep one or two homes, one in South Africa and perhaps one in Lesotho, for those miners who say they will move to South Africa. Only the most important factors are mentioned.

The explanations given by the miners or their wives are consistent

TABLE 9: Factors relating to maintaining a home in Lesotho

Would migrant maintain home in Lesotho? Reason given by miner or wife	No	Yes
Cannot afford to maintain two homes	40.6%	2.9%
Wants to assist family	21.9%	11.6%
Wants benefits of living in South Africa	15.6%	1.4%
Would live permanently in South Africa	73.5%	25.4%
Wants to keep Lesotho as home	3.1%	55.1%
Has assets in Lesotho	3.1%	13.0%
Wants to be a farmer after retirement	6.3%	21.5%
Willing to take any job after retirement	9.4%	16.9%
Wants job driving or running a taxi	28.1%	4.6%
Wants to have a small business	21.9%	16.9%

with our earlier findings and with the common consensus. Those who would cut their ties with Lesotho are motivated by economics, feeling that it would be expensive to have two homes and better for their family if they concentrated on the benefits they could gain in South Africa. Yet some of those who would live permanently in South Africa would also maintain a home in Lesotho. Those who would keep a Lesotho home are motivated either by what seems to be patriotism, by assets already present in Lesotho or by the presence of family in Lesotho. Plans for the future also influence the decision, in that families which look to farming emphasize keeping a home in Lesotho. Driving or running a taxi, and to some extent having a small business, lead to South Africa. That some factors lead both to positive and negative responses is related to the fact that miners must weigh many different factors which could work in opposite directions. We report in this table and in Table 19 the individual factors, not the complex of issues which must be considered.

3.4 PERMANENT RESIDENCE AND CITIZENSHIP

The next question concerns whether these miners would seek citizenship in South Africa, and if so why. Table 10 gives the basic facts about application for South African citizenship, as well as retention of Lesotho citizenship.

	Yes	No	Probably no
Miner wants to live in South Africa	18.7%	46.0%	35.2%
If lives in RSA, wants South African citizenship	50.9%	49.1%	0.0%
If RSA citizen, also wants Lesotho citizenship	36.0%	64.0%	0.0%

If these figures are correct, the following reasoning should apply. Only 18.7% of miners say they want to live in South Africa. Of this group 50.9% (which represents 9.5% of the total) say they also want to take South African citizenship. And 64.0% of this group who say they want both South African residence and South African citizenship (representing 6.1% of the total) say they would give up Lesotho citizenship. In short, the net result of this series of preferences is that 6.1% of the miners in our sample would seek to become South African citizens and leave home entirely, 3.4% would take up South African citizenship but also try to keep their Lesotho citizenship, 9.2% would be permanent residents in South Africa without taking up South African citizenship, and the remaining 81.3% would maintain their status as migrant workers with residence in Lesotho. This result may be biased by the factors

representing 6.1% of the total) say they would give up Lesotho citizenship. In short, the net result of this series of preferences is that 6.1% of the miners in our sample would seek to become South African citizens and leave home entirely, 3.4% would take up South African citizenship but also try to keep their Lesotho citizenship, 9.2% would be permanent residents in South Africa without taking up South African citizenship, and the remaining 81.3% would maintain their status as migrant workers with residence in Lesotho. This result may be biased by the factors

mentioned above which either prevent some miners from admitting their desire for permanent residence or from presenting themselves at a TEBA office if they have already been granted permanent residence. It is thus possible that the true figures are higher than those which we state here.

This conclusion depends on eligibility to take up permanent residence as perceived by the miners and their wives, not on objective factors which must be considered by the government of South Africa. We have no way of verifying the statements of those whom we interviewed, but we believe that their own perceptions of their own situation and desires are largely accurate, with one major exception: a number of those whom we interviewed believe that 10 years of service is required rather than five, which could make a difference in their willingness to apply. If this misperception, which is based on the difference between the two declarations of amnesty, is corrected, then the total figure may be somewhat higher, but not significantly higher.

Table 11 explores some of the reasons why migrants would or would not seek South African citizenship.

Obligations to relatives is a strong factor leading many miners to wish to remain citizens of Lesotho, but nonetheless a smaller number also feel it leads them to seek South African citizenship. Jobs are a reason for moving to South Africa, but the possibility of finding a job does not significantly tip the balance in favour of South African citizenship. More significant is the feeling of some Basotho that they have no obligations to Lesotho, but wish for the benefits of being South African.

An important factor in the minds of many miners is the availability of farm land. Those who intend to maintain their status as citizens of

Lesotho cite the lack of farm land in South Africa as an important reason. On the other hand, many who wish to take up South African citizenship recognize the importance of land and farming but apparently do not consider it a sufficient incentive to remain citizens of their home country, identifying it as a poor country despite its advantages of free land and access to farming.

In fact, farming is an unlikely prospect, as many commentators have pointed out. Even in 1986, Keyter listed a

	Become RSA citizen	Remain Lesotho citizen
Obligations to relatives	45.5%	71.4%
No obligations to Lesotho	40.9%	5.7%
Wants RSA benefits	41.4%	20.9%
Expects job in RSA	78.6%	70.2%
No farm land in RSA	0.0%	73.3%
Has assets in Lesotho	10.3%	68.9%
Lesotho is a poor country	45.2%	25.0%
Lesotho has free land	37.9%	8.9%
Lesotho lives by farming	20.7%	8.9%

series of reasons why “a reconstruction of peasant agriculture no longer seems possible,” including loss of cattle and equipment through peasant dispossession, land fragmentation, rise of a consumer as opposed to a producer economy, low level of capital investment, loss of community co-operation, and dependence on remittances.³¹

We have already pointed out the low level of agricultural productivity in Lesotho. Further evidence has been adduced by Sechaba Consultants, who show the declining production of cereal crops per capita in Lesotho, to the point that the expected harvest in 2001 will only provide a quarter of Lesotho’s food needs.³² Furthermore, careful regression analysis shows that for ordinary farmers there is likely to be a negative return for money spent on crop farming.³³ It is no wonder that so few miners think of farming as a hope for them when they retire or are retrenched. The situation is different, of course, with livestock, since the person who has substantial numbers of animals at least has a bank account on which to fall back. The investment in livestock which we have reported earlier is thus a more sensible approach to the lean years coming than recourse to crop farming.

A very similar pattern emerges if we ask why people would also try to keep Lesotho citizenship if they became citizens of South Africa. As stated above, commitments to family members are important but pull in both directions. Those who feel no personal obligation to Lesotho are far less likely to keep their Lesotho citizenship. Benefits and jobs are the main factors keeping people in South Africa, but many of those who seek such benefits prefer not to break ties if they can avoid doing so. Free land in Lesotho remains an attraction even to those who seek South African citizenship, since by retaining Lesotho citizenship in addition to their new allegiance to South Africa they hope they can get the best of both worlds.

4. DEFERRED PAY

4.1 PROBLEMS WITH DEFERRED PAY

An important part of Lesotho’s income derives from deferred pay. Table 12 shows that compulsory deferred pay payments in 1994 were over M160 million. Total remittances to Lesotho were over M320 million. Thus half of the country’s remittances are from compulsory and half from voluntary forms of deferment.

Table 13 shows the attitudes of miners and their wives toward deferred pay, whether it is viewed as a problem and what type of deferred pay they would prefer.

Miners have a slightly greater problem with deferred pay than do their

Year	Compulsory deferred pay	Voluntary remittances	TEBA savings	Other	Total
1988					224 074 242
1989					308 866 238
1990					343 438 167
1991					246 808 167
1992	129004 808	86 877 569	33 735 685	34 345 074	283 963 136
1993	161 115 778	79 960 811	37 377 394	40 226 742	318 680 725
1994	162 675 270	81 944 054	39 001 050	45 519 401	329 139775

Source: TEBA; breakdowns for 1988-91 not available.

	Miner	Wife
Compulsory deferred pay is a problem	38.3%	11.9%
Prefer deferred pay to be optional	62.9%	9.5%

wives, although in neither case does a majority have a problem. On the other hand, given the choice, miners would strongly prefer it to be optional, while wives even more strongly wish it to remain compulsory. There is, incidentally, a striking

difference between the percentage of miners in our survey who found deferred pay a problem, and the percentage reported in the earlier survey conducted by the Central Bank, who said “only 7 per cent of the mineworkers indicated that they did not like the Deferred Pay Fund (DPF) scheme”.³⁴ This difference may arise because migrants were afraid to tell the truth to representatives of the Central Bank, or may reflect a change of heart eight months later.

The reasons for this division between men and women come out clearly when we examine the reasons why deferred pay is or is not a problem. Table 14 presents the basic issues, first whether deferred pay is seen as a problem, and second according to the miner or his wife.

The basic problem with deferred pay is that the interest rate is be-

	Deferred pay a problem	Not a problem	Miner	Wife
Provides a reserve when needed	8.9%	72.2%	35.3%	40.6%
Low interest rates	51.3%	9.0%	35.3%	9.4%
Difficult to get access	16.8%	2.1%	11.7%	0.0%
Men misuse the system	7.9%	6.3%	3.9%	40.6%
System hard to understand	9.9%	2.8%	8.1%	0.0%

lieved to be low. In fact, on the basis of an agreement between Lesotho and the Board of Trustees for deferred pay the Lesotho Bank reports that the interest on deferred pay is 2% higher than the basic interest rate of 6%. Subsidiary problems are that it is hard to get the money, that the system is hard to understand, and that men misuse the system. The real advantage is that it provides a reserve when the family needs it.

There is a sharp difference between the opinions of men and women on some of the issues, despite the fact that both agree on the importance of having a reserve supply of money. Men are concerned with such matters as low interest rate, difficulty of access, and inability to understand the system. The big issue for women, which is doubtless why they would like to keep the system, is that men misuse the system and would doubtless misuse it even further if it were made optional. The women do not state exactly the form of the misuse.

Table 15 gives the reasons why deferred pay should be required or optional.

Once again a pattern emerges. Women do not trust their husbands

	Should be required	Should be optional	Miner	Wife
Men are untrustworthy	56.5%	2.5%	20.9%	72.4%
Encourages savings	25.5%	7.0%	17.4%	13.2%
Helps maintain family	12.5%	4.5%	9.6%	5.3%
Should manage money privately	2.3%	65.0%	38.4%	3.9%
Difficult to get access	2.3%	17.5%	10.8%	5.3%

with money, and would like to see a better way of handling the family income. Men are more concerned with managing their money themselves, without the nuisance of going to TEBA to collect their deferred pay.

4.2 WAYS TO IMPROVE THE DEFERRED PAY SYSTEM

Table 16 explores ways in which the system can be improved, from the perspective of those who do or do not find it a problem, as well as the miner and his wife.

There is no great difference between the groups over the questions of

TABLE 16: Ways to improve the deferred pay system

	Deferred pay a problem	Not a problem	Miner	Wife
Give better interest	36.2%	25.5%	31.5%	25.0%
Replace by a personal bank account	27.7%	15.6%	21.5%	25.0%
Have transparent management	12.1%	4.3%	8.5%	3.6%
Make it optional	5.0%	0.7%	3.1%	0.0%
Keep it compulsory	4.3%	35.5%	21.2%	3.6%
Increase the deferred percentage	4.3%	9.3%	5.4%	17.9%
Involve wives more closely	2.8%	2.1%	1.5%	14.3%
Make loans for interest	2.8%	0.7%	1.2%	7.1%

having better interest and a personal bank account. Men are more interested than women in keeping the system compulsory, while women are more concerned to increase the amount of the miner’s pay which is deferred until later. Clearly the wives want to be more involved in the process. An interesting suggestion is that the fund be used to make loans, so that it would accrue interest.

5. THE VIEW FROM SOUTH AFRICA

One of the enumerators spoke at length in open-ended interviews with miners he met in Welkom in the Free State.³⁵ These miners reflected the same ambivalence toward Lesotho and South Africa that was displayed in the answers to the structured questionnaires. The heart of the matter for them is the migrant labour system itself, whereby men are forced to live and work away from their homes for almost the whole of every year. This separates them from their wives and children, and they face a long-term future in a country which uses them and which they use for mutual convenience and mutual exploitation.

The girl friend or prostitute in South Africa is symbolic of the problem. A repeated theme in these interviews with miners in Welkom is the breakdown of deep loving relations with wives at home, and the consequent turn to short-term sexual satisfaction. The parallel theme is the breakdown of the political/patriotic relation between the miner and his home country Lesotho, which is replaced by the short-term satisfaction of getting job, salary and benefits from a South Africa which uses the miner and which is in turn used by the miner.

One miner said:

Apart from pensions, there is no future for Basotho miners here because the women here say, 'Get old, and get kicked out'.

Another said, on the basis of years of life in South Africa, that:

South African life is the most corrupt. As means of survival, social norms do not exist. Social laws of South Africa are such that it is difficult to maintain social values in the households.

The same analogy applies to the women and the country left behind. Not only do wives exploit their husbands, according to these men, but they too will seek quick money in South Africa. A miner cited the example of a friend, whose wife went missing from her home in Lesotho, but was then traced to a shack near the mines where she was living with a different miner.

Another miner was almost poetic in his description of the women who "trap" the migrant workers:

They are a ruthless lot. They want the whole purse and demand everything. You bring her here and rent out for two weeks and while you are at work she will be working hard to mix all the potions to get you hooked. In less than one week she will be playing the guitar and you will be dancing to her music. By this time, you will have forgotten all about the family and instead will be getting across the border with her to withdraw the deferred pay and come back. There is no way you can hide from them because they have access to the hostels. When the potions wear down, she has no problem catching a new miner.

His recommendation was that going home or bringing wives to visit on a regular basis was too expensive. Families should rather live together in South Africa as permanent residents.

A woman who was interviewed in Welkom spoke frankly about the women who entrap these miners:

I have a friend here who has been bought a house by a mineworker. Her so-called husband has a family in Mafeteng in Lesotho. This man has not been home for the past four years, and you can imagine how his family is surviving. All my friend is working for is to get legally married to this man so as to get all the benefits. Once this objective is achieved, the man will be kicked out in the cold, and a new one will come in.

In saying so, she echoed the words of another miner who said:

Unemployed Basotho women open their mouths wide to swallow everything a man has. ... Social life here is corrupt, and things we most value as Basotho do not mean anything here. ...In terms of peace, Lesotho is the best place to stay in.

A miner agreed, saying:

Lesotho has economic problems which will be worsened if migrants take up South African citizenship but still, there is free land which could balance the situation if well utilized.

He feels if he had the rights to stay in South Africa, he would have problems bringing his family there to expose them to all the social evils common there.

Some miners are bitter that Lesotho has no real intention of assisting mineworkers. Rather they feel that Lesotho uses the miners in the same way that the wives use the husbands. The deferred pay scheme benefits the banks and the government officials, but not the miners, according to one man. Among such miners there is little feeling for Lesotho as their home, their mother country. Another man said:

Lesotho is unable to provide for her people because of poor governance, and this would ensure that many miners would seek permanent residence. ...Lesotho will face disastrous economic problems as she will lose all her earnings from migrant labour.

A miner in Welkom who came from the rural areas of Maseru district agreed:

Migrant workers like everybody else are disgruntled by the fact that their expectations to improve economically have been shattered. Our voices to the government to use the deferred pay money to improve and make education accessible to all, and pensions for the aged and disabled, have not been heard. Government officials use our hard earned money to enrich themselves.

Yet he sees the same problem on the other side of the border:

Clouded promises about permanent residence and benefits is a ride on a tiger and those who take the ride will sooner or later change their minds. If miracles do happen that some of the promises materialize, Basotho mineworkers would still have the same problems as they would in Lesotho because mining skills cannot be applied anywhere else.

He worries further that the South Africans have not thought through the

issues which will be raised by the exodus from all migrant labour supplying countries. There are not enough jobs, and crime is already a serious problem.

Several of the miners are nonetheless preparing to take up permanent residence. One miner gave five reasons: his contribution as a miner to the South African economy, his vote for the new South African government, his prospects of unemployment benefits, his hope for old age pension, and access to free education for his children. This miner knows that the influx will be great, but he sees that there is plenty of surplus land in South Africa that can be used for everyone.

Others disagree. They fear that the new permanent residents will be forced to live in shacks. One remembers the snow in July this year:

When the heavy snow fell in July, there was much misery around the shacks. Some shacks are built of plastic materials, and with heavy snow they just fell in. Some people died and amongst these were Basotho from Lesotho. Is this the type of housing Basotho migrants want to have?

For others, permanent residence is only a device to get what Lesotho should get through legitimate means, namely, to win back the “Conquered Territories”, which consists of most of the eastern Free State. Winning this back does not mean physical conquest, of course, but rather access to the free services and pensions that are the product of the South African economy to which the miners have contributed over the years. Permanent residence to such miners means being a beneficiary, not a physical resident.

One man, for example, said he had no intention to bring his family to South Africa even if he is granted permanent residence:

Life in South Africa is garbage. Working in South Africa is like going to the cattle post where you take your livestock in summer and bring them back in winter. I will only use my ID or permanent residence as a passport to get the benefits I have worked for. I don't think that the pensions will continue, because there will be too many people demanding them, but for the time being I want my share.

Another miner sees the issue as basically political:

I am aware through my work with shaft sinkers that Mozambicans and Basotho are knowledgeable, tolerant, skilled workers and have served South Africa well. These are the people permanent residence is extended to. Should they respond positively, South Africa would no longer have to go through all the bureaucratic engagement channels.

South African-born citizens can only do certain jobs, but the most laborious would be for Basotho. South Africa would save money in attestation fees, deferred pay and money sent out of the country to families.

But he warned that in the end:

Life in South Africa would be hell. Population boom, competition for jobs and ever-rising crime would ensue from this move. The South African trap is closing in very quickly, and something has to be done and not just said, as has always been the case.

An important part of the political struggle is that taken by the NUM. Extensive discussions with NUM officials in Welkom displayed real suspicion of attempts to interview miners. They felt they had won the struggle for wages, benefits and power in the mines, and they did not want this victory to be compromised. They were confident that South Africa would be able to accommodate permanent residents from Lesotho and other labour-sending countries. They had a close alliance with the governing ANC, and according to one miner:

Many miners who applied for IDs did so because they feared they would lose their jobs unless they voted for the ANC.

The union is strongly behind the move toward permanent residence for Basotho, a position which some miners say was taken without consulting them. The political suspicion was put clearly by one miner:

South African citizens still face serious unemployment problems and if the present South African president dies, South Africa will plunge into civil war. South Africa is merely a time bomb which can explode any time. We as miners were requested to register our children for jobs and assistance for their education, but one registering official told me secretly that this was merely a ploy to win our confidence. In short, this will never happen. I am asking myself why this bait, pensions and blue cards, is used against us, if not to let other people with unknown agendas organise our lives for us.

The issue of deferred pay was mentioned by this man, who feels it is an important way for miners to take care of their families in Lesotho:

The deferred pay helps a lot of miners who, if it was not there, would not know what to do with their money, except to spend it on prostitutes staying in shacks. It happens that their wives visit such miners to collect money for the

children at home, only to find that their husbands have not a cent in their pockets, or even hide so as not to be seen.

The problem of life back home in Lesotho is not confined to the need to provide money for the family. Some of the miners who, on balance, think it is necessary to take up permanent residence realize that there are no jobs in Lesotho as well as a shortage of land. One man said:

It is downright foolish to stay in Lesotho when there are opportunities in South Africa. Every Mosotho may think that farming is a sustainable form of life, but in recent years it has become too expensive and changing climatic conditions make it too risky.

Others point out the problem of retirement in Lesotho without employment, without pension and without the chance to start a small business. It is already the case that some people even today who have retired in Lesotho go monthly to South Africa to pick up their pensions.

In summary, the view from Welkom is cloudy. The smoke which rises from the mines and from the shacks disturbs the clarity of the air in the Free State. It is the same smoke which makes miners realize that they are caught between two ways of life, two nations, two societies. Both societies exploit them, at the personal level and at the national economic and political level. Some see that the way out is to return home to Lesotho. Others believe their hope lies in South Africa. The reasons on both sides are cogent and convincing. For a given individual, the choice is therefore difficult. He is on his own, with alien and greedy forces pressing him on every side.

6. CONCLUSION

As the results of the survey and the informal interviews show, Basotho migrant labourers on the South African gold and platinum mines face an uncertain future. The uncertainty is not simply a result of the objective economic situation in South Africa, namely, a change in gold price, an increase in inflation, closing of mines due to uneconomic costs of production, retrenchment because of mechanization or political instability. The issue which this report has addressed is the uncertainty of the miner and his family as to what choice to make in this new and rapidly changing region.

There are push and pull factors which help determine the choice a miner and his wife will make when considering taking up permanent residence in South Africa. Francis Wilson developed the push-pull model for migrant labour in South Africa in the early 1970s, and it still applies today. He showed at the time that under apartheid there could be no

simple solution to the increasing pull of urban areas and the decreasing attraction of the rural labour-supplying areas. As a result, the enforced residential separation implied that “the contradiction inherent in the simultaneous pursuit of the twin goals [industrialization and apartheid] can be resolved only by entrenching the pattern of oscillating migration at the heart of the economy.”³⁶

Today the situation has changed, as legal apartheid has officially been abandoned and informal apartheid is gradually yielding to non-racialism. Miners and their families now have a choice which would have seemed impossible to Wilson and those writing in the 1970s and even the 1980s. The choice of where to live is more nearly theirs to make, although not entirely, and may reflect factors which we have not uncovered.

It seems that the issues raised in the questionnaires and interviews are the main influences on the decision. We summarize these as a matrix: the factors that push miners away from Lesotho and pull them toward Lesotho; and the factors that push miners away from South Africa and pull them toward South Africa. We attempt to go a step beyond Wilson’s analysis by suggesting which factors are more and less important. We give ranks for these factors, to indicate their relative importance, based on the frequency with which they were mentioned in the questionnaires and on informal discussions with miners in which these factors were summarized for them. Table 17 lists the factors which would tend to persuade the miner and his family to stay in Lesotho and not take up permanent residence in South Africa.

TABLE 17: Factors working against permanent residence in South Africa			
Pull factors toward Lesotho	Rank	Push factors away from South Africa	Rank
Love of Lesotho	1	Lack of accessible land in South Africa	1
Assets in Lesotho	2	Separation from family	2
Income within Lesotho	3	Crime and violence in South Africa	3
Livestock in Lesotho	4	Political instability in South Africa	4
Desire to farm after retirement	5	Poor living conditions in South Africa	5
Few dependents at home	6	Temptation to sexual promiscuity	6
Savings and deferred pay	7	Distrust National Union of Mineworkers	7

Table 18 lists the factors which would tend to persuade a family in Lesotho to take up permanent residence in South Africa.

TABLE 18: Factors leading to permanent residence in South Africa

Push factors away from Lesotho	Rank	Pull factors toward South Africa	Rank
Few livestock	1	Wish to start small business	1
Lesotho doesn't care about miners	2	Long mine experience	2
Poverty in Lesotho	3	Pensions	3
Desire to keep family together	4	Well-being of family	4
No income at home in Lesotho	5	Free schooling	5
No land in Lesotho	6	Sending money and goods home	6
Cost of maintaining two homes	7	Unemployment benefits	7
Many dependents	8	Miner well educated	8
Bad government	9	Wish to drive or run a taxi	9
Few assets at home	10	Second family in South Africa	10

Each family, miner and wife, must make its own choice, as we have noted. These are some of the factors that will influence the choice.

We have already noted, on the basis of Table 12, that 6.1% of the miners in our sample would seek to become South African citizens and leave home entirely, 3.4% would take up South African citizenship but also try to keep their Lesotho citizenship, 9.2% would take permanent residence in South Africa without taking up South African citizenship (and thus by implication retaining rights, and in half the cases homes in Lesotho), and the remaining 81.3% would maintain their status as migrant workers with residence in Lesotho. It seems likely, however, that most of these 81.3% of the miners would also do their best to get access to pensions, so that they can enjoy the fruits of their labour. How they can do this without taking permanent residence is unclear. They may not fully understand the issues involved, but if they do not accept the offer they may have to rely on what Lesotho has to offer when they finally leave mining.

It is important therefore to ask how Lesotho is responding to this new and very fluid situation. Clearly the pattern that Murray described is no longer possible for most migrants: "The paradigm of the successful migrant career for a man is to establish his own household and to build up a capital base, through the acquisition of land, livestock and equipment, to enable him to retire from migrant labour and to maintain an independent way of life at home."³⁷ Murray realized at that time that few men ever realized this goal. Mayer makes the same point: "The elaborate defences developed by [migrant cultures] have lost their effectiveness

once the possibility of obtaining arable land has fallen away, or when fathers and lineage elders no longer have a say in matters of land allocation.”³⁸ Setsabi et al point out that “only 10% of ... miners reported harvesting sufficient crops to support their families”.³⁹ Clearly the time-honoured sentiments which suggest a return to the land simply do not work.

The Lesotho government has not made any definitive pronouncement on the matter, and even seems unwilling to recognize the present-day reality. Former Minister of Employment and Labour Notsi Molopo argued in early 1996 that:

...permanent residence to migrant workers will not affect Lesotho’s economy because the majority of Basotho mine-workers (who constitute the largest number of immigrants) will not take the benefit. They have settled families, relatives, fields to grow crops and domestic animals in Lesotho, all of which will make it difficult for them to leave and go to South Africa.

He said a minor economic effect might be experienced from mine-workers who will retire or be retrenched from South African mines.⁴⁰ Former government minister and Basutoland National Party (BNP) leader Retsilisitso Sekhonyana said that the Lesotho government is faced with the challenge of making the country attractive to its citizens. This is important no matter how far or near a Mosotho may be in relation to his/her home country, and regardless of whether such a person is a permanent resident in any other country. The BNP leader suggested that improvement of the education standard and the granting of bonds to Basotho migrant workers by the banks in Lesotho would make the country more attractive to its absent citizens, and encourage them to spend revenues in Lesotho.⁴¹ In actual fact, little has been said by present or past government officials to address Sekhonyana’s point or even to indicate a real concern about the issue.

More to the point has been the effort to create jobs within Lesotho for those migrants who choose to return. Matlosa refers to an important scheme developed in the wake of the retrenchments caused by the 1987 strike on the South African mines.

At the micro-level, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) has embarked on a strategy of engaging retrenched miners and their dependents in income-generating schemes in their home countries. It was in pursuit of this strategy that the Basotho Mineworkers Labour Cooperative (BMLC) was established in 1988. ... These projects, however, are not in any way a panacea to Lesotho’s chronic employment

crisis. It would be helpful if the government and the mining houses could contribute toward projects like these in order to enhance their rate of success.⁴²

Creating jobs within Lesotho may be very difficult, however. The BMLC has succeeded in creating employment for a few, but a very few, of the miners who have returned to Lesotho. Otherwise job creation in the country has certainly not kept pace with the return of mineworkers, much less the growth of the whole population.

The ultimate answer seems to lie for many Basotho migrants to establish a base in South Africa, even while keeping the base at home. It is probably true, as we have pointed out, that very few actually wish to live permanently in South Africa and that most wish to remain in Lesotho. The deep and moving call to Lesotho as home, and to “Sesotho” as a defining concept, that Coplan describes so well, remains powerful. But poverty and patriotism is not a marriage likely to last too long.

Moreover, it is important to remember that the poverty is not simply a phenomenon on Lesotho’s side of the border. The miners themselves know that there are serious problems in South Africa of crime, poor housing, lack of land, violence and lack of employment. Sechaba Consultants has noted the fact that “there is less hard core poverty in Lesotho than in South Africa.”⁴³ Miners sensibly wish to have the best of two difficult worlds.

In 1986 one writer identified a way forward:

With regard to the core labour-employing areas, the migratory labour system has spawned the development of two types of areas:

- The thriving industrial conurbations, typified by the Witwatersrand, where in addition to migrants, the settled urban Blacks have added their needs and spending power to those of the white population;
- Mines, scattered throughout the provinces, where there are only few houses for white miners and management, and a senior Black employee, a few shops and compounds for the miners.

The latter places seem to epitomize lost opportunities. Who can say what thriving industrious communities might have developed had the labour force been allowed to settle with their wives and families?⁴⁴

If migrants choose to take up permanent residence and settle with their families in the vicinity of the mines, then this hope for “thriving indus-

trious communities” to come into being may well come true. It is certainly the hope of those migrants who look forward to setting up small businesses in South Africa. These miners, moreover, will keep their ties in Lesotho, since almost none have indicated the desire to leave Lesotho totally. Perhaps this will be the future scenario: residence in both countries, loyalty to Lesotho and to “Sesotho”, income from South African economic growth, and maintenance of a fail-safe “bank account” of livestock in Lesotho.

What are the implications for Lesotho of such scenario? For one thing the GNP would decline. The exact amount is hard to predict, since even those miners who would take up permanent residence would leave some family members in Lesotho to whom they would send money. At the worst, if roughly 20% were to move to South Africa and send nothing to Lesotho, this could result in a loss of 71.3% of the mean net income of M836 for 19 000 men, or a total of M135 900 000 annually. A rough projection of the GNP for 1996 is about M4 000 000 000, so that the loss by migrants moving to South Africa would be about 3% of GNP.

A second result is that the border would become increasingly porous. Already Basotho are buying land in the Free State, moving freely back and forth to do business, attending school throughout South Africa, and seeking medical care in South Africa. It has often been pointed out that there are more Basotho in South Africa than in Lesotho, if Basotho are defined in terms of ethnicity and language rather than citizenship.⁴⁵

There are many scenarios as to the ways in which the border between Lesotho and South Africa might, if not disappear, at least melt into insignificance. These have been summarized by Stephen Gill, the Curator of the Morija Museum and Archives, under four headings: a re-unified Basotho state including much of South Africa’s present Free State Province, a federation of southern African states, the retention of the status quo, and what is called by Cobbe the “Eire Model”.⁴⁶ James Motlatsi, the President of the NUM and himself a citizen of Lesotho, has gone even farther, and opened the debate on whether Lesotho should simply be incorporated into South Africa.⁴⁷ The debate raged extensively at the time of his speech on Monday 14 March 1996, and still continues. Whatever the answer, it is clear that the miners see their futures as lying in both their home and their place of work. The ideal answer, in their eyes, is not an “either/or”, but a “both/and”. Whether that is possible remains to be seen.

APPENDIX

TABLE A1: Percentage of miners by ecological zone			
Ecological zone	% of miners 1993 poverty study	% of miners present sample	% of projected 1996 population
Lowlands/foothills	68.6%	65.3%	56.5%
Mountains/Senqu Valley	21.6%	25.4%	27.9%
Urban	9.8%	9.3%	15.6%

Note: The foothill and lowland zones are collapsed into one category, and the mountain and Senqu Valley zones collapsed into a second category. The enumerators had difficulty identifying which villages belonged to foothills or lowlands, and which villages belonged to mountains or Senqu Valley, because they were not physically present in the villages at the times of the interviews. Instead, the enumerators asked the miners to describe the area from which they came in order to make their own decision about the ecological zone.

TABLE A2: Household members			
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Age of miner	19	73	39.1
Age of wife	16	60	32.6
Miner's years of school	0	12	4.2
Wife's years of school	0	15	6.8
Number of members	1	15	5.6
Number of outside dependents	0	11	2.1
Number totally dependent	1	19	6.9
Number partly dependent	0	10	1.6

Note: The most common age group for miners is the 36-40 group, while that for the wives is the 31-35 age group. Only one of the miners is under 20, while two are over 60. The most common number of years of school for men is none, while 22.7% had no schooling. These figures agree closely with results obtained in the 1993 poverty study, where the mean years of school for miners was 4.3 years and 27.2% had failed to attend school.

The most frequent number of years of school for the wives is seven, with 29.6% having gone this far. Altogether only 28.2% of the miners have had at least seven years of school, while 62.2% of the wives have completed seven years or more. Altogether 84% of the households have had at least one member complete seven years or more, 35.3% of the households have had at least one member complete 10 years of school, and 12.7% of the households have had at least one member complete the full 12 years of school. We did not ask for the pass rate of those who completed Std 7, form C (or 10 years) and form E (or 12 years).

	Urban	Lowlands/ foothills	Mountains/ Senqu Valley	Total
Inside tap	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
Tap in yard	11.8%	2.9%	0.0%	3.5%
Communal	61.8%	72.3%	41.5%	64.5%
Other	25.0%	24.8%	58.5%	31.8%

	Urban	Lowlands/ foothills	Mountains/ Senqu Valley	Total
Flush toilet	1.3%	0.2%	0.0%	0.3%
VIP latrine	26.3%	8.0%	3.1%	9.4%
Other latrine	60.5%	61.8%	25.6%	54.0%
None	11.8%	29.9%	71.3%	36.2%

	Urban		Lowlands/ foothills		Mountains/ Senqu Valley		Total	
	Mean	Max	Mean	Max	Mean	Max	Mean	Max
Rooms	3.4	7	3.4	14	3.0	7	3.3	14
Vehicles	.040	1	.034	1	.03	1	.034	1
Radios	1.2	3	1.1	6	0.9	3	1.1	6
Televisions	0.25	2	0.16	1	0.04	2	0.14	2
Sewing/knitting machines	0.26	2	0.27	3	0.32	4	0.28	4

	Urban		Lowlands/ foothills		Mountains/ Senqu Valley		Total	
	Mean	Max	Mean	Max	Mean	Max	Mean	Max
Cattle	1.1	12	2.5	100	4.9	21	2.8	100
Sheep	0.8	28	2.1	96	17.3	300	5.1	300
Goats	0.6	30	2.2	200	9.3	120	3.5	200
Horses	0.1	5	0.2	4	1.2	10	0.4	10
Donkeys	0.2	5	0.4	6	1.0	7	0.5	7
Bags of cereals	2.9	46	7.3	100	4.9	24	6.3	100
Garden crops	2.0	6	1.5	7	1.1	6	1.5	7

TABLE A7: Financial resources of households in Maloti			
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Gross pay at mine per month	267	5 700	1 361
Net income at mine per month	87	2 078	836
Money sent home per month	0	1 600	538
Total income at home per month	0	4 000	619
Non-mining income at home per month	0	3 200	69
Monthly income per member	0	606	127
Value of savings account	0	53 000	1 276
Value of fixed assets at home	0	111 700	6 897
Value of houses at home	1 500	73 500	13 161
Value of livestock at home	0	110 000	5 291
Value of crops harvested in 1996	0	11 000	688
Value of fields at home	0	6 600	559
Resources available to household	5 579	134 626	33 117

- *Gross pay at mine per month*: Less than half the miners were able to state their gross pay before taxes, provident fund deductions, union dues and deferred pay. At the time of the interview, the miners did not have their pay slips with them. Wives also did not know the gross pay. This figure is thus skewed toward the higher-income miners, who seemed to have better knowledge of their pay packet. The minimum recorded is of a miner who worked only part time during the year. The others worked full-time.
- *Net income at mine per month*: This figure was calculated as the sum of savings, travel expenses, expenditures at the mine, purchases for the miner himself and for the family at home, and the amount sent home to the family. Wives were unable to give these amounts.
- *Money sent home per month*: This figure, as well as the following figures, is either the amount reported by the miner or the amount reported by the wife, depending on who was interviewed. The Central Bank of Lesotho reports in this connection: "It is estimated that on average a mineworker remitted around 71.3% of his total income. Total income includes wage income as well as non-wage income, while total remittances are made up of cash remittances and remittances-in-kind."⁴⁸ Our own data show

precisely the same figure, 71.3% of the miner's income on average is sent home either in the form of cash or in the form of goods.

- *Total income at home per month*: The total income includes the amount sent home by the miner, plus any other income earned at home.
- *Monthly income per member*: The total income per month is divided by the number of members in the household, but not by the total number of dependents.
- *Non-mining income at home per month*: This includes all other sources of income.
- *Value of savings account*: This figure was given by the miners or the wives. Altogether 68.2% of the miners or their wives reported having savings accounts. Of these, 88.7% kept their money in Lesotho while 11.3% kept their money in South Africa.
- *Value of fixed assets at home*: Fixed assets are defined as livestock, fields, vehicles, sewing or knitting machines, radios and television sets. A nominal market value in Maloti has been given to each, as follows: cattle, 1100; horses, 1500; donkeys, 600; sheep, 175; goats, 100; fields, 200 or the total crop value divided by the number of fields, whichever is larger; vehicles, 10 000; sewing or knitting machines, 1 000; radios, 200; television sets, 1 500. These values were chosen after extensive discussion with informed persons.
- *Value of houses at home*: Houses were valued according to the number of rooms. Each room was given a value of M1 500 times an income level. The income levels were defined in Maloti as follows: 1, less than 50 per member month; 2, between 50 and 100; 3, between 100 and 150; 4, between 150 and 200; 5, between 200 and 300; 6, between 300 and 400; 7, between 400 and 500; 8, greater than 500. The range is therefore between 1 500 and 12 000 per room, depending on the family income.
- *Value of livestock at home*: Livestock were valued as indicated in the discussion of fixed assets.
- *Value of crops harvested in 1996*: A bag of cereal crops was estimated as being worth M110. Pulses and garden crops were not taken into consideration.
- *Value of fields*: Fields were valued as indicated in the discussion of fixed assets. The minimum figure of M200 for a field was arbitrarily chosen to indicate the possible rental value of a field.
- *Resources available to household*: This is intended to represent money potentially available to household members if assets were

sold. It includes income received at home, the present balance in the savings account, the values of livestock, cereal crops harvested in 1996, houses, vehicles, sewing or knitting machines, radios, television sets, latrines, privately owned water sources, and deferred pay.

TABLE A8: Financial resources of households by ecological zone in Maloti					
	Urban	Lowlands	Foothills	Mountains	Senqu Valley
Gross pay at mine per month	1 315	1 420	1 325	1 289	1 626
Net income at mine per month	905	849	820	828	900
Money sent home per month	601	536	528	543	462
Total income at home per month	728	631	578	644	514
Non-mining income at home per month	116	77	39	95	41
Monthly income per member	156	136	119	118	101
Value of savings account	1 346	1 049	1 258	970	3 742
Value of fixed assets at home	3 331	5 497	5 781	13 502	11 634
Value of houses at home	15 938	14 972	12 181	10 830	10 966
Value of livestock at home	1 816	3 673	4 218	12 236	9 926
Value of crops harvested in 1996	317	798	818	559	477
Value of fields at home	251	634	636	518	468
Resources available to household	34 355	34 404	30 585	34 395	37 035

In terms of resource base by ecological zone, the principal difference between the areas lies in agriculture. Households in the mountains and in the Senqu Valley have far more livestock than other areas, leading to higher fixed assets in the mountains and Senqu Valley than elsewhere. Likewise, households in the foothills and mountains had better crop harvests in 1996 than other areas. The urban areas are at the bottom in both categories. There are no great differences between the areas in income and housing.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Anon, *Lesotho Poverty Assessment*, (Washington: World Bank, Report No. 13 171-LSO, 1995), p 1.
- 2 M Mhlanga, *Declining Migrant Incomes and Remittances: Effects and Repercussions, and Possible Implications for the Mafeteng Development Project*, (Maseru: Business Support Southern Africa, 1996), p 7.
- 3 J Gay and D Hall, *Poverty in Lesotho, 1994: A Mapping Exercise* (Maseru: Sechaba Consultants, 1994), p 7.
- 4 J Cobbe, “Macroeconomic Statistical Evidence From Lesotho” In J Crush and W James eds, *Crossing Boundaries: Mine Migrancy in a Democratic South Africa* (Cape Town: IDASA/IDRC, 1995), p 152.
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- 8 *ibid*, p xiv.
- 9 *ibid*, p 19.
- 10 *ibid*, p 5.
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- 12 *ibid*, pp 153-154.
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- 20 J Gay, "Basotho Women's Options: A Study in Marital Careers in Rural Lesotho" PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 1980, p 135.
- 21 E Gordon, *The Women Left Behind: A Study of the Wives of the Migrant Workers of Lesotho* (Geneva: International Labour Organization, 1978).
- 22 Van der Wiel, p 59.
- 23 *ibid*, p 34.
- 24 Department of Home Affairs Circular No. 9 of 1995.
- 25 Member states of the SADC are Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
- 26 Department of Home Affairs Circular (undated, unnumbered).
- 27 Information from Department of Home Affairs, Pretoria.
- 28 It is unclear whether miners are eligible for or are applying for the second amnesty. The miners obviously believe they are while South African officials say not.
- 29 D Coplan and T Thoahlane, "Motherless Households, Landless Farms: Employment Patterns among Lesotho Migrants", in J Crush and W James, ed, p 148.
- 30 D Coplan, *In the Time of Cannibals: The Word Music of South Africa's Basotho Migrants* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp 249-250. In our survey we refer to this cluster of attachments as "love of Lesotho" (Table 24).
- 31 C Keyter, "The Causes of Rural Poverty" in C Keyter, ed, *The Report on Proceedings of the Second Consultation on Migration and Development* (Maseru: Transformation Resource Centre, 1986), p 138.
- 32 Gay et al, p 105.
- 33 *ibid*, pp 107-108.
- 34 Anon, *Survey of Basotho Migrant Mineworkers*, p 15.
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- 48 *ibid*, p2.

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