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Men's Role in Persistent Rural Poverty: Lessons from Kenya

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Masculinities can be described as methods that men use to justify their superior and exploitative positions in any society. In hegemonic masculinities, men's power has been legitimized to reproduce social relationships that generate their dominance. This legitimacy is normalized through culture and gendered social responsibilities with dual transcripts (Cornwall and Lindisfarne 1994). Mies and Bennholdt-Thomsen (1988) expound this further by arguing that,

the various forms of asymmetric, hierarchical division of labour which were developed throughout history up to the stage where the whole world is now structured into one system of unequal division of labour under the dictates of capital accumulation, are based on the social paradigm of the predatory/hunter warrior who, without producing himself is able ... to appropriate and subordinate other producers, their productive forces and their products. This extractive, non-reciprocal exploitative ... nature remained the model for all other male modes of production.... The characteristic of this model is that those who control the production process and the products are themselves not producers but appropriators. Their so called productivity presupposes the existence and subjection of others – *those who sustain the non producers*. ... (N)on producers appropriate and consume what others have produced. Man-the-hunter is basically a parasite not a producer. (Mies and Bennholdt-Thomsen 1988: 91–2)

This explains why Kenyan societies and others societies across the globe legitimize and concentrate power positions on men with exclusive control over decisions, access and manipulation of social order and resources. At the same time, mechanisms to reinforce the subordinate social positions are put in place, which

is where most women, some men and children find themselves. As a result both women and men subscribe to this social order of rulers and ruled, owners and beggars, masters and subordinates. This order has brought the gender inequalities debate into the spotlight. There are various forums discussing hegemonic masculinities worldwide in terms of gender inequalities and inequities. The most current is contained in the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) report, which envisions an improved world by 2015. Improvement is measured in halving extreme poverty, reduction of child mortality and gender disparities, improved health and environment, and accelerated empowerment of women. The report states that,

gender equality is important not only as a goal in itself, but also as a path towards achieving other goals. Gender inequality ... tends to lower the productivity of labour and the efficiency of labour allocations in households and the economy, intensifying the unequal distribution of resources. It also contributes to the non-monetary aspects of poverty – lack of security, opportunity and empowerment – that lower the quality of life for both men and women. While women and girls bear the largest and most direct costs of these inequalities, the costs cut broadly across society, ultimately *hindering development and poverty reduction*. (World Bank 2003: 1)

The gender inequality that hinders development and perpetuates poverty results from the prevalence of hegemonic notions of masculinities at various levels within Kenyan communities. The discussion below zeroes in on '*productivity of labour and the efficiency of labour allocation in households*'. This is the first place to look in understanding masculine subjects' role in perpetuating persistent rural poverty. While the rest of the world attempts to include their women in decision-making positions as well as challenge masculinities, Africa has been giving the debate little attention. By and large within the continent, male domination is escalating and female subordination is deteriorating. Consequently, poverty has been escalating.

Various studies by researchers and development agencies spell out the abject and persistent poverty in Africa, both within the urban centres and the countryside. There are several theories on why Africans, whether within the continent or in diasporas, are at the bottom of the list when it comes to wealth and at the top of the ladder when it comes to poverty. Some schools of thought argue that slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism, unfair trade agreements and the continued exploitation of Africa's resources are to blame. Others argue that Africa's ills are not all of external origin: Africans and in particular African leaders, who are largely men, have contributed significantly to the continent's crises. In one sense we can say that hegemonic masculinities are responsible for perpetuating poverty especially in the rural areas. Men in the rural areas are therefore the subject of examination and discussion in this study because each one can make a contribution

within his own household to disentangling his family from the persistent rural poverty cycle.

Theories and explanations exist on the whys and hows of getting Africans out of abject poverty. But the gap in this debate, to which the study contributes, is on what contributions men can make within their households in order to get their families out of abject poverty. The study is based on rural men in Subukia locality, Nakuru district, Kenya. However, this study group represents many rural communities in Kenya in particular and Africa in general. It is an examination of the hegemonic masculinities with parasitic tendencies. These need to be examined in order to understand why poverty is persistent in the continent.

This study was triggered by the 'Gender, Growth, and Poverty Reduction' World Bank Report by Mark Blackben and Chitra Bhanu. In 1999, before the final report was written, I had the honour of listening to Dr Bhanu present her impressive report in Nairobi. Gender inequality in Sub-Saharan Africa came out as one of the major factors hindering the region's economic growth in this globalizing era. None of those present could argue with that. Most of us were witnesses of this inequality in all spheres of our own lives and those of our sisters in all socio-political and economic spheres in the country. The report's gender analysis is convincing but the labour recommendation triggered the need to find out what men in rural areas were doing. In Bhanu's report, men's limited contribution is given attention, but the recommendation is to '... raise labour productivity in the household economy by reducing the time burden of domestic work...' (Blackben and Bhanu 1999: 46), and redirect women's labour to marketable production. But domestic chores keep rural households functioning. Therefore, the proposal that women divert some of their time and labour to marketable production from domestic chores may have serious negative impacts on the families. The question then is: *why not make men more active in subsistence and marketable production instead of asking that women shift their time from domestic work to marketable production?* I was prompted to examine such a possibility where men would put more time and hence labour in household production. However, such an idea required a survey to establish that there is underutilized male labour and time allocation within rural households. Consequently, a pilot survey was carried out in 2002 in Subukia area of Nakuru district in the Rift Valley Province in Kenya.

Gendered Time and Labour in Rural Households

Rural development studies in Kenya and other African societies show that African women are overworked. They put in long hours to produce most of the food in the continent while at the same time providing substantial labour for cash crop production (Mwaka 1993; Government of Kenya (GoK) 1994; Boserup 1970; Chambers 1983; Rathgeber and Kettel 1989). The question that has not been

answered is: *when women were doing all this, what were men doing?* This is where gender analysis becomes important as a tool to help us examine the actual contributions of men and women and boys and girls in household production. Unfortunately, most gender studies give little analysis on men as a category. In this omission men are left free, as in the case of household production activities. Hence this study attempts to make men a factor of analysis in order to understand the role hegemonic masculinities play in men's attitudes towards work in contemporary farming communities in Kenya, and Africa in general. This may explain the causal factors in the production and maintenance of persistent rural poverty in Africa, using the lessons from Kenya.

What is Persistent Poverty?

Persistent poverty is 'the socio-economic phenomenon whereby the resources available to a society (or household) are used to satisfy the wants of the few while many do not have even their basic needs met' (Kurien 1978, cited in Friedmann 1992). That being the case, one can propose that within rural households, persistent poverty occurs where labour, time and other resources are skewed towards members of the masculine gender in rural households where, owing to hegemonic notions of masculinities, most men are in control of all other members' labour, time and the resources available. They take the lion's share while often making the most minimal contributions towards their household production. They do this because they '... inhabit positions of power *which* ... legitimises and reproduces social relationships that generate their dominance' (Corrigan et al. 1985: 92, cited in Conwell and Lindsfarne 1994: 19). Hence, there is no gender equity in labour and time use or equality in resource distribution within the various levels of society.

The privileges inherent in hegemonic masculinities are in part responsible for women working long hours, sometimes with the help of children, to provide the bulk of the labour in rural households' production (see Table 4 below) while men do little within the same households. Unfortunately, the labour of women and children is not adequate to lift rural households out of poverty, because most of it is spent in domestic chores and subsistence production. That is why Blackden and Bhanu (1999) advocated that women release some of the time spent on domestic and subsistence production to marketable production, which is financially rewarding, in order for households to break the cycle of poverty. The drawback with this suggestion is that it plays into the prevailing masculine ideologies, which do not question why women are working long hours, why their labour revolves around domestic chores and the subsistence economy, and what men contribute either to the domestic and subsistence economy or to the marketable economy.

Rural poverty has persisted all over the world for various reasons including unfavourable agricultural policies and global trade swings among others. Little has changed in the daily experience of rural people except more poverty.

Hegemonic masculine notions sustain the systems of domination that result in gender inequalities at various levels of society including and starting from the household levels. Though women '... bear the largest and the most direct costs of these inequalities, ... the costs cut more broadly across society ultimately harming everyone – *the household, the community and the nation at large*' (King and Andrew 2001: 1). In the process persistent rural poverty structures are maintained.

In Kenya the government estimated that in 2001 56% of the population, or 17 million people, were living below the poverty line. Three-quarters of these were in the rural areas, and were mostly women (GoK 2003). According to Thomas-Slayter, Rocheleau and Asamba (1995), about 74% of rural households are under the management of women on a full-time basis. Although some men move to urban areas in search of non-existent jobs, a considerable number remain within rural households. This is the group that this work zeroed in on to examine *why rural households with both spouses present are caught up in a cycle of poverty*. The discussion below is based on a sample of households with land as a basic resource from which families should eke out a living by engaging household members in farming activities.

Friedmann (1992: 46) describes a household as 'a pattern of relationships and processes that connect the household to extended family, neighbours, the market economy and civic and political associations'. It is the primary polity in human organization. A household socializes its members from one generation to the next about their gender roles, expectations and position within and outside the household. It also shapes the gender relations within it and the larger society as it socializes its new members. The household economy is central to civil society through which market and non-market relations are articulated. The household does this by continuously solving the problem of allocating time and hence labour of its individual members to different tasks and different rewards. The household here is taken to represent people living together in one familial compound composed of adults of both sexes and children.

Rural households are the unit of analysis in this discussion. They are taken here as the most important institutions in addressing persistent poverty because they do have a stake in how successful poverty alleviation programmes would be. Friedmann (1992) reinforces this by arguing that the household is the most important unit for empowerment. Using the household as the basic unit of analysis makes it possible to 'start with people and not things' (Chambers 1983). This is important in understanding persistent rural poverty because it forces one to examine what each individual member does or fails to do in creating wealth or perpetuating poverty within a household. This brings us to examine what men and boys in contrast to women and girls do to contribute to the household production because '... equal sharing of responsibilities and a harmonious partnership between men

and women are critical to their wellbeing and that of their families...’ (DAW 2004: 4).

Do those men who remain at home work along with the women to provide the basic needs within their households? The assumption is that time and male labour are abundant resources in these households. If the two are efficiently used, they could help a family to get out of poverty. If carried out by all the men in a locality, the chains of persistent poverty would be broken within that locality. The research purpose was to show that rural households have excess male time and labour, which if tapped could make differences in household production, breaking the poverty cycle. The intent was to show that there is underutilized male time and labour in rural households, which should be the target in alleviation of poverty/wealth creation designs. The survey examined time and labour, the two factors that rural households with resident male members have in abundance, and which are within their authority to control and manage.

Research methods included a survey, focus group discussions and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) gender calendar data from rural communities in Kenya, to establish that men had extra time or unused time and hence extra labour for rural household production activities. The survey used a structured questionnaire administered to 33 men in Subukia locality of Nakuru district. Sampling was purposeful to capture only those households where the men were at home most of the year. It also targeted men young enough to have children of primary school age. In addition six informal women group discussions on gendered time use were held in the area. Twelve gender daily calendar results from various PRAs from different parts of the country were also analysed, to enrich the results from the survey and the discussions. Only men were interviewed because existing gendered labour analysis focused mostly on women, omitting men. However, gender discourse has to balance both men and women (DAW 2004).

Households in rural Kenya operate in a fast-changing world but indigenous systems still dictate the conduct of the members. The man, whether ever-present or occasionally present, is still the *de facto* head of the household. Household members find themselves in a new patriarchal system – a hybrid of Judeo-Christian colonial form and the traditional African form. The current hegemonic masculinities operating in Kenya tolerate minimal male contributions in household productions. This in turn reinforces and promotes masculine power in rural Kenya in particular. The result is a new form of patriarchy where there is *authority with minimal responsibility*. Men in rural Kenya are rarely answerable to anyone within their respective households because they are the heads and hence the decision-makers. They can work if they so wish but there appears a lack of societal expectations from them within the rural social structure. Meanwhile, women are blamed if the family is poor, if there is not enough food, if the house is unkempt, if the farms are not

properly cultivated and the yields are low and if children cannot go to school. When these things happen, it is the woman who is perceived as failing.

Under prevailing notions of masculinities in rural Kenya, men are allowed to withdraw from domestic production activities with little or no official criticism (Silberschmidt 1999; focus group discussions with women). This is how researchers, policy-makers and poverty eradication strategists miss the role men can play within their household production, including participating in both domestic, subsistence and marketable production work. In fact if men participated in domestic chores, then women could release their saved labour and time for marketable production, as Blackben and Bhanu advocated in their report.

However, this is not the case. Findings from this study confirmed what others have stated, that women in Kenyan rural households work on the farm, the house, the school, the church and on government projects. As Okot p'Bitek would ask in *Song of Lawino*, 'African woman what are you not?' Yet, it was not till 1970 when Esther Boserup published her work that the world began to appreciate the overworked African woman. Unfortunately, this knowledge has not been translated into policies and programmes that would make men in rural households become active in household economic activities. Gender inequalities at the household level are a block to effective use of excess labour and time, especially those of the men in these households.

Impact of Gender Inequalities on Household Labour Allocation

Africa's household relationships are characterized by inequality in the distribution of work, land, income, consumption and contribution to productivity (*use of time*), based on gender and age (Mwaka 1993; Blackben and Bhanu 1999). This inequality is most pronounced in the division of labour between men and women and boys and girls within the same household. It manifests in societal expectations of each member of the household. Inequality that allows little expectations from men and older boys creates enormous inefficiencies in family labour allocations and time use. This results in loss of opportunities to improve the household economy. As Blackben and Bhanu (1999) found, efficient labour allocation at the household level (that is, shifting women's labour from domestic chores to producing goods for sale) would increase yields by 20% in one year. Like many other economists and rural development scholars, they failed to note underutilized male labour and time. Hence the question, *what would be the economic impact of putting underutilized male labour into household production?* We will answer this by referring to a summary from twelve communities where PRA was conducted between 1999 and 2001 by the Environmental Science Department of Egerton University, Kenya.

Table 1: Gender Daily Calendars (12 Communities, 1999–2001)

Villages where PRA was conducted	Hours men spent working	Hours women spent working
Kihingo	2	16
Mutiume	6	15
Mwireri	5	15
Kwanjiku	5	16
Thiru	7	16
Mungetho	5	17
Sikokhe	4	14
Kerma-a	3	14
Kerma-b	9	14
Mutito-a	7	15
Dikale	4	19
Total	57	155
Average	5	13

Source: compiled from PRA Reports: PRA Programme, Egerton University, Kenya.

Gender daily calendars are produced by separating groups of men and women from a zone or locality. A male group and a female group are set apart and asked to record a regular day with their activities. The hours spent working were solicited from men and women who voluntarily indicated the number of hours they worked within the household.

Table 2: Male Time Used in Subukia

Respondent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Hrs worked	3	4	3	0	3	7	3	2	2	4	4	3	3	5	0	0	6
Respondent	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	
Hrs worked	7	0	6	4	6	5	1	2	0	4	5	2	4	6	5	8	

Average hours worked from 33 respondents was 4 hrs.

Source: Compiled by the author from the survey.

Table 2 shows the hours men admitted to have invested in household production in the Subukia area. These two tables confirmed that women in Subukia work longer hours. But they also tell us that men in the same households are spending too little time, an average of between four or five hours a day, in household production. Some of them were not engaged in any way at all in their respective household production. The interview results show that 12% of all those interviewed did not engage in any productive activities within their households and yet they eat, wash/bathe, dress, and some smoke and some drink. Their female partners largely provide for all these personal needs. These results portray the parasitic hegemonic masculinities within Kenya's rural households. This is not only traceable in Kenya, for most of Africa's agricultural communities are facing similar challenges (*New Internationalist* 1986).

What Does the Unequal Gender Time Allocation Mean?

To answer this question it was imperative to calculate family incomes pegged on unskilled farm labour costs. Table 3 shows us the rate of pay for unskilled farm labour.

The government wage limit for agricultural non-skilled labour is Ksh 1428.00 a month for an 8-hour day and a 5-day week (GoK-CBS 2001: 58), which is about Ksh 72.00 or USD 1.00 a day. If we assume that the two adult members of a household agree on selling/costing their labour, then they would make a total of Ksh 3400.00 (about \$500) a month while working only five hours in a day on their farm or selling their labour to other farmers in the neighbourhood. The two adults would be able to earn about Ksh 113.00 per day ($3400/30 = 113$), just slightly above US\$ 1.50 a day.

Table 3: Unskilled Farm Labour in Subukia Community

	Women		Men	
	Kenya shillings	US dollars	Kenya shillings	US dollars
Payments/day	70.00	1.00	100.00	1.50
Payments/hour	14.00	0.20	20.00	0.30
Money earned/ month	$70 \times 5 \times 4 =$	Approx.	$100 \times 5 \times 4 =$	
Approx	1400.00	20.00	2000.00	28.00

Source: Personal communication with labourers and farmers in the study community.

However, this is not the case because in most households men do less than 5 hours of productive work such as hoeing, weeding, milking, planting and other duties within a household (see Table 4 below), while women do more than 10

hours, most of which is in domestic chores like fetching water and firewood, cooking and cleaning, mending and attending communal duties, all of which do not contribute much to tangible production. But they are nonetheless important daily chores for family survival.

We may ask: what would happen if men in these households increased the time spent on productive work from 5 to 8 hours a day? This would increase the family income from Ksh 3400.00 to Ksh 5400.00 a month, which would translate into Ksh 180.00 a day ($5400/30 = 180.00$), the equivalent of US\$ 2.25 per day. Such an increase would move the family from persistent poverty and from under the poverty line. An extra four hours invested by the man in the household would more than double the family income. If this happens, the family would make some savings and have a chance of breaking the cycle of persistent poverty. Thus if male time within the household is efficiently used, the family can create the needed wealth to escape the poverty trap. If those four hours would be spent on the marketable production that Blackben and Bhanu referred to, they might improve the household's income even more. It should be noted that the positive contribution of male labour discussed above is at the level of the most poorly paid unskilled farm labour.

Table 4 highlights gender labour contributions in rural households.

Table 4: Labour Contribution by Gender within Kenyan Households

Activity	Women's labour contribution	Men's labour contribution
Food processing	90%	10% (with children's assistance)
Reproduction and domestic chores	95%	5% (with children providing the bulk of support)
Transportation of marketable farm to market	60%	40% including motorized products from transportation
Food processing and storage	80%	20%
Hoeing and weeding	90%	10% (with children's assistance)
Harvesting and marketing	60%	40%
Average	82%	18%

Source: Adapted from Blackben and Bhanu (1999) and Government of Kenya (1994).

On the average, women's labour contribution constitutes 82% while men, assisted by children, provide the remaining 18%. This is because, as we have seen in

Tables 1 and 2, men spend considerably less time in household production activities. Thus, inability to engage excess male time and labour means the loss of opportunities to create wealth within those households.

Given the existing gender stereotypes in rural communities, it may be difficult to expect men and boys to engage in domestic chores. However, PRA discussions have enabled male participants to realize and acknowledge that they are not doing enough and that there is room for improvement. Few role models exist in those communities of men who are themselves substantially engaged in household production. Such families prove what contributions men and bigger boys in rural households can offer in creating wealth for their families and getting them out of abject persistent poverty.

Where Should Men Spend their Extra Time Within Rural Household Economies?

Those men with underutilized labour and time could engage themselves in harvesting and marketing, hoeing and weeding, processing, storage and transportation. As Table 4 shows, there are activities within rural households that underutilized male labour could be engaged in. If that happens, there will be extra labour from both genders to be engaged in marketable productions. In this way dominant hegemonic masculinities would be moderated to give room for gender equity.

What Did the Women Living with these Men Say?

The focus group discussions confirmed that many men in rural households have excess time and underutilized labour. Women reported that with the failure of most men to 'help', none of their chores is done well and often they are never completed. For example, they reported that preparing the gardens for planting is never done or if done is done very poorly as the women juggle all the other responsibilities in the home. Planting is occasionally late, weeding is never thorough and sometimes is done very late. Occasionally, the families incur substantial losses owing to lack of time. For instance, post-harvest losses are one consequence of poor preparation of the storage facilities in the family. This in turn causes food deficits for most families. Others are able to have just enough for household consumption in situations where excess for sale can be produced if the male adults within the households agree to work alongside the women and children on the farm.

When asked why this is so, women observed that the main problem is lack of help from most men and some of the bigger boys in the households who still require food and other personal needs that most times women have to provide. Do men produce anything? The women answered yes, but more often than not what they produce was for their personal use only. On other occasions, they help

technically in order to claim or legitimize their control of the produce and its marketing.

As Table 3 shows, most men are mostly engaged in transportation and marketing activities, where they provide 40% of the labour, a fourfold contribution compared to hoeing and weeding, where they give only 10%. This is in spite of the fact that hoeing and weeding are the crucial chores in crop production.

In these group discussions, stories were shared of how men steal food and sell it. Some men will wait for the spouse to go to church or take a child to the clinic to sell what they have stolen. A female participant reported how she came home one day to discover that there was no single grain of maize in the granary to cook for the evening. All the ninety bags of harvested grain were gone, and the husband was gone too. Labour shortages in rural areas are more often than not attributed to labour migration into urban centres (Macharia 2002). Yet, rural neighbourhoods are littered with idle men on the roads and market centres in mid-morning, features of a distressing underutilization of masculine labour and time.

What Explanations Did Men in the Survey Give?

The survey sought men's explanations on their use of time and labour in household production. When asked why they do so little at home, men said that they expected to have jobs in offices. They blamed the government for failing to provide them with white-collar jobs as they were promised when they were growing up and going to school. When asked what should be the solution, they said that government must create jobs: that it is the government's responsibility to set up factories and industries for them to work in. The implication of this is that if work is in the fields as Table 4 indicates, this is meant for women and children. Masculine ideologies came out clearly in these interviews. The interviewees' perceptions of what being a masculine subject is all about were expressed in their laxity in engaging themselves in activities that would make their lives better simply because they were socialized to expect formal jobs after having been to school. To them, the drudgery of farming is for women.

The school and education per se in Kenya are major socializing agents. Unfortunately, they have so far served to reinforce hegemonic masculinities and stereotyped gender attributes in both male and female learners. And because Kenya's education system like many others within the continent was inherited from the colonial masters, it has not changed its primary goal of producing clerks for the colonial government. In 1985, Daniel Arap Moi, the then President of Kenya, pronounced a presidential decree for a changed education system whose goal was to inculcate basic skills for entrepreneurship among the nation's learners. The idea was good but poorly planned and implemented, and it did not achieve its noble goal. Today, this system, known as the 8-4-4 system, has gone

through several incremental changes. It is serving the same purpose as the colonial system and the post-colonial system. As in any other region, men participate more in education than women. This seems to give them the licence to seek only formal employment and to look down on manual work. When formal clerical jobs are not available, they fail to acknowledge other options within their settings.

Women's Opinions on Men's Underutilized Labour

Women's opinions on men's underutilized labour were interesting. They blamed the government for being blind to masculine idleness. They recalled an administrative police officer in the local chief's office who hated idlers. He would arrest them and get the local chief to punish them. This made men work. Though they primarily worked for themselves, they made positive contributions to their household economies because women did not have to share their proceeds with them. By the time of the study, this was not happening and women wished there could be laws to force men to work on their farms. Subukia women's sentiments confirm those of Tanzanian women, as reported by Blackben and Bhanu (1999). Tanzanian women who were participating in a land bill workshop expressed interest in '... a bill that (*would*) force men to work harder so that they would be too tired in the evenings to beat their wives' (Blackben and Bhanu 1999: 83). Similar sentiments were expressed by women from Nyandarua district in Kenya when contributing to Kenya's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) in 2000. They said that in order to reduce poverty in their district, men must work and that the government should introduce a personal tax that would force those men who are not very active to become fully engaged in order to pay the tax. This strategy, according to the Nyandarua women, would make the men work and contribute to household production (discussion with Nyandarua women at PRSP forums).

Conclusion

The aim of this study has been to establish that most men living in rural Kenya do not fully utilize their labour and time adequately to help in their household production in order to create wealth to raise their families out of abject poverty. In order to demonstrate this, it was imperative to establish that these men have excess labour and time, and also record the impact of efficient use of that excess labour and time towards generating family income. The gender daily calendar, interviews with men and focus group discussions with women all pointed out that dominant hegemonic masculinities pose specific obstacles to poverty alleviation and gender equity in Kenya. These masculine notions projecting male supremacy have perpetuated gender stereotyping and male domination in decision-making at all levels of society, particularly at the household level. Hence, other family members pay a heavy price because men tend to contribute minimally although they share equally with the producers the proceeds in those households.

Table 3 attempted to show the impact improved male contributions in family labour would make in creating wealth for the family and getting it out of the poverty trap. In this scenario, it is clear that what is needed is to encourage more men and bigger boys to be active participants in the responsibilities of their families and their households, and especially in areas where they can contribute significantly in the production of goods and services for subsistence and for marketing.

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