

**DIFFERENTIATION IN THE RURAL ECONOMY OF SOUTHERN GHANA:
A VILLAGE CASE STUDY.**



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ABSTRACT

This thesis sets out to examine the social and economic organisation of the farming economy in the Amansie West District of Ghana, focusing on a particular village - Antoakrom - as a case study. It uses some historical background but concentrates on the contemporary farming system.

The main focus of the thesis is the way in which the social organisation of the community affects the farming system and how this presents opportunities or constraints to different groups of farmers. In this respect gender divisions were found to be very important.

The local farming patterns of men and women are examined in relation to the wider 'macro' economy and the possible effects this may have on the local economy, particularly in relation to the price of cocoa and food crops over the last 10-20 years. Some consideration is also given to the possible effects of Structural Adjustment. However, the thesis concentrates on the social relations of production that exist within the local economy and how these shape the different farming patterns of men and women. It looks at issues concerning rights to land, labour use and access to capital. There are also chapters on market trading and processing and on particular government intervention and development issues that are important to the local economy and surrounding area.

The findings of the research highlight the importance of looking at factors internal to the organisation of the local economy in explaining the response of individual farmers to the local and macro economy, and in particular the necessity of looking at gender relations in understanding differential access to the means of production within the local economy - although age and wealth are also seen to be significant factors in shaping farmers choices. These findings have much in common with the findings of similar studies in other areas, but once again show the need to look at the local situation when decisions are made concerning economic policy and development initiatives.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: SMALL SCALE FARMING SYSTEMS - OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

This thesis examines the social and economic organisation of food crop farming in Amansie West, southern Ghana using a village case study. My main concern is the way in which the organisation of social relations of production and the internal characteristics of economic units affect farming patterns. The thesis shows how differential access to resources affects farming strategies, and in particular how gender is fundamental in explaining this differential access. Consideration is also given to the possible influence that factors outside the local economy might have on farming patterns; as Guyer points out, 'It is clear..that commodity production has been influenced by political factors outside the local economy and adopted or resisted according to the structure of relations within it.' (1981:123). On one level farming patterns in southern Ghana are influenced by the 'macro' economy of markets, price incentives and government intervention, but on another (and I argue more important) level, they are dictated by the social relations of production that exist in the local economy and the opportunities or constraints these present.

Therefore, while documenting the importance of external factors in the choices farmers make, I stress the strategies developed by farmers themselves to make a living in the late 1980s. As Long argues,

'The central analytical challenge is to explain the various adaptations that arise, by showing how different dimensions intersect: for example, state development policies, the changing nature of the national economy and international commodity markets, the pattern of rural-urban relations, and the persisting (though possibly restructured) local institutions and social processes.' (1984:2 emphasis added).

It is important to understand the local economy and the structures within it since it is rural small scale farmers who make up the majority of the population, and it is the strategies of these farmers on which the state of the agricultural economy depends, both for internal consumption and export. A fundamental question therefore is: What constraints and opportunities are posed by the village economy? In order to encourage and facilitate the development of agriculture in Ghana, to enable self sufficiency if nothing else, it is necessary to understand the situation of those at the 'grass roots' level. So much macro economic theory, particularly that which is currently concerned with planning Structural Adjustment appears to ignore this part of the economy.

I have not had the opportunity to carry out a longitudinal survey to look at changing strategies over

an extended period, but my data provide valuable comparisons between the contemporary problems of different farmers in the current economic climate. My data show striking differences between the farming strategies of men and women. It is important to recognise and to consider why these differences occur since the policies of many government and non-government organisations are 'gender blind'. Such policies are often devised from the 'top' using information from national surveys without an understanding of the 'micro' village level (see Chapter 9). This obviously has serious implications for the farming system as a whole, and for women in particular.

Depending on the external circumstances, local structures may inhibit or promote an individual's attempt to structure or restructure economic life, and although a particular economic stimulus may present itself to all farmers, it is well known that individuals respond very differently (1). I suggest that the opportunities and constraints placed on farming patterns depend largely on the types of local social and economic resources available, and how they are utilised. As I have already suggested, and as this thesis shows, gender relationships are fundamental in explaining local farming patterns. Women have unequal access to the means of production, and the access of men and women to the resources of production is crucial in deciding the farming strategies they employ. Although this thesis shows that gender is the most

important form of differentiation in the local economy, other forms of differentiation are considered. In particular, 'local' or 'stranger' status (see Chapter 4); and age and wealth are also discussed.

In my particular research area there has been a long history of cocoa production, but output has fallen since the 1960s and there was little new planting in the late 1970s and early 1980s. At that time some farmers invested in alternative crops. One of the issues addressed in this thesis is the reason why some farmers were able to do this while others could not.

Ghana has long been in the grip of an economic recession and agricultural output generally has been falling. From the mid 1960s Ghana's economy had gone into decline, worsening in the 1970s until in 1983, against much internal opposition, the government implemented a programme of economic recovery (ERP) directed by a World Bank/IMF Structural Adjustment Programme (see Chapter 2). Ghana is currently in the midst of this programme that is being carried out in three phases. It is designed to bring the economy out of recession with various measures such as devaluation, import liberalisation, increased cocoa and other producer prices and an increase in the efficiency of state owned enterprises. However, it is difficult to evaluate the full impact of these policies as the lives of many rural Ghanaians seem to have changed very little. In

fact many of the farmers in this study have been adversely affected by ERP because input prices and consumer goods prices have increased by more than output prices (Smith 1987). In many ways the local economy appears to function in spite of as well as in relation to the wider economy.

Apart from gender relations, another area of differentiation that is considered in this thesis is that between those individuals who are 'locals' in the village (members of land owning lineages) and those they consider to be 'strangers' (people of different ethnic origin, or those who are of the same ethnic group, but who are not members of a local land owning lineage). Although the differentiation in access to resources between locals and strangers is not as marked as it is between men and women (because it is easier to overcome - as subsequent chapters will show) it is nevertheless considered to be of significance in the village and does affect farming strategies.

There are many theoretical debates that deal with the issues discussed so far. There are 'macro' economic theorists who look at factors outside the local economy that may influence production strategies, while there are others who recognise the need to understand the ways in which local structures affect farming patterns in a much more fundamental way. In the following sections some consideration will be given to the theoretical debates

concerning the possible influence of both external and internal factors on the farming system.

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES ON FARMING STRATEGIES

Government Intervention and Political Change.

Increasing producer prices is one way that the government hopes to influence the production strategies of small scale farmers within southern Ghana in its current Economic Recovery Programme (ERP). However, there has been much theoretical debate as to whether price alone presents a stimulus to grow certain crops. It is, of course, an incentive to farmers if what they grow fetches a good price, either wholesale or in the market, but it is often very difficult to gauge this incentive. There have been many attempts to do this with varying degrees of success, and many agricultural policies world wide are based on such incentives (Chapter 2 gives an account of the Ghanaian government's aims under ERP). In this thesis it is argued that while some farmers do respond to price incentives others do not, and this can only be explained in terms of the broader social and economic context in which decisions about cropping strategies are made, since according to individual circumstances and preferences, different farmers may disagree about the relative importance of different crops and their returns.

Many authors have addressed this debate, in particular Chibnick (1978) and Mellor (1966). Chibnik tries to determine the value of what he calls 'subsistence' crops in relation to cash crops, and argues that 'sensible' farmers should value subsistence production at retail price (in fact somewhat above it). Mellor also argues that a higher price has to be attached to crops grown for home consumption, since in effect the farmer pays the retail price for what he buys and gets the wholesale price for what he sells. However, both also recognise that the different needs, resources and preferences of individual farmers will influence their cropping strategies - although neither adequately addresses possible constraints on these strategies.

However, others have looked rather differently at this issue. In the 1960s much was written about the notion of farmers as 'rational economic men [sic]', in direct opposition to debates which had gone before concerning the inherently conservative or 'tradition bound' nature of farming communities. It was argued that farmers responded to economic incentives, for example to changes in the prices of the commodities they produced, and that they were not so much conservative as constrained by available resources (2). This argument has been modified by Lipton (1982), who suggests that farmers 'optimise' rather than 'maximise' - since they must minimise risk and uncertainty as well as orient themselves to profit. He

argues that not all farmers are equally endowed with resources, and not all can therefore withstand risk to the same extent. Farmers are not all likely to be 'consistently rational' in economic terms anyway, because rational economic values are only part of an individual's total value system. This point will be discussed in the village case study in relation to the choices farmers are seen to make.

Knowledge about the way in which farmers make decisions about their production strategies has been developed in the current 'populist' debate that is concerned with the value of indigenous knowledge. Research is being focused on the decisions farmers make about the best strategies to employ in any given situation, (Karimu and Richards 1981). Richards explores this in *Indigenous Agricultural Revolution* (1985), one of the arguments of which is that: 'Small scale farmers are capable of making changes in their own interest which are potentially of benefit to society as a whole.' (1985:16). Richards argues that evidence suggests that small scale farming is not merely adaptive, but dynamic and innovative also.

Inevitably government intervention in production does have some impact even on the smallest farmer. There are few people who live outside the range of at least a nominal administrative control of some description. This means that while government policy may influence farming

strategy, so too does political change. Political upheaval in the form of changes in government, for example, is likely to increase policy incoherence and discontinuity. In a rural context it is also likely to mean continued stagnation through mismanagement and non-implementation of policies. It is commonplace that while new leaders like to talk about reform in terms of populist policy measures that include the whole population in their plans, they find themselves unable to fulfil their promises as easily as they would like (see Chapters 2 and 9).

Hart (1982) argues that successful transformation of an agricultural society can only take place with the encouragement of an effective state. The central proposition of his argument follows the Weberian principal that 'successive political forms, both state and rural property and office, have been the determining influence restricting West Africa's development' (Hart 15:1982). He argues that there is now a 'pressing need' for new political forms to encourage development, and that national governments must create conditions under which high levels of productivity in commercial agriculture can develop. Hart basically advocates the adoption of a capitalist approach to farming. However, while this may be a solution in principle, it seems that it is not always possible in practice, since he admits that in real terms, so far, the needs of commercial agriculture have been subordinated to those of state formation in West Africa.

Even where agricultural interests are given importance, it is common that policy makers (both foreign and domestic) are only trying to provide basic needs. As far as increasing levels of food production is concerned Lewis recognised this need in Ghana long ago, 'The most certain way to promote industrialisation in the Gold Coast is to lay the foundation it requires by taking vigorous measures to raise food production per person engaged in agriculture.' (1953:58). But, as Seidman (1978) points out, Lewis failed to identify the institutional changes that would be needed to attain the goal of the expansion of agricultural output. Under ERP some attempt is being made towards institutional change, but with limited success (Chapters 2 and 9) (3).

Much of what has been written about the need for development in sub-Saharan Africa has been criticised for its lack of understanding of particular local situations, and the tendency to base plans on dubious official statistics (see Chapter 9). Hill (1986) cites the Berg Report (1981) (4) as a report that 'provides a good example of a recent tendency to base weighty discussions on official statistics which are simultaneously admitted to be of doubtful quality' (1986:49). One of the main points in the Berg Report is the discussion of low productivity in the food crop economy through the 60s and 70s - but Hill is inclined to quote the use of statistics that are unconvincing.

Low production in both foodstuffs and other crops is often blamed on the type of cultivation practices, but few, if any, African states give non-export crops the same support in research, production and marketing that they give to export crops. While the government in Ghana has tried to encourage diversification in the farming sector (see Chapter 9), it has also contributed towards making cocoa the sole income generating crop for many farmers in the south, a dangerous position when fluctuations in world price are considered (5).

Underlying modern influences is the legacy of colonial intervention in agriculture. One of the most fundamental points about West Africa is that after 1900 colonial rulers were only furthering a process of commercialisation that was already underway, and that what is happening now is only a further step in the same direction. Coastal trade with the interior had been going on as early as the 16th century, and Hopkins (1972) argues that colonialism marked an 'expansionist' phase in the evolution of the market economy - in other words it was a 'stage' of capitalism. The traditional argument is that colonial governments were responsible for introducing and managing economic change, but, as Hopkins argues, it seems that, 'the most important and successful experiments, however, were those undertaken by Africans themselves, without European supervision' (1972:138)

Throughout Africa much of what colonial governments did relates to the infrastructure that they provided, the building of roads and the implementation (albeit late in many places) of some kind of organised agricultural policy through Departments of Agriculture. In West Africa, for example, colonial governments influenced the production of cocoa by providing incentives for production, and a basic infrastructure for marketing and help with disease control; in Ghana they set up the Cocoa Marketing Board (6).

Market and Urban Demand.

In addition to the direct and indirect effects of government policy, farmers are also obviously influenced by the market for what they grow. There are numerous accounts of the marketing of foodstuffs in Ghana, not least because there is a long history of long distance and overseas trade as well as a very complex internal structure for the marketing of food. There are both formal and informal networks for marketing which means that although the sale of produce can appear chaotic to the outsider, both inside and outside the market place, it is in fact highly organised. In 1972 Jones wrote:

'If tropical African markets for basic foodstuffs worked less well, we should probably know a great deal more about them. The truth of the matter is that they have done a remarkably good job of their first task, which is the provisioning of cities and towns and of the large mining developments' (1972:18). (7)

In many African states, including Ghana, the demand for food has provided an incentive for farmers to produce for urban markets, and the operation of free market prices under the policies of Structural Adjustment in many, has been an additional incentive. Swindell (1987) argues that those who live within urban hinterlands are likely to produce for urban demand, 'Farming reflects the rising demand for urban foodstuffs... producers are not only offering fortuitous surpluses in the market place, but have become small commodity producers whose farming is geared towards the urban market.' (1987:1). The production of food for markets has also been made easier with the improvement of infrastructure such as roads. With better transport facilities, the differences between local and long distance trade have been evened out to some degree, and it has become profitable to trade outside the area of production (Hopkins 1972). This argument is examined in Chapter 8.

While providing an urban market for foodstuffs, towns also provide an opportunity to work outside farming. This work often provides capital needed to invest in farming. Non-farm work can provide a substantial proportion of the income of a farming household, and can become a major part in the process of reinvestment in and expansion of commercial farming.

The same two points are raised over and over again in much of what has been written about the provision of food for both urban and rural populations. The first is that, 'The extent to which small farmers benefit from the opportunities provided by the urban food market varies among rural households and their access to resources and markets.' (Swindell 1987:29); and the second is that to meet the requirements of feeding an increasing urban population, planners either have to consider the options of providing state farms or developing large scale private farms, or giving incentives for small commodity producers. It is the latter which is now often considered the better policy, since there is little evidence to suggest that large farms are more efficient than small ones and the bulk of foodstuffs for urban markets is provided by small farmers anyway. These two general points suggest that a 'populist' approach should be adopted for an understanding of small-scale agriculture. There is a need therefore to understand how and why the rural producers operate in the way they do, in order that development initiatives can help them more efficiently. Bates argues that an approach is needed that 'requires the use of precise and detailed knowledge of cultures, structures and institutional arrangements.' (1983:140).

It is obvious that external influences on the local economy cannot be underestimated. The history of

colonialism, authority structures and the power of the state enter into all local situations, and changing strategies among farmers are sometimes a direct response to these. Urban markets provide opportunities to expand or diversify production, and prices may provide the incentive. In Ghana the history of cocoa production in the south and its importance to the export economy, and more recently the possible effects of Adjustment are perhaps the most important external influences (although of course the full effects of Adjustment are yet to be seen). However, in making connections between the stimulus and the results it is important to recognise that the intentions of policies and what actually happens may be two different things, and that the outcome may be shaped by very different sets of factors. In a criticism of Bates (1981), Konings makes this point very clearly, he states 'While Bates lays great emphasis on the individualistic economic responses of peasants to the harmful government intervention in markets - a fall in the producer price of specific agricultural commodities is usually followed by a switch in production to other, more highly priced commodities, or a reversal to food production - he never informs us just why peasants are able to make these shifts in production' (1986:5). This is the crucial point - what is it that constrains or enables certain farmers?

Konings argues that farmers can make shifts in production because colonialism did not entirely wipe out precapitalist modes of production and therefore farmers have retained a large measure of control over the means and processes of production. But this explanation is not sufficient since there are many farmers operating within the same economy, not all of whom can make that shift. He leaves out of his analysis those who cannot. Generalisations that leave out the local situation are inadequate. The next section of this chapter looks at some of the issues that are important *within* the local economy. It will be argued that these are the final determinants of farming strategies.

INTERNAL INFLUENCES ON FARMING STRATEGIES

Social Organisation and the Developmental Cycle.

Fortes (1949) and Goody (1958/1976) argue that farming systems owe their character more to the developmental cycle of domestic units and to kinship structures, than to ecology or economics. Social organisation is crucial to all aspects of economic life, since labour is often the most critical factor of production, and it is possible to link differences in behavior among households and individuals to variations in their structure and composition (8). Fortes emphasises both the developmental cycle of the *unit* and the developmental cycle of the

individuals within that unit. The position of the unit can be very different from that of the individual and each member may have different objectives to be maximised. The work of Fortes and Goody has something in common with the earlier work of Chayanov (1925), who also suggested that agricultural production is affected by the dynamics of domestic group formation. He was particularly interested to show that farmers output and the size of the plots they worked were regulated by the number of dependants they had, and further to this the age of these dependants. Stages in the developmental cycle can be marked by the size of the domestic unit, the age of its members, their gender and wealth. The structure of the domestic unit can be an important factor in determining access to labour (Chapter 6).

The risks people are prepared to take may also have a lot to do with the size and structure of the domestic unit. Calculations concerning strategy for the next year have to involve a number of considerations balancing economic and political gains with social and personal ones. A young man with no responsibilities may be willing to take new risks, but may have little experience or resources to fall back on, and lack social support. These may thus make him more conservative than his father. Maximisation must be weighed against the minimisation of risk, and thus differing responses to opportunities for change can reflect differences in domestic organisation.

In looking at the effect of household composition on farming patterns, it is important to recognise patterns of differentiation that this may highlight. The changing size and composition of a household can be measured against differences in wealth and income (9). This may also be linked to social status. Fortes has also noted this, since he argues that 'every member of a society is simultaneously a person in the domestic domain and in the politico-jural domain...status in the former receives definition and sanction in the latter.' (1958:12).

In discussing social organisation some consideration has to be given to matrilineal inheritance amongst the Asante population with whom I worked. The idea that matrilineal descent affects and is affected by the economic organisation of domestic units is a powerful one around which there has been much debate. Douglas (1971) looks at the relevance of matrilineal systems in the contemporary global economy, and argues that matriliney is compatible with competition in the expanding economy. However, Goody (1958) argues that poor and egalitarian economies are compatible with matrilineal descent, but that an increase in wealth, differentiation and inequality are not, since he argues that inequalities in wealth 'upset the operation of equal exchange' (1958:348). This is a convincing point, and it does seem that at least in some instances matrilineal systems are vulnerable to the increasing wealth of individual members of the matriliney. In her discussion

of cocoa farmers in southern Ghana, Hill (1963) suggests that individuals want to provide for their own children when they think the matrilineal clans do not have enough resources, and my own study shows this very clearly. For example, in Amansie West (where the research for this thesis was carried out) the economy is surviving, if not thriving, and those that are doing well want to pass on property to their own children as well as their sister's children, while in some cases it is only their own children that interest them.

However, matriliney does impose certain constraints on economic change for both men and women (see Chapter 5). Mikell argues that women in southern Ghana are constrained in some ways by matrilineal inheritance. She notes, 'Men rather than women seem to be breaking free of the *abusua* [lineage] property relationship and acquiring private property in farm land which was distinct from the *abusua* farms. Women as the passage for lineage resources, appear restrained.' (1984:200). She argues that it is brothers and sons who inherit property in which an investment has been made, rather than sisters and daughters. Commitments to patricentric obligations are certainly increasing. In Amansie West men face obligations to both matrilineal kin and their own wives and children. These points will be discussed more fully in Chapter 5 on the division and distribution of land.

Differentiation and Wealth

Arguments about the shift towards capitalist relations of production in Africa, and the economic differentiation that accompanies this have been the subject of much discussion. Evidence from southern Ghana suggests that it is possible to discern a significant number of 'capitalist' farmers. For example, Polly Hill (1970) suggests that Ghanaian cocoa farmers are 'rural capitalists' in that they have always regarded cocoa growing as a 'business'. However, this does not necessarily mean that all farmers are either 'traditional' or budding 'capitalist' farmers.

Bernstein (1977) uses the notion of 'poor', 'middle' and 'rich' peasants. The poor peasants are unable to reproduce themselves by household production and exchange their labour on a regular basis. They are the rural proletariat in the process of formation. Middle peasants are able to reproduce themselves through family labour and land, 'but in specific relations with other strata of the peasantry' (1977), and the rich accumulate sufficient to invest in production through the purchase of the means of production and labour. Bernstein argues that there are persistent inequalities among farmers, and, while accepting that differentiation does take place, argues that farmers who maintain a degree of autonomy do survive.

Hansen (1987) argues in this vein about Ghana. He suggests that the colonial administration of the cocoa economy had a lot to do with patterns of rural differentiation that emerged. He says that some farmers accumulated capital 'which was either used to expand production or invested in real estate or trade' (1987:39). After a while four main sectors of the rural economy could be indentified. He sees a small group of rich peasants who used wage labour, who had several farms and were also engaged in trade. 'Middle' peasants who also had several farms, but smaller in size, and who used wage labour but in a more limited way, 'Like the rich peasants they hardly grew any food crops except in bad times.' (1987:39). The poor were those who had a few small holdings, and hardly used hired labour. They relied mostly on family labour and grew foodcrops for subsistence and some market sales. Hansen also sees a further group, the 'rural proletariat'. These people are migrants from Burkina Faso and Togo.

Although differentiation can be seen as a process occurring over a long period of time, it is important to see the difference between short and long term change. Hill (1970) argues that much differentiation is meaningless in the long term. Farming communities are not undifferentiated, but much of this is cyclical and peoples' fortunes vary from year to year or generation to generation (10). In other words not all differentiation is part of a process of class formation. Differentiation in the local economy can

be caused by many different factors, for example sudden disaster, out-migration or remittance of cash or goods from members of the domestic group outside the rural economy can all be part of this process. Differentiation is a cause and a result of change; it is at the same time inherent in the system of social relations explained above, and part of a wider historical process. This is more in line with what I found to be the case in Amansie West: being part of a wealthy family does not always secure the future of successive generations.

Gender and the Division of Labour

Women obviously play a major role in most systems of agricultural production in African economies, and because of this gender relationships are centrally important to the organisation of agricultural production and patterns of rural resource allocation. Many different theories have been put forward to explain the relationship between gender and farming patterns - some very general, while others are more specific (11). Many studies rightly show women to be distinctly disadvantaged as agricultural patterns change. Boserup (1970) argues that women have been marginalised in the process of change and development, and that they work in sectors of the economy that typically have a low status. However, Lancaster (1976) makes the valid point that it is the relative

value of women's and men's work that is more resistant to change than the actual content of the work each sex does.

There are many ways in which women are disadvantaged within the local economy in southern Ghana. For example, their access to the resources of production - land, labour and capital in particular - is more difficult than it is for men (as Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 will show). Access to labour is especially important and it is the differential access to supplementary labour that can be seen as one of the most crucial factors in assessing the differential contributions men and women make to agricultural production. Hill (1978) has related patterns of farming to patterns of marriage in this way, arguing that decisions may be effected by a farmers access to labour of the opposite sex. Polygamous marriages and the birth of many children are also often favoured for the increased labour they will bring (12). For women, as I will argue later, the possibility of expanding farming practices, or changing them, often depends on their ability to hire labour, since they cannot always mobilise labour through kinship obligations in the same way as their husbands. The ability to hire labour is an important measure of the differences in wealth between richer and poorer farmers in a village, and therefore in general, between men and women.

The use of hired labour is very common in Amansie West, and it will be suggested in this thesis that this is increasing in response to changes in the types of crops that are being farmed. It is also important to note, however, that labour is also hired in part to compensate for outmigration.

Savane (1986) has argued that gender divisions of labour can vary according to class, and that as a result not all women are affected in the same way by economic change. This is an important point in the context of southern Ghana, where differentiation certainly affects womens' access to resources. Although I do not look at accumulation by women in terms of their class position, my evidence certainly supports Savane's assertion that not all women are affected in the same way by economic change.

Many studies, like that of Boserup (1970), outline gender divisions where men are involved in cash cropping and women in subsistence production. The situation is rarely as straightforward as this, and using this basic division often undermines women's involvement in production. Opportunities in the rural economy are divided along gender lines, and women are certainly disadvantaged; however, they are involved in growing cash crops and they work as wage labourers and traders. In West Africa in general, and southern Ghana in particular, women may have a variety of occupations, or at least one that gives them

a separate income and control over their own earned capital. For some women this capital has to be used immediately for the maintenance of their families, while for others it may help them finance their own commercial business or farming enterprise, or the expansion of their own existing farms.

As Moore (1988) argues, if women are

'portrayed merely as losers and victims, then there is a danger that they might be represented simply as passive recipients of social change rather than active participants..[the difficulty with] simple characterization of women's disadvantaged position in developing economies is that it tends to reinforce the treatment of women as a homogenous category' (1988:79)

While this thesis examines the basic divisions between the opportunities of men and women, it does go some way towards differentiating groups within these 'categories' and recognises that not all women (or men) form a single undifferentiated group.

Much has been written about the way in which the commercialisation of agriculture has affected the 'traditional' rural division of labour in the forest zones (13), but these parameters are constantly changing, and the commercialisation of food crops is leading to new possibilities. In Amansie West large scale commercial farmers are those that have access to both capital and labour. Here the strongest emphasis is on capital. As

Vellenga says of the women farmers in Brong Ahafo: 'their biggest complaint was the scarcity of labourers - or more specifically, the lack of funds to pay for labourers' (1977:205), and this point is certainly borne out by evidence in the survey village.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the main issues that will be addressed in this thesis. They relate to the wider external pressures that influence the local farming system, which may promote or limit change, and the internal social relations that give opportunities or present constraints at a local level. Whilst the macro economy and government policies have some effect on farming patterns (as Chapters 2 and 9 will show) and I look at these as a background to the present situation, my major concern in this thesis is to explore the significance of gender relationships and 'local' and 'stranger' divisions in shaping production strategies. Women are definitely disadvantaged in their access to resources, as are strangers; and this will be highlighted very clearly in subsequent chapters. The farming system may be influenced by external factors, but gender relations and 'local' and 'stranger' divisions within the local economy shape it to a much greater extent.

As I have already indicated it is important to determine the major influences in any local farm economy, since these are the factors that ultimately shape the farming system, not the price incentives and infrastructural changes that governments are so keen to implement. Village studies of this kind help to further our understanding of the relationship between the 'micro' and 'macro' economy - between internal and external opportunities and constraints, by showing how important access to the means of production is in explaining farming patterns. It is not useful to assume equality of opportunity in the rural economy - as many macro economic theorists and policy makers do.

The next chapter in this thesis looks at the history of farming patterns in the study area to give some historical context to the present situation. Chapter 3 describes the particular village that was the focus of this study and sets out the samples and the field work strategy. Chapter 4 examines the local economy as it is today, and some of the changes that have taken place in recent years. The subsequent chapters consider how these can be understood in terms of gender differentiation in the allocation of land, labour and capital in the local economy and explain how this can lead farmers to concentrate on certain strategies rather than others. Chapter 9 returns to government intervention and examines specific policies aimed at small-scale farmers; this chapter looks at the

effects of agricultural extension on the rural population in order to evaluate the real extent of government influence, since it appears that the absence of effective links is a major impediment to economic growth. Here too gender differentiation is apparent; whilst men do not benefit a great deal, women are left way behind. Unless there is official recognition of women's position in the local economy it will be impossible to enhance agricultural productivity in the way the Government desires.

NOTES

1. See Hutton and Cohen (1975) for a discussion of this problem.
2. See Hutton and Cohen (1975), Schultz (1964) and Jones (1960)
3. Mosley, Harrigan and Toye discuss the nature of World Bank lending in their study *Aid and Power* (1991). In the second volume there is a case study of Ghana which examines some of the problems the implementation of ERP, has faced.
4. The full title of the Berg Report is *Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Agenda For Action*.
5. See Hansen (1987) and La Anyane (1963).
6. Hart (1982) argues that the political economy of colonialism in West Africa was a 'preindustrial' combination of small indigenous producers and large foreign trading firms with a tendency towards monopoly; while Konings (1986) argues that, later on, one of the main reasons for government intervention in cocoa production in Ghana was that as cocoa production grew the increasing number of large scale cocoa producer traders posed a threat to the colonial governments accumulation of surplus and thus to the state itself.
7. See Guyer (1981).
8. See Mookk (1986).
9. See Murray (1987) and Speigal (1982). Murray argues the need to take account of various survival strategies that households adopt at different stages in their developmental cycle. Speigal does this in way that reflects both the opportunities and constraints that occur at different phases in a 'typical' developmental cycle.
10. See Williams (1982).
11. For a discussion of this debate see Burton and White (1984), Boserup (1970), Beneria and Sen (1981), Guyer (1980a and 1980b). Brydon and Chant (1989) and Moore (1988) provide good overviews of these issues.
12. Galleti et al (1956) present very strong evidence of this attitude among Yoruba cocoa farmers in Nigeria. Karimu and Richards (1981) found that those farms considered credit worthy to a Sierra Leone development project had larger than average domestic units.
13. For example, Guyer (1980a, 1980b and 1984) has carried out extensive work on this topic.

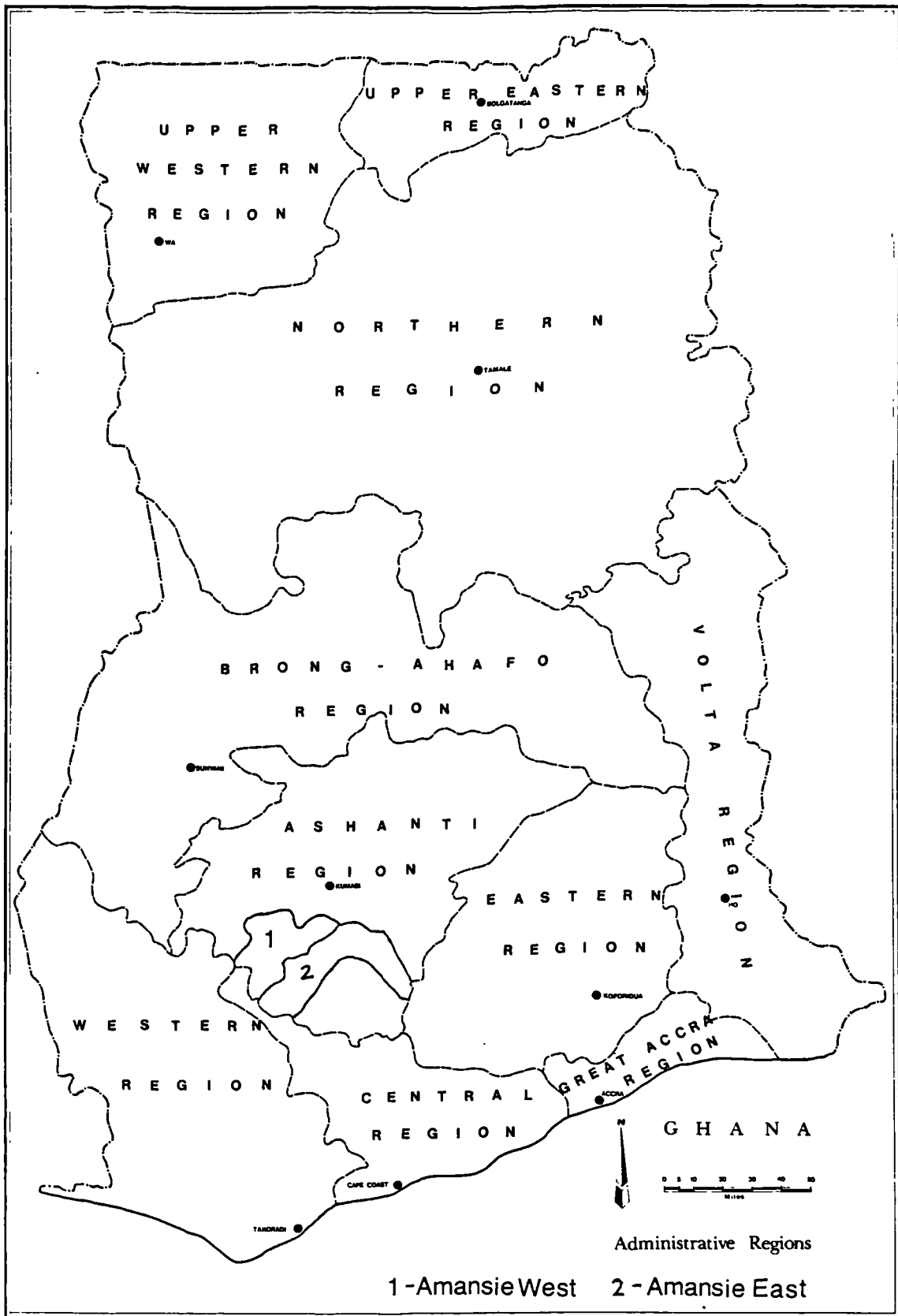
CHAPTER 2

THE AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY OF SOUTHERN GHANA.

This chapter outlines the history of farming practices in the fieldwork area. It locates the village economy in its regional setting to provide a background for the data on contemporary farming strategies that follow. Some of the historical evidence is specific to the study village of Antoakrom, while much of it refers to Amansie West, and some to the Ashanti Region in general (see Map 1). While there is some variation in the local economy within the region, where there are references to Amansie West and Ashanti Region they are considered to be representative of the whole area, and are therefore useful in describing the local economy.

As was discussed in Chapter 1 the main focus of this thesis is gender differentiation in the local economy and how this effects the production of food and export crops. The production of foodstuffs has been an issue for the government since the earliest period of colonial rule. However, the focus of almost all studies of agricultural production in southern Ghana has been the cocoa economy, the main export crop since the turn of the century. Important as these studies have been (Hill 1956 and 1963,

MAP1



Beckett 1944, Beckman 1976), understanding the production of food over this period is just as valuable although it has received less attention. Very little is known about precolonial farming practices in this area; much of what is known is based on archaeological evidence or conjecture. There is more information about the colonial period, but this is often sketchy, and archival accounts of the production of food crops are slim. Present day food production is obviously influenced by the cocoa economy. Most food crops can be planted with cocoa since there is a symbiotic relationship in the early years. However, opportunities and incentives to produce food, with or without cocoa, have varied considerably over time. In the 1980s there were, I argue, incentives to grow food in the form of prices (compared to cocoa) and a good market, but constraints of several kinds differentially affected farmers.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first will deal with the precolonial agricultural economy, the second with colonial intervention and the adoption of cocoa farming, and the third with the more recent history of the agricultural economy.

THE PRECOLONIAL AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY

Wilks (1977) argues that the emergence of the Asante political kingdom in the 17th century was predicated upon

a major socio-economic transformation which had occurred over the preceeding two or three centuries, during which the agrarian order had been established. Early archaeological evidence suggests that there was land clearance around Kumasi in neolithic times (Davies 1967), but that before this the forest was virtually uninhabited. Davies argues that a population explosion, marked by extensive clearance and settlement, occurred in the 16th and 17th centuries, and that one of the major stimuli for these changes may have been the introduction of new food crops by the Portuguese. Wilks suggests that it was this clearance that transformed the forest economy from one primarily based on hunting and gathering to one primarily dependent on cultivation. He argues that the period preceeding the formation of the Asante state was one in which,

'hunters located sites in the forest suitable for cultivation, after which villages were founded and land cleared... Each parish thus came to consist of a nuclear village..an adjacent area of farmland and fallow, and a surrounding hinterland of forest which the hunters and gatherers of wild crops, snails and the like would continue to exploit until the expanding frontiers of farmland finally deprived them of a livelihood' (1977:511)

Food crops

Certain types of oil palm, yams and rice are indigenous to West Africa, plantain and other varieties of yam were introduced from South East Asia in the early Iron Age. It

is widely accepted that the Portuguese were responsible for introducing a large number of food crops and domestic animals in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. They brought the rice most commonly grown in Ghana, *Oryza sativa*, which is of Asian origin. There is some debate as to whether they introduced maize, or whether it arrived in West Africa from the Arab world and was being cultivated prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, but the former is thought to be more likely (Dickson 1969). They also introduced sugarcane, pineapple (from Sao Tome), banana (from the Congo), and sweet potato, oranges, lemons, red peppers and groundnuts. They were also responsible for the introduction of chickens, pigs and sheep.

The date of the arrival of cassava in Ghana is uncertain, though it is thought to be around 1700 (Dickson 1969). Dickson argues that cassava spread rapidly in the eighteenth century. Cassava is mentioned in documents of the early part of the nineteenth century, but not in the later period of the century. In 1983 the Bekwai Gyasehene told Austin (pers comm.) that it had not been grown until more recent times, and middle-aged and older informants in Antoakrom (see Chapter 4) told me that when they had been younger they ate little cassava, if at all, and that their parents and grandparents had not used it (1). However, there is evidence to suggest that cassava was used frequently in Amansie in the 1920s onwards (McCaskie 1990,

pers comm), although this may have been as an emergency crop, as people in Antoakrom reported. Maize appears to have been widely cultivated and consumed in the nineteenth century, and then to have declined in popularity (Wilks 1977). McCaskie (pers. comm) suggests that this is because its earlier use was for provisioning armies. As a result of British conquest the Asante were forced to curtail the use of their armies thus reducing their need for maize. Austin (1984) suggests that it may have been the rarity of maize, rather than its popularity, that caused comment when it was sighted; for example by Freeman (1843).

The food crop economy seems to have changed little over the three centuries prior to the introduction of cocoa, and was one based upon starchy foodstuffs, plantain, cocoyam, cassava, yam and maize. This is probably determined by conditions of cultivation which, as stated earlier, have not changed very much in the forest area in spite of land clearance. Cassava, however, is now more widely used than it used to be, and the popularity of cocoyam has increased with the introduction of the West Indian *Xanthosoma sagittifolium* in place of the older *Colocasia esculentum*. Austin (1984) argues that there is little mention of cocoyam in nineteenth century documents, although oral testimony suggests that it was grown before the colonial period. A few accounts of nineteenth century

Asante make reference to crops grown in villages around Bekwai (2):

Dompoasi.

'The plantations, which are flourishing and extensive, it would seem, are adequate to the supply of a population infinitely greater. Several large corn plats were inclosed, with tolerable fences of bamboo, to preserve the grain from incursions of wild animals, and of pigs, which are here permitted to rove at liberty about the suburbs' Dupuis (1820:57)

Dompoasi.

'Plantations of plantain, yams and kasada [cassava], surrounding this as well as most of the principal crooms.' Hutton (1821:192-193)

Dompoasi.

'the whole way to the right and to the left of the road extensive plantation grounds were seen' Brackenbury (1874:149)

Esumeja.

'Its plantations encroach very extensively on the forest, and several large fields were at this time, well fenced round in a state fit for the reception of corn and yams.' Dupuis (1820:63)

Amoaful.

'A great number of bundles of Indian corn and plantains, made up all ready to be carried away by the enemy, were found in the town..' Brackenbury (1874:189)

Amoaful.

'the Bekwai Prime Minister' arrived from his capital, with 'a 'dash' for the white Chief', consisting 'of a long string of natives, loaded with yams, plantains, fowls, and eggs, a present of gold dust, and ..a bullock' ' The Bekwai people had opened a market as requested, and a plentiful stock of bananas, plantains, yams, and paw-paws were offered for sale' Musgrave (1896:140-141)

As well as the cultivated food crops that were grown around villages, the forest provided a rich source of food and saleable products, including rubber. Wilks (1977) has

argued that after the land was settled and cleared in Asante the forest was no less important than when it had provided the sole means of subsistence. It provided a rich source of fruit, protein in the form of game and snails, and was also an important source of the raw materials for alcohol. Palm trees were extensively tapped for palm wine, and part of this distilled into a spirit called *akpeteshie*. Kola (which was traded) and palm fruits (used for oil) were also collected in the forest. However, LaTorre (1978) argues that these two tree crops were not completely wild. He describes them as 'semi-cultivated' since kola was spared where bush was cleared and sometimes deliberately planted, and oil palm grows best at the peripheries of agricultural rotation, where the bush is cleared and the plant has more space and light. The forest was used in other ways: as a source of medicinal plants and of palm leaves which were used for thatch.

There was a gender division of labour in the collection of these products, as there is today. Men hunted game and tapped palm wine; women collected fruit and snails. However, there is a difference between the early use of forest products and current usage. At the most obvious level, there is less forest to utilise now and that which remains is often secondary regrowth. A great deal of the virgin forest with its animal and plant life has disappeared. In Antoakrom informants told me that their

ancestors had always used the forest, but that the things they used to collect are no longer left for them. Some of the elderly vividly described the time when they were small children, and recounted stories they had heard from their fathers about collecting rubber and hunting in the forest with guns they purchased at the coast. One old man told me

'I used to go to hunt with my uncle. In the evening we would go into the forest, there was game in those days, and we ate plenty of meat. We used dogs, and my uncle had a gun, now there is only grasscutter from the farms' [a large porcupine-like rodent].

Another old man told me about his grandfather and great-uncles, who went to the forest to collect rubber to trade in Takoradi and Cape Coast.

'Some were volunteer trees [in the forest] and some were planted. If you wanted to collect goods from the white man you had to find rubber... My relatives climbed the trees and pierced the bark at the top of the tree, and then they would use a plantain leaf to collect the resin. They made it solid by adding lime, to make hard rubber. Then it could be made into a ball so that it could be easily carried to the coast to sell. Some people were bad then and added stones to it, and sometimes people added pounded *fufuo* (3) to give it more weight...They exchanged it for salt, at that time there was no salt in this area, and some bought wine [schnapps] from the ships that came to Cape Coast.'

Nineteenth century travellers frequently described what they ate and saw for sale. Freeman, the first European missionary to visit Kumasi, refers to the food he was

given on his journey and the food he saw in the market in Kumasi in 1843:

'[The] chief food ..is a soup made from the palm nut, boiled with dried fish , or the flesh of the monkey, to which they add a kind of pudding (native name foofoo), made with the green fruit of the plantain tree, (Musa paradisiaca) which they first boil and then pound in a large pestle in a mortar' (1968:31)

In Kumasi he observed in the market,

'..kankie (native bread), yams, plantains, bananas, pines, groundnuts, fish and the flesh of monkeys and elephants' (1965:56) (4)

It is difficult to tell, however, who ate which foods, and how widespread consumption of some of these products were at this period. Not all of them, it seems, were available to the poor. Bowdich (1819) writing about the availability of meat and fish, noted

'The food of the higher orders is principally soup of dried fish, fowls, beef or mutton (according to the fetish), and groundnuts stewed in blood. The poorer class make their soup of dried deer, monkey flesh, and frequently of the pelts of skins' (1819:319)

Freeman at Formena in 1843 says the Asantes kept hens 'for the sake of eggs'. Arhin (1983) suggests that it was the gold mining inhabitants who bought fish at Manso Nkwanta, about 10 miles from Antoakrom. Freeman says that sheep were only used for sacrifice to the fetish but, as Austin (1984) suggests, this does not mean that people rarely ate

mutton, as festivals were frequent. The same applies to chickens which were (and still are) often sacrificed.

While all these foodstuffs (with the exception of elephant and monkey) still form the basis of the contemporary diet, it is difficult to say, on the basis of such data, whether the diet has remained exactly the same, although the quantity of meat seems similar. People in Antoakrom eat little meat in comparison to a Western diet, and it is carbohydrate that makes up the bulk of the food consumed.

The field system

According to early reports, individual farm plots were rarely more than a few acres in size. In 1821 Hutton noted fields of 'up to two acres', and in 1824 Dupuis saw 'clearings of several acres.' Although this gives an idea of individual plot sizes, it gives no indication of the total farm size, since farmers may have had more than one plot of land on which they were farming. Obviously farm size was (and is) limited by the amount of land available and particularly, in relation to this, the length of fallow needed. As Wilks points out, 'the size of the farm, that is of the *afuo* comprising of field and fallow, is a function of the span of time a piece of land is kept under cultivation and the span it is left to fallow' (Wilks 1977:491). There are many different estimates of how long it takes to restore fertility fully

to the soil. Estimates vary from between five and ten years (Ahn 1970) to twenty years (Foggie 1962). Length of fallow will obviously vary with the quality of the local soil, but also with demographic pressures on land utilisation. Wilks (1977:492) outlines three levels of exploitation of the forest for food cropping (assuming a cultivation period of three years):

Levels of exploitation

Level	Description	Fallow	Years since cultivation	Fertility
1	Intensive land rotation	Forb regrowth/ early thicket	5-7	Inadequate in short term
2	Less intensive land rotation	Thicket regrowth and early secondary forest	7-10	Inadequate in long term
3	Non intensive land rotation	Secondary forest	10-20	Adequate in long and short term

Wilks (1977) argues that the variations in intensity of land use in the 1970s is similar to that of the nineteenth century. He argues that, 'non intensive' land rotation (Level 3) was practised in most of the Asante forest in the nineteenth century, except around Kumasi and other large towns, where rotation was 'less intensive' (Level 2). The distinction that Wilks makes between towns and more rural areas is highlighted clearly by the accounts of Bowdich and Freeman, whose comments leave little doubt that the area around Kumasi, then a city of 20,000 people

(Wilks 1975), was already quite densely populated and intensively farmed. Entering from the south into what would now be called Amansie East, some 10 miles from Kumasi, Bowdich noted:

'the plantations became more frequent and extensive, and numerous paths branching off from where we travelled, showed that the country was thickly inhabited' (1819:29)

And in 1843 Freeman described the same journey in a similar way,

'We passed through a fine part of the country, more thickly populated and more extensively cultivated, than many parts of the interior through which I had passed since we left Mansu' (1843:118).

In spite of these descriptions of fairly dense cultivation, not all the land outside Kumasi was exploited as intensively as in Wilks' Level 1. In 1843 Freeman, travelling by a different route from Kumasi to Juaben, did not recognise that he was looking at secondary forest and blamed the smaller trees on infertile soil. Wilks argues that outside the rural hinterlands of Kumasi, the low level of exploitation allowed the survival of,

'communities..who still depended, seemingly almost exclusively, upon an older mode of production: the exploitation of the food resources of the natural forest. One such was Esiankwanta, which lay on the Cape Coast road only some twenty five miles south of the capital. It was, Dupuis remarked, a 'little dirty croom [village], inhabited by forty or fifty families, who depend for their support upon the range of the forest' (1977:495). (5)

It is difficult to say whether Wilks' conclusions on the similarity of land use between the nineteenth century and the present are correct. Certainly there is no real pressure at present on land available for cultivation in Amansie West, or in Antoakrom in particular, and fallow on some land is as much as 10 to 20 years (Wilks' level 3). However, in Antoakrom this kind of fallow is usually on land that has fallen into disuse, such as on diseased or unmaintained cocoa farms, or on land over which there is disputed inheritance. Most land is now fallowed for between five and ten years in Antoakrom, most often at the lower end of that scale, which puts land use somewhere between Wilks' levels 1 and 2, which is more intensive than he suggests to be desirable for long-term sustainability.

Division of Labour

There is very little information about the gender division of labour in the precolonial farming economy. Most of it comes from the observations of the few men who ventured into the area as missionaries or early colonial officials. According to Martinson, an agricultural officer in Ghana between 1895-1932,

'Ashanti in those days was without motor roads and the people were only beginning to settle down after the war. There were no cacao farms, and only food crops were grown. The crops were tended by the women folk, for the men were warriors and hunters with no interest in farming pursuits' (1948:26)

In a survey of the Gold Coast in 1931, Cardinall wrote that farming,

'was carried out by the system known as that of 'shifting cultivation'. The menfolk selected a small portion of the forest, cleared the undergrowth and cut lianes...Then the womenfolk took possession, planted plantains, maize, groundnuts, yams, onions, ginger, coco-yams in a seemingly haphazard manner, according to what they considered the soil was most suited to produce. In five years or even less the patch would be abandoned and a new one selected.' (1931:84)

Terry Coppin notes that women did 'the greater part of farming' (1885:29), while men only performed the task of clearing the land. The amount of time clearing takes obviously varies according to the nature of the cover. If men were involved in clearing, and in the fencing of fields on the farm, their total labour input for one hectare, according to Wilks (1977), was 88 days out of a necessary total of 399 over a three year period (an average of less than 30 days a year). The remaining 311 days over the three years were the work of women or slave labour (just over 100 days per year). Even if men occasionally did additional farm work, by comparison with women tasks relating to agricultural production made far less calls on their time. With the addition of processing, preparation and the sale of food, and their duties around the house, women were left with much less time than men to pursue their own economic activities.

'..In Kokofu, it was women who took foodcrops and fish to Ahuren market, and brought meat back. In addition women spun cotton, and played an ancilliary role in gold and rubber production,

washing the earth dug up by miners for gold, and carrying latex to the house.' (Austin 1984:145)

With their apparently limited role in agriculture, men had time to participate in other economic activities. Men mined gold, tapped rubber, hunted and wove cloth. The biggest single use of male labour, however, was in long distance trading - so that in fact Austin argues that there was little surplus time or labour throughout the year. Austin (1984:146) summarises the available evidence about the different economic activities in the nineteenth century and when they occurred throughout the year:

The economic year in nineteenth century South Ashanti:

Season	Agriculture	Long Distance trade	Extraction
Wet (Mar-Jul)	planting	assembly of goods and carriers	collection of kola rubber,snails,and gold after rain
Minor dry (Jul-Aug)	harvesting, weeding	to coast	hunting
Minor wet (Sep-Nov)	planting	assembly	kola, rubber,snails gold after rain
Dry (Dec-Feb)	harvesting	to all parts	mining, crafts

Surplus, provisioning and trade.

Austin argues that nineteenth century descriptions give the impression of an 'abundance of cultivation in relation to population, raising the possibility that there was a deliberate production of surplus' (1984:120). Farmers

would plant more than they normally needed in case of crop failure, and this, if harvested, might be sold if there were a market. Dupuis notes that at Dompoasi the farms were 'adequate to the supply of a population infinitely greater' and of Aquamasy [Adidase], 'Its production is not inferior to that of Adadwasy [Ankase] although the population is scarcely half as numerous' (1824:60). These extracts indicate, that it is unlikely that people produced only for subsistence if there was a market for surplus, as with the present economy.

Austin argues that there is evidence of planned substantial surplus by transfer from producers to non-producers:

'People who dwelt on major routes, like the inhabitants of Formena and Amudurasi in Adansi, sold food to travellers. More important, there were sizeable food markets. According to an informant in Kokofu, agricultural produce from there was sold in Ahuren, then an important commercial centre. Food, cooked and uncooked, was sold in Bekwai market, supplied not only by farmers from the surrounding villages (such as Ofoasi-Kokoben), but even according to Dupuis, from the comparatively distant 'Yomoho' district of Akim... Besides products of the forest, those of the Lake were also marketed; Bosumtwi fish were bought in large quantities for sale as far afield as Mansu Nkwanta, and in Kumasi.' (1984:121-126)

By the late nineteenth century there were many towns, such as Kumasi, Bekwai, Kokofu and Mampong, which offered employment opportunities other than farming, in courts and business for example (Wilks 1977). As well as food and locally made items, imports from both the north and south

were sold in Asante markets (Austin 1984). In 1883 when Barrow visited Ankasi:

'The market-place..had some 600 or 700 traders in it yesterday when I passed through; they were carrying on a brisk active trade in dry and in hard European goods, native food, spirits, and tobacco. It was the largest and best filled native market I have ever seen.' (cited by Austin 1984:132)

The precolonial economy in Asante was based on the production of food stuffs, kola, palm oil, gold and local and long distance trade in these articles. In Amansie West the agricultural economy was one in which both cleared land and forest were exploited for personal consumption and trade. Although the 'subsistence economy' is still used as a term to describe food farming in this area, it can be argued that it has never been one solely involved in subsistence, as I have already suggested. The inevitable absorption of Ghana into the world economy obviously had a marked effect on the macro-economy and encouraged the Asante population to start growing cocoa. It has been argued (Hill 1956) that this was adopted so quickly because of the ease with which it fitted into the existing patterns of cultivation.

COLONIAL INTERVENTION IN THE AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY

Early Intervention in Food Production.

Among the various offices of the British colonial government, a Department of Agriculture was established in the early 1880s. This department employed agricultural officers who trekked about the country reporting on the state of agricultural production, and watched over various projects and campaigns the department itself engineered. It was their job to check on the state of food and export crop supplies, organise extension work and agricultural shows among local farmers and to liaise, to some extent, between farmers and local government officials in matters of concern to both.

Their reports often made reference to the amount of food available, as these extracts from yearly reports on Ashanti show (6),

'There has been a good supply of these [food crops] throughout the year in all centres. Kumasi demands a very large supply and is exceptionally well served owing to its favourable situation. Prices, although high, are generally cheaper than at other large centres in the Colony' ('Report on Ashanti', April 1926-March 1927. MOA)

'There is a steady increase in rice being grown in Kumasi District. Farms are made by squatters, mostly Mendis and Kroos, who appear to get very good yields and make a substantial profit for their labour' (Provincial Superintendant of Agriculture, Report for MOA, 1926)

There are frequent references in these reports to the agricultural shows held in the Ashanti Region to encourage production. The first agricultural show to be held in Ashanti Region was in 1908, organised by the Gold Coast Agricultural and Commercial Society (7). The reports on these shows shed light on the variety of food crops grown locally, and those export crops that the colonial administration was keen to encourage, through their display at shows, and the donation of cash prizes.

In 1927 the Ashanti agricultural show was held in Bekwai, and the list of produce on display was as follows (8):

Foods, Vegetables and Fruit.

Bananas	Okro
Plantain	Garden eggs
Oranges	Onions
Limes	European Veg/Collection of
Pineapples	Native Veg/Collection of
Pawpaws	Beans
Tomatoes	Rice - Native
Palm fruits	Sugar Cane
Palm kernel oil	Garri [dried and grated cassava]
Maize	Tobacco
Yams	Cotton Yarn
Cassava	
A'mankany (12 tubers)[cocoyam]	
Peppers	

Products for Export

Coffee beans	Rubber sheet 60lbs
Fibres	Rubber ball "
Gum copal	Rubber paste "
Kola nuts	Chen-chen cloth 60lbs
Maize	Peppers (dried)
Palm oil	Groundnuts
Palm kernals	Shea butter
Oil seeds	Bees wax
Ginger	

The records of the 1931 agricultural show held in Mampong district show the amounts given in prize money for particular items (9).

Prizes for		1st	2nd
Coffee beans	cleaned 5lbs	5/-	2/-
Fibres	1lb	5/-	3/-
Gum copal	10lbs	4/-	2/-
Cola nuts	red 60lbs	5/-	3/-
Cola nuts	white 60lbs	5/-	3/-
Maize	grain 30lbs	10/-	5/-
Palm oil	half kerosene tin	6/-	4/-
Ginger	washed 10lbs	5/-	3/-
Groundnuts	washed 30lbs	10/-	5/-
Shea butter	5lbs	5/-	4/-
Bees wax	best	5/-	3/-
<u>Cacao</u>			
Cocoa in pods	6 pods Amelonado	7/6	5/-
Cocoa beans			
3 loads Amelonada	ready for export	30/-	20/-

In spite of what appears to be an impressive list of different types of crops grown in the Ashanti Region, some colonial officials were concerned that this variety was not enough:

'The Food Problem

The variety of foodstuffs in the Gold Coast is very limited. This is the first thing that strikes one with experience in other parts of the tropics. The cultivation of foodstuffs, except in the northern territories, consists, in the main part, of plantains, cocoyams (xanthosoma), maize, cassava and occasionally some dioscorea yams. Pulses were hardly ever seen, nor were a number of other food and vegetable crops which are common in the tropics. In a country largely unsupplied with animal food, such a condition is obviously unsatisfactory from a dietetic point of view, and if cheap supplies of meat are unlikely to become available, much greater attention must be given to

a mixed vegetarian diet' (Report by Stockdale, Agricultural Advisor to the Colonies, 1929) (10)

This of course may well have been due to a bias on the part of the colonial officers as to what was the 'right' kind of diet.

Although Hansen (1987) argues that the colonial government's main concern was with the benefits to its own economy through the provision of adequate export crops, there are many reports from government officials within Ghana that express concern for the adequate supply of food to local people. However, as Hansen suggests, export crops were the colonial governments' main concern and small-scale local production of export crops was preferred as the way to feed British industry. Just before World War 1 the Gold Coast became the world's largest producer of cocoa, but as early as 1909 there were some who feared that the farmers were paying too much attention to cocoa, and not enough to other crops. A Department Of Agriculture report for that year commented that food crops were becoming very scarce in some parts of Akwapim. Colonial records were full of warnings as regards impending food shortages. The Colonial state encouraged people to grow more food, but at the same time was continuing to encourage them to grow more export crops (a dilemma which still pervades agricultural planning).

In many African countries there has been large-scale alienation of land for plantation agriculture by white settler farmers, but in Ghana it was small scale farmers who were 'encouraged' to grow certain crops that were valuable for export. This was largely because Ghana was seen as unhealthy for white settlement and early attempts at plantation agriculture had failed. But it was also the case that the colonial government recognised the success of indigenous agriculture (Hansen 1987). Dependence on small-scale farmers meant that the British, in order to get them to respond favourably, sought to influence those who had sway over these farmers, namely the chiefs, who were involved as a 'junior partner' in the colonial administration.

One of the main tasks of the agricultural officers at this time was to provide an extension service to local farmers. Field officers were encouraged to study existing food crops, methods of growing and harvesting these crops, and to give recommendations for the improvement in methods of cultivation and crop varieties (11). Some of the recommendations made to the government about the agricultural extension services at that time, do not sound too far removed from the kinds of pleas that are being made now. In a memorandum on extension in 1929, Auchinleck notes,

'The Secretary of State..expressed the fear that, in the matter of relations between the farmer and the Department of Agriculture, an attempt was being made to build from the top downward, and

expresses the feeling that there is a danger of too great rigidity and of the insufficient response to calls for help if the Department is organised on a purely specialist basis...I should like to clear the ground first by stating that close and effective touch between the farmer and the Department is vitally necessary, and I have little doubt that in the coming year it will be established' (1929:1)

'I hope to select certain literate farmers and persuade them to undertake simple records of areas, yield etc. of their crops' (1929:6) (12)

In these government records there is no evidence of any discussion of the work that women did on farms, or any consideration of the role that they played in the production of both staples and export crops. While the concern for adequate production is apparent there is an implicit assumption that men were the ones who had to be approached to ensure this production.

The Introduction of cocoa

It is important to consider the effect that the introduction of cocoa had on the farming economy. The debates discussed here look at the significance of cocoa and the relationship between cocoa and the food economy, the effect it had on land tenure and the impact it had on differentiation among the farming population.

The earliest attempts at cocoa cultivation in Ghana were made by the Basel missionaries at Akropong in Akwapim. In 1859 they experimented unsuccessfully with cocoa seedlings

from Surinam. The successful introduction of cocoa was achieved by Tetteh Quashie who brought a few cocoa pods back into Ghana from Fernando Po and planted them at Mampong in Akwapim. His first harvest in 1883 was purchased by the local farmers at a very high price. His first sale to the export market was in 1885, when he was paid only £6.15/- for 121 lbs of beans. The next documented export of cocoa was in 1891, when 80lbs of cocoa was sold for £4. In 1893 exports had risen to 3,460 lbs, in 1894 they were 20,312 lbs, and in 1895 exports had reached 28,906 lbs (about 13 tons). Ten years later, in 1905, exports had increased nearly 400 times to 5,093 tons (Hill 1956; Dickson 1969). Information about how this dramatic increase occurred is scarce. A report from the Department of Agriculture in 1895 'made no reference to African interest in the crop, merely commenting that young cocoa trees were thriving at the Government Botanical Station at Aburi' (Hill 1956:208)

However, in 1897 the Agricultural Departmental Report acknowledged hundreds of small cocoa and coffee plantations in the Akwapim area. The Report of 1904 stated that cultivation had rapidly spread throughout the colony, and that pods had been sent to Ashanti Region and the Western Province (Hill 1956). By 1908, when exports had reached 13,000 tons, expatriate commercial buyers had arrived in Ghana; the firm of Cadbury had started buying

on a large scale by 1906 (and had a depot in Bekwai, the nearest town to Antoakrom).

How large a profit the firms who were buying at that time could make depended on the cost of transportation, as all cocoa had to be carried or rolled in barrels from the cocoa growing areas to the port,

'A witness before the West African Lands Committee stated that, at a time when the price to the farmer in Kwahu was 5s. a load, 10s. a load had to be paid to get the cocoa down to the 'factory' on the coast. At that time most of the hired workers were carriers. They must have been very numerous. A Travelling Commissioner, Mr. A.G. Lloyd, reported in December 1908 that on his way from Dodowa to Mampong, a distance of about 5 miles, he met no fewer than 800 carriers.' (Hill 1956:105)

In spite of any early problems the cocoa industry kept on growing, faster in Ashanti than anywhere else (Hill 1956). One of the main reasons that accounted for its success in Ashanti was the fall in the price of rubber in 1902 and the extension of the Sekondi-Obuasi railway to Kumasi in 1903 (Dickson 1969).

Further to this the Colonial Report on the Northern Territories for 1913 stated that:

'The remarkable growth of the cocoa industry in Ashanti is due, in a large measure, to labour supplied from the Northern Territories. The Ashanti, never an agriculturalist, is only too pleased to pay the native of the Northern Territories from 1s. to 1s.3d. per diem, in addition to his food, in exchange for his work on the cocoa farms.' (Report No. 807)

There has been a long association between the Asante and people from the north; firstly through slavery, but subsequently and up to the present because northerners come to find work in the south. Many of them work on farms, and many have settled - as data from Antoakrom will show.

The year of 1906 was significant in the history of cocoa cultivation in Ashanti and Brong Ahafo. Following a petition of chiefs in Ashanti, agricultural stations started to appear in south Ashanti from which cocoa seedlings could be easily distributed.

Although cocoa production was increasing at this time, there were still other economic activities which were more lucrative in the forest area. In Ahafo, which admittedly was not one of the earliest cocoa growing areas, the thinly populated forest had abundant areas not only for food cultivation but for hunting, fishing and the collection of snails. During the 1920s hunters in Ahafo were able to earn a substantially higher income than that derived from cocoa farming; £24 could be made by a good hunter in 25 days, compared with 10/- by a cocoa farmer.

The Availability of Land

From the outset cocoa was planted on land that was cleared for the purpose. It has been argued that food production did not suffer:

'Historically the enormous expansion of cocoa production involved not the substitution of labour and land from food to cocoa production, but the opening of new forest land and an expansion in labour output from unutilised labour, especially among men' (Kraus 1986:114)

Austin (1984) argues more convincingly, however, that there was no 'unutilised' labour, and that farmers who went into cocoa production either withdrew from other activities or hired labour.

One of the most intractable and enduring problems arising from the introduction of cocoa has undoubtedly been its effect upon land tenure. Cocoa, with a lifespan of anything up to fifty years, demands a more permanent interest in a piece of land. Rather than rotating land use, a farmer had to be able to lay claim to a particular piece of land, and individual ownership became more formalised,

'This was not always possible in former times when land was used primarily for growing food crops under the shifting or a bush fallow system of farming. In those times, the individual who abandoned his piece of land for too long a time as to be unable to prove that he once cultivated it, lost his rights over it. With cocoa which is a tree crop, there is no question of the land being abandoned after a few years of cultivation, or the

farmer finding it difficult to prove he has the right to use the land' (Benneh 1970:54)

The immigration of those who became known as 'stranger' farmers also had an effect on the system of allocation of land, and increased its value. This process also sharpened the distinction between strangers and members of a stool community; between those for whom land was freely available, and those for whom it was not (see Chapters 4-7). Local farmers had lineage rights to cultivate land, although once they started to grow cocoa they had to pay part in tribute to the chief. Kraus (1986) argues that these rights were still unequal, however, since different lineages had unequal access to vacant land.

The expansion of the cocoa economy encouraged farmers to move into new areas to find land. These migrant farmers rented land from local chiefs to grow cocoa. The rents were not fixed, but depended upon the individual and the amount of land they wanted. After the initial formal request to the chief, a yearly rent was paid to the stool and usually some form of cocoa tribute. Robertson (1987) argues that around the turn of the century and in the early years of cocoa production, while land was still plentiful, some land was sold outright. It was only when the cultivation of cocoa had opened up a good deal of virgin forest that land sales declined and payment was demanded instead. Hill (1963) also describes the outright

sale of land in Akim Abuakwa around the turn of the century.

Before the First World War a farmer who had fitted cocoa cultivation into the traditional system of food farming tended to start a new farm every few years (Hill 1956). Some farmers did not cultivate the older farms they had planted, and these quickly returned to fallow, while others maintained all their farms. It was common to own a number of farms at this time, but there was no standard size, and some producers had much bigger farms than others. At the end of the first world war, Tudthorpe, the Director of Agriculture, tried to find out the average size of cocoa farms, but he found the farmers very unhelpful:

'The facts are that it is invariably the case that men, women and the semi-grown up members of their family have each got plantations of their own...Some admit they gather at least 2,000 loads a year; and I know that others get much more than this amount. On the other hand there are many who do not get more than 10 to 20 loads a year.' (1918-1919) (13)

In 1925 as many as 3,000 farms in Ashanti Region were visited in a survey to check disease in plants. The average size of the farms was found to be 1.7 acres, and the average number of farms per farmer to be 1.3 (giving an average area per farmer of 2.2 acres). In 1928 Muir, of the Department of Agriculture, carried out a survey in the west of Ashanti to record the average production in loads

per farmer (a load being 60lbs). For farmers with 'fruiting' cocoa this was found to vary between 54 loads in one area to 24 in another. The owners of 'fruiting farms' always had 'non fruiting' ones as well, 'it having become customary to plant cocoa in all clearings made for food crops'. Commenting on the high average yield for what he saw as fairly 'undeveloped' districts, Muir noted:

'until recently, when transport facilities to Kumasi were vastly improved, cocoa growing tended to be a family rather than a personal form of occupation. This phase of the industry is unfortunately in the process of changing, and at present there is an increasing tendency for individuals of a family to make their own farms and to employ labour which is deplorably inefficient and is seldom supervised.' (1928:33)

Hansen (1987) argues that one of the consequences of putting production into the hands of small-scale farmers was that it was possible for the more enterprising to accumulate capital that was either used to expand production or to invest in real estate or trade. Over a period of time, he argues, differentiation within the rural community emerged, 'on the basis of the position a group occupied in the structure of colonial agricultural production' (1987:39).

Hansen (1987) identifies four main divisions that emerged in the rural community. There was a small group of 'rich' farmers, who had several holdings and used wage labour. These people were connected in some way to the 'authority patterns of the traditional political structures'. There

were a second group of what Hansen identifies as 'middle' farmers, who had a number of holdings though these were smaller. They relied on wage labour, but only to a limited extent. These people grew mostly cash crops. The 'poor' farmers were those who only had a few and small holdings, and were hardly able to employ wage labour. They used family labour and they relied largely on food crops for home consumption and the market. These farmers had very little power in society. Hansen notes a fourth group that has also emerged - the agricultural labourers, or 'rural proletariat'. These were originally migrants from Burkina Faso and Togo, but increasingly included migrants from other parts of Ghana. Hansen argues that the 'poor' were the opposite of the 'rich' in terms of their cropping patterns - the rich grew cash crops, and the poor grew food mainly for subsistence. He concludes that 'at the very beginning food crop production did not attract the most enterprising of the African peasants' (1987:40). While this pattern may have explained early differentiation in the farming economy, it is not an adequate one now as subsequent chapters will show. Most farmers have several holdings, and all employ wage labour. gender rather than class is the most obvious source of differentiation.

Availability of Labour

Food production depended on labour inputs throughout the year but with peak periods of labour requirements. With the introduction of cocoa, more labour was needed which was met by changes in the division of labour and the use of hired labour. Although cocoa was fitted into the existing system of land use and could initially be grown with food crops, it needed to be weeded carefully to ensure adequate growth and, once producing, cocoa farms needed maintenance in addition to the labour required on food farms. Extra labour was also needed during the two seasons of harvesting in the year, when cocoa pods had to be cut from the trees, split, the beans dried and then carried to the place of sale.

The introduction of cocoa reinforced and exacerbated gender divisions with respect to labour:

'There were sexual inequalities in access to land, labour, and capital for agriculture. The male..economic preferences were for cash crops, and this led to the devotion of land, labour and capital to these crops, though food production did not decline since the cultivated area grew [although this only applies in the first few years of intercropping for cocoa]. In much of southern Ghana there developed a new sexual division of labour with women more responsible than previously for subsistence food production...Within households, cash crop incomes tended to be controlled by men and were not usually ploughed back into food production.' (Kraus 1986:117)

Wives and daughters were expected to work on cocoa farms at certain times, during the harvesting and splitting of the cocoa pods, and then with the headloading of the cocoa to the nearest selling point. The major season for processing cocoa coincided with the time when there was least activity in the food farming cycle. Although the work load may have increased for women, it was still fairly evenly spread throughout the year. Beckett (1944) discusses the allocation of labour time between men and women in cash and food cropping in Akokoase, 'In planting cocoa or food crops a woman's work was counted as a 1/2 man day and children's as a 1/3' (1944:86). However, he goes on 'the *total* work done in the farms by wives and children is greater than by the farmer himself' (1944:87). As the production of cocoa expanded over the years, it rapidly came to depend on wage labour. There was an increase in the number of migrant labourers coming down from the north to look for work on the cocoa farms, and for those that could afford it this was a stable supply of labour. Austin (1984) describes how cocoa production came to depend on wage labour early on in Bekwai, yielding to sharecropping only in the 1930s and 1940s.

Cocoa quickly became the mainstay of the Ghanaian agricultural economy and its production developed throughout the century. It peaked in the 1960s, but up until the late 1980s it had gone into persistent decline. Both food and cocoa production have, at times, been

precariously balanced in Ghana, and continuous political change has damaged the stability of the economy (see Chapter 9).

RECENT HISTORY

The introduction of cocoa has had the most marked effect on the forest economy over the last century, but in the last 20 years fluctuations in the price of cocoa, and the increase in the opportunity to produce foodstuffs for the market has led to some shifts in cropping patterns.

By 1965 the Ghanaian economy had gone into recession, following a drop in the international price of cocoa. In response to high cocoa prices in the 1950s farmers had increased production, allowing European buyers to stockpile cocoa reserves, and the international price went down. Dependence on income from cocoa resulted in hardship for all cocoa farmers and labourers as prices fell. Their reaction was to withdraw from production (Kraus 1986). In the 1964 season production had been good, reaching 557,000 metric tons, but by 1968 production had fallen to 380,000 metric tons. In the mid 1970's production slumped further to 285,000 metric tons and by the 1982-1983 season production was down to 200,000 metric tons.

Bateman (1974) has looked at the effect of producer prices on cocoa production between 1900 and 1971. He argued

that good prices gave incentives to producers to increase production during three main periods: 1900-1918, 1926-1930 and 1946-1962. Kraus argues that 'the impact of falling real producer prices and rising costs, especially in 1965-1966, created a price squeeze on cocoa farmers which contributed to declines in production and little interest in new planting after 1965' (1986:118). In the 1970s and early 1980s cocoa producers, faced with these falling producer prices and rising costs, had little incentive to expand production or maintain existing farms. The major problem was that cocoa farms could no longer compensate farmers for their time and effort. This evidence seems to support Chibnik's argument put forward in Chapter 1 about the possible effect of price changes. In Antoakrom, for example, in 1987, many farmers argued that the cost of maintaining their cocoa farms was higher than the returns they were receiving. Many no longer employed *abusa* (14) labourers although they had done so in the past, and did not initially mention their cocoa farms among those they listed as actually productive. For Ahafo, Konings (1987) notes that 46% of the farmers he interviewed said they no longer replanted their existing farms, 63% no longer sprayed them, and 59% no longer weeded.

This situation created enormous problems for poorer farmers who could do nothing to help themselves, as they had no capital to diversify into other crops. But those

that could afford to did start to plant crops such as maize. Mikell (1986) notes a similar trend in Brong Ahafo, and farmers interviewed in Antoakrom in 1987 said that maize had become an increasingly important crop for income generation since the late 1970s. Table 2.1 shows the relative prices of maize and cocoa, and the advantages of growing maize during this period. Nyanteng (1979) notes that since the 1960s the real producer price of cocoa was falling in relation to food crops so that it became more advantageous to plant food. Table 2.2 shows the rapid erosion of cocoa prices as a percentage of local food prices at that time. Konings (1986) argues that it was the shortages of food supplies to the cities and agricultural raw materials for the newer agro-based industries that caused the prices of these crops to rise faster than that of cocoa. As Hansen argues,

'The retail price index for local food has risen faster than any other item of consumerable expenditure...It has been estimated that between 1979 and 1982 the wholesale prices of maize and millet increased by over 500 percent, while the price of yams increased by 1,500 percent' (1987:31-32)

TABLE 2.1 Trends in producer prices of cocoa and maize.

Year	Cocoa c/headload	Maize c/200lbs
1960/61-64/65	5.4	8.6
1965/66-69/70	7.0	8.3
1970/71-71/72	8.0	14.6
1972/73	9.2	18.4
1973/74	10.5-12.0	20.0
1974/75	15.0	24.9
1975/76	16.0	53.1
1976/77	20.2	99.0
% increase		
60/65-75/76	200%	520%
60/65-76/77	270%	1050%

Source: Adapted from Konings (1986:120)

TABLE 2.2 Food and cocoa prices 1962/3-1980/81

Crop years	Index of cocoa prices	Index of food prices	Food prices as a % of cocoa	Cocoa Prices as a % of food
1962/63	100	100	100	100
1963/64	100	112.3	112	89.4
1964/65	100	172	172	58.1
1965/66	73.6	199	270	37
1966/67	100	169.5	170	60
1967/68	120.3	184.3	153	65.3
1968/69	129.6	200.1	154	64.8
1969/70	148.2	210	142	70.6
1970/71	148.2	236.1	159	62.7
1971/72	148.2	259.4	175	57.1
1972/73	185.2	313.4	169	59.1
1973/74	222.6	362.7	163	47.0
1974/75	277.8	473.6	171	58.7
1975/76	296.3	805.6	272	36.8
1976/77	370.4	2,033.8	549	18.2
1977/78	674.9	3,241.9	480	20.8
1978/79	1,349.8	5,241.1	388	25.8
1979/80	2,024.7	7,982.7	394	25.4
1980/81	2,024.7	17,242.6	852	11.7

Source: Kraus (1986:125)

It seems obvious from these figures that farmers would adopt a policy of growing more food crops. By the 1970s, with the economy favouring the price of food crops over those of cocoa, 'there is substantial evidence to suggest that in general farmers ignored cocoa for food production' (Kraus 1986:124). Konings argues that 'the biggest food farmers are among the middle peasants. They seem to have lost confidence in cocoa and to have invested capital - accumulated from cocoa - in food production rather than in expanded [cocoa] production' (1986:119).

Kraus (1986) says that severe labour shortages were experienced by farmers in the 1970s who tried to maintain their cocoa farms, as *abusa* workers found higher earnings in food crops. Mikell (1986) documents evidence from USAID officials in 1981 who reported that many southern Ghanaians were destroying their cocoa trees to plant maize and cassava as they derived greater income from this than producing cocoa. I have not found evidence of farmers destroying trees in Antoakrom, but even in the late 1980s many farmers said that they no longer maintained existing farms. Posnansky (1980) also argues that in Hani, Brong Ahafo, the local farmers believed themselves to be better off than they had been in the early 1970s with the increased prices obtained for yams and maize in the market.

This kind of crisis has inevitably led to shifts in the economy, and in some areas severe shortfall. In the agricultural sector the response of farmers to the prolonged economic crisis has been varied. This variation, I suggest, is largely due to the social and economic organisation of the local economy, and, in particular, to gender relations within it. Opportunities to diversify production strategies do not always mean an automatic switch by the majority of the population (see Chapters 4 to 7).

More recently the effects of Structural Adjustment have also been felt by some farmers. In trying to rejuvenate the economy since 1983 the Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) has implemented various policies, including devaluation and increases in producer prices for cocoa. This increase was obviously intended to give incentives to plant new farms or revitalise those already in existence. However, as Shelia Smith points out,

'...if the position of cocoa farmers is considered in a longer term perspective, the restoration of incentives is only marginal...From 1983 to 1985, real producer prices have risen, but the price in 1985 is still less than one-fifth of its 1950 level, implicit taxation of cocoa producers remains significant...Input prices have been rising significantly: the price of cocoa insecticide rose by a factor of 60 in 1982/3 over 1981/2, and by a further 345 per cent in 1983/4 (Vordzorgbe 1986 p.13). The price of spraying machines rose from 30 cedis in 1981/2 to 700 cedis in 1982/3... and the price of fertilizer rose by a factor of 13 between 1983 and 1986...These increases in input prices, together with increased labour costs, may undermine the attempt to enhance incentives to export.' (1987:17-20)

These points support my own findings in 1987, and on a separate trip in 1991, when the effects of ERP were just beginning to be felt. Even as late as 1991, although a few farmers had cocoa nurseries they proudly showed me, it was by no means all of those I might have expected to plant as much cocoa as they could afford. This is a good example of how government programmes have not always had the desired effect at village level. Whilst there is some replanting, farmers are still maintaining alternative crops if they can. It is therefore important to explain the response of farmers in the context of this historical framework. As I explained in the introduction there are interesting comparisons to be drawn between the problems of different farmers in Antoakrom. While the assumption seems to be that changes in policy and subsequent strategies will affect all farmers in the same way, and that the response of all will be similar, there are of course other issues that need to be addressed.

In the following chapters I look at the farming strategies of my sample of both male and female headed households and explain the different patterns that emerge in terms of their differential access to the means of production.

NOTES.

1. Its current prevalence now seems to be associated with deteriorating soil fertility. In Antoakrom it is usually planted on land that has already been used for other crops such as plantain and cocoyam.
2. These food sightings are very incomplete, but nevertheless give the impression that the staple crops grown in the 19th century were the same as those grown now.
3. 'Fufuo' is a pounded mixture of cassava, plantain and cocoyam eaten with soup.
4. 'Kankie' refers to varieties of fermented maize, which is made into a dough and cooked (see Chapter 8).
5. Esiankwanta is the place now known as Anwiankwanta. Those depending on the forest according to Dupuis, might infact have been trading.
6. The Kumasi archives were in disarray in 1988, and these files are the only ones that were found for me. Kumasi National Archives D Series File 2510
7. Kumasi National Archives D Series File 2510
8. Ditto. No mention is made of cocoa at this show.
9. Ditto. No explanation is given for awarding prizes for these particular crops - but it may be that they were favoured by the Colonial government as export items.
10. Kumasi National Archives D Series File 2511
11. Ditto.
12. Ditto.
13. Enquiry into the Gold Coast Cocoa Industry. Interim report. Tudthorpe Gold Coast Sessional Paper No. 11, (1918-9)
14. *Abusa* caretakers are workers who look after cocoa farms for a 1/3 share of the harvested cocoa as payment. Chapter 6 explains this in greater detail.

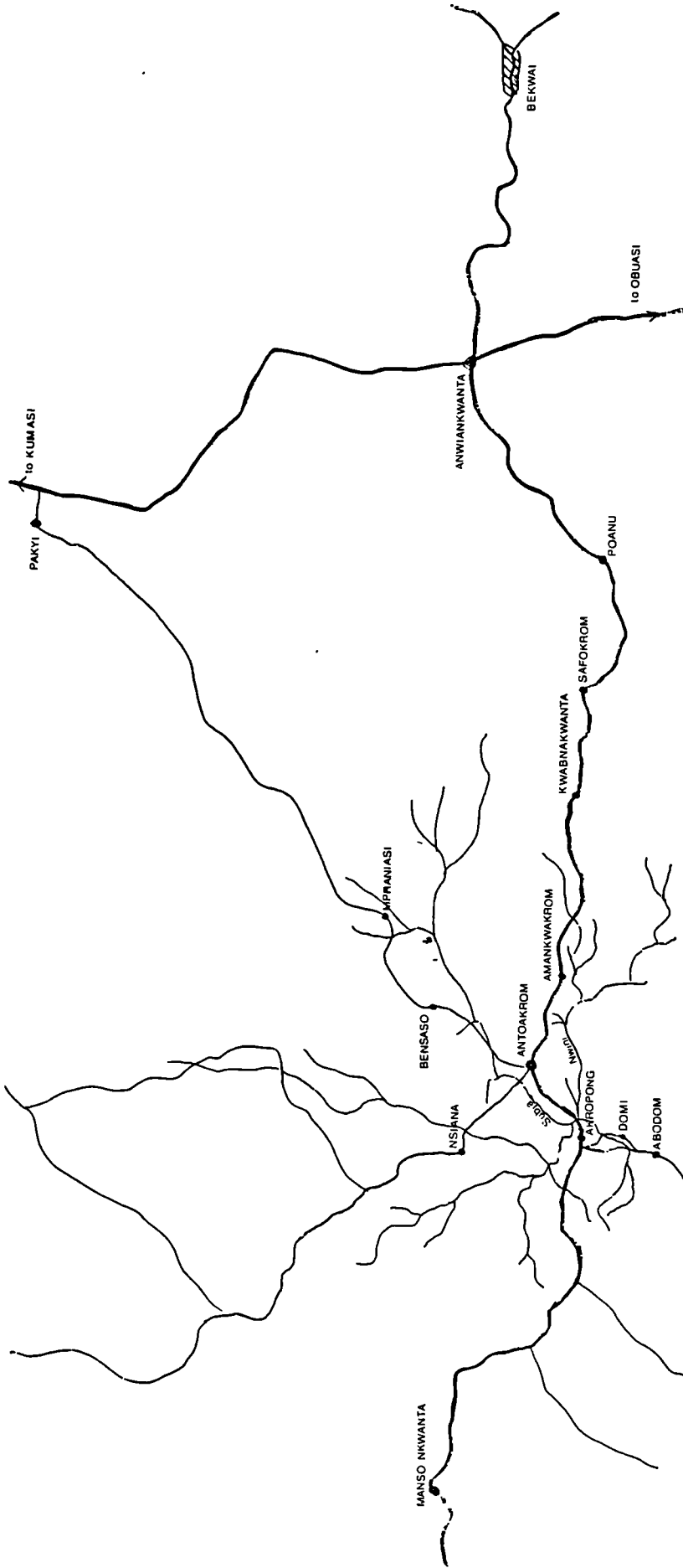
CHAPTER 3

THE VILLAGE SETTING AND RESEARCH SAMPLES

This chapter provides a short introduction to the village in which I carried out most of my research over a twelve month period between August 1987 and August 1988. It provides a description of the social and political organisation of the village. The last section of the chapter outlines the research methods used in the field and explains the sample selection.

The village is called Antoakrom and is situated in the administrative district of Amansie West within the Ashanti Region of southern Ghana (Maps 1 and 2). It is an average sized village for the district. In 1988 it had a population of 1,402, 439 women, 359 men and 604 children (16 years and below)(1). The land is quite heavily cultivated, especially along the roadsides adjacent to the village. The area is permanently green, since the region is forested and the rainfall is good, and it appears very lush. Most of the uncultivated land has dense undergrowth, which is usually the result of fallowing.

MAP 2 Antoakrom and the surrounding area



scale- 1 inch : 2.5 miles

The village itself, which is typical of those found over the whole of Amansie West, covers a small area despite the number of houses (Map 3 below). The houses are built close together, with narrow pathways between them. These paths are often deep gullies, the surface washed away by rain, leaving the floor level of the houses exposed at a much higher level. Privacy is afforded by the design of the houses which are mostly square, with a central courtyard in which there is usually one or more kitchens. The houses are made up of rooms used for sleeping and storage, with corrugated iron, bamboo or palm leaf thatch roofing. Many houses accommodate more than one household (see the definition below) hence the use of more than one kitchen. Most are made of mud bricks, although some are plastered and painted.

Antoakrom has a market place around which the houses in the centre of the village are located. There are a few offices of local administration on the outskirts of the village. It also has a *zongo* where the non-Asante residents live. The population of Antoakrom is made up of Asantes and some non-Asante 'strangers'. Table 3.1 shows the origins of the population of Antoakrom. Most of the male Asante population are local and born in Antoakrom, but there are some Asante 'strangers', who were born outside the village. 'Strangers' (*ohoho* in Twi) is the word local people use to describe those from other Asante villages, and those who are non-Asante.

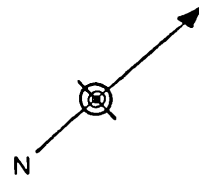
ANTOAKROM VILLAGE PLAN

to MANSO NKWANTA

to NSIANA

- - house
- - kitchen
- ▣ - borehole
- ◻ - kiosk

- 1 - Cocoa Marketing Board
- 2 - Bank
- 3 - Cocoa Producer Buying Division
- 4 - Cocoa Shed
- 5 - Middle School
- 6 - Primary School
- 7 - Distillers Cooperative
- 8 - Mosque
- 9 - Police Station
- 10 - Market Place
- 11 - Blacksmith
- 12 - Carpenter
- 13 - Producer Inspection Division
- 14 - Corn mill
- 15 - Maternity Home and Clinic
- 16 - Government Education Service



not to scale

to BENSASO/
PAKYI

to BEKWAI

Many of these Asante strangers work in the administrative offices and businesses that are located in the village. Most of the non-Asante stranger population are from the north of Ghana, although some are from Burkina Faso, and a few from Togo. There are only two Ewe men in the village, and a few Fantes.

TABLE 3.1 Adult* population of Antoakrom, by origin and sex.

	Local Asante	Stranger Asante	Ghanaian Strangers	Strangers	Total
Men	216	104	28	11	359
Women	276	127	27	9	439
TOTAL	492	231	55	20	798

* Those of 17 years and over.

Most of the non-Asante strangers, and a few of the Asante ones, originally came to the area as migrant labourers to work in the mines in Obuasi, or at the timber mills at Mim. Some of them came as agricultural labourers to work on cocoa, and others were in the service of colonial officials. Those who are permanently resident in the village have since taken up farming on land that they rent from the community.

Amansie West comes under the jurisdiction of the local government of Manso Nkwanta (Map 2). It is one of 13 administrative districts in Ashanti Region, and Ashanti is one of ten regions into which the whole country is

divided (Map 1). This district level control, however, is only one aspect of local authority in Antoakrom. A much stronger influence, I observed, is the authority of the traditional Asante state.

The Local Political System

The highest authority in Asante is the Asantehene, who is the traditional ruler of the Asante people. He has many advisers, who are usually chiefs in their own right, attendants and servants. The symbol of the authority of the Asantehene, and of the chiefs and subchiefs below him, is the 'stool', the most sacred of which is the Golden Stool which was created in the reign of Osei Tutu (c1689 - 1720) the Asantehene who is considered to be the founder of the Asante nation. This stool contains the spirit of the whole nation, and is more important than the individuals entrusted with it during their reigns. The 'stool' of any chief is the symbol of his office, and of the authority over the land which comes under the jurisdiction of his stool. Chiefs inherit the office through matrilineal descent. If there is no appropriate male member of a particular lineage (*abusua*) then a man of the same clan can become chief. This is the cause of much dispute in Asante, particularly among chiefs of lower rank, and it is possible for chiefs to be 'destooled' if their claim to the chiefship can be undermined by other members of the family or clan. There are also stools that

are the right of women. Titles pass through the female line of the office holder, or as in the case of male stools, to another female member of the same clan if there is no lineage member. The role of the Queen Mother (*Ohema*) varies according to the importance of the stool. According to Rattray (1923), the Queen Mother to the Asantehene has considerable advisory powers, and visits the Asantehene's court daily. She also attends certain ceremonies and has a great deal of influence over the women of the Asante nation. Many *Ohema* of more powerful stools are very influential women, as spokeswomen for their towns or villages, and as business women.

The role of chiefs in Asante is much more than symbolic, and they influence many aspects of daily life. Perhaps the most significant of these is in the settlement of disputes, especially those concerning land over which they have authority. The chief's court is the first place to which a 'formal' dispute is taken, and what the chief decides is the final authority at this level. Appeal to a government court is often prohibitively expensive, and a settlement in a chief's court is often preferred. If the chief settles the dispute with a fine, this fine must be paid, and his authority cannot be ignored. There is a hierarchy of courts in line with the hierarchy of the stools. The Asantehene is the highest office, and holds the highest court of appeal. Below the Asantehene there are 27 Paramount Chiefs (pl. *Amanhene*) in Asante, of which

Bekwai is one, and Manso Nkwanta is another (Map 2). Each *Omanhene* has chiefs and subchiefs below him, who have authority over villages under each *Omanhene's* jurisdiction and owe allegiance to him.

Although it might be supposed that Antoakrom would come under the authority of the Manso Nkwanta stool, this is not the case, since stool authority does not always coincide with areas under government administration. Antoakrom has an *odekuro* (subchief) under the authority of the Pakyi stool (Map 2), which in turn comes under the direct authority of the Asantehene. The role of an *odekuro* is similar to that of a chief, although without the same authority. He is usually responsible for minor dispute settlement, and in theory has to oversee community initiatives and festivals (although the *odekuro* in Antoakrom is often absent). He is an authority in the community to whom people look for guidance and leadership, but whether this role is fulfilled depends very much on the individual, and in Antoakrom there are old men in the community who have more influence than the *odekuro*. It is therefore the court at Pakyi to which most of the disputes arising over land settlement or divorce in Antoakrom are taken. This chief has more authority in the settlement of disputes, particularly those over land.

According to the Pakyihene, Antoakrom was established as a settlement sometime in the late eighteenth or early

nineteenth century. It was probably a hunting camp at first and gradually became a more established settlement as people from Pakyi needed more farm land. It is widely recognised in Antoakrom that the first people to settle there were from Pakyi, and that it was a Pakyi resident, Antoa, who gave Antoakrom its name (*krom* meaning village). He was the first recognised *odekuro*, in the 1820s. There have been twelve other *odekuro* in Antoakrom, including the present incumbent who has been on the stool since 1986.

The village was situated on the banks of the Subia, a kilometre from where it is now, until about 1920. One old woman told me 'We came here when I was a small girl, formerly we were staying in the old town by the river bank. All this place, there were cocoa trees, and we cut them and came to stay here'. Before the road was constructed people from Antoakrom walked to Bekwai and Kumasi to buy cloth and other necessities, and as far as Cape Coast to buy salt and schnapps. According to some of the older people in Antoakrom the move coincided with the building of the Bekwai to Manso Nkwanta road. The road was built by local people who were directed by colonial officials from Kumasi. According to another old woman they were not paid, and were beaten if they did not do the work. She described how they were given shovels and pickaxes to dig and fill the road. Each village near to the proposed route of the road had to work on their own section. There is a bridge a few kilometres outside

Antoakrom on the road to Manso Nkwanta, over the river Nwini that marks one of the boundaries between land belonging to Antoakrom and land belonging to Akropong; people from Antoakrom constructed half of this bridge when they built the road, and people from Akropong the other half.

Services available and links with other villages and towns

Antoakrom is situated on the junction of two roads which link it and the surrounding villages to Bekwai due East, Obuasi to the South, Kumasi to the North, and Manso Nkwanta and Abori due West (Map 2). The road from Bekwai (Anwiankwanta) to Manso Nkwanta is tarred, but heavily potholed, and the other to Kumasi is laterite, with deep gullies caused by rain water erosion, which adds to the journey times on these roads dramatically. Kumasi is a journey of 2 hours, although it is only 27 miles from Antoakrom, and the journey to Bekwai takes 1-2 hours although it is only a distance of about 19 miles. This also has something to do with the repair of the vehicles on the roads, and in a 'four wheel drive' conditions are not so difficult.

At present Antoakrom is reasonably well supplied with transport. There are two buses that pass through Antoakrom early in the morning for Kumasi and return in

the evening. There are also two or three 'tro tros' every morning and evening between Abori, Manso Nkwanta and Kumasi, two local vehicles (one from Antoakrom, and one from Bekwai), and two taxis from Anwiankwanta that travel between Bekwai and Antoakrom if and when there are enough passengers.

Antoakrom is a central focus for surrounding villages because of its situation on these cross roads. Until recently Bekwai was the district administrative centre, and Antoakrom came under the authority of Bekwai. The decentralisation of administrative authority since 1988 has meant that the new district of Amansie West has been formed. Under the old system Antoakrom had been a local centre for administrative, health and agricultural services, and at the time of the reorganisation of the local districts there was much controversy over the location of the district capital in Manso Nkwanta instead of Antoakrom. Not only does Antoakrom have more services than Manso Nkwanta, but it is also much more centrally located for other villages and towns in the district. Many people say that Manso Nkwanta became the district capital as a result of the considerable wealth and political influence of the Manso Nkwanta chief and his brother, the *kyidomehene* (2), compared to the relative poverty of the *odekuro* in Antoakrom. The chief and his brother are contractors, with a very successful business based in Kumasi, and since the reorganisation of local

government they have invested a great deal of their own money in the village.

Antoakrom has a primary and a middle school, and a Local Schools Inspectorate Office. There are three banks - the Amansie West Rural Bank operates daily, and the Standard Chartered and the Social Security banks open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The Social Security Bank is a mobile branch from Manso Nkwanta where the daily bank is. The Standard Chartered is a mobile branch from Kumasi. There is also a clinic and maternity home in what used to be the local government offices in the 1950s. There is one trained midwife who has two assistants. The helpers have no formal qualifications but know a great deal about basic medical care and midwifery. There is also a druggist in Antoakrom who sells more drugs than the midwife has available, so people go to him with prescriptions from the midwife. Antoakrom also has a police station with six policemen (and three cells). It has six Christian denominations (most use the schools to hold services) - Catholic, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, Deeper Life, Caanan and Church of Christ - and one Mosque.

There is a daily market in Antoakrom, and six 'chop bars' or homes where cooked food is served. There are also five large bread ovens in the village. There are 5 kiosks selling a variety of tinned foods, hair pomade, soap and so on, but only one of these provides its owner with a

living, and even he also has a farm. Antoakrom also has a rice and corn mill, owned by a lecturer at the University of Science and Technology in Kumasi, and a carpenter and blacksmith. The village is also well provided with agricultural services (not all particularly effective, see Chapter 9). There is an Agricultural Extension Officer living in the village who works for the Ministry of Agriculture, and a Cocoa Services Division, Producer Buying Division, and a Producer Inspection Division (all for cocoa). There is also a Distillers Association for *akpeteshie* (a local spirit based alcohol), and all those who distil have to be registered. There are five registered *akpeteshie* sellers in Antoakrom, and four people who are allowed to sell palm wine (a sweet alcohol tapped from palm trees). There are many more people who collect palm wine, however, and sell it to the registered outlets. There are also two bars in the village which sell bottled beer and soft drinks, one of which has a calor gas fridge, although it worked on only one occasion during my stay there. There are many women trading in a more informal way selling items such as scarves, handkerchiefs, cloth and pots and pans, but none of these women has a shop. Like all the other villages in the area, there is no electricity. There is, however, a good supply of clean water provided by four boreholes constructed with German aid funds in 1984. The boreholes have hand pumps and are the meeting place of children and young women when they come to collect water.

Antoakrom is much better equipped with all these services than most of the other villages close by, and so there are many people visiting the village every day who do not live there. The wide variety of services means that there is a diverse occupational structure in Antoakrom (Table 3.2).

TABLE 3.2 Primary Occupational Structure in Antoakrom

(Residents and Absentees)

Primary Occupation	Men	Women
Farmer	182	274
Market Trader	11	56
Teacher	16	18
White Collar Government*	11	-
White Collar Private*	4	-
Business/entrepreneur+	13	1
Religious	5	-
Medical.	2	6
Agricultural/Cocoa Extension	17	4
Tailor/seamstress	2	9
Carpenter/electrician/mason	7	-
Mechanic/welder	4	-
Driver	7	-
Chop bar/selling cooked food	-	15
Government labourer	21	9
Clerk/typist Government	4	4
Clerk/typist Private	2	1
Retired/old	8	17
Student	21	11
Forces/services	9	-
Overseas(d/k what they are doing)	12	13
Sick/other	-	-
Don't know	1	1
Total	359	439

* Government includes those working for the Cocoa Services Division, the Education offices etc. Private includes working for a bank.

+ These are people who have a business such as a bar, or are transport owners.

• These people work at the government hospital in Kumasi and the Maternity Home in Antoakrom.

It is obvious from this table that women are not as well represented outside farming and market trading as men, especially in the formal sector. It is common that people have more than one occupation or source of income in Antoakrom. Those employed in the formal sector usually farm as well, and women who farm usually do some sort of

selling, although they might not class themselves as market traders. As Fortes noted in 1947, there is great occupational as well as geographical mobility in the Asante population.

'Both men and women move readily from occupation to occupation within the limited range where either no special skill or very little capital is required, and also from one place to another. This gives a certain amount of free play to individual enterprise and initiative. Every Ashanti, whatever his primary occupation, is apt to dabble a bit in trade or money lending.' (Fortes, 1947:163).

As far as movement outside the village is concerned, it is obvious from my census data that all households have, or have had, normally resident members working outside Antoakrom. Of the total adult population there are 90 women and 100 men 'absentees'. The absentees work on the roads, railways, for the Cocoa Services Division, as drivers, or trade in Kumasi or Accra. Some even work in the Ivory Coast. These people leave the village for indefinite periods of time, often a few months, although it may be years, but they are expected to return to the same household. They are defined as members of the household by the residents not only because they are expected to return, but also because most remit goods or money at fairly regular intervals. In the case of young unmarried men and women, they may come back to live with parents, or they may come back to marry and set up their own household. Many young men and women leave to settle

elsewhere, and although they may come for occasional visits they are not expected to return (these are not included in the census data).

The samples and surveys used in the study

The area in which Antoakrom is situated was chosen as the location for my fieldwork with the advice of the district's Chief Agricultural Extension Officer. We discussed my interests and he took me to see several villages in the area. Antoakrom itself was selected as the particular village for study because of its central position, and its local administrative importance in relation to other villages in the area, and because it was possible to visit other villages and markets easily. Antoakrom was also a place through which food supplies passed, so it was possible to see what food stuffs were traded in the district. The samples and interviews used in this study were largely collected in the period between September 1987 and August 1988. I also had the opportunity to return to Antoakrom for a period of four months in 1991, although the topic of research was different (3). In 1987/88 the main interviews with farmers were all carried out in Antoakrom, as was a complete village census, although information was also collected in other villages concerning cooperative farming and processing activities. Surveys of the local markets in the area were carried out in four different markets.

Paramount chiefs, chiefs and subchiefs were interviewed about land rights and litigation in the area, and interviews were carried out with government officials in Bekwai and Accra in the Ministry of Agriculture and Cocobod. I also carried out more informal interviews with old people and friends I made during my stay, concerning their life histories and the history of Antoakrom. By living in Antoakrom for this period much general background information was also gathered from observation and informal discussion with the people living there.

The interviews were conducted in Twi (the local language) through an interpreter. Once an initial interview had been carried out some of the subsequent interviews were taped and transcribed into English later. This largely depended on the response of the respondents, and the type of qualitative data they were providing. My interpreter and assistant, helped with the translation of interviews, mapping, and the collection of census data. He also had the use of a borrowed motorbike, and was able to take me to the surrounding villages and markets.

Survey 1

This consisted of detailed interviews with 40 farmers, who were also heads of households in Antoakrom, 23 men and 17 women. These farmers were chosen once a town plan had been made, and initially every third house was selected. Five of the initial 40 subsequently proved unsuitable for

various reasons, and five more farmers were selected - three men and two women. These were chosen on the basis of friendships I had subsequently made and the willingness of these people to be respondents. The 40 farmers were all heads of their households (the women usually as a result of divorce or widowhood or for a few because their husbands were absent). The main criterion for selection was that these heads controlled one or more of their own plots, even if they also worked for or with someone else as well.

Each of these farmers was interviewed four times. The first interview was about technical aspects of production and knowledge of agricultural services and assistance available (4). The second was about land rights, the size of plots under cultivation and the origin of ownership or tenancies of that land. The third interview was about the division and use of labour, and the availability and access to labour for that farmer. The fourth interview was about income and expenditure, although interviews on this topic were only possible with about half the respondents. Many people were unwilling or unable to give information on these matters, and those that tried usually gave very incomplete responses, as might be expected. Separate interviews on these four topics meant that the interviews were not too long, since people were invariably too busy to give up more than one or two hours at a time, and also enabled clarification of points made

in earlier interviews if necessary. All these discussions were carried out from a basic set of questions, but these questions were as open ended as possible to encourage the farmers being interviewed to elaborate on these topics, and to discuss their own experiences. Some people also gave me detailed life histories. At least one visit was also made to each of the respondent's farms, and in most cases there were at least two visits. I also interviewed spouses of these farmers or other members of the household where possible, to gain as complete a picture of each farmer's activities as time allowed.

Survey 2

A census of the village was carried out with the help of two local teachers from the primary school. This census sought information relating to age, marital status, occupation, education, birth place, religion and ethnic origin of each person resident in Antoakrom. It also sought the same information about family members, normally resident in Antoakrom, who were absent at the time. There was also information about who built or owned the house in which those interviewed were living, and the housebuilder's relationship to the present inhabitants. This census was carried out after about three months of my being resident in Antoakrom in order that everyone should be familiar with my presence, and did not find it too strange that I was asking such questions. This survey

gave me general information about the population, their occupations and their origins to compare with the sample data.

Survey 3

In order to increase the initial sample size for comparative purposes, two additional sets of questions were asked of other male and female farmers who were heads of households. These interviews were not as detailed as those in the first sample, but included discussion about age, marital status, ethnic background, size and organisation of domestic unit and crops grown. Farming strategies were not discussed in great detail, but any comments made in the discussion about farming methods and reasons for the decision to grow various crops were noted. The number of additional men interviewed was 27 (to make the total of male farmers 50). The number of additional women was 23 (to take the total to 40). These heads were selected from other houses in the village based on their willingness to respond. This survey is referred to as Sample 2 in the subsequent text.

Survey 4

This involved a marketing survey that was carried out in four main food markets in the area. The largest market in the sample, and the furthest from Antoakrom, was Bekwai, the central market for the districts of Amansie West and East. The market survey of Bekwai covered only a sample

of the total number of traders, and was carried out by myself and a teacher at the government secondary school in Bekwai. Antoakrom market was also surveyed, and two markets between Antoakrom and Bekwai in which Antoakrom women traded. Questions concerning residence, age, occupation, marital status and occupation of spouse, type and origin of produce, days spent in the market, trading relationships and the price and value of food stuffs brought to the market was discussed. Some 'queen mothers' (5) of particular food stuffs and wholesalers in the Bekwai market were also interviewed about their trading activities. These market surveys yielded a great deal of information not only about the distribution and sale of food crops but also about the strategies of those selling, balancing trade against other responsibilities as farmers, wives and mothers.

These surveys and interviews made up the bulk of the work that I carried out between August 1987 and August 1988. I also made a land use map (Map 4) and mapped Antoakrom itself (Map 3). Most of my time, however, was spent in the company of the farmers that made up the first sample.

Survey 5

This material was collected while doing fieldwork in Ghana for nine months in 1990-1991 (four of which were spent in Antoakrom). Although the topic of the research was not

specifically related to farming systems, valuable information was collected on household composition, availability of land and land use, and the use of labour. This information has been used where appropriate to supplement the earlier data (6).

From all these interviews I obtained most of my data on the farming system in Antoakrom. Respondents gave full accounts of their domestic arrangements and their farm activities. They discussed the choices they made about their farming strategies and the reasons for these choices. Particular case studies from my surveys are used extensively in the thesis but they are always considered to be representative of wider group in the village.

The definition of household

It is important to define the terms used here since, although this study is concerned to analyse the village economy, it focuses on individuals and their households as the primary source of this information. In this study the definition of the 'household' is an economic one. At its most simple this unit comprises of the people who eat together, and contribute in some way to a communal pot. However, while these people may be a unit bound by the ties of kinship, friendship or work, individual members may have separate incomes and interests, and do not necessarily form a single homogeneous unit cooperating

together in all aspects of production, consumption and investment. The household is not necessarily a residential unit, as people will sometimes eat in one house and sleep in another. Residence is not a useful way of defining the household because husbands and wives do not always live together. Moreover, some members may not be resident in the village at all, and therefore do not collaborate in labour or consumption - for example, those who work away. However, they are defined as members of the household if they make a significant contribution to the household through remittances. This sometimes creates problems when trying to determine who is the so called 'head' of the household, because women will sometimes identify their absent husbands or brothers as 'head' even if they themselves are the ones who control production and consumption in the short or long term. Women have been identified as the heads of households when there is no spouse or other close adult male relative who makes a significant contribution to the household over a sustained period. The sample shows this clearly. Married women whose husbands make little or no contribution, and may be absent for much of the time make the decisions about economic activities.

Residential units and household composition

Observations that Fortes made in his 'Ashanti Survey' 1947 still hold true today for Antoakrom. He notes that,

'the norms are so fluid that all sorts of elaborations arising out of the ramifications of kinship are possible in the domestic structure. As it is a common practice for members of the unit to come and go, the total numbers are apt to vary from month to month or week to week...we find a variety of domestic groupings, the most clear cut forms being firstly, the matrilineal unit consisting of an old woman and perhaps her sister, together with some of their sons and daughters and the children of the daughters, and secondly, the simple patrilocal family of husband wife and children. Mixed forms of various kinds are common..' (1947:167-168)

He concluded, however, that in 1947 between 60% and 70% of all households were composed of matrilineal kin alone. My analysis of household composition in Antoakrom shows the incidence of spouses living together as a separate unit is now higher - between 50% and 60%. This may reflect changing circumstances in Antoakrom. The increasing trend, first noticed with the introduction of cocoa at the turn of the century, towards a more individualised lifestyle and one in which there is a greater desire for inheritance directly from the father is continuing today (see Chapter 5). Also, more men and women are marrying into the village from outside the district. This seems to be caused by greater mobility in the search for work and land that has meant an increased stranger population in the village.

TABLE 3.3 The origin of spouses in Sample 1

Female Heads		Local Spouse	Stranger Spouse
Local	8	4	4
Stranger	2	1	1
Divorced/widowed	7	-	-
Total	17	5	5
Male Heads		Local Spouse	Stranger Spouse
Local	11	2	9
Stranger	10	6	4
Divorced/widowed	2	-	-
Total	23	8	13

Of the 40 households in Sample 1, nine out of the 13 local Asante male heads have stranger wives, and half the local women heads of household who are married have husbands from outside the village. A greater number of the stranger male heads are married to local women from Antoakrom than are married to women from elsewhere. The strangers come and live in the home of their spouse - either in his or her family home, or in a house built separately. This situation is markedly different from one of the neighbouring villages of Nsiana. Census data I collected in Nsiana in 1991 reveal a much more homogeneous population, with a much greater incidence of marriage within the village or with those from nearby villages. The high percentage of strangers in Antoakrom reflects the fact that it is a local centre for banks and schools and so on, and these institutions employ a number of people who are posted from outside the village. Over the last fifty years strangers have also come to settle in

Antoakrom for other reasons. These people had often been employed in the timber or mining industries in the forest area, and stayed on to farm when they decided to leave the industry, or were made redundant.

There are a large number of female headed households and stranger headed households in Antoakrom. Of the 40 sample units 23 are male headed households, and 17 female headed. Of the 23 male headed units 13 were born in Antoakrom while of the remaining 10, six are Asante strangers, one is an Ewe, one from Togo and two from the north of Ghana. Of the 17 female heads 15 were born in Antoakrom, and the remaining two are Asante strangers. Seven of these women are divorced or widowed, five have more or less permanently absent husbands, and five farm separately from their husbands who nevertheless live in Antoakrom. A few of these women have some help with clearing land from their spouses, but apart from that their farming enterprises are completely separate from those of their husbands. They maintained that their husbands gave them no other support and did not really provide for their children. The high percentage of female heads is partly due to male migration and, according to census data, there is a higher percentage of absentee men than there is of women in Antoakrom. The number of absentee men may also account for the unusually high percentage of men above 50 in the main sample.

TABLE 3.4 Age of absentees in Antoakrom

	17-30yrs	31-40	41-50	51-60	60+	Don't know	Total
Men	56	25	7	6	1	5	100
Women	50	15	14	5	2	4	90
Total	106	42	21	11	3	9	190

Table 3.4 shows that the number of absentees, as might be expected, is highest among the younger age groups.

Conclusion

This chapter serves as an introduction to the village where the major part of the fieldwork was carried out, and to the samples and definitions used in the study. Antoakrom is typical of many of the surrounding villages in the area, although its stranger population may be higher as a result of its position on a major road through the district. It therefore provides a representative example of the social and economic organisation of the local farming economy and thus offers a window into the key questions identified in Chapters 1 and 2. I did not want to get a biased view of the farm economy by interviewing only men or women in the sample, but the

number of female headed households interviewed gave me detailed information about the position of women in the farm economy - which I may not have been made aware of if I had only interviewed men. This also highlighted the importance of understanding gender divisions at the local level if the differentiation I observed in farming patterns was to be explained. The following chapter describes this differentiation, and the subsequent chapters explain it in terms of access to the resources of land, labour and capital.

NOTES

1. This is my own census data from 1987/88.
2. *Kyidomehene* literally means a 'rearguard' chief in the army of the paramount chief.
3. The fieldwork in 1990/91 was for a project that was examining the the 'grassroots' perceptions of Structural Adjustment in Ghana. This is an ongoing project funded by the E.S.R.C. in the Department of Sociology at the University of Liverpool.
4. 'technical' refers to the methods of farming used: the implements, fallowing, planting and so on. This interview was considered to be the least 'personal' and so it was conducted first.
5. 'Queen mothers' in the market place are women who represent the interests of all those selling a particular produce (so there will be a 'queen mother' for yams, one for cassava etc). They are responsible for controlling the number of women who trade, and for fixing the price at which the item will be sold. They also settle disputes that may arise in the market place, and ensure that the market runs smoothly (see Chapter 5).
6. All the tables in the text of the thesis are from data collected in 1987/1988 unless stated otherwise.

CHAPTER 4

THE FARMING SYSTEM.

This chapter outlines the contemporary farming system in Antoakrom, and highlights the differentiation that occurs within it. My evidence shows that there are marked divisions within the local economy, for example in terms of the number of plots under cultivation, the size of these plots, and what is grown on them. These divisions are most marked between men and women, but to a lesser degree also occur between locals and strangers. This chapter also provides some basic data about the environment and activities within the farming cycle.

THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

The environment provides a favourable basis for agriculture in Antoakrom and surrounding villages in Amansie West. The rainfall is fairly reliable and varies little from year to year. Rainfall in southern Ashanti averages between 60-75 inches a year according to Wills (1962). The distribution of rainfall over the year is seasonal, with major and minor wet seasons. The major wet season is from March to early July and the minor one from

September to early November. Table 4.1 gives rainfall figures for Antoakrom since 1979 showing the consistency of rainfall averages over this period.

TABLE 4.1 Rainfall in Antoakrom (inches)

	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1987	1988
JAN*	0.17	0.56	-	-	-	-	-	1.75	0.82
	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
FEB	1.09	2.75	1.96	2.64	1.70	1.19	4.31	2.43	-
	2	5	4	5	3	3	6	5	-
MARCH	4.96	4.45	6.40	5.76	3.78	6.03	4.44	4.81	5.53
	9	8	9	8	3	6	9	8	7
APRIL	2.94	2.58	2.37	9.98	5.96	2.03	3.52	3.02	3.81
	5	3	5	4	11	2	10	5	7
MAY	6.08	7.10	10.23	7.59	9.07	3.68	7.63	4.97	4.60
	11	10	13	9	7	8	13	6	11
JUNE	12.21	11.78	9.96	9.15	9.62	7.59	6.06	5.63	9.34
	15	14	10	12	9	12	6	10	12
JULY	9.54	7.30	4.60	6.85	0.94	3.62	6.06	3.15	5.90
	15	7	9	6	2	11	11	4	8
AUG	4.04	2.36	6.59	4.29	1.49	10.27	0.66	6.77	6.45
	7	5	7	8	4	12	2	11	9
SEPT	12.09	9.09	4.78	1.09	4.64	9.47	5.74	6.81	5.02
	16	12	10	2	6	11	7	9	7
OCT	11.66	7.79	3.86	12.35	1.38	6.00	6.66	7.04	6.92
	19	13	7	9	3	12	10	10	9
NOV	2.12	5.90	1.79	1.79	4.78	1.34	3.43	1.58	1.36
	7	8	4	4	4	3	4	2	3
DEC	-	0.34	0.64	0.08	2.23	0.85	-	0.73	0.53
	-	2	2	1	3	2	-	1	1
TOTAL	66.09	62.00	53.18	61.57	45.59	52.07	48.51	48.69	50.28

These figures are from the offices of the Cocoa Services Division in Antoakrom. No data are available for 1986.

* The first number in each column is the number of inches of rainfall and the second is the number of rainy days.

The vegetation in Amansie West was once thick forest. Much of this is now secondary regrowth, having been cleared over many years of cultivation, but there is still some primary forest, which is classified by Lane (1962) as 'moist semi-deciduous'. The virgin forests

remaining are either government owned Forest Reserve areas or they have some local importance. In Antoakrom the only untouched virgin forest is a burial ground of about four acres in size. There are many tall trees dotted around farm land belonging to Antoakrom, but those that are old are usually too big to fell, or act as boundary markers for property. Even though most of the virgin forest has been cut, regrowth is rapid. Apart from the good rainfall this growth is due to the numerous streams in the area. Most of these drain into one of three rivers: the Oda, which crosses Amansie West north to south, the Ofin to the southwest, or the Pra to the southeast. The streams around Antoakrom, the Nwini and the Subia, run into the Oda (Map 2).

Over most of Amansie West the soils are forest ochrosols (Brammer 1962). These soils are well-drained, easy to farm and initially quite fertile. Most of this fertility comes from the humus created by the heavy undergrowth and from the protection this undergrowth affords against the sun and heavy rain (Ahn 1970). The canopy also maintains fertility by preventing the effects of sun and rain which would otherwise cause considerable erosion (the problems of which can be seen very clearly where land has been extensively cleared). Once the foliage is cleared the nutrients in the soil decline rapidly. As Brammer notes:

'The organic matter is quickly oxidised and the nutrients it holds are released either to be absorbed by a growing crop..or to be leached down and out of the profile. As the organic matter

diminishes too, the topsoil loses its crumb structure. It then dries hard if exposed to the sun and is easily puddled when wet, leading to surface run-off and erosion if the soils are not adequately protected by a cover of foliage or a mulch.' (1962:94-5).

In order to use the soil for agriculture without causing too much long-term degradation, farmers in Antoakrom (like many other West African farmers) have never cultivated the same land continuously. They use a system of land and crop rotation, leaving the land to rest for a number of years after a three or four year period of cultivation. Fallowing has the effect of drawing nutrients up from the lower soil, gradually restoring fertility (Brammer 1962). As Wilks argues:

'the evolution of an agrarian order in the Asante forest lands has clearly involved the acquisition on the part of the cultivators, over time, of a sensitive awareness of the restraints imposed upon the exploitation of the soil by the nature of the bioclimatic system' (1977:490).

Crops and the environment (1)

The pattern of cropping is affected by two major ecological factors. The first is the rapid deterioration of soil fertility over a three or four year cycle of use, so that crops that need more fertile soil are planted in the first year. This means that maize, yams and plantain are often planted first. The second consideration is that the newly cleared land has to be protected from the harmful effects of the rain and sun, so this means

cropping broad leaved plantain and cocoyam at an early stage. The effect is that all four plants are intercropped. Maize is harvested after a few months, depending on its type, and the yams are also harvested in the first year. Cocoyam and plantain are harvested in the second year, continuing into the third. In the third year cassava is planted as a sole crop, and harvested during the same year or possibly into a fourth after the fallow had commenced. Cassava is often planted on land that has already been used for other crops, since it can be grown on poor quality soil, but it is also commonly intercropped at an earlier stage.

When cocoa was adopted into the farming system, it was incorporated into the existing system of land rotation, although not without adjustments in the allocation of land and labour. Wills (1962) suggests that cocoa trees fitted easily into this system because, 'the period that they remain as yielding trees is merely a long extension of the cropping period of the normal rotation cycle of clearing, cropping and fallowing' (1962:209). Hill argues that,

'Food and cocoa farming have always been intimately related activities. Therefore the earliest acquired lands were not far away from the homeland - where food was grown on much the same scale as formerly, the women continuing to be responsible for most of the work.' (1963:188)

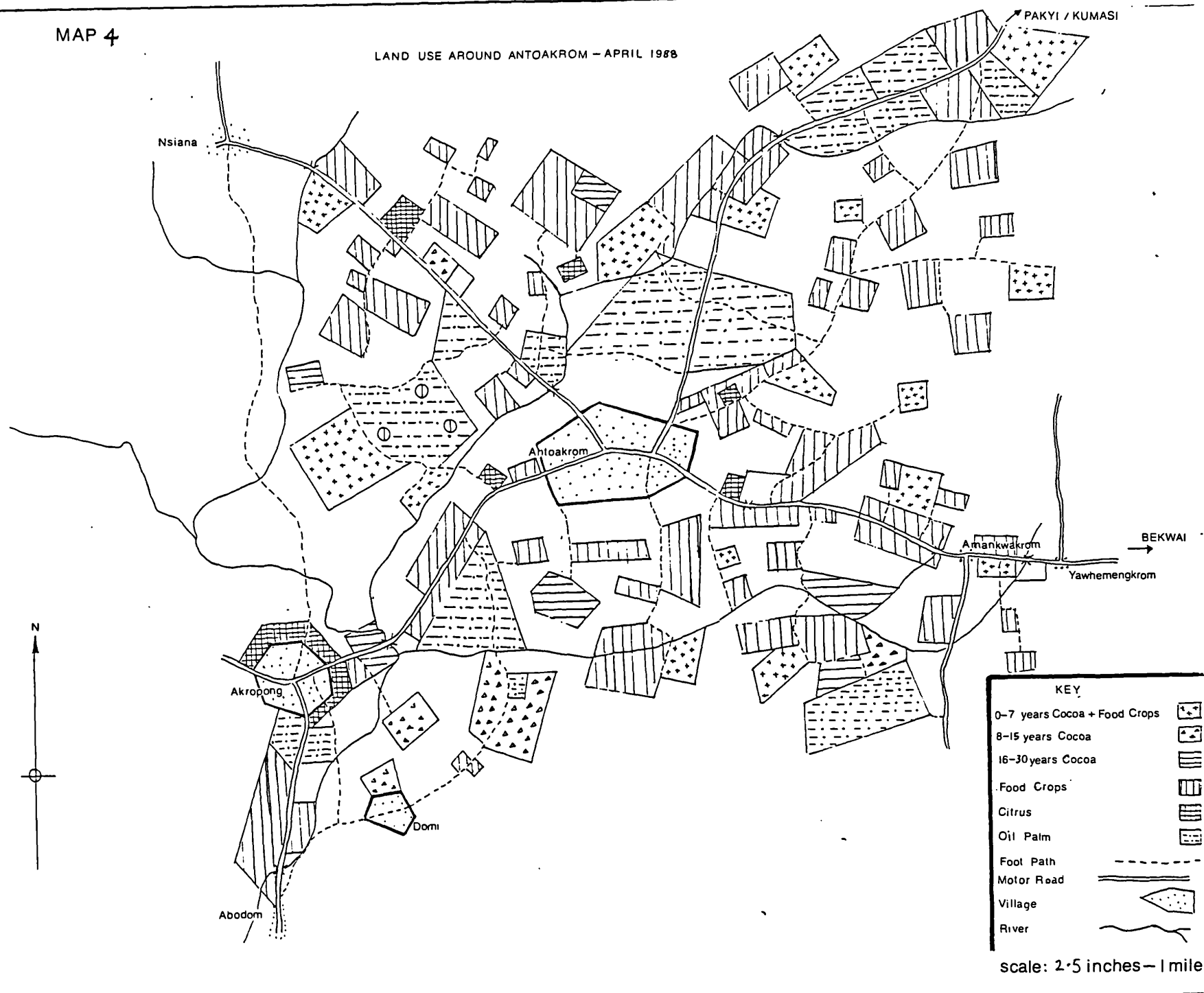
Food crops and cocoa are planted together on the same land. This system of intercropping is only practised,

however, for the first few years, since once the cocoa tree canopy has formed, food crops must be grown elsewhere. Plantain and cocoyam are used to provide shade for the cocoa trees, while at the same time they are valuable crops themselves. Weeding starts before planting is finished. From the end of the first year until the trees are almost mature, the work on the farm is mainly concerned with weeding and harvesting the food crops, and possibly an occasional spraying of the cocoa trees. When new cocoa varieties are used, trees may start to bear fruit from the third year of planting, after which food crops are reduced to almost nothing.

There are other crops that are not necessarily grown in association with cocoa. Vegetables such as tomatoes, okra, garden eggs, beans, onions and pepper are grown for home consumption and for sale often in separate plots. Early yielding varieties of maize are often monocropped, by those that can afford the initial cost in materials and labour, as is rice and sugar cane, before the same piece of land is intercropped. One maize harvest is sometimes taken during the first year, before a later yielding variety is intercropped. The other crops that are grown by farmers in Antoakrom are plantation crops. Oil palm has become a more important crop in the area since the mid 1970s and is grown by some men and a few women as an alternative or supplement to cocoa. Citrus fruits are also occasionally planted.

MAP 4

LAND USE AROUND ANTOAKROM - APRIL 1988



KEY

0-7 years Cocoa + Food Crops	
8-15 years Cocoa	
16-30 years Cocoa	
Food Crops	
Citrus	
Oil Palm	
Foot Path	
Motor Road	
Village	
River	

scale: 2.5 inches - 1 mile

Map 4 shows the types of crops being grown around Antoakrom. There are large palm plantations and some young cocoa plots that have recently been planted. However, there are few plots of cocoa planted 8-15 years ago; in fact there is less cocoa in this age range than older or younger plantings. This provides further evidence of changes in crop choices being made in the last fifteen years; cocoa replanting was not taking place. There are also a significant number of food crop farms without cocoa. This map also shows how farm plots tend to be located near to others (even if not owned by the same person); large areas are left to fallow in between them. I did not question farmers about this, so it may be by coincidence or by design - for mutual help and easy access down cleared pathways. The rivers between Antoakrom and Nsiana and Antoakrom and Akropong mark the boundaries between the land of these villages. The land use around Akropong that is marked belongs to Akropong people although the food crops near Abodom are farmed by a stranger from Antoakrom. The land around Amankwakrom belongs to Antoakrom, and that marked on the map is being used by people from Antoakrom.

THE AGRICULTURAL CYCLE

The agricultural cycle in Amansie West is a continuous process of planting and harvesting. Although there are major seasons for the planting and harvesting of certain

crops, such as cocoa, for most other crops, these activities go on throughout the year. There may be peak times for certain types of work, but because of the process of maintaining old farms while planting new ones, there is a continuous cycle of planting and harvesting. The following plan of the agricultural cycle shows this process, and the sexual division of labour that it encompasses. Although the sexual division of labour in this plan is an accurate guide to what happens in general, and is what people might describe, it is more flexible than it appears as subsequent chapters will show.

JANUARY

Activities: Men are surveying land to weed, weeding in oil palm farms, hunting and tapping palm wine. Vegetable farmers make beds for planting. Women weed in established farms of food and young cocoa

Planting: Women and some men plant vegetables (tomatoes, okra, garden eggs, onions)

Harvesting: Men and women harvest oil palm, and women harvest yam, plantain, and some cocoyam and cassava (2).

FEBRUARY

Activities: Men start clearing land, and those who want to plant early maize burn their fields. Men also tap palm wine. Women continue with the process of maintaining the old farms.

Planting: Vegetables are still being planted and some food crops are planted on swampy areas that did not dry completely during the dry season.

Harvesting: Oil palm, yam, cocoyam and plantain.

MARCH

Activities: Land clearing continues, and most men start to burn the land. Women sometimes help with burning and also continue to weed and harvest old farms. March is also the month in which women collect snails.

Planting: Women start to plant cleared and burnt land with plantain, cocoyam and early maize.

Harvesting: This is the beginning of the major season of the collection of oil palm (although oil palm is harvested all year), men cut the crop and women headload it to the distribution point.

APRIL

Activities: The rains are steady by now so most activity is directed towards planting. Men also start to fence fields with bamboo to prevent rodent damage of early maize and rice

Planting: Men and women plant early maize and rice, and women and some men plant most other food crops (plantain, cassava, cocoyam and vegetables)

Harvesting: Major oil palm, and foodcrops.

MAY

Activities: Women weed the new maize and young farms and women and men make yam mounds, planting continues. Fence building continues, and noose traps are set by men to catch grasscutters and other rodents.

Planting: General food crops, rice, late maize and cocoa.

Harvesting: Fresh early maize at the end of the month, major season for oil palm, and cassava is better to eat now as it has reabsorbed moisture and is used more in *fufuo*.

JUNE

Activities: Women weed, plant and stake yams. Men who planted their rice later than April build fences.

Planting: Men plant cocoa and oil palm with the women, and women plant other food crops.

Harvesting: General food crops from old farms and fresh maize. Oil palm.

JULY

Activities: Women weed newly planted crops and stake yams. Men and some women weed established cocoa farms for easy access for the cocoa harvest, and to allow better seed formation in uncongested farms.

Planting: General food crops, cocoa and oil palm.

Harvesting: Food crops from old farms. Oil palm.

AUGUST

Activities: Women weed around the crops, and men clear land for vegetables and make barns for rice and maize.

Planting: Women replant where the new crops have failed (if the ground was too dry for example).

Harvesting: Everyone is involved in the harvesting of rice and maize. Women harvest food crops.

SEPTEMBER

Activities: Men make drying racks for cocoa, and women weed the new food and cocoa farms.

Planting: Plantain, oil palm and vegetables.

Harvesting: Maize and rice, and a little cocoa. There is lots of plantain and cocoyam ready for harvesting at this time.

OCTOBER

Activities: Women weed crops on the old and new farms

Planting: Vegetables and a few food crops.

Harvesting: This is the beginning of the season for harvesting cocoa. Also dry maize, rice and other food crops (especially plantain and cocoyam) are harvested

NOVEMBER

Activities: Vegetable farmers (especially men) have to spend long hours irrigating crops such as tomatoes now the rains have stopped. Once cocoa is harvested (by both men and women) the pods must be split and fermented.

Planting: Very little at this time by comparison with earlier in the year.

Harvesting: Cocoa is still being harvested, along with food crops.

DECEMBER

Activities: Cocoa beans are brought into the village from the farm to dry on racks near the owner's house. Women weed the cocoa farms after the harvest. Men hunt and fish.

Planting: Men make cocoa nurseries.

Harvesting: Mostly food crops and a little cocoa.

FARMING METHODS

All agricultural work in Antoakrom is carried out by hand, with the use of hoes and cutlasses. Axes and occasionally chain saws are used by men to fell trees. There is no tractor or animal ploughing in the forest, because even when the land has been cleared the stumps and roots of the felled trees and bushes are left in the ground. Larger trees are left to dry out on the farm where they are felled, to be used as firewood at a later date.

As can be seen from the agricultural cycle above, work goes on throughout the year, and there is no time when farming activity ceases. Most people spend at least six hours, six days a week on the farm, unless they are involved in some other work also. Most women sell their

produce on a daily basis, as well as in bulk. They will go to the farm for most of the day and then harvest crops to sell in the market in Antoakrom before they cook in the evening. The few men and women who work as labourers for the Cocoa Services Division in Antoakrom or on the local government cocoa plantation about 3 miles away still spend four or five hours a day on their own farms, since they only work up until midday on the plantation, and sporadically through the year spraying cocoa trees or weeding.

All the descriptions of early Asante agriculture assign very specific roles to men and women within the farming system. As I have indicated above, while certain tasks and crops are more usually associated with men or women, there is little evidence to suggest that all tasks are *exclusively* gender specific today. For example, although women do not usually clear land, and men do not usually plant cassava, this is not always the case, and while women weed crops more often than men, weeding is by no means the exclusive domain of women. The same also applies to harvesting (see Figures 6.1 to 6.4). The prevalence of gender specific tasks may have been higher before the cocoa economy became so important, and labour use diversified. It is possible, however, that agricultural tasks were always performed by both sexes if the need arose, although they may have been associated with one more than the other.

FARMING PATTERNS

There are several different crop combinations that emerge from the data. These combine cocoa, oil palm and other food crops that are grown for cash as well as home consumption. Although the crops grown by individual farmers may not be very different, the frequency of crop combinations and the size of farms is affected by a number of factors. One of the most obvious differences to emerge from the data is between the farming patterns of women and those of men. As has already been explained most people grow basic staples for consumption and sale, but growing certain combinations of crops indicates favourable access to the means of production.

There is marked differentiation in the particular crops and combinations of crops that men and women grow. In Samples 1 and 2 half (50%) of the women interviewed had some cocoa, compared to three quarters (74%) of men; however, only 12.5% of women (5 in number) compared to 48% of men (24 in number) had invested in oil palm. If this is compared to the numbers of men and women who only grow food crops without cocoa or oil palm then there is an inverse pattern, with only 8% of men compared to 50% of women who grow food crops alone. These figures are explained in the next chapters in terms of the differences in access to land, labour and capital between men and women.

The following tables show the variation in the number of women and men who grow cocoa and oil palm and who are able to monocrop maize and rice (3).

TABLE 4.2 A comparison of the percentage of men and women who grow cocoa, oil palm and rice in 1988/89 and 1991*.

	Cocoa		Oil Palm		Rice	
	88/89	1991	88/89	1991	88/89.	1991
Men %	74	54	48	54	20	36
Women %	50	63	13	14	2	-

* The samples used in 1988/89 and 1991 were different. In 1988/89 samples 1 and 2 were used, in 1991 figures from the sample that was taken as part of Survey 5 (see Chapter 3) were used for comparison.

o This figure is from Sample 1 only.

Table 4.2 shows that there are many more men than women who grow cocoa, oil palm and rice in 1988/89, and oil palm and rice in 1991. The figures for cocoa in 1991 are surprising, although they may indicate that women are maintaining small cocoa farms, while men are investing in other crops and or cannot afford to maintain existing cocoa farms (which are usually larger than those of women) (4). Unfortunately these statistics were not analysed in the field, so I was not able to interview respondents about this apparent contradiction.

TABLE 4.3 Cocoa, oil palm and monocropped food crops - variation in the number of plots owned by men and women (Sample 1)

Crop	Total number of these plots owned by men and women	Number owned by men	Number owned by women
Cocoa	57	38	19
Oil Palm	15	13	2
Rice	12	11	1
Maize, mono	45	37	8
Total	129	99	30

It is obvious from this table that men are much more likely to be growing cocoa, oil palm and monocropping certain types of food than women. There are 23 men and 17 women in Sample 1. Although on average men only have one more plot than women (Table 4.4), the sizes of the individual plots and what is grown on them is not as Figure 4.1 and Table 4.5 show.

TABLE 4.4 Average number of farm plots per person in Sample 1

Number of plots	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
Men	-	1	-	4	8	7	2	1	-	-	5.30
Women	-	1	3	5	4	3	-	1	-	-	4.53

FIGURE 4.1 Differences in the sizes of farm plots of men and women in Sample 1

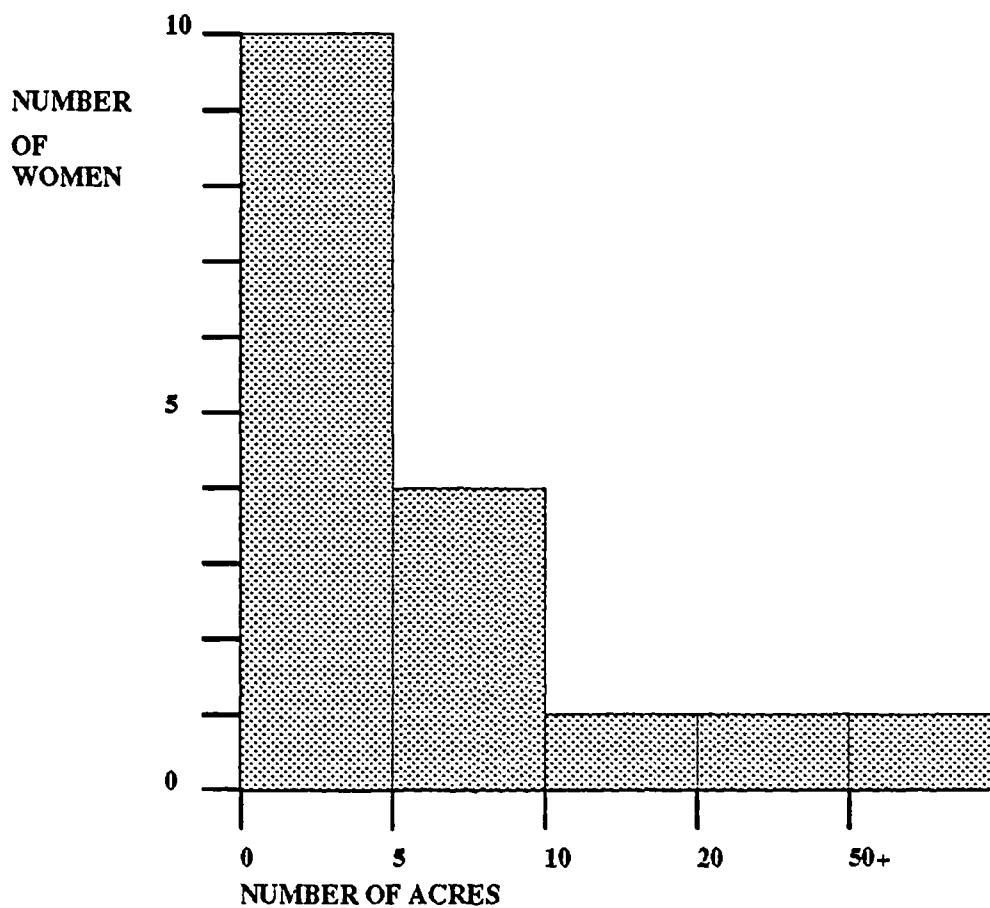
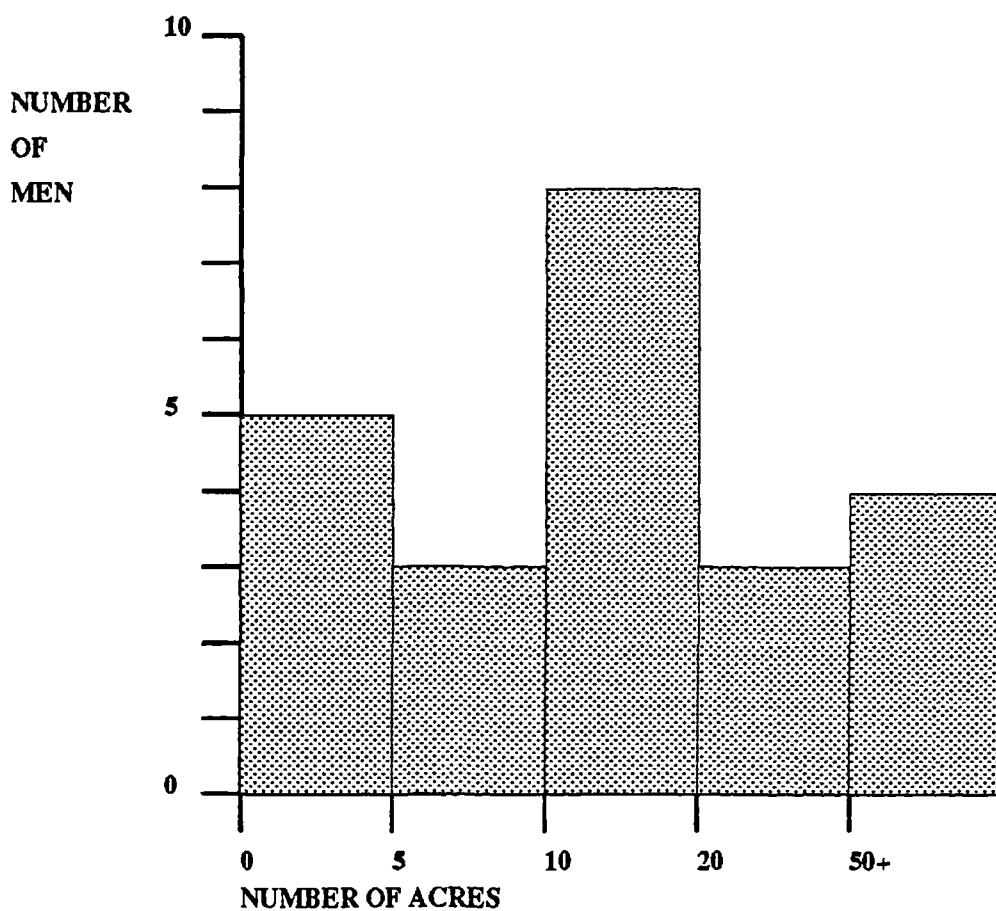


Table 4.5 shows the total number of plots on which each crop is grown by all those interviewed in Sample 1.

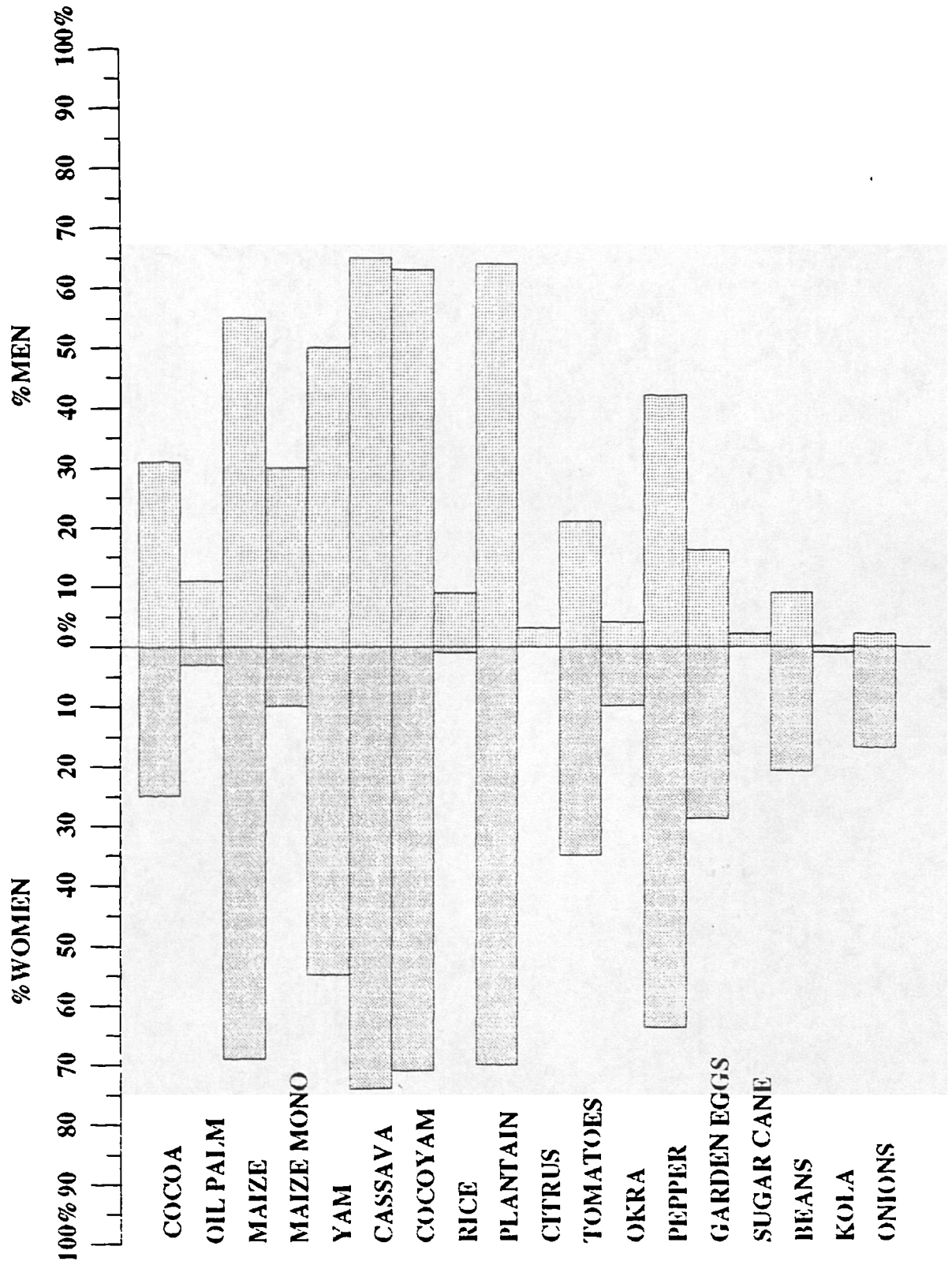
TABLE 4.5 Total number of plots on which each crop appears in Sample 1

Crop	Total number for Men	Total number for Women
Cocoa	38 (31%)	19 (25%)
Oil Palm	13 (11%)	2 (3%)
Maize	67 (55%)	53 (69%)
Maize Mono	37 (30%)	8 (10%)
Yam	61 (50%)	42 (55%)
Cassava	79 (65%)	57 (74%)
Cocoyam	77 (63%)	55 (71%)
Rice	11 (9%)	1 (1%)
Plantain	78 (64%)	54 (70%)
Citrus	3 (2.5%)	-
Tomatoes	26 (21%)	27 (35%)
Onions	2 (2%)	13 (17%)
Okra	5 (4%)	8 (10%)
Pepper	51 (42%)	49 (64%)
Garden eggs	19 (16%)	22 (29%)
Sugar cane	2 (2%)	-
Beans	11 (9%)	16 (21%)
Kola	-	1 (1%)
Total number of plots*	122 (100%)	77 (100%)

*This table shows crops that are both intercropped and monocropped; it shows the number of times each appear in the records on a farm plot, either alone, or part of an intercropped farm, so the figures add up to more than the total number of plots.

This table shows the general pattern in the number of plots for all crops, although it does not show the size of these plots. However, it does give an indication of the frequency with which men and women plant the various crops that are listed. The histogram below gives a graphical representation of the frequency of each crop from the percentages in this table.

FIGURE 4.2 The percentage of the total number of plots planted with each crop for men and women.



Both Table 4.5 and Figure 4.2 show that women plant a greater number of mixed staple crop plots than men, and men plant a greater number of cocoa, oil palm and monocropped food farms than women (such as rice and maize). These tables also give an indication of the popularity of certain crops for both men and women. Cocoa, of course, is still an important crop for men, although an average of only 31% of their farm plots have cocoa on them, which is almost equalled by monocropped maize at 30%. Both men and women plant more plots with staple food crops than anything else; plantain and cassava being two of the most frequent crops for both groups, and women plant many more plots with vegetables than men. As was stated above these frequencies do not give any indication of the sizes of these plots, and this must also be taken into consideration. Male farm plots tend to be almost twice as large, on average, as those owned by women. For example, the average size of cocoa plots in Sample 1 is 7 acres for men, and 2.9 acres for women. The average size of mixed food plots is 2 acres for men and 1.1 acres for women. These averages may seem large, but some of those in the sample have very sizeable farms (see Figure 4.1).

Men's Farming Patterns

Much of the literature on central Ghanaian farming focuses on farming strategies that are dominated by men.

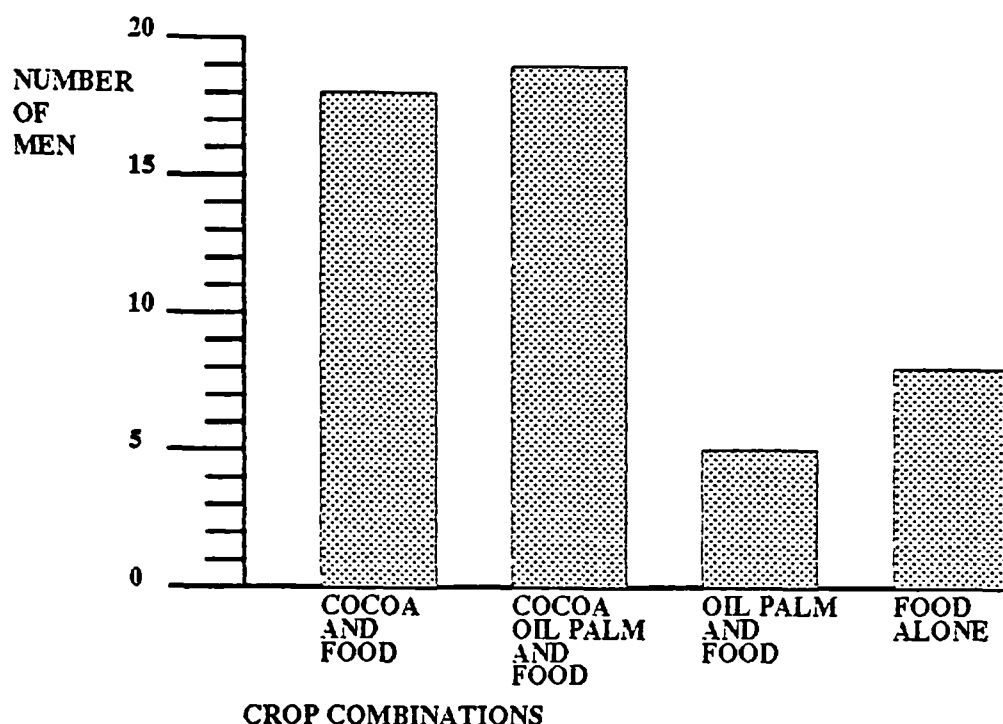
Interest in the cocoa economy has elicited numerous studies which describe the largely male cocoa economy, and then mention the role women play in maintaining these farms and the crops they often grow that are interspersed with the cocoa. Notable exceptions are Hill (1963) in her discussion of female cocoa farmers, and Okali (1983) and Mikell (1986). However, it is men's farming activities that receive most attention.

It is difficult to describe crop combinations and farming patterns that are particular to men in Antoakrom since there is no crop or pattern of farming that is exclusively gender specific. However, it is easier to describe certain 'types' of farming patterns that are more likely to be carried out by men, and those that are more likely to be carried out by women. When I asked informants general questions about the organisation of the farming system they said that everyone farms the same crops, but when they discussed this further they said that there is a greater prevalence of male control in certain areas, and that for women, growing certain crops is likely to be more difficult than it is for men. Men, however, do not all farm the same crops with the same resources, and factors such as age, status and whether they are local or stranger have to be taken into account in considering these issues.

Types of crop combinations among men

The most obvious divisions can be identified between four groups. There are those men who grow cocoa and food crops, those who grow cocoa, oil palm and other food crops, those who grow oil palm and other crops, and those who farm only food crops for sale - most notably rice and maize (5).

FIGURE 4.3 The distribution of crop combinations among men in Samples 1 and 2



* 2 of these men also have citrus plots.

It is interesting to note that there is a slightly higher percentage of men who grow oil palm and cocoa (38%) compared to those who grow cocoa only (36%). It is also worth noting that 84% of the men in the total sample have cocoa, oil palm or both. Most of the cocoa and oil palm

farmers interviewed also grow maize, either as a monocrop or as an intercrop with young cocoa, rice and vegetables. Some grow rice every year or every other year. The main interest is in producing these food crops for market, and only a part will be consumed at home. Those that have young cocoa also grow plantain, cocoyam and cassava with the cocoa as cover crops. These food crops are often the responsibility of the man's wife or daughters, unless he is unmarried, and are sold by her. On the whole, however, few men are concerned with staple root crops, and although they may grow them their main concern lies with maize, rice, and their oil palm or cocoa. A few men also grow citrus.

TABLE 4.6 Frequency of crop combinations in relation to total farm size among men in Sample 1*

Size	Crop Combinations			
	Cocoa/ foodcrops	Cocoa/ oilpalm/ foodcrops	Oil palm/ foodcrops	Foodcrops alone
0-5 acres	3	-	-	2
5.5-10	3	-	-	-
10.5-20	2	3	1	2
20.5-30	-	1	1	-
30.5-40	-	1	-	-
40.5-50	-	-	-	-
50.5<	-	4	-	-
Total	8	9	2	4

* This table is restricted to Sample 1 as I do not have accurate farm sizes for Sample 4.

Although the sample size is small, Table 4.6 shows a marked relationship between the largest farm sizes and those who are able to grow cocoa and oil palm. Those in the cocoa and foodcrop category have small farms in comparison, but this may well be connected to the fact that most of them have only just started replanting their cocoa (see Table 4.8 below).

According to local informants there are fewer people around Antoakrom with cocoa now than there used to be 20

or 30 years ago, and their farms are not as large. Many people in general conversation said that they had once owned cocoa but had not replanted. Old men and women told me how Antoakrom used to be surrounded by cocoa in every direction, where there are now houses and food farms, and they said that people stopped planting cocoa 'seriously' in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Map 4 shows how few cocoa farms there are around Antoakrom now in the 16-30 year range, and also in the 8-15 year range. It also shows clearly the number of food farms that have no cocoa, and the large areas that have been planted with oil palm.

How then is the association of men with these crops to be explained, and the frequency of the four crop combinations shown in Figure 4.3 and Table 4.6 to be understood? As might be expected investment in crop combinations, and the size of farms is not only related to sex, but is also related to age, status and wealth, and the access to land, labour and capital that these confer. The following chapters go on to explain this access to land, labour and capital in more detail.

My data show that age, in particular, is significant in terms of these combinations, as Table 4.7 below shows.

TABLE 4.7 Frequency of crop combinations in relation to age among men in Samples 1 and 2

Ages	Crop Combinations			
	Cocoa/ foodcrops	Cocoa/ oil palm/ foodcrops	Oil palm/ foodcrops	Foodcrops alone
17-30 (years)	-	1	1	2
31-40	4	2	4	5
41-50	3	4	-	-
51-60	6	4	-	1
61+	5	8	-	-
Total	18	19	5	8

This table shows a correlation between the eldest men and the ownership of both cocoa and oil palm and younger men and oil palm and foodcrops or foodcrops alone; although most men either have cocoa or oil palm, even when they are relatively young. This is in striking contrast to women, whose chances of growing such crops are more limited, as will be shown below.

It is the oldest men who have the oldest cocoa; the younger and middle aged men who have cocoa have all replanted or have started planting within the last few years.

TABLE 4.8 Age of cocoa and age of men in Samples 1 and 2

Age of Men	Age of cocoa (years)				
	1-5	6-10	11-20	21-30	31<
17-30	-	-	-	-	-
31-40	4	-	-	-	-
41-50	2	-	-	-	-
51-60	6	1	-	2	-
61<	3	-	-	2	1

* There are 21 entries in this table, although there are only 18 men in this category, because 3 men in the 51-60 age group have old and new cocoa farms; 1 has cocoa that is 1 year and cocoa that is 34 years, 1 has cocoa that is 1 year and cocoa that is 10 years, and 1 has cocoa that is 25 years and 2 years.

In the long-term most older men believe cocoa makes good economic sense. They argue that price fluctuations will even out, and that as the fortunes of cocoa rise and fall so do their lifestyles. They told me there was little point in cutting cocoa, as has been reported elsewhere in Ghana by Konings (1986), and that although the prices had dropped over the last twenty years they had continued to harvest. However, they also told me that their cocoa was neglected when the price was very low, and that harvests were small. They said that their resources had been channelled elsewhere in recent years. They had stopped

maintaining farms, and had made investments in monocropping maize and rice, some were growing oil palm and some had tried to find work outside farming.

However, the long standing association of the Asante with the cocoa economy does mean that there is a strong desire to maintain existing cocoa farms and an allegiance to cocoa that cannot be overlooked. This allegiance is symbolic as well as economic. Cocoa is associated with status in Asante society in a way that other crops are not, as one old man told me, 'if you have cocoa you have respect, it is important to pass it on to your children.'. Many men used this kind of sentiment, as well as the obvious economic ones when I asked them about their reasons for growing cocoa. This is not to deny the economic value of cocoa as a crop even when times were hard, but is to recognise the meaning of cocoa in peoples lives. For those in the Samples who grow cocoa and food crops, and do not plant oil palm the decision is of course largely economic, and only secondly to do with sentiment. Many had inherited old cocoa in the past but none of it is still producing now. Some of the older men have old farms, but are now starting to plant new cocoa as well.

Cocoa and foodcrops

Of the 18 men who grow cocoa and food crops with no oil palm, half have no real interest in growing oil palm.

They argue that it is too expensive, in time and labour, and that they do not have the capital to invest in it. The others say they would like to plant oil palm if they had the capital or land. Five of these are Asante or non-Asante strangers who are farming on borrowed land, and although they have cocoa it is not as easy for them to acquire land as it is for locals (see Chapter 5). The relationship between stranger and local farming patterns is discussed below.

All of those farming cocoa and foodcrops are not wealthy enough to risk investment in another major crop. Their cropping strategies reflect their interest in avoiding risk by diversifying the sources of their own income. Since the slump in the price of cocoa in the mid 1970s and the relative increase in the price of food crops around the same time, many of these farmers grow more maize than they did previously, and nine of the 18 men in this category monocrop at least once a year. Rice is a crop more usually associated with non-Asante strangers in and around Antoakrom, and the amount of rice grown around Antoakrom reflects its high stranger population. Although locals recognise the risk, they also recognise the economic sense in growing rice, and 7 of the men in this category are currently growing rice, or have done recently.

Profiles of some of those in the sample who grow cocoa and foodcrops alone are sketched below to outline the reasons for their farming strategies:

Ampedu is 36, an Asante stranger married to a local woman on whose land he farms. He works for the Cocoa Services Division and favours cocoa over oil palm because he has access to all the available inputs, although if he had the land and the capital for labour he would like to diversify into oil palm. He had planted his cocoa only three years previously, and he has monocropped maize since 1983 as he says the price had been increasing rapidly every year since then.

Abubaka is around 65 years old and is a non-Asante stranger who planted eight acres of cocoa one year ago. He acquired the land through the chief in a place that he used to work south of Bekwai. He would also like to plant oil palm, as he works on someone else's oil palm farm in return for *abuna* (6) land, but cannot afford to maintain it. He plants rice as a major cash crop, and also maize.

Amoah is a local man who intends to plant oil palm in the future but who planted cocoa two years ago. He says the incentive to plant cocoa is there as the seedlings are free, and he can afford the labour he needs to care for it. He feels cocoa is a safe crop. He employs labour to

weed his cocoa as his only labour force is his wife and small children.

Danquah is an older man who has no real interest in oil palm. He inherited cocoa that died ten years ago, but had replanted in the last season. He has tried hybrid citrus but thinks cocoa is more reliable as it is less prone to disease.

One of the oldest men with cocoa farms is also one of the poorest in Antoakrom. Nsutuo has a wife but his sons are working outside Antoakrom and he cannot afford to hire very much labour. He uses occasional labour on his cocoa but he harvests only a little cocoa from it as he cannot afford to maintain the farm, and has no caretaker. He and his wife farm food crops together on a separate plot. He has no interest in oil palm, since he cannot contemplate affording it.

Cocoa is a crop that needs land and labour and capital investment. As will be shown in subsequent chapters male access to and control over these resources is much easier than it is for women, and cocoa is therefore an easier crop for men to plant. All but one of the 18 men growing cocoa have wives to help them (although the two non-Asante strangers tend not to use their wives' labour as frequently as Asante men). All said they expect their wives and

adult children to help on the farms, and for those with newly planted cocoa this means that the women go to their husbands farms regularly to maintain the cocoa by cultivating shade food crops and weeding. All said they hire labour when necessary, and some had permanent hired labour. Labour inputs from children are varied, but all but one of the men with older cocoa has a caretaker (7). On average men have greater access to and control over household labour and the labour of their friends and other relatives (see Chapter 6).

Cocoa and Oil Palm

It appears to be men who are older and well established who are most likely to be able to grow both cocoa and oil palm, and who want to take the opportunity to do this. Cocoa production is still an important element in the farming strategy of all these men, but they have had the opportunity to diversify their income generating crops as the market changes and develops. The expansion of oil palm since the mid 1970s is one such change, as is the concurrent increase in the output of maize and rice.

Tables 4.6 and 4.7 show how age and cropping patterns are closely linked, and that the size of farms is likely to be bigger among those farming both oil palm and cocoa. All of the older men with this pattern of farming had profitable cocoa farms when they were younger, and of the

19 men growing cocoa and oil palm 10 of them have or have had an outside business from which they have invested money in their farming enterprise. Hybrid plantation oil palm is a relatively new crop compared to cocoa, and the first plantation around Antoakrom was planted in 1974. The older men with cocoa who have planted oil palm say that they did so as an extra long term investment to increase their income, but also to offset some of the problems with the fluctuation in the price of cocoa. Although it does not have the same status as cocoa, these men see it as a good investment in the long term. Although its lifespan is not as long as cocoa, 15-20 years as opposed to 30-40 years, they imagine passing it on as inheritance. An advantage with oil palm is that it fruits all year round. This is one of the reasons that those who grow both feel that oil palm is a valuable addition to their cocoa farms. Cocoa money is seasonal and gets spent quickly after the harvest (8), whereas oil palm gives a constant income throughout the year.

The oldest and wealthiest men growing oil palm all have a good supply of household labour as well as being able to afford hired labour (see Chapter 6). They have reached the stage in the development in their household unit where they have young adult children to work on their farms as well as their wives. The middle aged and younger men may not have the same supply of household labour, but they either have the capital to buy labour or they use

cooperative labour (See Chapter 6). The one young man (in his 20s) growing oil palm and cocoa (in Sample 1) is local and has an adequate supply of land for plantation farming and he can afford adequate labour on his oil palm and cocoa.

In spite of the success of their oil palm farms most of the older men still see themselves as cocoa farmers first and oil palm farmers second, although for 3 of these men in particular, oil palm has come to make up the bulk of their earned income. One of these men actively encourages others in the village to plant oil palm, as he prides himself on his 100 acres of oil palm - a very large investment.

Of the 19 men in Samples 1 and 2 who grow oil palm and cocoa, 8 either grow rice each year or every other year, 6 of these also monocrop maize at least once a year, and 7 monocrop maize but do not grow rice. Four also grow vegetables for market sale. Four do not grow rice or monocrop maize.

Oil Palm and Food Crops

The sample of men who grow oil palm with other food crops and no cocoa is a significantly smaller proportion than those growing cocoa or cocoa and oil palm (Figure 4.3). All are young local men who have opted for oil palm as a

direct alternative to cocoa. When considering in which long-term permanent crop to invest they chose oil palm. They gave a number of reasons for their decision to choose oil palm as opposed to cocoa. The first was the market which they say is good for oil palm. They all consider planting cocoa in the future, but argue that by planting oil palm first and reaping a steady income from their trees they can reinvest in further farming enterprises in the future. The need for labour is met by most of them with the use of cooperative groups (9); those that use this method say that if they did not do this they would not be able to afford to maintain the farms, but since they are young and fit they can help each other. Two of them say that oil palm is less risky than cocoa. If there is a drought and the cocoa harvest fails there is no income for another year. Whereas with oil palm if there are problems with climate or disease the tree will still bear fruit, even if the bunches are smaller.

All of these men are local and have sufficient land to grow oil palm. For some of them part of their inherited land was swampy and this is another reason to plant oil palm, which thrives in such conditions, where other crops do not. With palm fruits they also have the choice of whether to sell them to be processed (as they have to with cocoa) or whether to process the fruit themselves (with the help of their wives) and sell the oil, as this fetches a higher price than the fruits. All five men who grow oil

palm also monocrop rice and maize for sale. Three grow maize and rice and two grow just maize. Two of them also hunt, and sell game in Kumasi. Two of them also sell the leaves of oil palm after they have been woven to make roof panels. All but one of these men are married (the other is divorced), and all expect help from their wives, only two of whom have separate plots of their own. Younger men, it seems, expect a greater amount of help from their wives as new farms are being established, as there is not the capital or the labour time available to help a woman establish her own farms. It is the older men whose wives are more likely to have their own plots even if they are expected to help on their husband's farms also.

Foodcrops alone

There are eight men who have not invested in cocoa or oil palm, but who grow other foodcrops to earn an income. Three are Asante strangers married to local women, and use their wives' family land, one is a non-Asante stranger and borrows land, and four are local and use their own inherited land. One of them is in his mid 50s, but the rest of them are under 36 years old. They use cooperative labour and hire occasional daily labourers but do not have the capital to hire more, or the resources of household or family labour to utilise. The older man practices only mixed cropping with his wife, but the younger men (except for the youngest who has only just

started farming and is unmarried) all monocrop maize or rice or both. These men all farm with the help of their wives, who sell the mixed crops grown on the farms, although the men keep the income from the rice and maize. These men have not had the opportunity to extend or change their farming patterns, although they argue that they monocrop maize and invest in rice because they are lucrative crops to sell, and all of them grow tomatoes and pepper for sale. These men appreciate the market and would grow oil palm or cocoa if they could. However, they are primarily prohibited from doing so by constraints on labour and capital, which inevitably affect the types of crops they are able to grow and the size of their farms (see Chapters 6 and 7).

Women's farming patterns

As men's farming patterns can be grouped into certain crop combinations, so too can women's farming patterns. These farming patterns are dictated by the same set of constraints - land, labour and capital - as for men, but women are more likely to be disadvantaged in their access to these resources than men. For example, women's farming activities are dictated by constraints on labour time. Women's labour is often demanded on other people's farms in a way that male labour is not. Their own farming patterns are therefore affected by the amount of labour they have to give to others, the labour time they can give to their

own enterprise, and how much labour they can command themselves.

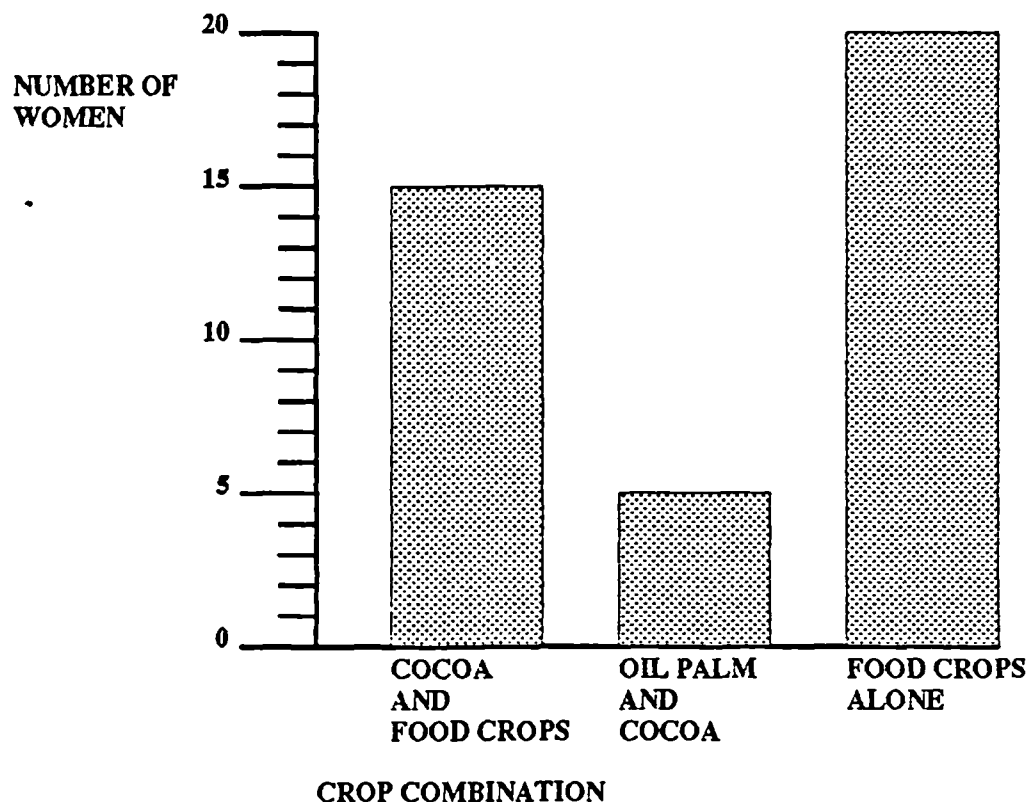
Land is not a problem for women in the same way that labour is, unless those women are strangers in the community and have more difficulty acquiring land to farm. Stranger women can obtain land if they have the capital to rent it, but few do (see Chapter 6). However, local women can face problems in inheriting land, and their rights are not as straightforward as those of men.

In an interesting article on differentiation among women farmers in two districts of Ghana, Vellenga (1977) describes the types of combinations of farming systems prevalent among women. She identifies different farming combinations that are dictated by the division of labour between men and women, and focuses on how farming patterns vary depending on how much help or capital a woman is able to invest in her farming enterprise. In her studies of women food and cocoa farmers, Okali (1975, 1983), identifies a number of farming systems in which women can be involved - often at the same time. On the one hand a woman might be working on her husband's cocoa farm, and at the same time working on her own food farms, and she may have cocoa herself on which she employs labour.

Types of crop combinations among women

The types of women's crop combinations that are found in Antoakrom reflect the diversity of women's roles in the domestic economy. For example, most have to spend time marketing produce as well as growing it (see Chapter 8), and some are obliged to work as paid labourers on other people's farms in order to pay labourers to work on their own farms. On one level it seems that male farming systems are influenced by how much labour they control, and female farming systems by how much labour they have to give. There are three different farming combinations that are apparent in Antoakrom for women. The three categories are those women who have their own cocoa and foodcrops, those women who have cocoa, oil palm and foodcrops, and those who have foodcrops alone. In contrast to the men, there are no women who have oil palm and food crops as a combination without cocoa.

FIGURE 4.4 Combinations of farming patterns among women in Samples 1 and 2.



Although it appears from this chart that a reasonably large number of women (50%) grow cocoa and/or oil palm, these figures must still be compared to those of men (see Figure 4.3), for whom the equivalent figure is 84%. Farm sizes also have to be considered, since women's farms are on the whole smaller than their male counterparts (see Figure 4.1). All the women interviewed grow staple foodcrops - plantain, cassava, and cocoyam, intercropped with maize and vegetables. About 20% of them are able to

monocrop maize also, but only one grows rice and only five grow oil palm.

TABLE 4.9 Frequency of crop combinations in relation to total farm size among women in Sample 1*

Size (acres)	Crop Combination		
	Cocoa/ foodcrops	Cocoa/ oil palm/ foodcrops	Foodcrops alone
0-5	4	1	5
5.5-10	4	-	-
10.5-20	-	-	1
20.5-30	1	-	-
30.5-40	-	-	-
40.5-50	-	-	-
50.5<	-	1	-
Total	9	2	6

As with the men, this table combines all the individual plots to give a total farm size for each woman. It is restricted to Sample 1 as I do not have accurate farm sizes for Sample 2.

This table shows very different results to the same one for male crop combinations. Women's farms are nowhere near as large and, with the striking exception of one or two cases, the various crop combinations do not show any great difference in relation to size across the 3 different types. While women may have the opportunity to diversify their cropping strategies, it is by no means

guaranteed that this enables them to expand the size of their farm plots concurrently.

As is the case with men, there are factors other than sex that can affect cropping strategies and, like men, age also appears to be significant for women as Table 4.10 below shows.

TABLE 4.10 Frequency of crop combinations in relation to age in Samples 1 and 2

Age	Crop Combinations		
	Cocoa foodcrops	Oil palm/ cocoa/ foodcrops	Foodcrops alone
17-30	-	-	2
31-40	1	-	6
41-50	6	1	6
51-60	6	3	5
61<	2	1	1
Total	15	5	20

From this table a correlation can be seen between older women and the ownership of cocoa, and cocoa and oil palm - although the frequency of participation in all the crop combinations declines rapidly after the age of 60, unlike the comparative figures for men (Table 4.7). Although

older women own more cocoa and oil palm than younger women those farming foodcrops alone are spread throughout the age groups, so age on its own is by no means a guarantee of improved status or wealth. For women there are so many influences on their cropping strategies, these figures need to be considered in conjunction with the tables and discussion below.

Cocoa and foodcrops

Most women who have own account cocoa and foodcrops around Antoakrom have planted the cocoa themselves (Table 4.11). A few women, however, have inherited cocoa. For those women that are married it is their husbands who are the most likely to have given them the cocoa, and this also applies to a few women who are widowed. For those that are divorced or single, if their cocoa has not been inherited, they have usually acquired the capital needed to have the land cleared and the cocoa tended from trading their own foodstuffs or through working as daily labourers.

TABLE 4.11 Method of acquisition of cocoa farms by women in Samples 1 and 2.

Self	11
Husband	5
Mother	2
Father	-
Uncle	1
Brother	-
Son	1
Total	20

None of these women have adequate household labour supplies on their own to plant or maintain cocoa, so some of them have to work as wage labourers themselves to pay for the labour they need on these cocoa farms once they are planted. If they have young children in their household their first concern is to grow food that can be used in the household as well as for sale, so their efforts do not always lead to particularly fruitful harvests. Okali (1973) argues that women may not be able to develop their own cocoa farms until they have reached an age where their children are adult and they have no one relying on them for support. This seems to be true for the women I interviewed in Antoakrom. Even women who had been given cocoa while they had been married were given this cocoa as they got older, and not while they were committed to looking after small children.

Cocoa, oil palm and food crops

The women who can afford to grow oil palm as well as cocoa all have some other business enterprise to inject capital into their farm work (see Chapter 7). These women also grow other food crops in a more commercialised fashion than women in the other two categories, since they can afford to take risks. Two of these women plant vegetables not normally grown around Antoakrom, including cabbages and carrots. They say that this is in response to an increasing, though specialised, demand for these vegetables in Kumasi and Obuasi since the mid 1980s. One of these women also plants rice, and all but one monocrop maize, three of them monocrop twice a year.

Three of the women who plant oil palm say that they have planted it because they have the available land, and can afford the labour as they generate enough income from trade. They have adult children who provide some labour, but this is not sufficient and they hire male labourers to work on the oil palm. They say that they like the continuous income from oil palm that gives them money to reinvest in their farming. Two others have businesses in Kumasi, but also want to farm. They feel that farming is secure and that there will always be a demand for farm produce, and they have the capital already to invest in the land and labour needed for their farms. Both of these women employ permanent workers on their farms, and as

much daily labour as is needed. One of these women spends about half her time in Antoakrom and half in Kumasi. The other, who has the largest farms, has a farm manager and visits at weekends to check up on the farms.

None of these women gives labour to anyone else. Two of them have husbands who farm, but their farming enterprises are completely separate from each other. The marital status of these women is not an issue, since they can afford to operate without the help of husbands. The working relationship between these women and their husbands is non-existent, and each has a completely separate economy from her husband.

All but one of the women with these crops are in their late 50s, and age is obviously a significant factor in their opportunity to develop their farming enterprises. There are very few women who have the opportunity to diversify their farming patterns to this extent, but those who are able to do so appear to operate within the same framework as the men in the samples. They are able to rent land, hire labour and have capital to expand their farming enterprise.

Foodcrops alone

One woman expressed the views of many that I interviewed when she said 'Formerly we used our own energy, but now it

is money.' The 20 women who only grow staple food crops in Samples 1 and 2 cannot afford to plant anything else. Their farms are invariably the smallest since they do not have access to adequate supplies of labour or capital to expand production. Most have only a few acres of food farm, on which they grow staple food crops to feed the household and sell. Many of these women are divorced or widowed with young children, and have access to little or no adult labour, and have to spend time taking care of their children without adequate help.

Many of the women in the samples who were only able to grow food crops said they would like to establish cocoa or oil palm farms if they had access to the labour or the money with which to hire labour. Vellenga (1977) gives similar examples in her own work. She interviewed women whose biggest complaint was not scarcity of labour, but lack of capital to pay for it.

In spite of the constraints that are placed upon them these women do try to grow a range of crops, on the one hand to avoid risk, and on the other because this makes good economic sense. If the market is flooded with one crop they have others to fall back on. Many of them plant as much maize as possible, and all intercrop vegetables such as pepper and tomatoes with their root crops. They sell part of the whole range of crops they grow in the market place or to other traders (see Chapter 8).

Local and Stranger Farming Patterns

The differentiation between locals and strangers is less obvious within the farming system than that between men and women. However, it is worth discussing because there are noticeable divisions in the organisation of the local economy that are marked by local or stranger status. As the following chapters will show this differentiation occurs particularly in access to land and labour. The outcome of these differences in access does not always mean that a stranger will be disadvantaged in his or her choice of cropping strategies, but there can be problems with access to land and labour that often require diverse tactics to overcome them.

These observations are based on a small sample since I do not have accurate farm sizes or detailed enough information about the cropping strategies of the few strangers in Sample 2. However, they are backed up by a year of general observation and discussion in the village, as evidence in the subsequent chapters shows. A further point about these local and stranger categories is that they seemed important to everyone in Antoakrom, and people defined themselves and others as 'locals' or 'strangers' when they talked about their farming strategies.

Evidence from Sample 1 shows that there are obvious differences in the acquisition of land between locals and

strangers. This will be explained more fully in Chapter 5. For example, locals have rights to land based on membership of an *abusua*, whereas strangers often rent land from the chief. In Sample 1 stranger men rented 79% of the land they used from the chief, compared to only 21% by locals(10). Strangers can acquire land, but for them it is more expensive. In looking at local and stranger farming patterns there is also variation in the number of plots, and the size of these plots between locals and strangers.

TABLE 4.12 The percentage of plots planted with listed crops for men (Sample 1)

	Locals	Strangers
Rice	8%	18%
Cocoa	36%	25%
Oil Palm	9%	12%
Food crops	39%	59%

Table 4.12 shows that strangers have the highest percentage of their plots planted with rice and food crops, and locals the highest of those planted with cocoa. As will be shown in Chapter 5 this is in part related to the requirement of short term crops on land that is leased to strangers. Rice is also a popular crop amongst strangers who have experience of growing it elsewhere. However, if the size of these plots is examined then the figures show that farm plots belonging to strangers are sometimes larger than those belonging to locals.

TABLE 4.13 Average size of men's plots planted with listed crops (in acres)

	Locals	Strangers
Rice	3	7
Cocoa	4	4.5*
Oil Palm	5.5	11.5
Food crops	1.5	1.5

These figures confirm the fact that despite difficulties in acquiring land and labour many strangers have taken up farming with the money or other resources to overcome these problems.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the farming strategies and detailed the farming patterns of men and women in Antoakrom. The patterns that emerge and the strategies that farmers employ reflect a changing economy where there is an emphasis on diversification in cash cropping because of the problems with the cocoa economy and opportunities to produce food for the urban market; but also more clearly reflect the different types of opportunity that are available to men and women within the structure of the local economy itself. My evidence shows that women are severely limited in their choice of cropping strategies. The percentage of women who grow cocoa, oil palm and rice is smaller than men, as is the number of plots they own. The sizes of their farm plots are smaller, and men have a greater variety of crop combinations than women. This

inevitably means that the farming system as a whole is one that operates on two levels defined by gender.

While local and stranger differentiation is very important and age is significant, gender is the most critical factor in explaining farming patterns. The subsequent chapters explain why this is so and look at how access to the means of production is different for men and women. The following chapter looks at differential access to land.

NOTES

1. For a list of the crops and their botanical names see Appendix A
2. Cassava becomes very hard at this time of year as it loses a lot of moisture when the soil is dry. It is not used regularly at this time, and is left in the ground to reabsorb moisture when the rains start again.
3. Monocropping maize and rice is significant since it is labour intensive and more expensive and risky than growing mixed crops.
4. I found in the course of my work that not all men listed cocoa farms that were not productive. In my 1988/89 sample this was checked. By 1991 these farms may have been abandoned.
5. Oil palm is a food crop, but it is distinguished here as a plantation crop.
6. 'Abunu' is half shares in a sharecropping arrangement to clear land or tend a crop.
7. A caretaker is a permanent employee who works, and often lives, on a cocoa farm for a third (*abusa*) or a half (*abunu*) share of the cocoa.
8. A doctor in a mission hospital at Agroyesum, 15 miles away from Antoakrom, says that requests for medical treatment and operations increase after the cocoa harvest when people have more money to pay medical bills.
9. 'Nnobua' is a term to describe male cooperative labour. Labour use is explained fully in Chapter 7.
10. Arrangements to use land are explained fully in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

ACCESS TO LAND

This chapter concerns the acquisition and usufruct of land. The farming population of Antoakrom acquire access to land through various means. This chapter explores these different means with respect to two significant social categories: most importantly, being a woman or a man and also membership or non-membership of land owning *abusua* (being a local or a stranger). Further, it draws on data to show that means of access to land determine to a significant, but not necessarily conclusive, extent what crops these categories of farmer will choose to grow. Therefore, access to land, either through ownership or some other means, is a critical determinant of opportunity within the farming system.

In Asante land is not such a critical factor of production as labour since the system of land tenure ensures that all local people of Antoakrom's stool, including women, have access to land. However, custom and practice entitling access is not straightforward, nor is land equally distributed amongst those who have claims to it. Although there are certain principles of matrilineal inheritance that apply, there are no hard and fast rules. Allocation

of land is fairly flexible, and arrangements for its use equally so. As Vercruijsse (1988) points out concerning Asante land tenure, 'it is impossible to give a straightforward account of customary rules concerning the control and allocation, usufruct and alienation, custody and administration of land, and of the conditions under which these apply.' (1988:35). The flexibility and inevitable complexity that Vercruijsse describes are evident in Antoakrom.

There are four main ways for anyone to acquire land: by right as a citizen of the community in which a person is resident; by payment of fees; through gift; or through inheritance. Rights to land as a citizen are guaranteed, but many people do not use this right if they have an occupation other than farming or live away. Although there is no particular pressure on land, there would not be enough if every person claimed their rightful share. As Vercruijsse argues, 'Even if the stock of unoccupied land were still considerable, there would be many members of land holding families whose valid claim to land could not be honoured' (1988:85). This is because land belonging to the stool is often unequally divided between different *abusua* (matrilineages). In Antoakrom, though people can rarely estimate the total area of their *abusua* land, they often compare it to the size of another *abusua* land, either so much bigger or smaller. It is evident from what they say that the person:land ratio, in terms of

entitlement through membership of a stool-dependent lineage, varies greatly. For most this will not become a problem, but for some farmers any extra land that is needed will have to be found through application to the stool or by borrowing from a friend.

In Chapter 3 it was mentioned briefly that the Asante recognise that all land ultimately belongs to the stool. This means that an individual can only acquire usufruct of that land. Land belonging to Antoakrom (under the Pakyi stool) is divided between land which 'belongs' to the various *abusua* associated with the stool and land that belongs to the stool itself. *Abusua* land is available to individuals by virtue of their membership of descent groups defined as dependents of the stool. But stool land can be 'rented' or 'sold' to farmers that want it - either those locals who need more land, or strangers who do not have rights to land through these criteria.

Although local people recognise usufruct of land, it is important to understand that when they talk of owning land it certainly means more to them than straightforward usufruct. Individual cultivators hold land as if they were the owners, using the same areas of land throughout their lives, and passing them on to their inheritors following the matrilineal principle, or to family members outside the *abusua* - such as a man's own sons or daughters (see below). This land is not easily alienated, and

although the Pakyi stool ultimately controls the land, it is rarely able to take land away from a particular individual. Those who rent land from the stool, however, do not have the same rights to land, and these people recognise that their claim is temporary. Different rules govern their use of this land, and most of this is controlled by a definite lease.

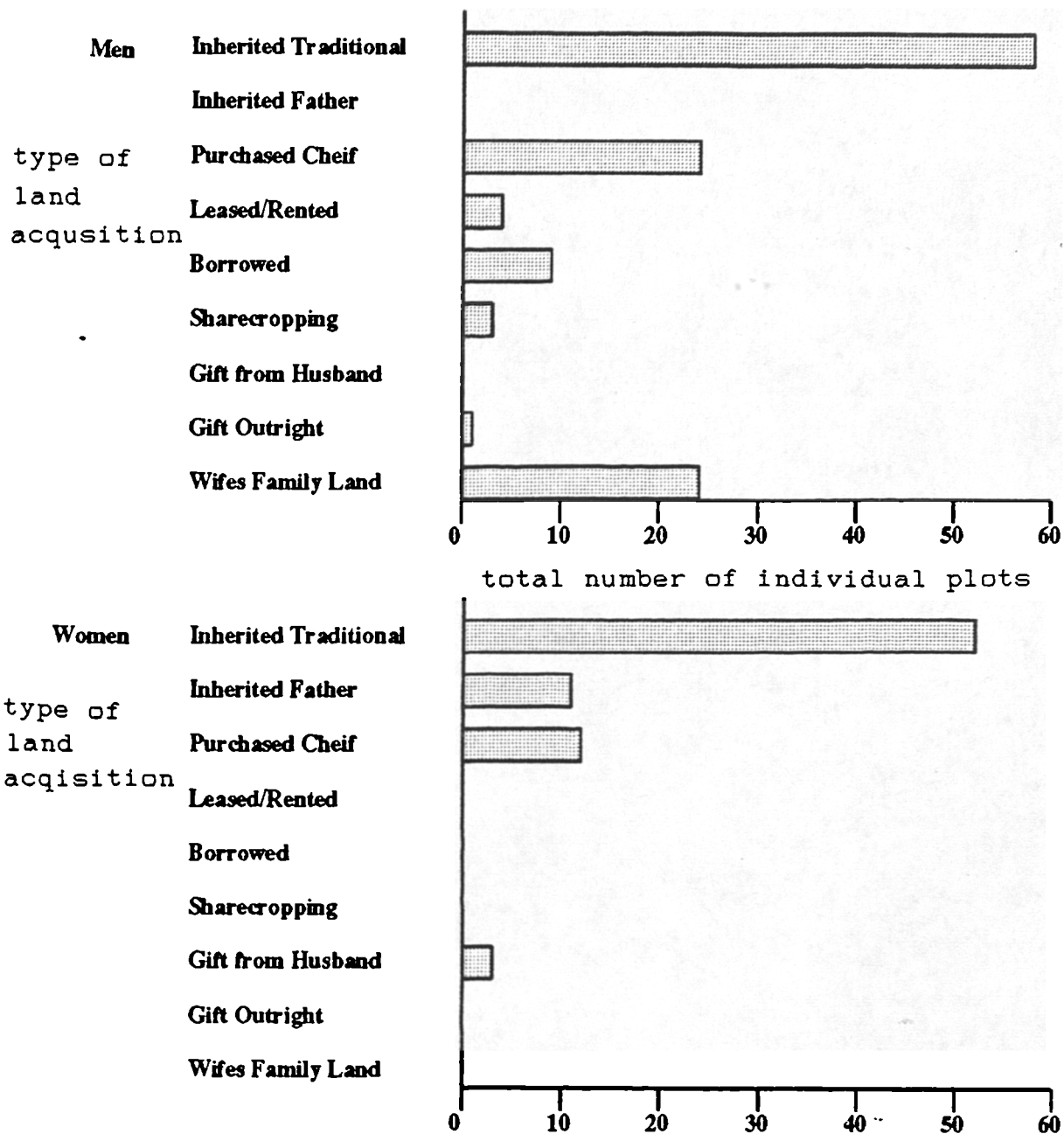
The most important knowledge people have about land is that it is really owned by the *asamado* - spirits of the ancestors, and that the living farmers are holding it in trust for the future. The Omanhene of Akim Abuakwa expressed this when he said, 'I conceive that land belongs to a vast family of whom many are dead, a few are living and countless hosts are still unborn' (MEEK 1946:178). People in Antoakrom see their rights to land deeply rooted in their relationships with deceased relatives and are always concerned about how the land will be passed on. This is one way to prevent alienation of land, and although individuals may rent or loan family land or even pass it on to spouses or children outside the matrilineage through gift, this land is almost always retrieved by the *abusua* on the death of the original owner, or those to whom it was passed on. Litigation over land in Antoakrom is often about boundaries and encroachment, but more commonly it is about inheritance and who really has rights to family land (see case below).

Although land is jealously guarded in Antoakrom and people are sure of their own boundaries, even in the densest undergrowth, the total area of land belonging to an individual (like that belonging to a family) is often unknown. While the sizes of particular plots of cultivated land, although sometimes approximate, are usually known, the total land including fallow is not. This is hardly surprising, but once again is often the cause of litigation. Land that was once cultivated but has been fallowed for a long time can be some of the most hotly disputed. This is because such land can be cultivated by another person in the same *abusua*. This causes disputes over ownership, particularly if the original farmer has died, and his or her direct heirs have not got round to re-cultivating their inherited land. In this case they have to prove they still have rights to it by pointing out a bearing tree which had once been cultivated by the original owner - old cocoa, kola, a palm or citrus for example. Ollennu (1960) argues that land is deemed abandoned after non-occupation of at least 10 years, but in Antoakrom people dispute over land that has not been actively cultivated for between 15 and 20 years (see the case described below). There are often contradictions between family and individual property here, especially if a person dies without making a will. Bentsi-Enchill (1964) describes this clearly: the rule is 'that upon the death intestate of a person, his self-acquired property would become family property. Thus individual property is,

in the absence of testamentary gifts to individuals, forever becoming family property' (1964:81). So, although individuals attempt to increase the security with which they hold land, the *abusua* has the ability to resist this so that there will be enough land for its members.

Access to land for everyone is thus governed by certain matrilineal principles. Those who are powerful and or wealthy can get around these, by renting land for example, or borrowing from a friend who has more. For those without capital or influence, however, or those whose *abusua* land is small or under pressure, acquisition may be much harder. Despite the traditional view that women and men have similar rights to land, men have much better access. There has been much discussion of the changes colonisation and the growth of the cocoa economy has wrought on kinship, labour resources and land tenure, and most of these changes seem to have worked to the benefit of men (Benneh 1970, Okali 1983, Mikell 1984, Vercrijse 1988). Mikell (1984) shows particularly clearly how women were 'squeezed out' of cocoa farming, and their rights eroded during the colonial period as men acquired ownership of the land and control of its products. The following table shows quite clearly the difference in the patterns of land acquisition between men and women (these types of land acquisition will be explained more fully below).

FIGURE 5.1 Acquisition of land by male and female heads of household (Sample 1) (Total number of individual plots)



It is obvious that men have a greater range of possible choices in their access to land, and that they are able to use these much more easily than women. This is reflected in the relationship between the acquisition of land and the farming patterns that were identified in the last chapter. The following tables highlight these differences between men and women:

TABLE 5.1 The relationship between land acquisition and cropping strategies for men. (Total number of individual plots)

	Cocoa/ foodcrops	Cocoa/ oil palm/ foodcrops	Oil palm/ foodcrops	Foodcrops alone
Inherited trad.	20 (16%)	22 (18%)	11 (9%)	4 (3%)
Inherited father	- -	- -	- -	- -
Purchased chief	1 (1%)	23 (20%)	- -	- -
Leased/rented	- -	1 (1%)	- -	3 (2%)
Borrowed	1 (1%)	4 (3%)	- -	4 (3%)
Sharecropped	3 (2%)	- -	- -	- -
Gift outright	- -	1 (1%)	- -	- -
Wife's fam. land	15 (12%)	- -	- -	9 (8%)
Total	40 (32%)	51 (47%)	11 (9%)	20 (16%)

The total number of plots counted is 122 (100%)

TABLE 5.2 The relationship between land acquisition and cropping patterns for women. (Total number of individual plots)

	Cocoa/ foodcrops	Cocoa/ oil palm/ foodcrops	Foodcrops alone
Inherited trad.	30 (39%)	6 (8%)	16 (21%)
Inherited father	3 (4%)	- -	8 (10%)
Purchased chief	5 (6%)	6 (8%)	- -
Leased/rented	- -	- -	- -
Borrowed	- -	- -	- -
Sharecropping	- -	- -	- -
Gift from husband	3 (4%)	- -	- -
Gift outright	- -	- -	- -
Total	41 (53%)	12 (16%)	24 (31%)

The total number of plots counted is 77.

Apart from the obvious differences in the number of ways that men and women acquire land, there are also differences and similarities between these for the various farming patterns. For men those farming cocoa, and cocoa and oil palm have similar numbers of plots acquired through traditional inheritance, although in the cocoa and oil palm group much more land is rented from the chief, suggesting that oil palm and/or new cocoa farms may be planted on rented land.

Amongst those who plant only cocoa and foodcrops it is the Asante strangers who make up the large number using their wives family land, and it is the non-Asante men who use sharecropping arrangements. The younger men farming oil palm as an alternative to cocoa do so on their own *abusua* land, perhaps in lieu of cocoa, and those who are farming

foodcrops alone have a greater number of leasing and borrowing arrangements since they are growing short term crops.

Interestingly, the women who grow cocoa and foodcrops plant more of their total percentage of plots on land that is inherited traditionally or leased from the chief than men do, and a few of their cocoa farms have been given by husbands or fathers. As with the men, the few women who grow oil palm and cocoa can afford to buy land on which to grow these crops as well as using traditionally inherited land, although the percentage of plots acquired in this way is much smaller than for men. Women who grow only foodcrops all use inherited land, since they do not have the money to buy or lease, and are not farming on a large enough scale to need to borrow.

MALE ACCESS TO LAND

The generally accepted rule about the inheritance or acquisition of land for local men is that when a male member of the matrilineage dies his male heirs, through their blood ties with women, are the ones who benefit first. In general a man's property is inherited in the following order: brothers according to seniority, own sister's sons, sister's daughter's sons, mother's sister's sons. In practice it is the sister's son who is most likely to inherit as inheritance is usually limited to the

children of a man's mother and sister (Okali 1983). As one man told me:

'You see, your brother, let's assume you have been born two boys, then another woman is also born. When one man dies it is the other man who will inherit, then when the other man dies it is the sister who will inherit. If the sister likes she can give it to the deceased's nephew [her son]'

Examples of such forms of acquisition by local men in Antoakrom are common. Some examples of this pattern of inheritance are detailed in the following cases:

Yaw is around 65 years old, and, apart from land he rents in Ahafo, inherited his land from his mother's brother. His 'grandfather' [his mother's mother's brother] came to Antoakrom to start farming when the land was first settled and cleared. When this man died Yaw's mother's brother told Yaw he should use all this land as he already had sufficient. The land in Ahafo is a 17 acre cocoa farm that is 20 years old, but apart from that Yaw only uses the family's matrilineal land as it is big enough for all the family members that want to farm.

Hanson is 38 years old, and inherited most of his land from his mother's brother, although he also uses his elderly mother's land. He does not use any land other than his matrilineal land and has enough to give to friends who need some occasionally. These friends clear an area twice as large as they need in return for the loan, and he uses the other half. Such loans are usually

for food crops only, so that they last for a maximum of two or three years. His cultivated farms total 11.5 acres.

Kojo and Kwabena are both younger men, one married and one recently divorced, and they farm on the land of relatives who are still living. Kojo acquired land through his mother's mother who inherited it from her brother. Kwabena's elderly mother's brother has given him land to weed. Kwabena has 10.5 acres (half of which is rice and oil palm). He says that the family's land is large, but that there are many people using it, which means that when he wants to expand his farming he will have to do it through borrowing, or leasing from the chief.

Access to land, however, depends on a lot more than the availability of large areas of family land and local men often rent or purchase land. Kojo is a well established farmer in his mid 60s. He started farming in the late 1960s, but as his *abusua* land is not very large and he grows plantation crops, he rents all his plantation land. It is easy for both young and old men to inherit *abusua* land, but older men like Kojo who are well established, and who have access to more capital, can also buy land. Another local man uses his wife's lineage land, as access to his own land is difficult for him. Matthew uses what he considers to be family land, but the Pakyihene reclaimed this land about 6 years ago (1) and he now has to pay 'drink' for it. This is simply a payment of a

bottle of schnapps to the chief rather than any fixed payment, as he is a local man and has automatic rights to land. The nature of this payment is the most obvious difference between locals and strangers. Strangers have to pay more - fixed sums of money as well as the statutory bottle of schnapps are required if they want to rent land.

Leasing land from the Pakyi chief is not a real problem for any local man. Kojo, who rents 100 acres from the chief gave him two bottles of schnapps when he agreed to the use of the land, and now takes him a bottle of schnapps and 'a few thousand cedis' a year for its use. Kojo has plans to plant another oil palm plantation, and since he has leased so much land from the Pakyihene already, he says that in future he will go to the Paramount chief in Manso Nkwanta some fifteen miles away to 'beg' some land from him. For Kojo this presents no serious problem as he is one of the three men in Antoakrom who owns a car. Local people usually have some kind of farm plan drawn up if they lease land, but it is not always officially registered with the Lands Commission (2) as is more common with strangers. Strangers are more likely to register land as they are at greater risk of being challenged by matrilineages over the rightful use of land. If they have a fully registered farm plan their claims are more likely to stand up in court (see Appendix C). A particular example of litigation that illustrates these points is one that in fact had the opposite outcome,

with the stranger having to give up his land. It also illustrates the possibility of litigation over what was or is fallow land, as described above. I recorded both sides of the litigation in Antoakrom:

I came here in 1982 to buy land from the Jaasehene, chief of Antoakrom, who was selling all the swampy lands here that belonged to the stool. So I bought 10 acres to make an oil palm farm. I bought 10 acres and made a plan to send to the Pakyihene. I paid c8,000 and then c2,000 to the Pakyihene to sign the plan. After that I was told I could cultivate the land. So I cultivated oil palm. In 1982 I planted 4 acres of oil palm. I continued to weed the rest, and planted more in 1983. In 1983 when I was planting oil palm seedlings Yaw came to me and brought a summons from the High Court in Kumasi that the land was his own, so I should not continue to plant it, and I was asked to leave the land. I informed the chief and the Pakyihene, and the Pakyihene sent me to a lawyer in Kumasi on the following day. The case lasted for four years. It started in Kumasi in 1984. It was adjourned continuously until 1987 when the case was called for hearing - every two months I had to go to court. Before the hearing the Jaasehene went to Pakyi and wanted to destool the Pakyihene, so the case was heard, but due to that the Pakyihene could not come to witness on my behalf. So after this the case ended in 1987 on June 15th.

The land had been for Kofi - that old man, and when the land was sold to me Yaw Manu [the old man's nephew] advised him to use a summons. But that man did not want to, and said that the land was for the chief, so Yaw did the summons. Yaw asked Kofi to be his witness, but Kofi had witnessed on my behalf, so Yaw said that if Kofi would witness for him he would give him a third of the land if he won. Yaw said that it was his uncle's land, and that he had been the first person to clear it, so the land was for him [Yaw]. The Pakyihene had told me to keep on farming - and had claimed money and drinks, and I paid because I thought he was doing me good. I had to leave the land because the Pakyihene should have witnessed, but he did not come to court, and he was the person who gave me the land. The Pakyihene swore an affidavit on my behalf that he gave me the land, but when the case came the Pakyihene denied everything. I appealed against the ruling but the papers did not get to Accra in time for the

appeal, so I had to give up the land. I could continue to appeal but it would be too costly. I spent ₦450,000 on the farm up to that time. After 4 years if I assess the value of the farm for sale I could have sold it for ₦5,000 per tree - 600 trees, so that's ₦2.5 - 3 million. I also spent ₦128,000 on the case, so I did not continue.'

As far as Yaw is concerned the case was to do with litigation over what is his family's fallow farming land:

'It is that my grandparents came to weed [the land in dispute], and it became secondary forest. The cocoa, some died and some was left, and I had to weed, I know all the boundary lines. I was weeding some [the area in question is near to an area Yaw was weeding at the time of the litigation] and then someone came, and the chief gave it to him. Then I told the chief that even though he is the chief my grandparents also came to weed, but because his grandparents came first he was elected chief. But that does not mean that all the land belongs to the chief, because in the beginning they all came here and weeded together. And so when the chief gave it to him I complained that it was for my grandparents and not the chief. Then he said he was the chief, and I said 'no'. So I summonsed him [Joe, the stranger renting the land], that the land was not for him, but for my grandfather who came to clear the forest, clear the trees and plant cocoa, and therefore it was mine. So I entered into litigation with him and had my property. How it happened is that the chief sold it to a stranger as his [the chief's] own land, and so I went to tell the man that the land was not for the chief, but my own, my ancestors came to clear it, and therefore he should stop. But he insisted that the chief had collected money from him, and therefore I sent a group of my people to tell the chief that he should give the money he has collected back to the person. But he said he was the chief and that all the land belonged to him and therefore I could not claim it. Then I said, 'even though it is yours you are just a caretaker, my ancestors cleared it, and therefore you are just taking care of it'. It is just the mineral wealth and the timber on it which belongs to him. He takes care of it and then pays his tribute to the Asantehene. But where my ancestors have weeded, he cannot claim from me. So I went and summonsed him, and therefore when I summonsed him it was decided that

my ancestors, not his, came to weed the land and it was judged in my favour.'

Although litigation over such issues is common practice, this decision was not a popular one as Yaw is well known for entering into dispute. He is a powerful and fairly wealthy elder in the village, and people think that he uses this too much to his advantage. Many people felt that the land should have been left as the original land owner, Kofi, had suggested. The case illustrates the importance that is placed on family land and its history, and the dread of its alienation from the *abusua*. It also shows that for local men of standing in the community, those with some wealth and influence, access to and control over land is fairly easy. It also highlights how the fallowing of land for lengthy periods can cause problems.

Land may also be acquired by borrowing. None of the local men in Sample 1 had borrowed land from friends, but strangers had done so. Almost all the local men interviewed said that they loaned land to friends (sometimes strangers) either a) for nothing; b) for payment in labour, i.e. the clearance of land; or c) the opportunity to intercrop a long term crop such as oil palm or citrus or cocoa in the field and have the borrower of the land take care of it. This is a common form of sharecropping arrangement. It is also possible for locals and strangers alike to use land belonging to a wife's

abusua if she is a local person. In the sample only one local man did this, preferring to work with his wife on four plots of her lineage land rather than on his own *abusua* land, over which he often argued with his brothers. The rest said that their wives came to work with them, and that in return they cleared small areas of their wives' land for their own farms. There is a certain amount of stigma attached to a man using his wife's land. He is thought of as weak, and in any case has no right whatsoever to the crops on that land in the event of a divorce. However, although only one of the locals in the sample did this, some of them did say that they would be prepared to use their wife's land especially if it was very fertile land, or if they wanted to expand their farms beyond the size of the family land that was available to them. Those local men, however, who have stranger wives may have to lease land from the chief if their own *abusua* land is not enough. One man said that because his wife worked on his farms most of the time and he did not need her family land, she loaned out some of this land on an *abuna* basis to a stranger, who cleared half for himself and half for her.

Many of the strangers in Sample 1 use the *abusua* land of their local wives (Table 5.3). However, it is significant that most of this category used the land for food crops, which do not alienate land for long periods since the land can be returned to its owner after the crops have been

harvested. The following tables show a breakdown of land acquisition by crop and local or stranger status.

TABLE 5.3 Land acquisition by crop, for men in Sample 1 (Total number of individual plots)

Land Acquisition	Crops: Cocoa	Oil Palm	Foodcrops
Inherited traditional	22	7	28
Inherited father	-	-	-
Purchased chief	10	5	9
Leased/rented	-	-	4
Borrowed	1	-	8
Sharecropped	-	-	3
Gift outright	-	1	-
Wife's family land	5	-	19
Total plots (122)	38	13	71

TABLE 5.4 Differences in land acquisition between local and stranger men in Sample 1. (Total number of individual plots)

Land Acquisition	Local	Asante stranger	Non-Asante stranger	Total
Inherited traditional	55	2*	-	57
Inherited father	-	-	-	-
Purchased Chief	5	4	15	24
Leased/rented	1	2	1	4
Borrowed	-	4	5	9
Sharecropped	-	-	3	3
Gift outright	-	1	-	1
Wife's family land	4	15	5	24
Total				122

* These strangers inherited land in their own villages on which to plant cocoa.

Table 5.4 shows that long-term crops, such as cocoa and oil palm, are more likely to be planted on inherited land or land purchased from the chief on a long-term lease. Table 5.5 shows that locals mainly use inherited land, as would be expected. It also shows that strangers use a wide range of methods to acquire land. Asante strangers in particular marry local women, and use their wives' family land, while non-Asante strangers who can afford it purchase land from the chief. Strangers, particularly those who are non-Asante, are more likely to use borrowing and sharecropping arrangements (explained in more detail below).

Many writers have noticed fairly recent changes in the customary methods of transmitting property (Benneh 1970, Adomako-Sarfoh 1971, Okali 1983). Since the introduction of cocoa there is a greater emphasis being placed on the conjugal family, particularly in matrilineal societies. As Okali notes

'Underlying the literature on the widespread agricultural changes in West Africa, including the transfer from subsistence to cash cropping, is the assumption that certain customary principles are eroded in the process. Attention has focused on the disintegration of descent groups as a whole, especially their corporate functions, and on the emergence of the elementary family as the key kinship group with respect to economic cooperation...Even Hill (1963)... who emphasised the persistence of customary principles of economic cooperation...reports that the forces of capitalist enterprise were represented by the individual farmer and his wives and children' (1983:2)

These changes are certainly evident in Antoakrom now, where many men express their intention of passing their farms to their own children rather than to their sister's children. This is more likely to be the case with private property acquired outside the matrilineage, land being rented on a long term lease from the chief for example. One man told me:

'Everyone is working for their fathers these days. When you have property you divide it into three, give two to your children and wife, and one to your sister's children. Giving everything to your sister's children means that you cheat your own children.'

The increase not only in the importance of passing property on to children but also to wives as well seems to point to the increasing possibility for men to operate without reference to descent groups, and to them having more independent access to land, and of course labour. Mikell (1984) highlights this point in an historical account of the changes that have occurred in men and women's rights within the *abusua*, and how these have affected property relations, with men controlling increasing amounts of land outside the *abusua*. By owning property that is separate from the lineage, men can pass it on to their immediate family. Benneh (1970) argues that it was the switch to cocoa that heightened individuals' claims to a particular piece of land, but this has certainly continued with the introduction of other cash crops such as oil palm and even on land for annual

crops such as maize. A farmer will often give a gift of land to his children in his own lifetime, but is more likely to do so to his wife, in order to ensure that this property is shown to belong to her and is not easily claimed by the *abusua* if he dies.

Local men who have stranger wives are often concerned that these women should have land in Antoakrom, and will not have to forfeit that land to the man's *abusua* if he should die. Some expressed their intention to plant long term crops for their wives in their own villages, and some have even built houses for their wives as their own private property. Others are not so generous, however, and many stranger women fear the death of their husbands, especially in the absence of any adult children. Local men are also concerned about their children if their wives are strangers, since they should inherit land in their mother's village, but may prefer to stay in Antoakrom where they may have been born. Often a farmer wants his children to inherit the private property that he developed himself, rather than it being taken over by the *abusua*. He might want his children to inherit from him because they may find it difficult to lay claim to land in their mother's village if they have never lived or farmed in that area. I heard of many cases of people who had found it impossible to claim their rightful inheritance because of jealous relatives. Funerals can be fraught when matrilineal inheritors come from other villages to lay

claim to land, and are deterred from doing so either by the bad feeling created by matrilineal kin, or by the refusal of the deceased's *abusua* to part with the land.

For local men 'transmission [of land] is more mechanical than for women' (Mikell 1984:211), and a man can be guaranteed access; even female property can be transferred to male *abusua* members on the death of women. Transfer of male property to wives and children is therefore particularly difficult if a man fails to designate his property before his death. If this is the case it will automatically go to the male members of his *abusua*. As was mentioned above Mikell (1984) has noticed an increasing tendency for men to designate property to sons and brothers rather than giving it out to the *abusua*.

Strangers and land

There are some distinctions to be made between the methods of acquiring land by Asante and non-Asante strangers. The acquisition of land by strangers can be through gift or by payment to the stool. While Asante strangers tend to marry into the village in order to acquire land, or are given land as a gift, occasionally renting from the chief, non-Asante strangers, especially if they are farming on a large scale, have to use much more complex and often more expensive ways of acquiring land. Although they are sometimes lent land to farm by

friends if they have stayed in the community for some years, non-Asante men are more likely to enter into sharecropping relationships or make a payment of some kind, even for local *abusua* land. Having said this, it is common for stranger farmers to come well-equipped to farm, either having made a conscious decision to settle and farm in the area, or having made money in some other business from which they originally came, deciding that farming is a more lucrative or satisfactory alternative. For these people buying land is not a particular problem as they have the resources to do it, (this is also true for some of the female stranger farmers), although they often find that payments have to be high in order to secure land from a particular stool, as was discussed in Chapter 4. They pose no real threat to stool land in the long term, and will not alienate land for their children (their children will have rights through their mothers to *abusua* land if the strangers have married local women.)

Men who have come into Antoakrom as Asante strangers often marry local women (Table 3.3). One man in Sample 1, who has a stranger wife and a much younger local wife from Antoakrom, told me that he only married the local woman to use her family's large lineage land. Most of these men have some farm land in the villages where they were born, but do not always lay claim to this unless they have planted or inherited some kind of long term tree crop in the past. Some of the Asante stranger men do have old

cocoa on *abusua* land, although several of these men in Sample 1 said that they do little to maintain them at such a distance, and that the cost of doing so was too high.

One Asante stranger who married into Antoakrom originally came to work in the area as a tree feller. He married a local woman and is now farming with her on land she has been given by her father's sister's son. This man's uncle has ageing cocoa farms in his home village, but has not given him any yet, and this man does not use any of his *abusua* land. He and his wife give some of her land to other strangers to use in return for half the cleared land, and they occasionally charge a nominal sum for its use, such as ₵1,000 or ₵2,000, if they are short of money. Another also works on his wife's land in Antoakrom. She inherited this land through her mother from her mother's brother. This man also has land from Essumeja, the place where he was born. Although Essumeja is north-east of Bekwai, one of the boundaries of Essumeja land borders on Antoakrom land, and so he farms citrus on land that is only 4 miles away.

The following example illustrates the way in which it is possible to receive gifts of land, even as a stranger, and the types of arrangements that can be made with the stool or private land owners for the use of their land. Kwame came to Antoakrom from Abori, about 20 miles away, in 1966. He originally came to ask the chief for land for

cocoa, and to open a store, which he still has. He now lives in the middle of a 15 acre oil palm plantation on the edge of the village. He acquired this particular land,

'from a man called Kwabena Donko, who lived where Yaw Bema is now keeping his kiosk [in the middle of the village]. That man is now dead, but then [around 1975] I went and begged and he offered it to me. He charged me a little money, and gave it to me to weed and to establish my property on it. I paid drink and he gave it to me out of love.'

I asked if it was someone else's family land, and how he had been able to keep it when the man died.

'It was his own property. He gave it to me to develop my property on it. His grandfathers were weeding it and when he saw me he said he liked me, and gave it to me, but then the whole of this area was a bamboo grove, and so nobody wanted to develop it, but I liked it.'

The land on which his original cocoa farm was planted he rented from the chief.

'In the olden days, when they charged you and you were given about 4 acres the cost would be about £4 or c8. Then the attendants [of the chief] who went to the bush with you to demarcate, they also charged a little drink money, sometimes 6 shillings.'

I asked if there was a yearly rent on land he leased from the chief: 'I ought to pay, but the chief likes me so much that I do not pay. I do not pay anything to anybody for that land'. Modesty aside, Boateng is probably not being misleading. He has lived in Antoakrom for a long time and is well liked and a respected member of the community. He

is considered kind and trustworthy. Because of this and the favours he does for others he has little difficulty in acquiring land to farm.

For the food crops he plants on a yearly basis he buys land from the Pakyihene and various *abusua* in Antoakrom. For a one acre stretch of land on which he has planted tomatoes in 1988 (he will only use it for one year) he paid the owner ₵1,500, and when he has harvested the tomatoes he will give back the land. If he replants the land, the owner will charge him an extra 1,000 cedis.

The money or drinks paid for land varies according to the individuals involved in the agreement and the type of crop being farmed. The land for tree crops, for example, costs a lot more because the crops are on the land for twenty or more years, while land for cassava may be cheaper than the land for plantain and cocoyams as it does not need to be so fertile, and the owner may have only recently left it, nor does it need to be used for so long.

For non-Asante strangers the stool is less willing to alienate land for long term use, although this can be bought at a price. Most non-Asante stranger farmers that I talked to told me that it was much harder and more expensive for them to acquire land than it was for others, and that they often had to rely on good will as the only means of acquiring land, as there are no established

practices governing stranger land use. Two examples of land use by non-Asante strangers are given here to highlight these points:

Abubaka was born in the north of Togo, but came down to Obuasi to work in the mines. He stopped working there to drive a car for a transport owner in Adanse near Obuasi, and the owner of the car brought him to Antoakrom to drive between Antoakrom and Bekwai. After a few years of driving he stopped and took up farming. Originally the chief gave him land in return for half (*abuna*) shares in the crops he produced. This proportion is much higher than Asante strangers who may only have to give one third (*abusa*), if that. Now he either rents land from several *abusua* for between c2,000 and c4,000 for 1 or 2 acres, paying perhaps double what an Asante stranger would; or he clears land for others in exchange for which they give him half the cleared land to use until the harvest of the crop he has planted. This year he has planted rice on the site of a local doctor's oil palm farm. They cleared the land together and Abubaka uses it, on the condition that he weeds and cares for the oil palm and looks after the land. He says that it is difficult to get local *abusua* land, even for food crops, because land owners do not like him to plant crops such as plantain that need good soil and bear fruit for up to 4 years. They prefer him to grow crops such as rice and maize that only last for one season. One local woman and two local men in Antoakrom

lend him land. He also has a cocoa farm in Adanse. His father, who was working in Obuasi with him, became a friend of the chief in Adanse, so that they were able to lease some stool land. He leased the land from the chief outright and does not have to give the chief a share of the cocoa, but at the end of every year he presents him with a sheep and a bottle of schnapps.

Ndokoba was taken to Accra from Navrongo as a small boy, but moved to Antoakrom around 1965 to work as a labourer for other northerners farming in the area. Eventually he was able to lease land in his own right, and now owns some of the most extensive farms around Antoakrom. About 15 or 20 years ago he was able to buy 20 acres of fruiting cocoa from a police inspector who was leaving the village for around c300. It was leased stool land and so the stool charged him another c600 to keep the land. This was very expensive, but he argues that this was so because he is a northerner and the stool will always charge him more. He also bought 8 acres of land for cocoa from the Nwenso chief with a 90 year lease on it. For this he paid £15, or the equivalent of c30 as it was then. For rice, which is his main crop, and other food crops, he rents land on a yearly basis from various chiefs and *abusua* in the area. He pays anything between c20,000 and c50,000 a year, depending on the size of his farms. This year (1989) he is planting around 13 acres of rice for which he paid c20,000. He says that he always rents land because if he

were to borrow it without paying he would have to give some of the crop to the owner, or if the yield was good the owner of the land may even ask for more money. Further to this he argues that local people are not keen to give land for nothing, but are more amenable to payment. He says that he is careful about who he rents land from, and always has a plan drawn up for long-term leases to avoid litigation (see Appendix C). Local people occasionally come directly to rent their land to him if they need capital.

Ndokoba also acquires land through the pledging of others' farms. He acts as a local money lender and has acquired one cocoa farm this year as the owner failed to pay him the money he owed. These arrangements will be discussed more fully in Chapter 7. Ndokoba is able to buy land on such a scale because, even though it is expensive, he is a successful farmer with capital resources and plenty of cheap labour at his disposal. Other northerners who have fewer capital resources (although for them labour does not seem to be the problem) have to use the sharing arrangements that Ndokoba does not like to use.

Issa who is a younger man relies on sharecropping arrangements in which he gives a percentage of the rice crop he farms to the person from whom he has borrowed the land. Sometimes he will give one sack of rice (60 kgs) and ₦1,000, and sometimes more or less than that depending

on how familiar he is with the person lending him the land.

A further point concerning the type and availability of land for strangers is a comment one stranger made while I was visiting his farm. He told me that the location of the land given to strangers is not always good (as fertile or easy to work), or as near to the village as land given to locals. The farm we were visiting was on the outskirts of the stool land, and could only be reached by means of very narrow and winding paths through thick secondary vegetation.

Although it is possible for strangers to acquire land it is often difficult for them to keep it. As has been indicated above, strangers often go to great lengths to secure a piece of land, by having farm plans made and lease agreements drawn up - especially for land that will be used for long-term crops. The case cited above in which Yaw had taken a stranger to court over what he considered to be his family land, illustrates clearly the vulnerability of strangers when using local property. In that particular case the land was actually granted by the Pakyihene, who clearly thought it was stool land. Strangers can also find that they lose their rights to land in divorce cases. Stranger men married to local women can be turned off their wives' lineage land in the event of divorce. However, as will become clear in the following

section, access to land for all men, whatever their status, seems to be easier than for women.

WOMEN'S ACCESS TO LAND

Traditionally land is not specified as male or female property in the same way as other possessions and women should have easy access to land. As members of the *abusua*, and the ones through whom land is passed, women play an important role in the maintenance of the system of land distribution but, as has been pointed out above, land seems to fall more easily into male hands. Local women are always able to acquire land from the *abusua*, but do not inherit established *abusua* property, such as cocoa farms, as easily as their brothers, sons or husbands. The same can be said of stool land. Although, in theory, women who are local citizens of Antoakrom have rights to use stool land, they can afford to exercise these rights less often than men.

Although women have rights to *abusua* land, it is difficult to tell whether those who might want larger areas of this land are in a position to get it as easily as their male relatives. Women's farms tend to be much smaller in size than men's farms, so it is not difficult for the *abusua* to accommodate them on matrilineal land. Many local men in Antoakrom who have large farms cultivate these entirely on *abusua* land. It must also be noted, however, that the

size of women's farms has a lot to do with other factors, especially access to labour and capital (to be discussed in subsequent chapters). As far as the inheritance of established property on *abusua* land is concerned, none of the women I interviewed had ever inherited any established farms of long-term crops through the *abusua*. Such farms went to their male relatives.

Although local women have access to stool land, only one of the local women I interviewed in Sample 1 uses any. Women inherit from their mothers or sisters, although this is by no means automatic. One of the women I interviewed expects to inherit a cocoa farm in Ahafo that her mother is cultivating, and two women inherited cocoa from their mothers in the past that were on stool land, but in both cases the cocoa is dead now and they have not replanted. One woman's deceased father had asked for *abusua* land for his children since his wife was a stranger. He had owned cocoa farms, but they had gone to her brothers as a matter of course, although the woman was able to use other parts of the inherited land for her own farming. Mikell (1984) notes that women use and inherit less private property than men, she argues that:

'Men rather than women appear to be breaking free of the *abusua* property relationships and acquiring private property in farm land that was distinct from *abusua* farms. Women, as vehicles for the passage of the lineage appear restrained...[and] when men begin to invest their resources in land it is generally brothers and sons who inherit these farms, and not sisters and daughters' (1984:200).

However, in Antoakrom, a number of local women have inherited from their fathers (Figure 5.1). This land is largely used for food crops, and their long term use of the land is not guaranteed. Women's access to land can be influenced by whether they are single or married. Married women can acquire land through the gift of a husband. Table 4.1 shows that five of the women with cocoa in Samples 1 and 2 acquired it in this way. While no married women I interviewed had their 'own account' farms on their husband's land (farms they had started themselves), some had been given farms by their husbands. These farms were usually started on the wives' own lineage land or on land leased from the stool.

Of the women in Sample 1 with established cocoa farms one does have a farm given to her by her husband on his own lineage land. This farm was taken from her on his death, by her husband's *abusua*, and only reinstated four years later. Women argue strongly that their husbands should make farms for them on their own land since this land cannot be alienated. If a woman has been given a farm on her husband's land, or even on stool land, the *abusua* are more likely to try to make a claim on it, or only allow her to use it in her own lifetime (otherwise it would become alienated from the matrilineage), after which it becomes *abusua* property again, and most likely male property, and cannot be inherited by her children.

As the owners of farm land, women fall into two categories - those who are the heads of farming units, who have control and make all the decisions on the farm, and those who help their husbands, and farm on their own account only when they are not needed on their husband's farms (not represented in my samples). The size of a woman's farm rarely reflects her position within the domestic unit, as some of the women who are heads of household are very poor and farm small plots of land with a small amount of household labour. However, on balance the women who are in control of their own farms, and do not have to work on their husband's land, have larger farms than those for whom their own farms represent a second occupation. For women who have to work on their husband's farms access to their own land is reduced to a minimum when they spend the larger part of their time engaged in other activities. As the heads of domestic units women are usually in this position because their husbands are absent, or because they have been widowed or divorced. Although on average their farms are larger than those of women who work with their husbands (3), they are still smaller (on average) than farms belonging to men (Figure 4.1).

Women have fewer means at their disposal than men for acquiring land. This is partly as a result of matrilineal inheritance which favours nephews, and also because they are less able to buy land or enter into costly litigation. As Figure 5.1 shows while some women

in Sample 1 acquired land through their fathers, and others rent from the chief, their methods for acquiring land are not as varied as those of the men. The following tables show land acquisition by women in relation to the crops they grow and by local or stranger status.

TABLE 5.5 Land acquisition by crop for women in Sample 1 (Total number of individual plots)

Land Acquisition	Crops	Cocoa	Oil palm	Foodcrops
Inherited traditional		11	1	40
Inherited father		-	-	11
Purchased chief		5	1	5
Leased/rented		-	-	-
Borrowed		-	-	-
Sharecrop		-	-	-
Gift from husband		3	-	-
Gift outright		-	-	-
Total plots (77)		19	2	56

TABLE 5.6 Differences in methods of land acquisition between local and stranger women in Sample 1 (Total number of individual plots)

Land acquisition	Locals	Asante Strangers*	Total
Inherited traditional	52	-	52
Inherited father	11	-	11
Purchased chief	1	10	11
Leased/rented	-	-	-
Borrowed	-	-	-
Sharecropped	-	-	-
Gift from husband	3	-	3
Gift outright	-	-	-
			77

* There is no column for non-Asante women, since there were none in the sample.

Table 5.5 shows that for women the range of methods of land acquisition is much more limited than it is for men, for all the various crops planted. Women plant their

cocoa on land that is inherited, or on land purchased from the chief. Cocoa farms given by husbands, as has been mentioned above, are also on the woman's own inherited *abusua* land, or on stool land. In the two instances where oil palm is grown one is a small farm (1 acre) planted on inherited land, and the other is a much larger farm (40 acres) planted on land bought from the chief. While it could be argued that women gain access to enough land by these few means, I was told that they would use other methods of acquiring land if the opportunity arose.

Strangers and land

As independent heads of household the Asante stranger women in Table 5.6 are restricted in their access to land. While they have the cash to purchase land for farming, they discussed the problems that they have in trying to borrow and lease from local *abusua*. For these women the problem is also the size of their farms, which are among the largest in the sample. Because they are farming on such a scale, local people do not want to alienate this much land from their own *abusua*.

On the whole non-Asante stranger women do not farm independently. Wives of non-Asante men go to farm with their husbands when needed, and have some other means for generating their own income. Stranger Asante women, who are not heads of households, may acquire land for their

own use. However, there are many stranger wives of local men (described in the first section of this chapter) for whom the acquisition of land can be a problem. These women are likely to work with their husbands and only farm their own plots on land their husbands give them on a temporary basis. However, some stranger Asante women who are married to local men do farm entirely on their own account. These women have their own capital resources which they decide to invest in farming as a completely separate enterprise from the farms of their husbands, as the following example shows:

Adua purchased land from the Pakyihene (4). Although she has a local husband she went to the the chief and arranged to lease her four farm plots totalling 27 acres. She does not work with her husband at all. The fact that she is able to farm independently of her husband can be explained by the cash income that comes from a 'chop bar' she owns in Kumasi. She has registered her farm with the Lands Commission and believes that her land is as secure as that of any other stranger leasing stool land in Antoakrom. She is a wealthy woman who can afford the risks of leasing land.

Stranger women who farm locally with stranger husbands, but without such reserves of capital, are possibly the most vulnerable group. These women have no access to land in their own right at all, and know that they will have to

leave Antoakrom if their husbands die. Some try to ensure that their husbands build for them on their own land, and make long-term farms for them on their own family land, since without this they will have no support in their old age. Their children are expected to take care of them, but this is an ideal, and not always possible. I heard of many women who had been forced to leave their husband's leased land when they died, and returned to their own villages with little to show for their time spent away.

Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted some of the major differences and inequalities in the system of land allocation. Men use a greater variety of methods for acquiring land than women, and use larger areas. The theory or 'ideal' of distribution, which is what any Asante would explain as the system of inheritance or acquisition, is far from the reality of practice, both in the way land is actually allocated and the inequality that results from this. For example, although women do gain access to property and land, their control is much more vulnerable than that of men - especially of land for long term crops. As Berry (1988) states,

'..even in societies in which women have been able to invest in tree crop farms - through access to planting rights and/or the means to establish tree crop farms or to acquire already bearing trees - it has been difficult for them to maintain control over their farms in the long run, or to assert their claims to farms vis a vis those of men in

the context of open-ended, overlapping, and proliferating rights to rural property.' (1988:9)

This chapter has shown the differences in access between local people and strangers - but stressed the advantages that capital can bring to someone who does not have rights through inheritance, be they male or female. In other words the 'practice' rather than the 'theory' of acquiring rights to land favours men over women for locals and strangers alike, and results in different levels of ownership and possibilities of diversification.

NOTES

1. Subchiefs were told by the *Asantehene* to reclaim all swampy lands to support their stools, through rent.

2. The Lands Commission is a government office for the registration of the deeds to land.

3. I do not have details of women who were not in the sample, although I know this to be the case.

4. Purchased from the chief means that the land has been taken for an indefinite period, or a long lease, such as that equal to or beyond the lifespan of the long term crop being grown (in order that the land can be inherited). Leased or rented is a short term arrangement either for a season, or the lifespan of the food crop being grown.

CHAPTER 6

ACCESS TO LABOUR

Richards (1983) argues that in many West African societies it is access to labour rather than access to land that imposes most constraints on production. While there is differential access to land among members of the community in Antoakrom, it is less problematic than access to labour. As Whitehead argues, 'the usefulness of land rights is limited by the extent of rights in labour' (1984:184), and some sections of the population in Antoakrom have greater resources for acquiring labour than others. This chapter will illustrate the different ways in which men and women, locals and strangers acquire the labour of others and how this effects the farming patterns of men and women that were outlined in Chapter 4.

Labour can be mobilised in several different ways: a) through the immediate household; b) through wider kinship obligations; c) through friendship; and d) through wage relations. These distinctions will be discussed below. There are also four main ways in which labour is contracted: a) *nnobua*; b) contract; c) 'by day'; and d) permanent. All except *nnobua* involve some sort of monetary payment. *Nnobua* involves a group of men (who are usually

young) who agree to work on each others farms in rotation; one day on one farm, and the next on another. This can operate on a daily basis, or can be weekly or monthly. Contract labour defines the circumstances in which a fixed task is carried out for a fixed amount of money, for one or more labourers. This arrangement may be struck with one person who may then involve others and split the fee, or it may involve a group. Either way it is both the nature of the work and the amount of money to be paid that is decided in advance, and the contract is then carried out within a reasonable period of time. 'By day' is, as its name suggests, a daily contract for a fixed sum, ₦300 for women and ₦400 for men (in 1988). 'By day' labourers usually work from 7 or 8 am until 12 or 1 pm. Permanent labour is a contract for a farming season, or a year or more, for a fixed wage and perhaps food and accomodation, and occasionally medical bills.

Most farmers use the labour of others in one or several of the ways mentioned above, as well as working on their fields themselves. Their ability to use these various forms of labour depends on a number of factors such as position within the household and gender; however, contract labour (with the exception of *nnobua*) depends on access to cash income. Roberts has pointed out that access to labour is 'largely dependent on the hierarchies of gender, rank, generation and class within and between households' (1989:97), and she goes on to note that 'women

are, on the whole, profoundly disadvantaged within these hierarchies' (1989:97). Guyer (1980) argues that the main differences between male and female farming systems is in their differential access to labour, since men have greater resources available to them to mobilise labour than women. The hierarchies that Roberts discusses are not only important in the recruitment of non-wage labour, but can also be important in the recruitment of wage labour, though perhaps less so.

The following bar charts in Figures 6.1 to 6.4 show labour use by the heads of household in Sample 1. They do not show the number of labourers actually used on each cultivated plot, but show the number of plots on which each labour type is used by the male and female heads of household in Sample 1. They give a record of the types of labour that men and women have at their disposal for each of the four main tasks during the farming cycle. These figures show a certain task specialisation between men and women, particularly in relation to clearing (Figure 6.1); since men clear almost exclusively. Figure 6.1 also shows that men commonly use *nnobua* to supplement their own labour for clearing, as well as contract, permanent and daily male labourers, whereas women use daily male labourers most often. Figure 6.3 that shows labour use for weeding is also specialised, not so much in relation to the heads of household, but in their use of the labour of others - men use a much greater variety of types of labour

than women. They also have the use of their wives labour, while most of the female household heads donot have the same help from a spouse.

FIGURE 6.1 Male and female use of different types of labour in clearing (Sample 1).

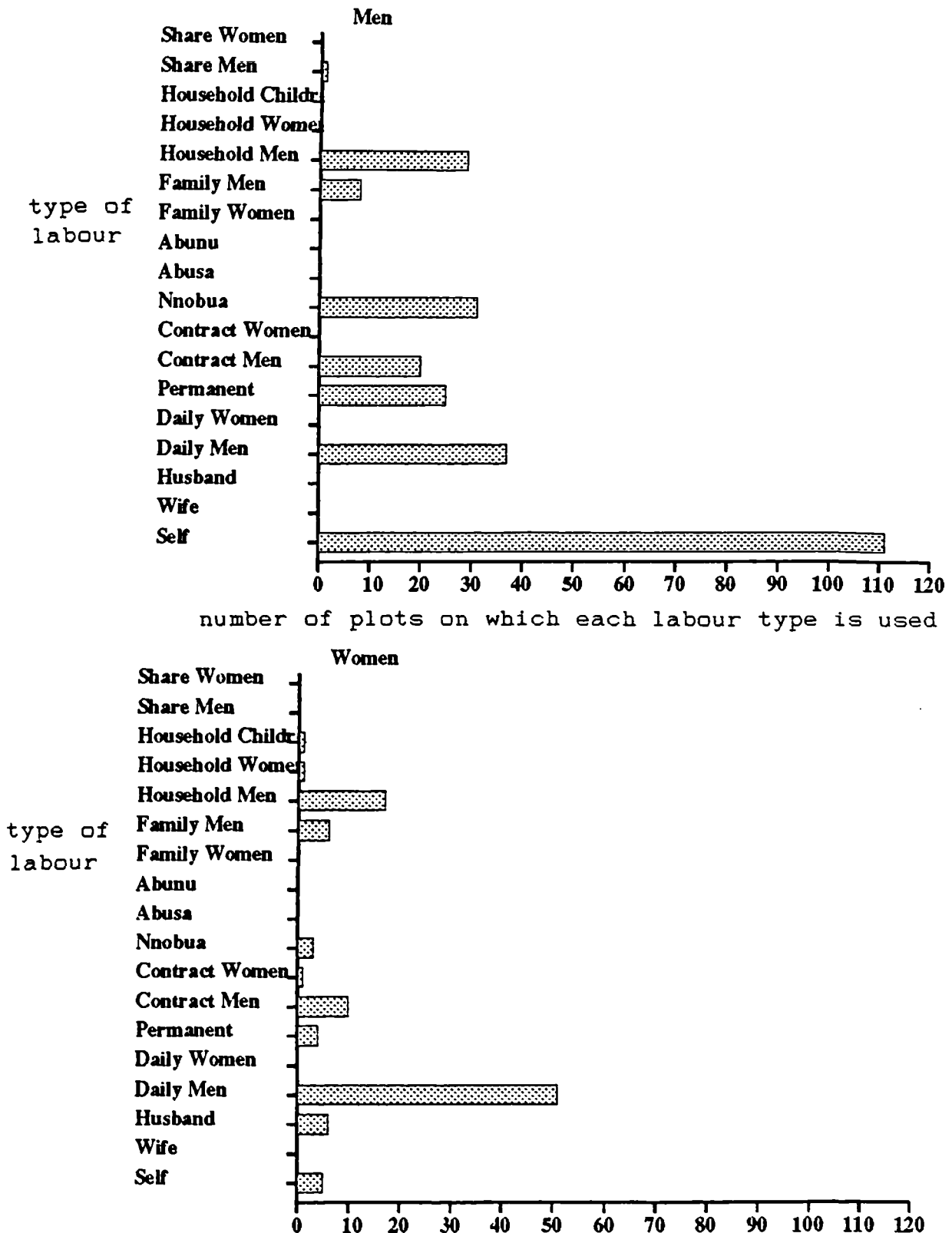


FIGURE 6.2 Male and female use of different types of labour in planting (Sample 1).

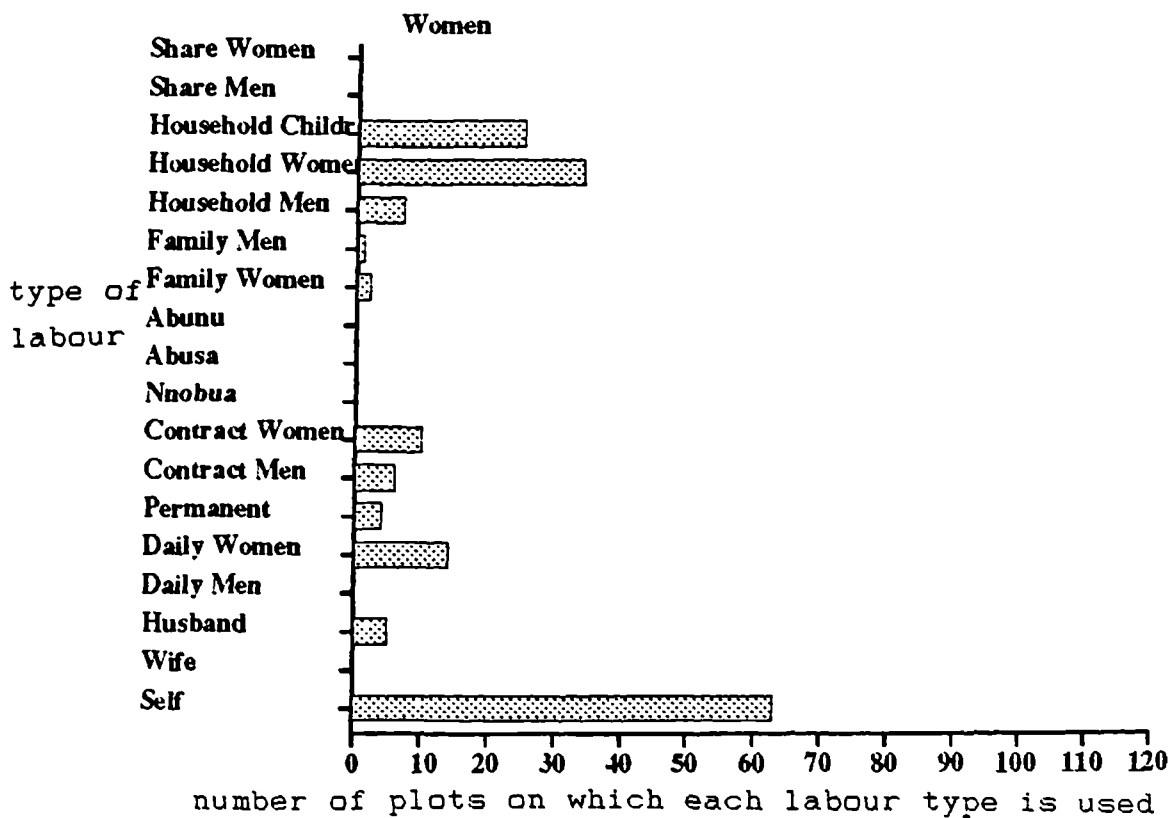
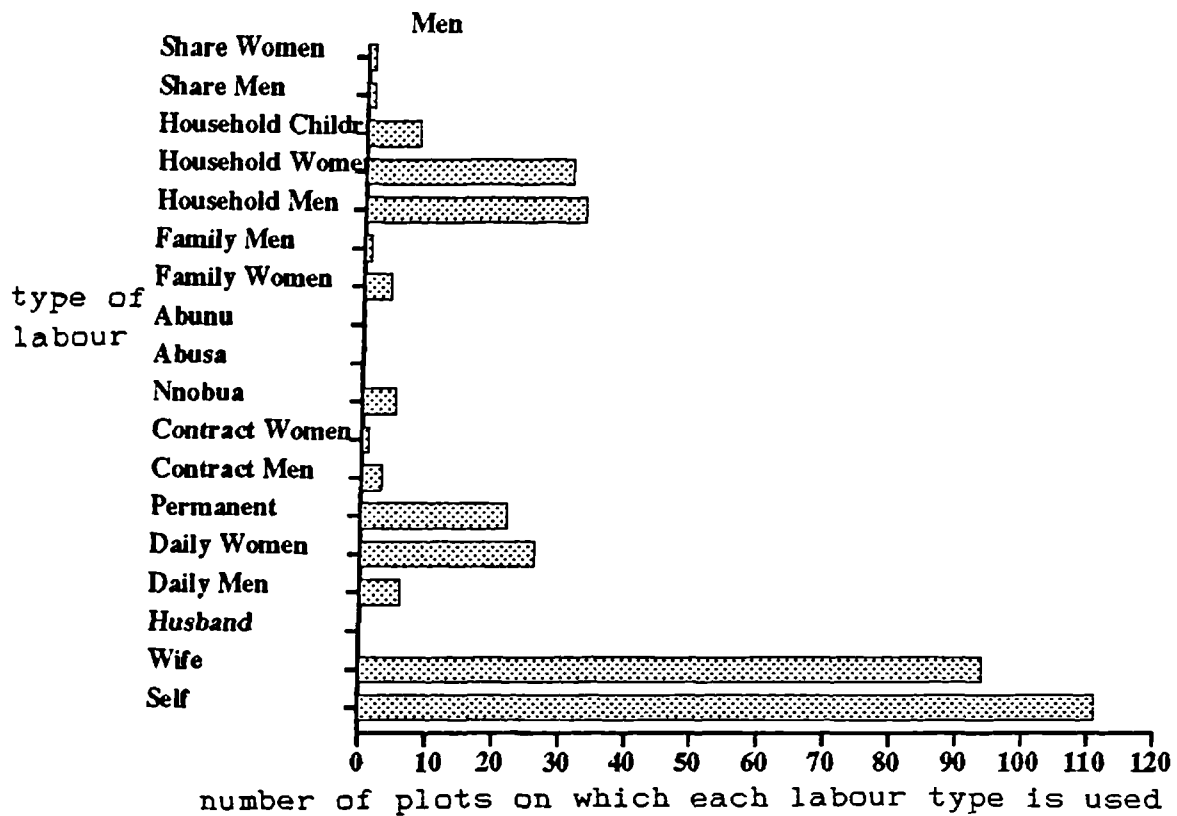


FIGURE 6.3 Male and female use of different types of labour in weeding (Sample 1).

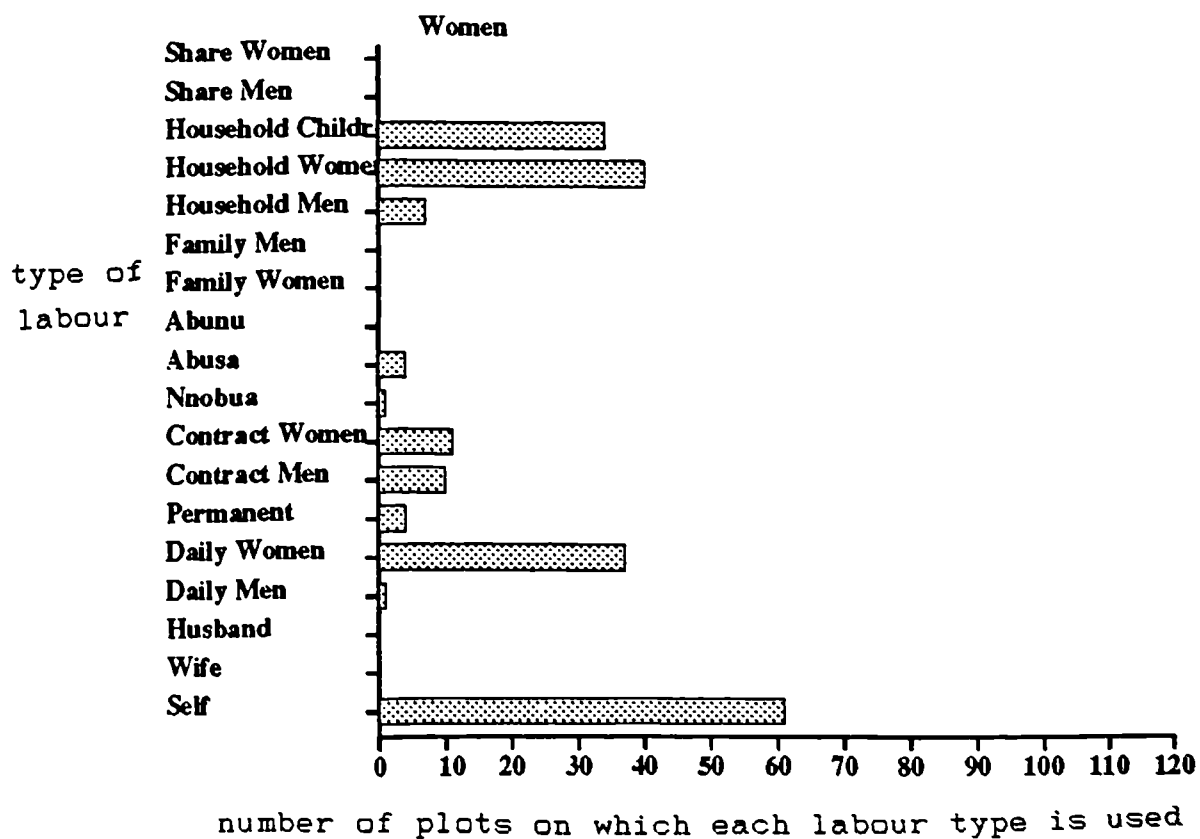
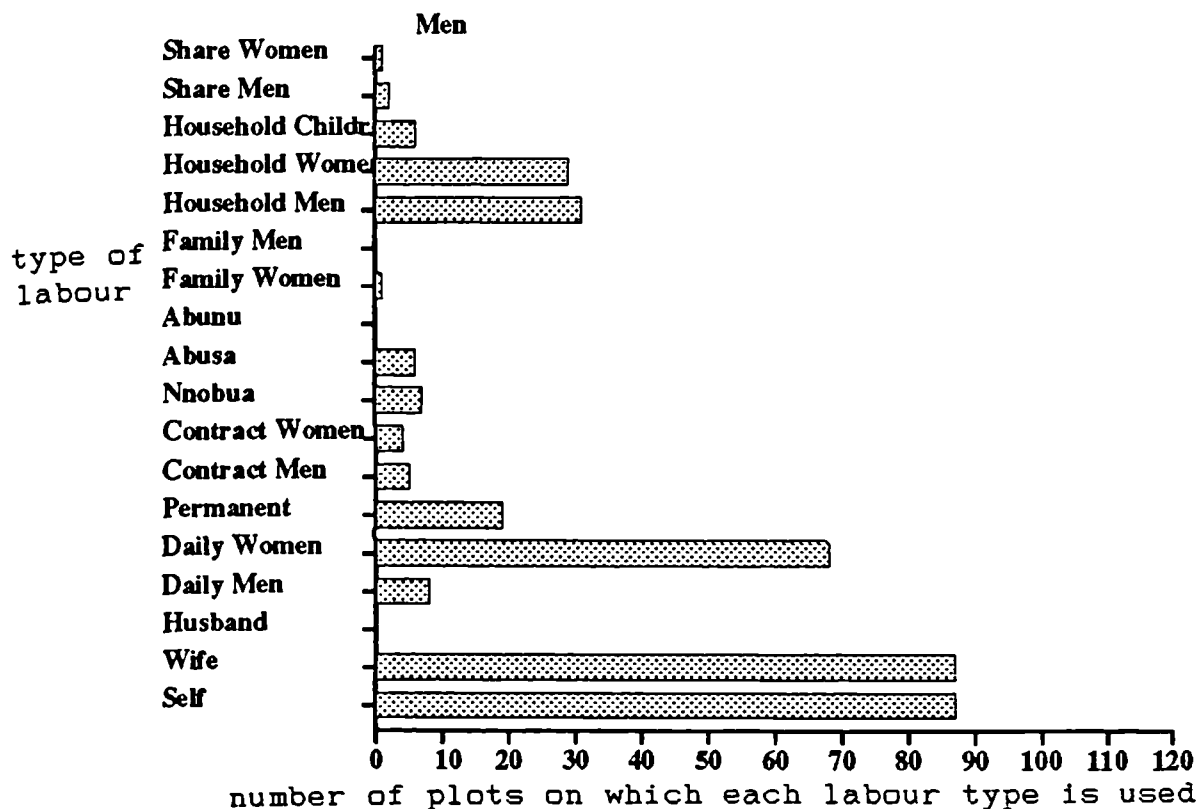
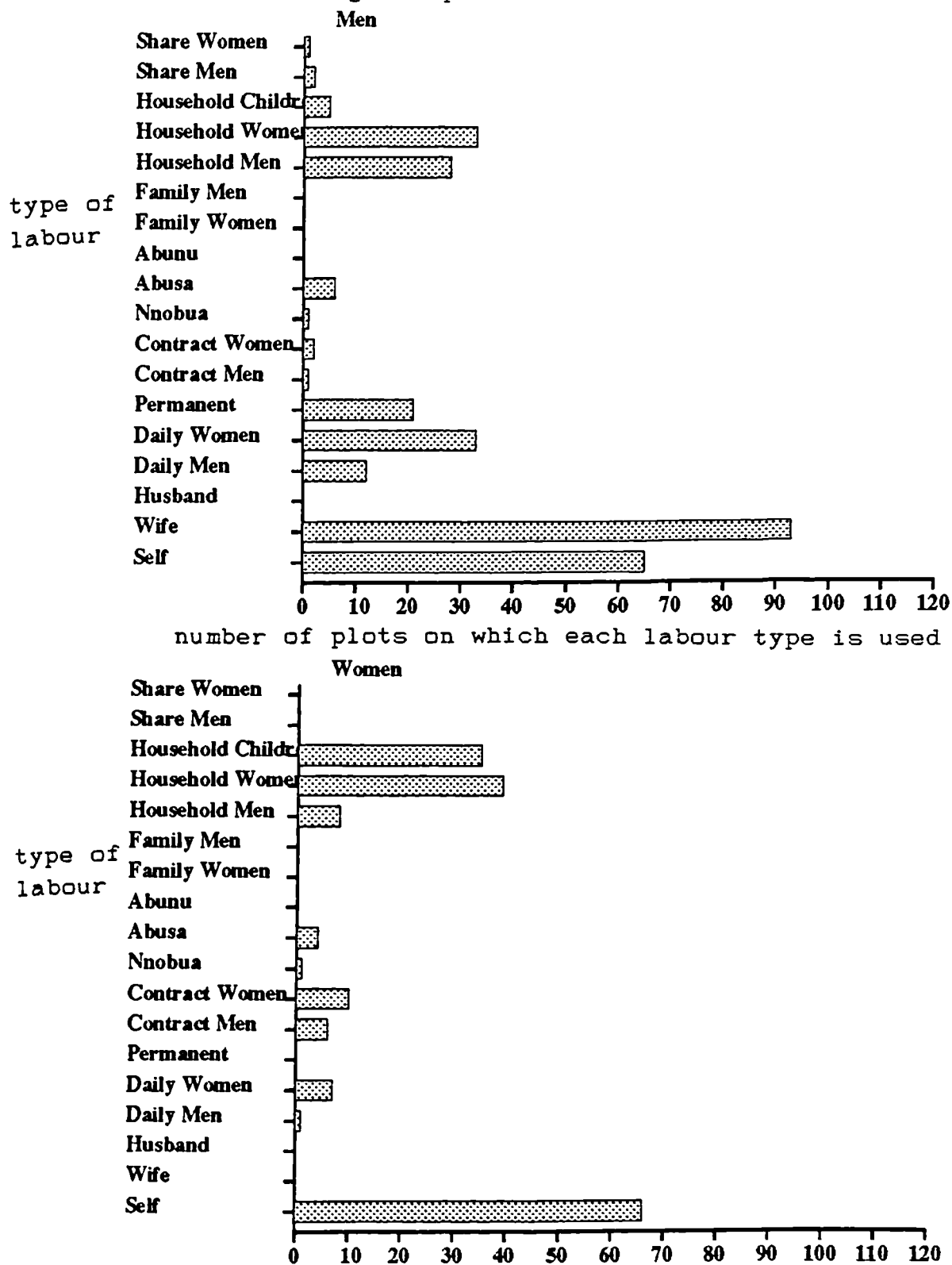


FIGURE 6.4 Male and female use of different types of labour in harvesting. (Sample 1).



The total number of plots belonging to the male heads is 122, and to the female heads 77; the amount of labour used on each chart exceeds these figures because more than one type of labour may be used on a plot of land at any one time.

In general the total use of other peoples labour is much higher for men than it is for women. Their use of family labour, including wives, household and more distant relatives is more than double that of female heads. Male heads' use of hired labour is also 30% more than that of female heads.

MALE ACCESS TO LABOUR

Men's access to labour largely depends on the factors mentioned above, including age, wealth and marital status. For men access to labour is on the whole much easier than for women as they have rights over the labour of others; including their wives, children and younger men. Further to this, they often have access to more cash income than women and use it to hire the labour that all of them use. Men who are married heads of households are able to use the labour of their wives and children - especially if the children are single adults. They supplement this with hired labour. They use family labour on a permanent basis, and hire 'by day' when necessary. Those who have fewer family members (particularly adults living at home), hire almost all of their labour. One man told me 'the land that you use depends on the size of your family'. Household size obviously has a lot to do with the supply of labour available for farming and thus the area a person can utilise.

In Antoakrom men are certainly able to exploit the labour of their wives, although sons and daughters do sometimes

move away, or into business outside farming. As far as processing is concerned, however, it is the wives of strangers who are more likely to be involved in post harvest processing. This is often because their access to land is restricted and, especially in the case of non-Asante strangers, their labour is not required by their husbands on a daily basis in farming. The wives of local male heads of household are also concerned with their own farm plots, if they have any, and are more likely to process for home consumption than sale. Whether they have their own plots is of course governed by whether they have time outside that which they must devote to domestic tasks and work on their husband's farms. They are thus more likely to be involved in the trade of their own unprocessed produce.

Some men who have small households do farm on the same scale as those with a greater number of relatives at their disposal. All of these men make enough money from their farming or some other enterprise to hire labour, and it is exceptional if a male farmer cannot afford to hire labour at all, as is often the case with women farmers. Heads of small households sometimes supplement household labour with a permanent hired labourer, who may live in the farmer's house. Household heads who use family labour tend not to pay these relatives unless they are a distant relative and are employed as a permanent agricultural labourer. However, household and wider family members do

expect some form of reciprocal arrangement if labour of this kind is needed. Wives hope that their husbands will clear their own private farms for them in return for the work they do, and sometimes expect husbands to provide labour for planting and weeding on these farms. Men say that they sometimes give their wives small cocoa farms in appreciation for the work they do, and in recognition of the fact that their wives want (and are expected to have) an independent income, albeit smaller than their husbands. However, this is not an automatic practice. Arrangements for the use of labour, other than that of a household member or an informal agreement between kin or friends is usually governed by one of the labour contracts outlined above. The following examples from Sample 1 show the use of family, friends and wage labour in Antoakrom by local men:

One elderly man, who has 30 acres in total (17 of established cocoa, 8 of oil palm and 5 of cocoa and mixed crops) uses the household labour of his wife, his divorced sister, three adult children who have left school (one son and two daughters), and his sister's school age children at weekends. Other adult nieces and nephews come to help occasionally, but not on a regular basis. He has one permanent paid labourer living in his house with him, and hires the labour he needs to clear and weed around the crops after planting as and when he needs it. He generally uses two or three extra labourers when he is

clearing (he works with the hired labourers), and up to five when he is weeding. He uses contract labour on his oil palm farm, and recently paid a lump sum of ₦14,000 to divided between three men for eighteen days of weeding. He says he has to consider the work that needs to be done before he takes labour from outside the household. He harvests his cocoa with his family because he argues that wage labourers have less concern for his farms than he does himself, and might damage the trees. Once his cocoa is split and fermented he hires a class of school children (thirty to forty children) to 'headload' it back to the village for drying. He says that he will only hire a caretaker on his local cocoa farm when he is too old to work it himself. He also thinks there are too many disadvantages with *nnobua* to make it worthwhile (older men do not usually participate in this form of labour arrangement). He thinks people do not work properly, even on contract, so he always takes care that he employs reliable labourers.

Duodu, who has large oil palm plantations, hires almost all his labour. He hires two *abusa* caretakers on his cocoa in Ahafo, and he hires permanent labourers on his oil palm farm. He pays the men ₦4,500 a month and the women ₦3,500 on his palm plantation. He also sends these labourers to his other farms if necessary. He increases the main number of workers in the main harvesting season, although the permanent workers are kept busy harvesting

and weeding all year. Between January and March he employs around fifteen men and fifteen women, and between May and November around ten men and six women who are his permanent employees. The men weed and cut the palm fruits, and the women headload the bunches to the road where they are picked up by buyers. A man is expected to work until he has cut 20 bunches, and a woman until she has headloaded 20 bunches each day. Some of Duodu's nieces and nephews work for him, and he pays them the normal rate. His wife has her own farms and his labourers clear the land for her if she needs help, although not always as a matter of course. If necessary they will fell the trees and burn the bush, and then she will hire labourers to do everything else.

Some of the older men whose households have diminished in size with their children moving away, no longer see the need to farm as extensively as they once did. One old man told me he no longer needs to feed his family, so he does not use as much land as he once did. He has a total of 6 acres, planted over the last 3 years. He says that 'the money to hire labour is more difficult to come by'. These sort of decisions must be taken into account when looking at patterns of labour mobilisation, as the possibility of hiring labour and need to do so may change over time. This man also taps palm wine, so the money he uses to hire a little labour comes from that source. His wife works with him on the farm, and his two daughters help

occasionally, although they have their own farms. He hires a few labourers to help him clear, and an occasional woman to help his wife weed around the crops.

Most married men use the labour of their wives and children to a greater or lesser extent, and all hire labour. The amount of hired labour they use depends primarily on their access to money capital, but also, as in the case above, on how much land they actually want to use and the types of crops being grown, as some crops need more labour than others. Growing crops such as oil palm or rice, that may involve the use of relatively high inputs of labour is only possible for someone who can recruit that labour. This is usually easier for men than women, as they are more likely to be able to mobilise the resources to do it. Older men who are well established can afford to be innovative, while for younger men who might not be able to afford enough wage labour, other types of labour arrangements still tend to allow them more freedom than women. Younger men often use *nnobua* groups in order to mobilise sufficient labour. Some of them use much larger *nnobua* groups than others - while some men might be in a *nnobua* group of three or four people, others use as many as 15. This labour only operates on a reciprocal basis, all those in the group work on each members land in rotation. Often these groups operate to perform a specific task, clearing, weeding or fence building for example.

Nnobua is particularly useful for young single men, or those who have not been married long. These men can develop new farm land using this labour. *Nnobua* groups are usually made up of relatives and friends who work together in rotation. In spite of the use of *nnobua* labour, most of these men hire 'by day' labour also, especially women, to weed crops. They do this with money they acquire from some other enterprise, or they borrow from an older relative or friend. Some of these men have taken loans from older brothers and fathers. Some men actively avoid *nnobua* labour since they say it involves too much of their own time being spent on other peoples farms. These people can usually afford to hire by day or permanent labour.

One young farmer who does not like to use *nnobua* works with his own wife and his brother and his brother's wife. He hires a permanent labourer, and 'by day' and contract when he needs it. He can afford to do this since he and his brother are both good hunters and have some income from that, as well as from their farms. This man particularly likes contract work because he says he can bargain with the workers to do a specific job for a specific price. He uses 'by day' to clear at the beginning of the farming season, and then contract to weed his oil palm farm after the rains in June when the farm is overgrown. He says that he would rather spend his own time on his farm, in spite of the advantages that a group of *nnobua* labourers would bring.

There are other kinds of arrangements that allow individuals to use labour on their farms without a direct cash payment. Men, and some women, use sharecropping arrangements and land for labour arrangements. Both food crops and cocoa are looked after in this way. The *abusa* and *abunu* contracts, most often used on cocoa, come under this category. Cocoa is sometimes divided equally with a caretaker like this, particularly if the owner is old and does not have the energy or the incentive to look after the farm. Women may also arrange for their cocoa to be looked after on an *abunu* basis, particularly if there are severe constraints on their own time and they cannot strike a better bargain. *Abunu* clearing is also carried out by some of those borrowing land, and for those lending it. As was discussed in Chapter 5, some farmers who have more than enough land give some to friends or strangers. In return these people clear twice as much land as they will use in order that the owner can use half of it. For the owner this is a way around having to pay to have land cleared, and is one way in which land and labour contracts are tied together. Men are more likely than women to have the spare land to give up to this arrangement. However, if women do have land available they often use this arrangement as it saves them the expenditure of 'by day' for clearing.

Stranger access to labour

As in the case with land, arrangements for the mobilisation of labour for both Asante and non-Asante strangers are different from local men. On the one hand they do not have the same opportunities to mobilise *abusua* labour, and on the other they do not have the status to command local wage labourers in the same way as local farmers do. However, those who are non-Asante often have very well established means of mobilising labour that can also prove to be quite lucrative. Non-Asante strangers often find it easier than Asante strangers to acquire labour through these means. Non-Asante men use the same types of labour arrangements as local people, the labour of their own families, 'by day', contract and *nnobua*. It is the source of this labour, and the arrangements for its use that can be different. Of the non-Asante stranger farmers that I interviewed most of them use non-local labour to a greater extent than local. They use the labour of other people living in the *zongo*. Many of them said they used 'other Muslims' for most of their labour requirements. They all use family labour although this does not always include wives. If wives are part of the labour force it is usually only at very specific times - for the planting and harvesting of rice for example. Wives are most involved in post harvest processing - and some of this may be for their own account.

'By day' labour is likely to be carried out by Asante labourers. Strangers, particularly northerners, often have large rice farms and need a lot of labour to maintain them. Local women often do 'by day' on these large rice farms, particularly during periods of weeding and harvesting. Contract is sometimes given to local people on strangers' farms, although permanent labour used by non-Asante strangers is most often done by fellow strangers. *Nnobua* too tends to be carried out by friends - one young man is in a *nnobua* group with fifteen of his Muslim friends, and several older men have *nnobua* groups of two or three friends or relatives.

Most of the non-Asante strangers interviewed use permanent labour in their workforce to a much greater extent than local people do. All of these non-Asante strangers in Sample 1 except one (who is Ewe rather than from the north of Ghana or Togo like the rest) use permanent labourers. This is largely to do with the fact that they bring labourers from outside the district for specific periods, usually for a year or a farming season. This arrangement is advantageous for both parties. For the employer it provides readily available labour on a seasonal basis, and for the employee regular work outside the north (1). One such man who brings labour from outside in this way is an interesting example to look at in more detail as he also acts as a broker in labour for other people:

Ndokoba hires permanent labour from around Navrongo in the Upper West Region. He usually brings around twenty people a year to Antoakrom, some to work for him and some to work for others. These people are not necessarily relatives, but are people from around the area in which his family live. He either goes to Navrongo to search for them, or his older brother who lives in Navrongo organises their recruitment for him. He brings them to Antoakrom at the beginning of January, and some of them will go back at the beginning of June; but the rest will remain for the full year. He says individuals come and go, and the same people do not come every year, although some of them stay on, and a few have been in Antoakrom for the last five years. He only brings men from the north, and the conditions under which they will work are decided before they come. He or their other employers feed them, give them pocket money, and a lump sum when they leave. He has four wives, and he splits his labourers between each of their compounds for the duration of their stay. When he is clearing land for rice he divides his labourers into groups to work on his different farms. His wives provide food for them on the farms. Ndokoba also has a herd of 20 cattle (the only ones in the district) and he has one labourer caring for them. Of the 20 people that he brings, he may keep ten for himself and the remaining labourers go to work for other people. He gets some free labour from these people before they go to work for others, as they usually help to clear land for rice and other food crops in return for the work

he has arranged for them. He also has an agreement to bring some of these labourers for a local chief in return for the use of stool land, and provides two other local farmers with labour.

These broking arrangements not only help him to acquire land, but also encourage reciprocal relationships with the local men who receive permanent labour from him. These men encourage local women to do 'by day' for Ndokoba, and help him in other ways with land. To clear his land and other rice and food crops Ndokoba uses his permanent labourers. To weed his rice he uses 'by day' and older school children in the afternoons when they finish school and at weekends. He measures the area they weed in cutlass lengths. They receive ₦100 for ten cutlass lengths squared. To weed other food crops, and maize in particular, he uses men and women on a by day basis. To harvest rice, he uses extra labourers again, and often pays them with rice rather than cash. If they harvest for three days, on the third day he gives them a basket of rice. This works out at approximately one basket earned for nine baskets harvested (unthreshed). For those who do not want rice, the payment is ₦50 per basket. Since a woman can harvest about three baskets in a day it works out at the normal ₦150 a day for women 'by day' worker. Sometimes Ndokoba employs groups of people who want to make money for a particular cause. School children are often used like this to make money for the school, or

church groups to make money for a church fund. These people pile up what they collect, and Ndokoba measures it at the end of the day and gives them a lump sum payment.

Younger stranger men, like younger local men, use a lot of *nnobua* and reciprocal friendly agreements for the use of each others labour. They are not farming on such a large scale as the man cited above and need less labour. They do use 'by day' however, particularly for weeding and harvesting, but cannot afford the permanent labour older and more wealthy farmers use. Since their labour needs peak at certain times and are not as consistent as farmers who have more land and more diversified farming patterns, these arrangements are more suitable.

Like non-Asante strangers, Asante strangers hire most of their labour, although not as much of it is permanent. They also rely on *nnobua* groups made up of friends in the community. All the men I interviewed worked with their wives and any children that were old enough, and one man also had his brother's son living with him.

One Asante stranger who has extensive farms on land rented from the local stool, uses the labour of his adult children and their spouses who all work with him. He has large farms and it makes sense for him to use as much family labour as possible. He has four wives and 20 children, half of whom are old enough to help him. He

pays his children in cash or with food, and his own wives in kind with the land that his labourers clear and weed for them. This man has extensive cocoa farms and employs ten caretakers on an *abusa* basis, and around 25 labourers four days a week for two months during the planting and weeding season. Because he has at least ten family members working for him he says he does not need *nnobua* labour.

One Asante stranger who uses his wife's lineage land, lent *some of this out to other stranger farmers* with the arrangement that he and his wife should use half the cleared land. This man is not wealthy and only uses a few 'by day' labourers when really necessary, so this is a convenient way for him to have their land cleared.

These sharing contracts, in which land and labour are linked, are more common for strangers who do not own land, especially for those who cannot afford to pay to rent land. Young men often use this as a way to gain access to land, and locals find it a convenient way to have their land cleared. *Nnobua* groups for the other Asante strangers vary between 15 people for a man who has oranges that need care and harvesting, down to two or three for those who cannot afford to hire, but need some extra help. In order to ensure an adequate supply of labour one stranger hires workers monthly, and then subcontracts to *nnobua* arrangements with two local farmers who also employ wage

labour. A certain number of each of their labourers then go to each of the farmers' fields in turn. This, he explains, is a very satisfactory way of increasing the labour supply for particular tasks that he might otherwise find it difficult to obtain. Two of the three farmers who participate have oil palm, and this arrangement is convenient for weeding and harvesting. They also use this *nnobua* labour to fence around maize farms as this is arduous work and must be done fairly quickly to prevent rodent damage to crops. These fences are usually constructed from bamboo split in half lengths and dug into the ground all around the field. A lot of labour is needed as the bamboo must be cut and carried to the farm, from where it grows on uncleared stool land. These fences are not very high but need to be dug deep to prevent burrowing by the rodents.

The following are examples of the type and amount of labour that is hired during different seasons by two farmers. One has 37.5 acres - including 10 of mature cocoa and 15 of mature oil palm, and the second 8.5 acres - 5 of food and 3.5 of food and young cocoa:

For clearing this season Boateng used 37 man-days of labour. Involved in that were three family members, two permanent workers and seven contract workers. His wife, six 'by day' women and other women in his household planted. He also hires another four contract workers when

his oil palm needs to be weeded. He has one *abusa* labourer on his mature cocoa farm.

Ampedu cleared his land with his brother's son for three days and hired two 'by day' labourers for four days. He planted with his wife, his brother's son and two children at weekends, for two months. For weeding, both his new and old farms he hired four women on a 'by day' basis four or five days a week, and he and his wife also weeded, along with his brother's son and the children at weekends.

With few exceptions men have the ability to command both wage and household labour. There are a variety of ways in which men can gain access to labour even if they cannot afford to hire very much, particularly through the use of *nnobua*, and through arrangements that are tied to land. Figures 6.1 to 6.4 show how men use a variety of different types of labour to a much greater extent than women. They use hired labour more than women, and are also in a position to command the labour of their spouses. While women sometimes have access to the labour of their own children, men use the labour of their households more often than women (Figure 6.1). They have also have access to *nnobua* and use sharecropping arrangements more often than women. Figures 6.1 to 6.4 measure the instances in which men and women use hired labour, not the total number of labourers used on any specific occasion,

but evidence from interviews shows that men hire a greater number of labourers more often than women.

WOMEN'S ACCESS TO LABOUR

In much the same way as men, women's access to labour depends on a number of factors including age, wealth and marital status. However, the possibilities for recruiting labour are far more restricted than those available to men. In this section the access to labour of women who make up the sample as the heads of households will be examined first, and then the access to labour of single women and married women who also work with their husbands will be considered.

In Antoakrom households that are headed by women are often *among the poorest*. Women who have no husbands, as a result of being widowed or divorced, often have little access to adult male labour. They do not have the authority to command the labour of their male relatives, particularly their social superiors, and rely on goodwill and the help of their children. Younger women who fall into this category are particularly vulnerable, especially if they only have young children who can give little help on the farm. In this respect women, as was discussed in Chapter 4, who are older heads of households are in a structurally different position. Although the phase of development reached by the household may mean that it is

smaller, through adult children leaving, the older woman is more likely to have adult sons and daughters who can help by giving up some of their own time if they are members of other households. If children have moved out of the area they sometimes remit money. This can prove to be invaluable to those women wanting to hire labour.

Women who are widowed with young children find it extremely hard to make ends meet. They work alone on their small farms most of the time, with the possible assistance of their children. One woman from Sample 1 who is in this position has five children who help at weekends when they are not in school, but the tasks they can do are limited. She cannot normally afford to hire labour, and clears her land herself except for the felling of larger trees. This year a friend's son came to visit and felled the trees for her. It took three weeks for her to clear the land on her own, and then three days for him to fell the trees, for which she did not pay him.

Another woman also has children in primary school. She does have one teenage son who takes care of her small cocoa farm, and comes to help her occasionally on her farm, but she has little assistance from anyone else. She is able to hire labour occasionally with money she gets from the sale of her cocoa (this comes at just about the right time for clearing the land).

A third example is an older woman who has two young teenage sons, both in primary school, who help at weekends, and a married daughter who comes occasionally to help her plant. She does not hire any labour and relies on her daughter's husband to clear her land. She does have a caretaker on the four acre cocoa farm that her husband left her, but she says she does not have the time to check on what he is doing, and she feels that he is cheating her when he brings her the money from the sale of the cocoa. For these women the management of their meagre labour resources is very difficult.

Household heads who are widowed or divorced in later life are usually better able to cope than younger widows or divorcees. Adult children may help, although this is not necessarily the case. Their age does mean however, that they might have been given gifts of property by their husbands before they died or left, or (in the case of widows) they might have inherited property from their husbands. More likely, however, is that they have children who live locally who can come and help with farming or, if they live away, can send money occasionally which is used to hire labour. However, this does not alter the fact that these women are not always able to mobilise sufficient labour resources.

The poorest household in Antoakrom is headed by a divorced middle-aged woman. She works with her adult daughter who

is widowed, and they live together with the daughter's six small children - the oldest of whom is ten years. This woman clears her farms herself. One son who is in the Ivory Coast came to help her clear one plot this year, but it is rare that he comes, and she says that he never remits her any money. She and her daughter hire no labour at all. A sister comes to help her plant. One important consideration in the lives of these women is the use to which they put their own labour. For them it is an absolute necessity to do paid work for other people as well as working on their own farms. These women hire themselves out as 'by day' labour in order to make some income. They need this money to reinvest in the labour of others to help on their farms, but also to pay for other items such as clothes and school fees.

It is quite common that women make use of their own labour by making it available to others in this way. Vellenga (1977) notices this happening among women in Brong Ahafo who hire themselves out in order to hire labour for them to use on their own farms. Married women and women who are not in such dire need do 'by day' occasionally to supplement their own incomes if they have the time, but the widows and divorced women with no available adult labour are the most reliant on this form of income.

For some older women the pressure to find adequate labour is still great, but they can fall back on older children.

Two examples of older divorced women with adult children both use the labour of these children as often as possible. However, these children are all married and although the daughters come to help when they can, their own husbands demand the greater part of their time. Both women have sons who work away, who help when they come home to visit, but this is infrequent.

For all of these women male help is at best erratic, and the only labour that can be consistently mobilised is that of young children and daughters. Sisters too are likely to help if they can, and adult sons will help, but this cannot be guaranteed. Women are a more likely and readily available source of labour for each other, although they do not have the same method of mobilising each others labour as men do, as *nnobua* does not exist among women (2). One woman expressed their problems thus,

'If you have a large family then some will come to help you. But if you are not lucky enough to have a large family then you will work on your own. The women will help you, but the young boys [in the family] now want money'

There are a group of women in Sample 1 whom I have classified as heads of households because, although they are married and may get some support from their husbands, this support is by no means guaranteed. Moreover, these women do not help their husbands on their farms in any way, and their household incomes are entirely separate. There are also some who are heads of households because

their husbands work permanently outside Antoakrom, and these men do not have farms at all. A few of the female heads who have husbands who are farmers (3) do receive some support from them. This is usually in the form of labour to clear their land. Either the husband himself does this, or he hires labourers. This is the total amount of support however, and does not mean that large areas of land can subsequently be utilised.

These women plant and weed with their children, once their husbands have cleared their land. They all say that their husbands only help them because of the children. One woman who is a young second wife of an older husband, says that her husband married her because he wanted more children, and helps her with her farming to support their four year old daughter. He clears for her, and provides 'by day' labour a few times a year, but he provides no further financial assistance. He lives locally, and the child spends some time in his compound, so he can take care of her other needs if necessary. This woman is very poor, and her farms are some of the smallest in Antoakrom, she only has two plots, and a total of 1.75 acres, but she does make a little money from keeping tenants in the compound she inherited from her mother. Another of these women receives no help at all from her husband. She is married, but it is her sons who clear and hire labour for her. The labour they hire is usually made up of women who work on a contract basis. These women are in much the

same position as those who are widowed and divorced, since they rely on goodwill and their own resources. These women also occasionally do 'by day' for other people.

The female heads who appear to be able to mobilise the most labour, from within the family and to hire it from outside, are those who either have money regularly remitted to them, or those who have another business or some kind of work that gives them access to a cash income. These women have substantially larger farms than those already mentioned because they have better access to labour on a more reliable basis. One old woman told me: 'In the past people did not have as much labour. But now they can hire more people, and can weed very large farms.'

One of these women is married but her husband works in Accra. He remits a little money to her on a regular basis, and comes to help her himself once a year when he is on leave. However, her main source of cash income for her substantial farming enterprise comes from the work she does for the Cocoa Marketing Board. Although this work only takes up her mornings, the fact that it is permanent and her earnings are regular means that she can take loans from the Agricultural Development Bank. She does this when she needs to pay large numbers of labourers. She has 10.5 acres of food farms in total and hires all her labour, as her children are young. She hires strangers from the north who come looking for work. She hires 6-10 people to

clear plant and harvest the maize she grows, and then the same people regularly, but not permanently, on a contract basis to weed for her. She says she sometimes hires women to plant but this is not always so, as it depends on other sources of labour available, and she can always be guaranteed the supply of northerners.

Another woman, whose husband works away building roads gets some regular remittance from him with which she hires local labour, although her farming is not on such a scale as the women above. She hires 'by day' to clear and she hires local women on a contract basis twice a year to weed her crops. She also solicits the help of a married daughter to plant, and if her husband gets leave around the time of clearing and planting he will also come to help.

Two other groups of women I want to deal with here are those who are married and working with their husbands and those who are single (4). Both of these groups of women are liable to give up a large part of their time to work for others. It is common in West Africa as a whole, and it is true of Asante, that married women are likely to have some sort of 'own account' farming or trading enterprise that is separate from the farm work that they do for their husbands. The size of these own account enterprises however is limited by the demand made on their labour by their husbands, and by their domestic tasks.

Married women who are subject to recruitment on their husbands' farms, often spend the greater part of every day working on these farms, the produce of which they do not control. The only reward they are likely to receive is that their husbands may help to clear a small area for their own farms, or give them produce to sell in the local market for their own income. The work of these women on their own account is thus restricted to labour time that is considered to be surplus to that needed on the husband's farm. If in addition to the farm work they do for their husbands these women are able to earn a small amount of capital by trading or processing food for sale, it is possible that they can reinvest this in paying for wage labour to work on their own farms.

In many cases husbands do acknowledge this separate enterprise, and recognise the importance of their wives separate income which, in the long run, is reinvested in household expenditure. Because of this, some women are given time to go to their own farms at regular intervals by their husbands (see Chapter 8). This time is obviously more frequent the more labour a man is able to mobilise.

Daughters are the most likely to help married women with their own account enterprise - but only as long as they are not subject to labour recruitment themselves from husbands, fathers or even brothers. Young single women are also subject to labour recruitment and are perhaps the

least likely people to have their own farming enterprise. They are usually expected to work for fathers or their mothers until they are married. A few young single women do have their own trading enterprise, or cook food to be sold in the market, but these women are either living away from home or have to relinquish at least a part of the income they derive from the sale of these products to parents or other members of the household. If they are not subject to continuous labour recruitment themselves, these women are also likely to hire themselves out, either on a 'by day' or contract basis to earn an income.

Stranger access to labour

Stranger women fall into three categories: those who are heads of households farming themselves, those who are married to local men but are farming separately - usually Asante women, and those who are non-Asante strangers married to stranger men (and there are also the adult single daughters of these women). The few stranger women who are heads of household in Sample 1 have bought land from the Pakyihene to farm. These women hire most of their labour, as in the example below:

When Yaa first cleared her land, she used prison labourers from Kumasi. The prisoners were grouped into sixes with one warder per group. She used these labourers over a period of one year, sometimes she would use just one

group, but most of the time she used two or three groups. She paid c18 per labourer per day, and fed them. The money for their hire was paid to the prison office. Now that the land is being utilised she uses 10 hired labourers and five family labourers on a permanent basis, and hires 'by day' when she needs them for clearing and weeding the crops and harvesting rice. She hires an extra 10 labourers on average at peak times. Of her permanent hired labourers eight are men and two are women. She pays the men c3,000 a month and the women c2,500 a month. Of the family labour three are men and two are women. Her daughter and her daughter's husband oversee the farm for her since she spends half of her time on the farm and half in Kumasi or on business elsewhere. She also uses the labour of her daughter's son and daughter, and her daughter's husband's sister's son. There are also three young children of her daughters living in the household who help at weekends. Yaa works when she can. She pays her daughter and her daughter's husband, who use the farm produce to feed themselves, and the two young men also get a wage. Her daughter's daughter, however, has just had a baby and she does not get paid on a regular basis for any work that she does.

Adua is a stranger Asante woman who is married to a local man, although her farming enterprise is quite separate from his. She has 27 acres in total and uses permanent labour that she pays for on a monthly basis. She does not

use any family labour except for one adult daughter who works locally who occasionally helps her at weekends. She hires 12 women and one man and pays them all c3,500 a month. The number of workers diminish to about six or seven after weeding. When she needs land cleared at the beginning of the year she employs a few 'by day' men herself. Her 'chop bar' in Kumasi was the source of her income to start the farm, and the produce she sells or uses in her 'chop bar' from her farm supports the labour she hires now.

These women's farms are thriving because they can afford to hire labour. With cash stranger women can hire as easily as anyone else. However, if stranger women cannot afford to hire labour they are at a great disadvantage since they are unlikely to have the networks of friends and relations to help them that local women have. Apart from immediate family members, most of their relations are likely to be outside the village. For non-Asante women, the chances of them farming on their own account are even smaller. As was mentioned earlier, their control over land is likely to be severely restricted, and their ability to mobilise labour is limited in the same way as Asante strangers. Non-Asante women who are married to non-Asante men living in Antoakrom are more likely to be involved with post harvest processing than they are with the actual farm work, although they work on their husband's farms at particular times of peak labour need(5),

they are otherwise usually in the house. These women make a living in Antoakrom by selling processed foodstuffs and spend the greater part of their time doing this (Chapter 8). Stranger women who are single, either Asante or non-Asante, are most likely to be involved in the same economic activity as their mothers. Mothers and daughters work together in a wide range of activities, trading and processing, and the mother can expect to command at least part of the labour of her daughter until she leaves home.

Conclusion

On the whole it is more difficult for women to gain easy access to labour than men, but for those women that can afford to hire wage labour the problems are nearly always eliminated. Hill (1959) indicates that labourers prefer to work for women as they tend to work alongside them and cook food for them. I did not find any particular instances of preference, but nor did any women with the capital to afford it have difficulty acquiring labour. In terms of their access to land women's labour arrangements are less often tied to the land on which they or their employees work. They do occasionally enter into arrangements where others borrow their land in return for clearing, but it is not as likely as for men. Women's labour relations as contractors are less complex than for men, and there is less reciprocity - except among direct

kin. This may well be to do with their time being more limited than that of their male partners. They do not have the time for reciprocal working arrangements with friends or more distant relatives. Many women argue that if you help your friend she may not have the opportunity to return that help.

The ability to mobilise labour plays a crucial part in dictating the types of farming patterns that men and women can undertake. In her study of female farming systems in Cameroon, Guyer (1984a) shows ways in which farming patterns are adjusted as a result of differential access to labour, and that women have different farming patterns from men. While men's farming patterns operate with peak periods of heavy labour input, women working with restricted access to labour have to avoid labour bottlenecks. In Antoakrom there are not the same labour bottlenecks, except with the harvesting of cocoa; however, the farming patterns described in Chapter 4 are certainly affected by the labour relations discussed in this chapter, and in particular the opportunity of farming labour intensive crops such as cocoa and oil palm. The men in the sample farming cocoa and oil palm use a wider range of labour types than those men farming other crop combinations. They may use household labour, hired labour and shared labour, while those growing cocoa and foodcrops use fewer types of hired and shared labour. Women who only grow foodcrops may be using their own

labour, the labour of household women or children, and occasional daily labour, with restricted access to other types of labour arrangement.

The mobilisation of labour is perhaps the most important factor, not only in the choices people make about the types of crops they are able to grow, but also in the size of the land they are able to utilise. In many ways male farming patterns are influenced by how much labour they control, and female farming patterns by how much labour they have to give.

NOTES

1. See Van Hear 1984.
2. In other parts of West Africa, for example The Gambia, unrelated women form work groups to provide each other with labour (Dey 1980), however in Asante women do not do this, and their access to the labour of other women outside their own lineage is difficult - except, as suggested, if they can pay for it.
3. These men are usually living with another woman elsewhere, and have rejected their spouses except for this occasional help.
4. These women are not in my sample, but I have enough information to discuss their situation.
5. Here again Muslim norms are different concerning the use of female labour - women are not expected to work as farm labourers unless it is really necessary.

CHAPTER 7

ACCESS TO CAPITAL

In this chapter the way in which men and women accumulate cash income will be discussed. The previous two chapters have discussed the acquisition and control of land and labour, and cash income makes up the third important part of the local economy that can affect farming patterns. While it is obvious that land, labour and capital are all important in the farming system, they are also interdependent. As was discussed in the preceding chapters, cash income has become an important consideration for both strangers and locals alike in their acquisition of labour, and for many in their access to land also. Here the acquisition and use of money is examined.

It is important to recall here that the 'household' is not a homogenous cooperative economic unit. Although capital may be accumulated and used in cooperation, individuals within the household may also have separate enterprises, the income for which may or may not be pooled. Often individuals have responsibility for different aspects of the households needs, but they also have their own interests to meet as well as those of their children or

their relatives. Whitehead (1984) argues that women's access to resources is tied up with collective needs and consumption to a greater extent than men's access to resources. Men tend to have more individual access to non-household resources and a greater control over the labour of their wives and children.

Evans (1989) argues that it is difficult to compare the types of income and expenditure that women and men have, since their responsibilities are different. Women are usually responsible for day to day expenditure, while men are concerned with longer term or more expensive projects. However, this is not always the case in Antoakrom. For example, women who are divorced, widowed or single have different responsibilities to women who are married, and for those who are married, their situations are often very different from one another. It is also interesting to compare male and female income in the light of economic change over the last twenty years, since they have shifted considerably.

The present system of income control has developed since the decline and subsequent stagnation of the cocoa economy and the growth of the urban market for food that was discussed in Chapters 2 and 4. The last 20 years, therefore, have been characterised by differential changes in male and female cash earning capacities, although there has been little change in the ideology or practice of the

rural farming economy. However, the opportunities for earning a cash income have shifted from cocoa to other agricultural produce, some of which is more easily farmed by men as previous chapters have shown. During my own field research, cocoa prices were rising again, and the cocoa economy has started to pick up, although as was discussed earlier it is unclear whether or not this is in fact really going to benefit small-scale producers. However, other agricultural produce has developed as, and remained, a major source of income for many people in Antoakrom and other villages in the area, with marketing opportunities in Obuasi, Bekwai and Kumasi.

As far as information about income is concerned, it proved easier to identify income from a specific source than to find out about overall income. Few people could answer questions about their monthly or yearly income, and although they had a very clear understanding of their own business and marketing, and knew the value of particular farming strategies, in general they told me their output of or income from a particular crop or activity, rather than its overall value. Further to this, incomes measured over one month would be inaccurate indicators of overall income for both men and women since the sale of some produce is seasonal as well as that which is sold throughout the year. There are also different demands in the farming cycle at different times of the year, which affect trading activities and employment opportunities.

MALE INCOME

Local men in Antoakrom make the major part of their income from farming. The crops that provide this income are cocoa, oil palm, maize, rice and, for a few, vegetables. It is difficult to evaluate the amount of income gained from cocoa at the present time, since the cocoa farmers around Antoakrom either have old farms that are not bearing as much as they once did, or they have new farms planted one or two years ago, which are not bearing yet (see Chapter 4). There is little in between - which reflects the slump in the cocoa economy in the 1970s and 1980s. Much of the oil palm was planted in the mid to late 1970s, and is now bearing substantial amounts of fruit, although some of the oil palm is more recent - especially that belonging to younger men.

TABLE 7.1 Male income other than farming, Sample 1

MAJOR CROP COMBINATIONS*

Cocoa and foodcrops

Teaching
Fetish shrine, tapping palm wine
Tapping palm wine
Watchman, trading kola
Blacksmith
Redeployment lump sum from Cocoa Services Division
No other income
Hunting

Cocoa and oil palm

Blacksmith, remittance
Remittance
Redeployment lump sum from Cocoa Services Division
Cocoa Services Division, Produce Inspector
Transport business
Mason, brought money to invest in farming
Invested money from former business as a driver,
substantial remittance.
Bar, transport owner, selling coffins
No other income

Oil palm and foodcrops

Hunting
No other income

Foodcrops

Rents land, taps palm wine
No other source of income
No other source of income
No other source of income.

* These were the crop combinations identified in Chapter 4. Each line represents the other occupation/s of one man in Sample 1.

Men farming cocoa and oil palm obviously have more cash to invest in their farming enterprises than those farming foodcrops alone. Many of them, particularly those who have invested in oil palm in the last 10 years, have done so with capital that has either come from some other kind of business, or with money that was made at the time when cocoa was more lucrative.

Men have many different income generating activities outside farming. Table 3.2 showed that there are many more men than women, for example, in paid employment in the formal sector in Antoakrom, and there is a wider variety of income generating occupations carried out by men than women. In Sample 1 male earnings are from activities both related and unrelated to farming. Some men earn an income from tapping palm wine. This is a common seasonal activity between April and September. Raffia palms are tapped while standing, while oil palm is felled and tapped. When oil palm trees have finished their bearing life they are either tapped by the owner or sold for ₦100 per tree. These can be wild trees belonging to the person who owns the land, or plantation trees, which sometimes cost ₦200 to buy as they are bigger and bear more wine. Once felled these trees can be tapped twice a day for 40 days. Each time they are tapped they yield one calabash of wine, which is worth ₦10 or ₦20. So each tree yields between ₦800 and ₦1600 over the 40 days. In a season a man might be collecting from anything up to 20 trees at a time, thus earning ₦400-₦800 a day. This means that he could be earning between ₦48,000 and ₦96,000 over 6 months (£160-£320 at 1987 prices), although this amount is probably not realised since he is unlikely to collect every day, and all trees may not produce the same quantity. The advantage of tapping palm wine is that the money is a regular, though small, amount that can meet day to day expenses. The disadvantage, however, is that

to realise the total sum to meet some major expense, income must be saved over a long period.

Another important, though irregular, form of income for men is hunting. This is restricted to younger men who go out to the forest at night with guns. Most of the unfarmed thicket around Antoakrom is now secondary forest, and there is little primary forest left. Some of this, however, has been fallowed for 20 or 30 years, and is inhabited by small game. The most common bush meat is 'grasscutter', and these rodents are hunted with dogs. They are also trapped with nooses around fenced fields of rice and maize. A grasscutter can fetch around ¢1,500-¢3,000 depending on its size. A small antelope, of which there are several kinds (primarily *owansane*, *eyuo*, and the smaller *otwe*) can fetch up to ¢7,000 or ¢8,000. Bush rats such as *kokote* or *kusie* are worth a few hundred cedis.

Some local men (although none in sample 1) also work as 'by day' or contract labourers, like women. However, these are usually young men who are unmarried or do not have their own commercial farming enterprise. They may have small farms of their own, but nothing that cannot be left if they need some extra cash income. Clearing two acres of farm land is worth about ¢3,000-¢4,000 on contract, divided among the number of participants. Older men with more established farms do not have the time for this kind of work, or more importantly, the need of it.

They have others working on their farms either as unpaid labour, or paid 'by day' or contract.

Although women trade more than men, men are more likely to have a business or some kind of work other than one that is related to farming. The village blacksmith is a local man and local men own the two kiosks. Men also own the transport - two local and one Asante stranger - and the village police are male Asante strangers. The teachers in the primary school are mostly local men, with a few Asante stranger men and women as well.

A further way for men to obtain capital for farming enterprises is through bank loans. It is easier for them to obtain loans than it is for women as they are more likely to have collateral or a guarantor. A person has to have been a customer for at least six months to qualify for a loan, and they have to have some kind of security, either a business, or more usually a guarantor who has a business outside farming. Cocoa farms are not accepted as collateral, since they can be destroyed by fire or pests, against which nobody insures. Civil servants (mostly male in Antoakrom) can acquire loans on the strength of their salaries. Loans are given for up to six months, but in reality this period is often extended. The Amansie West Rural Bank manager in Antoakrom has lent some farmers upwards of c100,000, although most loans are around c20,000. He lends on the basis of calculations he makes

about the output and size of the farm and the income of the farmer. Some farmers told me that they showed bank officials their friends' farms as well as their own, in order to secure larger loans. The bank manager said that he did not usually give loans to rice or maize farmers, but in the last four years he has done so to successful farmers for short periods of time - between 3 and 6 months.

Men also take unofficial informal loans, 'pledging' their tree crop farms or property, such as housing, to secure the loan. Wealthy farmers give these loans (both locals and strangers). One stranger who gives loans has given ₡150,000 to one local man who pledged his cocoa farm in return. If he does not pay back the loan in the agreed time the money lender can claim the farm. Another man pledged his house in return for ₡100,000, and as he has not paid in the stipulated two years, the stranger is to take possession of the house. During the period that a farm is pledged the man who is lending the money has rights to the cocoa from that farm. If a loan is not paid in the agreed time, it is common for 50% interest to be taken on the loan when the money is eventually paid.

TABLE 7.2 Loan use by men and women in Antoakrom, 1991.

LOAN SOURCE	FORMAL		INFORMAL		NEVER HAD
	Bank	Development Project	Money lender	Susu	
Women	5%	-	-	14%	77%
Men	23%	-	8%	-	69%

Table 7.2 shows that men take a much higher percentage of formal loans than women. In contrast women take a higher percentage of informal loans, but they prefer not to use money lenders as men do (this will be discussed further below). For both men and women by far the largest percentage is those who have never taken a loan. Although this may represent the largest category, the figures are probably too high, since it is possible that people had forgotten that they had taken a loan in the past (especially an informal one) or they may have chosen not to discuss it.

Stranger sources of income

The difference in both the source of income and the type and amount of income is more marked between men and women than it is between locals and strangers. As with

stranger women, some stranger men have come to Antoakrom to farm with capital for that specific purpose. They have made this capital elsewhere in another business. This is particularly common among non-Asante strangers, many of whom have previously worked in the mines in Obuasi, or in the timber companies around Manso Mim and Moseaso. When they gave up these jobs they settled in Antoakrom to farm. One man came from Mankasim, in the Central region, where he had previously been a mason. This man plants oil palm, cocoa and vegetables. During the 1970s, apart from planting oil palm, a few men also started to grow vegetables for the urban market. This is lucrative, but is hard physical work, especially watering tomato plants every day, and so middle aged rather than older men have been the ones to enter production. Seasonal price variations and risks in production also make vegetables demanding crops.

Most non-Asante men invest in rice as one of their most lucrative crops. It is these people who first grew rice on any scale in the area, and by example encouraged others to do the same, although rice is still considered a high risk crop by local men, and is farmed on smaller plots by locals than it is by strangers. Non-Asante strangers also trade in kola, that they collect from wild trees locally, or that they buy from people who collect kola in their own villages. I was also told about one other occupation that some non-Asante strangers pursue: the

mining and trading of gold in the area around Antoakrom. There are many old 19th century mine workings in the area, especially in surrounding villages, and it is said that the area is rich in gold. The sale of gold is tightly controlled by the government, and this is strictly illegal. I never saw a mine myself, but I know a woman who acquired gold for a wedding ring in this way.

WOMEN'S INCOME.

Most of the early studies of Asante show that women earned cash on a regular basis. Fortes, Ady and Steel (1947) say that of 246 women they interviewed in Asokore, only 22 claimed to be non-earners, and these women were the wives of stranger teachers and clerks. Fortes et al argue, "...it is taken for granted that a woman will earn her own living or a large part of it" (1947;163). In her discussion of the West African farming household Hill (1975), comments on the relative autonomy of men's and women's incomes and expenditures. In particular she notes that rather than complementing their spouses' income in the household, women often set up separate investments as an insurance against divorce. She notes that Akan women do this with cocoa farms, and some women in Antoakrom discussed their investment in property or cocoa for the same reason. However, it would be unfair to give the impression that male and female income and expenditure patterns do not relate at all in Antoakrom, as this is not the case, especially when children are concerned.

TABLE 7.3 Female income other than farming, Sample 1

MAJOR CROP COMBINATIONS*

Cocoa and foodcrops

Owns a chop bar in Kumasi, trades in bush meat
Cooks food, does 'by day' for others
Remittance from children, trades in cloth and cooking pots
Remittance from children, sells *akpeteshie*
Remittance from husband
Does 'by day' for others, trades in cloth
Does 'by day' for others, makes soap
Does 'by day' for others
Does 'by day' for others

Cocoa and oil palm

Trades salt, remittance from children
Trading with UAC in Kumasi

Foodcrops

Cocoa Services Division, remittance from husband
Remittance from husband, does 'by day'
Does 'by day', two tenants in house
Does 'by day', sells firewood
Does 'by day', makes local soap

* As with Table 7.1 each line represents the other occupation/s of a woman in Sample 1

This table shows the marked difference in the source of women's earnings compared to those of men, outside their farming activities. I did not include the trade of farm produce since, although most women do this, it is direct income from their own farms. Most of these women earn most of their non-farm income from 'by day' or are given remittance, although the amounts are varied, and may not amount to much at all. Those women in the sample with businesses outside farming, are the few who grow cocoa and oil palm on any scale. Most local women acquire cash from two main sources - their own earnings and through household and kin networks. Their own earnings, which usually constitute the bulk of their income, comes from

the produce of their farming, trade and processing, as well as other business such as sewing and working as 'by day' or contract labour for others. The money women are given from adult children or spouses is often irregular and rarely a sizeable sum, and although it often plays an important part in the farming a woman is able to carry out on her own account, or in the day to day maintenance of the household, it cannot be relied upon. Women do have a variety of ways of obtaining money, but they are rarely as lucrative as the enterprises of men. Most local women see providing for their families as their major goal in life, but would like to be able to earn above the subsistence level. For most of them trading activities allow them to do this, although none of them are wealthy. No local woman is entirely dependent on a man for cash, and every woman expects to be able to earn and control an income. One of the critical issues here is how this income varies according to marital status and age. Obviously income will also depend on the individual situation of a woman - the size of her household and the age of any dependants for example.

Most local women have their own account farms, either as heads of their own households or on plots of land that are separate from their husbands farms. For many women these farms, however small, provide the major part of their own income, as the produce that they sell comes from these farms. However, as was discussed in Chapter 4, the farms

of most women are smaller than those of men, and are rarely large enough to provide an adequate income. Most women are involved in other income generating activities, the sum of which makes up their overall income.

The main secondary forms of income are obtained from the processing of foodstuffs and trade in items such as cloth, handkerchiefs, head scarves and salt. Women also make 'local' soap (from cocoa pods and plantain skins) and *akpeteshie* (a local spirit distilled from palm wine or sugar, or some other starchy staple). They also collect snails seasonally and wild palm fruits for sale. Women who have children sometimes send them (especially young girls) to collect and sell seasonal fruits, and kola and wild palm fruits when they are not in school. Many women hire themselves out as 'by day' labour or contract labour if they can find the time between the work they are expected to do for others and their own farming activities. A few women in Antoakrom also have paid work with the local Cocoa Services Division, often on a seasonal or part time basis.

It is possible for women to obtain bank loans from the Amansie West Rural Bank, of which there is a branch in Antoakrom. In particular this bank offers credit facilities to farmers in rural areas. However, as I have already mentioned the bank's policies have a male bias, since credit is only offered for crops that have a

guaranteed return, such as cocoa or oil palm, crops that are largely under male control. The manager of the bank told me that he rarely gave loans to women since they could not afford to repay them. The only women to whom he has ever granted a loan are those who are government employees, and have a monthly income. Most of his loans go to cocoa farmers for weeding and spraying. However, he does give small loans out for short periods, for funerals for example, but the use of such loans is obviously limited, and the person involved still has to have adequate collateral. Of the local women interviewed about their income and expenditure in Sample 1, only one was able to obtain loans for her farming from this bank, and this was because she worked for the Cocoa Services Division. None of the women interviewed were using loans from more informal money lenders, although most said they occasionally borrowed from relatives if the need arose. This need is usually for some kind of medical bill, or money to travel or pay school fees. The most common form of borrowing that women use is credit relationships with other women who are friends. Many women purchase household items such as cloth and cooking pots in this way, but stressed that they were only able to have these kind of credit arrangements with women they knew well, who trusted them to pay when money was available. Table 7.2 showed how few women in the 1991 sample had access to formal loans, and how many used informal loans instead.

Susu

One form of savings or investment that is much more commonly used by women than men in Antoakrom, is *susu*. *Susu* is an amount collected on a daily basis and returned in a lump sum at the end of the month. The *susu* group in Antoakrom is made up of varying numbers of women (and a few men). Each month the man who organises the group collects a particular amount from each participant. The amount is specified by each individual, and can be as little as ₦20 a day or as much as ₦300 (or more) depending on income. The first contribution from each member belongs to the *susu* collector, but on subsequent days for the rest of the month he collects the given amount from each person, and then gives them the lump sum (minus the first payment) at the end of the month. This allows many women to save money that might otherwise be used up on a day to day basis. The *susu* collector says that women often join the group when they know they will need money in the near future to weed their farms or to pay hospital bills, for example. Others who are regular members use the money for school fees or to buy cloth. If a regular member is in need, money from the *susu* 'account' can be given out as a loan; for a funeral perhaps or some other unforeseen circumstance. *Susu* is very common in the area around Antoakrom, and there are *susu* groups in most of the local villages. Most of the women who participate are

farmers who trade their own produce, or market women who trade foodstuffs.

Of the men who regularly participate one is a shoe maker and mender, two run the local cornmill, and one is the local druggist. These men all give ₦200 a day. Of the women who participate regularly, two give ₦300 a day, but most pay ₦50 or ₦100. Table 7.4 below shows the number of male and female *susu* participants between February 1987 and July 1988. It is obvious from the table that *susu* is a much more important saving scheme for women than it is for men. The number of participants remains fairly constant but varies according to individual needs. *Susu* is collected on a monthly basis, and there is no obligation beyond the end of each month.

TABLE 7.4 *Susu* savers in Antoakrom,
February 1987 - July 1988

Month	Total Number	Number of Men
February 1987	36	5
March	31	7
April	22	3
May	21	3
June	20	2
July	22	3
August	22	5
September	34	7
October	33	5
November	43	3
December	40	9
January 1988	32	9
February	29	5
March	36	6
April	38	7
May	30	3
June	35	1
July	33	4

Contributions from spouses

Cash contributions to women from spouses or children take many different forms. As suggested earlier, monetary income received in this way is often very irregular and unreliable. Some of the female heads of household in Sample 1 who have adult children working outside Antoakrom do receive money from them, and although they include this when they are discussing their income, it is often given for specific needs, such as hiring labour at certain times of the year it is not necessarily given on a regular basis. Daughters give more regularly but in smaller amounts, a few hundred or one or two thousand cedis a month, whereas sons might remit between five and ten thousand cedis, but only occasionally. In Antoakrom husbands' commitment to financial help for their spouses varies from individual to individual. Husbands who live locally give more in terms of commitments in labour, and paying for items for children such as school fees and clothes. Shared responsibilities for children, with the husband paying many of the larger financial costs is common, although money given for a woman's personal use may be small. Men who live away, however, appear to remit money more regularly; although women whose husbands work away rarely feel this remittance is adequate, and assume full responsibility for their own farms and children. For

the female heads in Sample 1 whose husbands were rarely present, remittance was regular but not frequent, nor was it in large amounts - usually no more than a few thousand cedis. All of the women with absentee husbands in Sample 1 said that some of the money remitted was used to hire labour, and on average they did hire more labour than women whose husbands lived locally.

Women in Sample 1 who are divorced or widowed complain that capital is their biggest difficulty; one widowed woman with children said, 'My biggest problem is money. I don't get money to buy the things we need.'. Increasingly now under ERP goods and inputs are more expensive than ever before, and the returns these women make from what little they sell do not match their needs. These women have to take care of all the household expenses, and they all hire themselves out as 'by day' and contract labour for others. No one occupation gives them sufficient income, so they work at various enterprises to earn enough cash. One of the poorest widows collects firewood to sell in the village. This is unusual in a village such as Antoakrom, where firewood is fairly easily accessible to everyone, even those who do not own land. She farms her own plot and does 'by day' for others as well.

Unmarried women(1)

Unmarried women are obviously in the same position as those who are widowed or divorced, in as much as they do not have access to the resources of a husband, although many of them live with their parents. Earned income is still from much the same sources as that of married women, although single women tend to trade more and move outside the village more frequently. In Antoakrom they account for many of those who are market traders, and they travel to buy and sell in Kumasi, Bekwai and Obuasi. They may farm their own plots, and use these staples for trade, but most also farm in conjunction with their mothers or work on their father's plots. Unmarried women in Antoakrom make up for lack of transfers from a husband with earnings from trade, and they also work outside the village for short spells more often than married women. Young single women in Antoakrom often spend a month or two away two or three times a year trading in Kumasi and Obuasi. The real problems unmarried women face concerning capital are not so much in the basic expenses of providing food, but rather in raising large sums for medical costs or school fees if they have children. Unmarried women who need money for a particular expense find it difficult to substitute for the contribution a spouse would make to the household budget.

In spite of the difficulties all women face in finding enough money to meet their own needs and the needs of their children the money made from trading staple foodstuffs should not be underestimated. Women often use the profits from one farm to expand another. Eventually, some women plant cocoa or oil palm with accumulated profits, Vellenga (1977) describes a similar accumulation of profits in Abesem in central Ghana, and she shows the investments women make in time and energy in a number of different ways to acquire wealth. The following examples of the income of various women in Sample 1 serve to illustrate the points made above.

Adua says that she is fairly self sufficient. She is married to a man who lives locally but they do not share the same house, or the same household. She is around 45 years of age. She has her elder brother living with her who is old and sick, one of her single daughters, and two sons who farm with her (one is 18 and the other one is nine). She also has another married daughter with three children resident in the house, but she farms separately from her and has a separate kitchen. Her main income is from farming and she also trades in salt. She says she does 'by day' occasionally if she really needs the money. Her husband's only role in her household economy is the provision of the children's school fees and occasional clothing. She has not worked on her husband's farms for several years, arguing that now most of her children are

adult, she prefers to be independent from him. She sells all her maize and pepper, and about half of her cassava, plantain and yam. She hires occasional labour with the money she collects from the sale of these foodstuffs. She has an oil palm farm of one acre that she planted three years before with the help of her eldest son, and was planting an acre of cocoa with her mixed crops when I interviewed her. Her main expenditure is on the labour for her farms and the food needed on a day to day basis like meat and fish. She also says that she occasionally has to lend money to her daughters for the care of their children.

Mary is a young second wife who has one small daughter. Her income is strictly limited as she gets little support from her husband who lives locally. His first wife is very jealous of Mary and allows him to give her very little. She intercroops a small farm from which her main income is plantain, cassava and maize. She is hoping that her husband will plant a cocoa farm for her this year. Her other main source of income is from the rent she charges two tenants who live in her compound. Her husband provides money infrequently for medicine and clothes for their small daughter. She sells plantain and cassava on a weekly basis, and sells all of the maize she harvests. She did not tell me the rent the tenants pay her.

Theresa's husband works in Accra and she controls her own farming enterprise. Her main income is from farming and trading food crops. She is able to do this very successfully because she also works for the Cocoa Services Division, which gives her the opportunity to take bank loans to hire labour. She also sells *akpeteshie*. Her husband remits a few thousand cedis every two or three months, and also comes home to help her when he is on leave. Her main income is from maize, and then cassava and plantain. She sells all her maize and most of her cassava and plantain (except that which her family consume). She often sells the cassava to traders who buy it by the field, in the ground. She also has her wage of c7000 a month from the Cocoa Services Division. Her main expenditure is on the labour she uses on the farm, she spent c30,000 on labour and inputs last year. She also has five children in school, although her husband's remittance pays their fees. She intends to plant some cocoa, although she will not let it interfere with the four or five acres of maize she monocrops at the start of every farming season. She says she could afford to hire land from the chief if she needed it, but she has enough land of her own at the moment.

Akua is widowed and is very poor. She has small farms on which she and her daughter are the only labour supply. Her output from these farms is low and she finds it difficult to find enough time to weed her own farm as she

does a considerable amount of 'by day' for others to make ends meet. She has no cocoa, and cannot afford rice or oil palm, or to monocrop maize. She is sent cloth and a little money occasionally by her children who have left Antoakrom. She spent ₵3,600 on labour last season, but only because her son in the Ivory Coast gave her the money. She sells a little of everything (maize, plantain, cassava, cocoyam, pepper and beans) but cannot afford to specialise. Her daughter's children who live in the house are too small to help on the farm, and her daughter cannot afford to send them to school. She has no brother or other male relative close by who can help her with any expenses, so all of her meagre income goes on the household expenses. She says that her family lives on a cash income of 100 or 200 cedis a week.

The same degree of poverty is not necessarily characteristic of all divorced or widowed women, although on the whole their incomes are smaller than married women and any income gets used again immediately. Those who are older with adult children are in a better position since they can expect help financially or with labour, but as already stated this is not guaranteed.

Stranger women

As has been indicated in previous chapters, non-Asante stranger women have different access to resources than

local women. In part because of the constraints of their own northern (patrilocal) cultures non-Asante women (especially those who are Muslim) seem more dependent than stranger Asante women, and a greater percentage of any income they make is controlled by their husbands. Most of them relinquish at least part of their income, whereas Asante women expect to keep control over most of any self generated income. The possibility for non-Asante women to earn an independent income in Antoakrom is severely limited by their restricted access to land. Non-Asante women work on their husband's farms if required, and process the products of these farms for home consumption and sale. The alternative to this is to have a business cooking food for consumption in Antoakrom itself. Some of the women who do this keep the income for themselves but most give part to their husbands. This seems to depend firstly on the wealth of the husband, and secondly on whether the woman has bought the 'raw' food herself or has used it from her husband's farms.

It was the older wives of the longer established Antoakrom stranger residents who had the most successful and lucrative businesses in the supply of cooked foods - particularly porridge in the morning and rice balls and *banku* in the afternoon, as well as selling *kenkey* in the market (see Chapter 8). The women with the most established businesses in the sale of prepared foods have the larger incomes, and the older they are the greater

proportion of this income they keep. Younger stranger women trade on a smaller scale in products such as home-made soap and palm kernel oil, and kola they have collected themselves. It is interesting to note this specialisation, since few women who might be rivals for the same market, traded in the same products. Most non-Asante stranger women I talked to told me that it was their husbands responsibility to provide for the children, buy the daily food items and buy the women themselves cloth and other gifts. The little money they were able to save themselves went towards expanding their own business, purchases of cloth, but in the main was saved up to make visits to their families in the north of Ghana; in part for the fare, and in part for gifts for the family.

For Asante women who are strangers to Antoakrom, but have come to live there through marriage, the situation is similar to that of non-Asante women in some ways. For example, they too have limited access to land for their own farming as they have no direct rights. In general they therefore have to rely on their husbands to a greater extent than local women, and are expected to work on their husband's farms. One of the most likely ways that these women are granted any security is if their husbands give them a cocoa farm locally or better still plant one on land that is in the woman's own village. Sometimes the women try to do this for themselves if they are able, and try to have some kind of separate income to secure this in

case of divorce or the death of their husbands. The main way in which these women can procure their own income is through the trade of the produce from their husband's farms, or through some other kind of trade. Stranger women in Antoakrom trade dried beans, sugar and dried fish that they bring to the market from Kumasi. Others trade in pots and pans and cloth from their own houses. This is a common way for married women to trade since they do not have to waste time sitting in the market place all day, but can be visited at home, as people return from their own farms or during the evening. Trading of this sort also commonly takes place on Thursdays when it is prohibited for people to go to farm. Women also travel outside Antoakrom on Thursdays to carry out business in Kumasi or Bekwai, or to buy provisions to sell in Antoakrom during the rest of the week, or to sell the produce from their own farm.

There is an other group of Asante women strangers in Antoakrom however: those who are able to lease land to use for food farming. These women in Sample 1 are middle-aged, and already have capital from some other business. Some of them are already traders in foodstuffs, and with the prices of these crops rising rapidly they see the opportunities for producing their own to sell. These women are able to market this produce easily as they often have already established good trade networks. Two women in Sample 1 who have businesses in Kumasi but have settled

in Antoakrom to farm food crops, serve to illustrate these points very well. Both have businesses unrelated to farm work. One owns a 'chop bar' in Kumasi which sells cooked meals. She specialises in 'bush' meat in her restaurant and has started to buy game from local hunters since she established her farms. The other has a long standing business trading in hardware with UAC.

The purchase of land for these farms and the investment in considerable amounts of hired labour to establish and maintain these farms has come from this capital generated from outside the local economy. These women are in a very different position from most. One is married to a local man, the other has a daughter living in Antoakrom. Their decision to farm on a commercial basis was made without the constraints placed on other women. These women can afford to invest in certain crops and types of farming strategies that other women cannot afford. The woman who owns the 'chop bar' is farming maize, plantain and cocoyam, and the other woman farms rice, maize, plantain and vegetables - in particular eggplants and cabbage - for the Kumasi market. She has also planted 40 acres of oil palm. Both women have planted part of their farms with cocoa.

Conclusion

It seems that all women have to diversify their sources of income as much as possible to earn a living, although the data suggest that men have greater access than women to cash income from sources that are independent of farming activities.

The recent shift towards the food crop economy has given some women the opportunity to invest more heavily in these crops, and these women say that food farming is much more lucrative now than it used to be. For example, one woman told me 'When you have food crops you have money...'; and another, 'Now I am planting vegetables, beans and garden eggs. I have planted a lot. The market is good here, when you harvest you will sell right here.' However, while the sale of food crops has become more lucrative than it was in the past (especially since the urban market for food has grown) and most women sell their foodstuffs or trade foodstuffs that they buy, wealth is still unequally distributed in favour of men who have more diverse sources of income and, on average, larger and more lucrative farms.

Some women have taken the opportunity to farm more maize and also vegetables that are in demand in urban markets, but these are labour intensive, and unless women have the labour of family members at their disposal, this has to be

hired. The size of their farms, therefore, is often restricted by the lack of money to pay for this type of labour. For most women access to cash income is dependent on farming, which is dependent on cash income.

NOTES

1. There are no unmarried women as heads of household in my samples, but they are discussed here from general information I gathered.

CHAPTER 8

MARKET TRADING AND PROCESSING

This chapter deals with the marketing network in Antoakrom and further afield and the processing of agricultural produce, since both are an integral part of the farming system (1). Having provided an explanation of the different farming patterns of men and women and locals and strangers, it is important to consider how marketing and processing fit into their overall strategies. For most women trading and processing are not able to generate sufficient income to overcome the constraints placed on their access to land and labour, especially for those for whom trading is part of their farming enterprise. There are, however, a few women in the rural economy for whom trading goods other than the produce from their own farms has enabled them to invest in and expand their farming enterprise. This chapter will concentrate on women's work in these areas, since they are the ones who actually spend time in the markets, and are almost solely concerned with processing. However, some consideration will be given to the sale of produce by men.

As was discussed in Chapter 1, markets provide a strong incentive to produce for sale. Antoakrom's agricultural economy has always been one that has been based on the sale of food crops as well as cocoa, which is more traditionally associated with cash cropping in the area. Urban markets around Antoakrom in Kumasi, Bekwai and Obuasi (Map 2, Chapter 3) all have large populations who rely on the market to purchase all their food needs and provide the opportunity for rural farmers to make a cash income. However, in spite of fact that both marketing and processing are primarily the work of women (2), it is difficult for some women to take advantage of the opportunity that this provides because of their position within the local economy.

In larger markets women are often only traders and do not enter into any other business. In rural areas, however, women often trade what they grow themselves, as well as what they buy from others, and have to allocate their labour time accordingly. Similarly with crop processing: the time a woman can give to this as a form of income generating activity (i.e. that not directly related to feeding her own family) may be restricted by the time she has to spend on other activities. Roberts (1989) notes that the 'traditional' rights of West African women to trade on their own account have been too widely accepted, and that this has led to a tendency to '..lose sight of

the material conditions required for women to enter into own account production' (1989:103).

As has been highlighted in previous chapters, married women are often in a very unstable position as regards their rights to support from husbands, and processing and trading can be vital to secure many of their everyday needs. For most adult women in Antoakrom, married and single, trade in farm produce either 'raw' or processed, is the only way they have of earning a cash income. However, the opportunities available for them to do so are governed by factors often outside their own control. These activities will be described and then examined in relation to women's control over resources.

One of the most distinctive features of most West African economies is the market place. As Lawson (1976) has described, these market places are not just places in which the business of buying and selling gets done, but also provide a social service, where information is passed around between friends and neighbours. Religious societies are formed, as well as societies for savings and mutual benefit, such as funeral funds and *susu* (discussed in the previous chapter) for example. However, market places are not the only means through which women trade or sell their own produce. There are both marketing activities that involve the formal organisation of the market place itself, and those that do not necessarily involve going to

a market. It is common that women trade in items such as children's clothes and cloth from their own homes or by visiting friends. In Antoakrom women who sell handkerchiefs, cloth and pots and pans, sell from home. In such a small place everyone knows where to find items that only one or two people sell.

In Antoakrom it is also common for women to sell foodstuffs outside the market place, either literally from home or by striking deals where foodstuffs are sold straight from the fields (sometimes in the ground) to middlewomen or market traders. If produce is to be sold in bulk this is often dealt with outside the market place, as in the case of the deals struck with regular traders from Kumasi and Bekwai. These women come to collect produce from the individual's homes. Within Antoakrom, maize is often sold like this to local women who buy it to make *kenkey* or *banku* in the village. Women sell such items as bread in bulk to wholesalers from home, where they bake it in large dome shaped clay ovens. Others use their homes as 'chop bars' where people can go to buy a meal. For those women whose main occupation may be the production of such foodstuffs, trading from home is much more convenient. The same applies to others who process the foodstuffs they grow into products such as oil or maize flour. Selling from home is considerably less time consuming than than sitting in the market all day, especially as the demands on their labour time have to be

met elsewhere. Many women who farm and sell processed produce say that it is easier to sell from home in the evenings or on days when people do not go to farm. One way around this is to send young daughters to the market to sell. However, increasingly these daughters are in school and can only do this for their mothers in the vacations.

TRADING IN THE MARKET PLACE

Antoakrom has a daily market and is part of a market network in the area which combines both daily markets and those that are once or twice weekly. Bekwai has a daily market and one which is bigger on Wednesdays. This is the largest market in the area (apart from Kumasi) with over 300 traders. Women from Bekwai come to Antoakrom every week to buy produce, and people from Antoakrom go to Bekwai for produce they cannot obtain in Antoakrom. Safokrom, which is about 7 miles from Antoakrom (Map 2, Chapter 3) has a market two days a week, and Kwabnakwanta which is about 5 miles (Map 2, Chapter 3) has a wholesale market for food crops two days a week. These local markets are places where produce from Antoakrom also gets bought and sold. Women from these markets also sell in Kumasi market but to traders who work there, rather than in their own right. Women from Bekwai market also come to Safokrom and Kwabnakwanta on a regular basis to buy produce to sell in Bekwai. Women from Safokrom,

Kwabnakwanta and Antoakrom all trade in each others markets also. These three rural markets operate in this way as a focus for trade passing through them since they are all on a road that runs from Abori to Bekwai and has easy links with Kumasi and Obuasi. They therefore attract traders from the surrounding villages that are not on such easy routes. Women who bring foodstuffs to these villages from outlying areas expect to trade with women from the larger markets of Bekwai, Kumasi and Obuasi, as well as more local people. Table 8.1 below shows where the various commodities come from that are traded in the market network around Antoakrom.

TABLE 8.1 Origin of commodities in the marketplace

Commodity	BEKWAI	ANTOAKROM	KWABNAKWANTA	SAFOKROM
Staples	Feyase, Asanso, Poano Safokrom, Antoakrom, Ntriinko, Atebubu*	Antoakrom, Safokrom, Nsiana	Local villages, 5-10 mile radius	
Vegetables	Kumasi, local farms	Antoakrom	Local villages, 5-10 mile radius	
Grains	Kumasi, Techiman Local villages	Antoakrom, Techiman	Local villages Kwabnakwanta	Kumasi
Nuts	Local	Antoakrom		
Fruit	Local	Antoakrom	-	Safokrom
Processed food	Local, Kumasi	Antoakrom	-	Safokrom
Prepared food	Local, Bekwai	Antoakrom, Akropong	-	Local
Fish	Kumasi+, Yedji L. Bosumtwi	Bekwai, Kumasi	-	Kumasi Bekwai
Meat	Kumasi, local	Bekwai, Nsiana	-	Bekwai
Provisions	Kumasi	Kumasi	-	-
Utensils	Kumasi	Kumasi	-	-
Cloth	Kumasi, Accra	-	-	Kumasi
Shoes	Kumasi	-	-	Kumasi
Personal/petty items	Kumasi, local	Kumasi, Bekwai	Local (soap)	Kumasi, Bekwai
Others	Kumasi, local (charcol)	Kumasi	-	-
Services	Bekwai	Antoakrom	-	-

*These are all villages, within a 20 mile radius of Bekwai, except Atebubu where the yams come from.

+This is frozen fish that is brought up from the coast and distributed by the State Fishing Corporation in Kumasi.

Most markets, from the smallest rural to the largest urban, sell a variety of foodstuffs and other goods. Rural markets, however, are dominated by the sale of foodstuffs, either 'raw' or processed, with a few other items such as medicine, shoes, hair pomades, washing powder, soap and sugar. In villages these other items are also usually sold from kiosks or bars on a more regular basis, and these places are where people are more likely to shop for such items. In urban markets staple foodstuffs are in just one section of the market which also sells everything from cloth and electrical goods to buckets and beads, medicines and pots. The marketing of foodstuffs is organised differently depending on the scale of the market involved. The organisation of this type of trading extends from the wholesale marketing of bought goods in which market women buy and sell items as middle women that they do not produce themselves, to the small scale marketing of foodstuffs that the individual farmer produces and sells on a seasonal or daily basis.

Urban markets in Ashanti Region, and all over southern Ghana, are organised in a very structured way. For each product there is a woman who controls the marketing activities of her own section of the market. She is known as the 'queen mother', and organises the buying and selling of produce. This includes fixing a price at which her particular produce is to be sold and settling any disputes that may arise between women who sell that item.

The number of women who can sell is limited so as not to flood the market, as is the price, in order not to make the goods too cheap. Other women are not allowed to trade in these markets and everyone has to sell that price. In Bekwai there are 'queen mothers' for the staple foodstuffs and for fish. Women who sell staple foods have agreed to sell their foods on alternate days or weeks in order not to flood the market, which may undercut their prices. They say that they want to create an artificial shortage to keep the price of staple foodstuffs steady. On the days when they are not trading these women go to buy produce from outside Bekwai, and the few whose husbands are farmers go to help them.

In Bekwai the regular market traders pay a daily levy for their stall every time they come to market, and a monthly levy for the cleaning of the market. This is paid to the local council, which organises the maintenance and cleaning of the market. Those who trade on a short term seasonal basis, or only come irregularly, only pay the daily rate. However, those who do not have a stall but move around the market selling on a regular daily basis pay both the daily and the monthly levy. To trade most staple foods the levy is c20 a day and c100 a month. Butchers (who are usually male) pay between c50 and c100 a day and c200 a month. Women who sell snails and bush meat pay c40 a day and c200 a month. Fish sellers pay c40 a day and c150 a month. The higher charge for those who

sell meat and fish is because of the greater need for cleanliness in the areas of the market where they trade. Women who sell cooked foods pay ¢40 a day and ¢100 a month, if they come to the market regularly. Wholesale traders who come from outside Bekwai once a week on a Wednesday, and are not based in Bekwai but also trade in other markets, pay ¢500 a day and no monthly levy. In Antoakrom and Safokrom the figures are much smaller, and the regular market traders pay a levy of ¢200 per year to the local council. This is very haphazard as only a few women trade from the small number of stalls erected in the market places (3), and most spread a sack on the ground or use a basket or a tray to sell from. Kwabnakwanta is a wholesale market at the side of the road and is not levied.

There are many ways in which trading in the markets of Bekwai and Kumasi differs from that of more rural markets, and these largely reflect the occupational structure of the market traders. For example, in Bekwai most of the women are traders and have no other occupation. Of the sample of 63 traders surveyed, only four supplemented their income with other activities. Three women were also farmers, and one sold porridge in the early mornings (Table 8.2). This shows a marked difference to those women who trade in the rural markets of Antoakrom, Kwabnakwanta and Safokrom, most of whom are farmers first and traders second. In Antoakrom of the 37 women who were interviewed

selling in the market on one day, 25 were also farmers. Of those that were not, one worked in a local government coffee plantation, two sold cooked foods and only eight defined themselves as having no other occupation. Of these eight, three were married with spouses that farmed, on whose farms they helped (although they did not have their own plots). The other five were young girls between the ages of 16 and 20 who were unmarried and living with their mothers. Safokrom and Kwabnakwanta have a similar profile to Antoakrom. In Kwabnakwanta, because it is a wholesale market, every woman who comes to sell is a farmer, selling her own produce, and in Safokrom most are farmers as well as traders.

TABLE 8.2 Other occupations of market traders

	BEKWAI	ANTOAKROM	KWAENAKWANTA	SAFOKROM
None	59	8	-	7
Farming	3	25	36	37
Government labourer	-	1	-	2
Selling cooked food+	1	2	-	3
Selling processed goods**	-	-	-	1
Selling bush meat+	-	1	-	-
Seamstress	-	-	-	1
Total	63	37	36	51

* Goods such as oil and soap.

+Some women sell these items in the market, but others sell unprocessed foodstuffs in the market and distinguish between their market trading and their processing and cooking, which they sell from home.

In Safokrom of the 51 women surveyed, 37 were also farmers. Of the remaining 14, five were young unmarried women selling for their mothers, two were middle aged women whose husbands were farmers, two worked for the CDS in nearby Poano, three sold cooked food, one was a seamstress and another made soap. All of those who did not farm themselves, but who were married to farmers, said that they also helped on their husband's farms, although they did not have plots of their own.

There are also marked differences in the occupational structure of the spouses of market traders in rural and urban markets. Obviously urban men, like urban women, have less opportunity to farm unless they are absentee farmers, and this is reflected in the figures (Table 8.3).

TABLE 8.3 Occupations of traders spouses

	BEKWAI	ANTOAKROM	KWABNAKWANTA	SAFOKROM
TRADERS	63	37	36	51
Male	4	1	-	3
Female	59	36	36	48
SPOUSES OCCUPATION				
Farmer	17	19	17	29
Teacher	4	-	-	-
Government labourer	6	3	3	6
Government white collar	2	1	-	1
Driver	2	1	1	2
Business	3	1	2	-
Trader	1	-	1	-
Artisan	2	1	-	-
Other	1	1	-	-
No Spouse	25	10	12	13
Total	63	37	36	51

Of the 63 women interviewed in Bekwai market 17 have spouses who are farmers, of whom 11 are absent, 21 have husbands who work in another business, and 25 are without a spouse (11 unmarried and 14 divorced or widowed). Of the 37 women interviewed in Antoakrom 19 have husbands who

are farming, 10 have no husbands (five are young and single, and five divorced or widowed), and eight have occupations other than farming (of which three are absent). For Kwabnakwanta and Safokrom the figures are similar. In Kwabnakwanta, of the 36 women interviewed, 17 had husbands who were farmers, 12 had no husband and seven had other occupations. In Safokrom, of the 51 interviewed, 29 spouses were farmers, 13 had no spouse (four were unmarried and nine divorced or widowed) and nine had other occupations.

The differences in occupational structure in these market places, of both the trader and spouse, are also marked by the amount of time traders spend in the respective markets (Table 8.4).

TABLE 8.4 Hours spent in the market place

Average number of days spent in a week	Bekwai	Antoakrom	Kwabnakwanta	Safokrom
1-2	3	9	36	51
3-4	45	9	-	-
5-6	15	19	-	-

Time spent/day				

2 hours	-	9	-	-
3 hours	1	6	36)	-
4 hours	5	6)	-
5 hours	1	4	-	-
6 hours	5	2	-)
7 hours	-	-	-	51)
8 hours	6	-	-)
9 hours	2	1	-	-
10 hours	19	2	-	-
11 hours	-	1	-	-
12 hours	24	6	-	-

While women working in Bekwai market spend on average 10 to 12 hours in the market every day, women in Antoakrom, Kwabnakwanta and Safokrom spend on average two to four hours a day since their time is limited by labour time spent on other activities.

While marketing is an important source of income to women in Antoakrom they often cannot spend enough time actually in the market place, hence the need to trade outside the market place. Their labour time is demanded by their husbands as well as on their own farms (as was discussed in Chapter 6). Of the 10 women who spent the longest time in Antoakrom market place - between 9 and 12 hours - five are unmarried and selling for their mothers or themselves;

they have no husband for whom they are expected to work. The other five are divorced or widowed. These five are older women and all are farmers, but they control their own labour time, and can chose to a greater extent (within the constraints of their own farming schedule) how much time they allocate to their farms and how much to trading.

Lawson (1976) suggests that rural women may be better off than other women who trade in urban areas since they can sell their own produce and combine trade with farming, rather than urban traders '...who, because they have none of their own produced foods or goods to sell, are forced first to buy such commodities from others' (1976:598). However, she also argues that trading only provides a small income. This is certainly true for women in Antoakrom. The amounts they earn from their own account trade are small, especially if compared to male income from their own farms. The size of women's farms is smaller (as has been shown in Chapter 4), and this means the amount of produce available for sale is likely to be limited.

For Bekwai the survey showed that the overwhelming majority of market traders are resident in Bekwai. Traders from outside Bekwai cannot come and sell in the market whenever they like. It is difficult for those outside Bekwai to obtain a stall, and they have to sell to middlewomen or direct to traders in Bekwai rather than

trade there themselves. The only alternative is, like one tomato seller in the sample, to come once a week on a Wednesday to sell wholesale. Even this is limited by the decision of the queen mother for each staple food. Of the 63 traders interviewed in Bekwai 58 are from the town itself, one is a twice weekly 'hawker' from Kumasi, one is the tomato wholesaler from a village about 18 miles away, and three others are from villages 4, 6 and 10 miles away who have daily rights to trade. In Antoakrom, traders are mostly from the village. Three come from Akropong and two from Nsiana - both villages of about 2 miles distance. In Safokrom, however, and in Kwabnakwanta, people come from villages within a 10 mile radius to trade in the markets. In all three villages some buyers are local whereas others come from up to 30 or 40 miles distance - from Obuasi and Kumasi as well as Bekwai.

Table 8.5 below shows the number of traders in the sample selling each product in the markets surveyed.

TABLE 8.5 Number of traders of each commodity in the marketplace

Commodity	BEKWAI	ANTOAKROM	KVABNAKWANTA	SAFOKROM
STAPLES-e.g.cassava, yam, plantain	15	10	22	10
VEGETABLES-e.g.garden eggs, pepper.	7	8	12	8
GRAINS-e.g.maize	6	1	1	2
NUTS-e.g.groundnuts, coconuts	2	-	-	-
FRUIT-e.g.citrus, pineapple	3	-	-	1
PROCESSED FOOD-e.g.oil, garri, banku dough(4)	8	-	-	1
PREPARED FOOD-e.g.rice, bread, porridge	4	5	-	4
FISH	6	7	-	12
MEAT-e.g.goat, beef, bushmeat, snails	5	1	-	1
PROVISIONS-e.g.tins, sugar	2	2	-	-
CLOTH/OLD CLOTHES	-	-	-	5
PERSONAL/PETTY ITEMS e.g.combs, soap	2	3	1	3
OTHERS-toys, sweets, charcoal, tobacco, biscuits.	2	-	-	-
SHOES	1	-	-	4
TOTAL	63	37	36	51

With the organised networks of trading in Bekwai, I had expected to find that this occupation was passed on over generations, especially from mothers to daughters. Although this was the highest group of transference, the overall numbers of traders with other relatives in the same business was suprisingly low. Of the 63 traders in

Bekwai only 15 had other relatives trading. Six had mothers who also trade, two older women have daughters, two have grandmothers, two sisters, two fathers, one a brother and one a husband. All had applied for their stall from the local council and had not had them passed on to them.

One important aspect of market trade that has not yet been discussed is how people buy and sell from each other: who trades with whom and how? The business of buying and selling is carried out in cash or credit, and how these are used often depends on the length of time the relationship of trade has been formed between two partners. In Bekwai local people who buy in the market usually buy from the same person and it is not uncommon for these customers to be able to buy on credit - particularly for more expensive items of food and cloth. The traders who sell on credit often do so to chop bars - meat and plantain for example - and sometimes middlewomen sell on credit, the payment being made once the purchaser has resold the goods. In Bekwai market the traders said they brought produce from between one and 10 different people.

FIGURE 8.1 Number of suppliers in the Bekwai markey survey

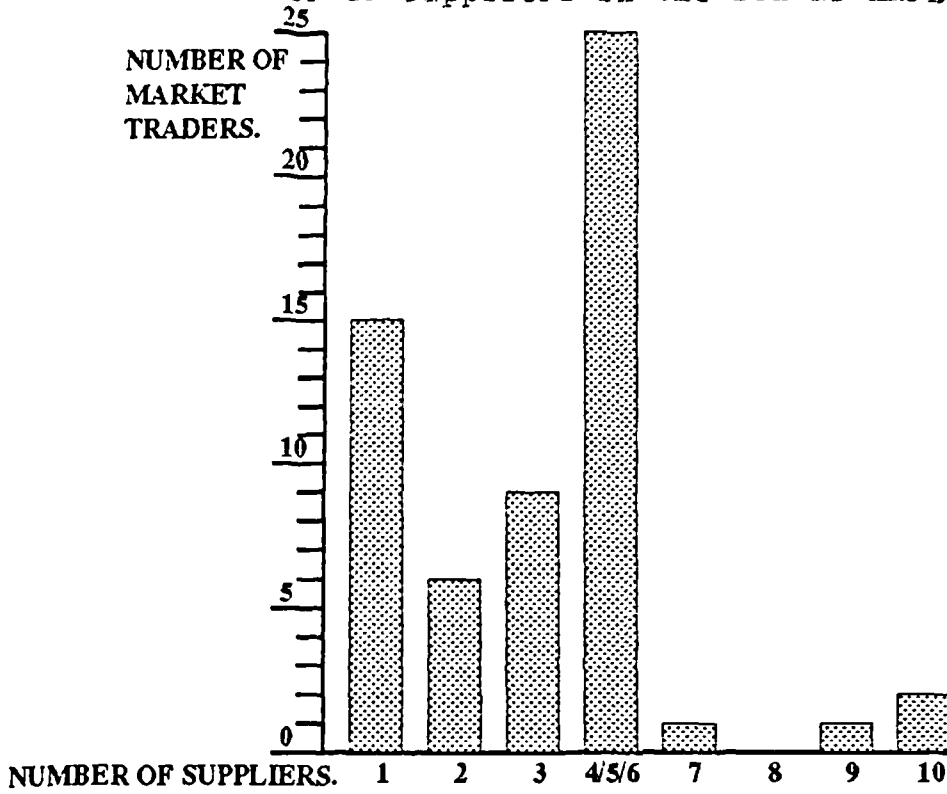
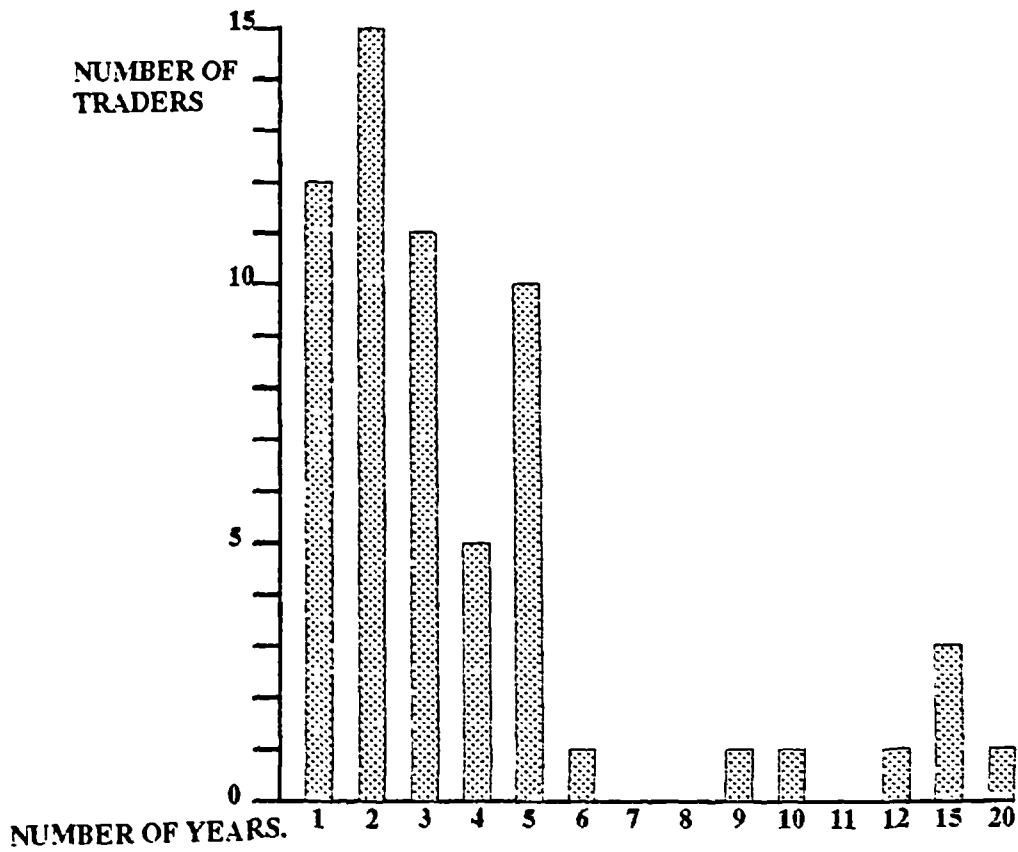


FIGURE 8.2 Length of time each trader has had their present trading partner



A few of the oldest women who have been trading for a long time, some of them more than 20 years, have had the same trading partners for nearly as long. But more often these links get broken sooner or later, and for most the average seems to be between two and five years. The longer the trading relationship the more likely produce is to have been transferred on a credit basis. Women in urban areas who buy staple foodstuffs in rural areas are less likely to be able to take on credit, but are more likely to give credit in the form of loans. The village women that they trade with cannot afford to give credit, but the urban traders to whom they sell sometimes give them money if they need it, on the assumption that they will be supplied with goods in the future in lieu of repayment. Some urban women told me that this way they ensured a continuation of the trading relationship, and thus guaranteed themselves a regular supply of produce to sell in their own markets. This also works to the benefit of the rural women, and some women in Antoakrom say that this kind of relationship makes it much easier for them to guarantee their own income. Some women do trade with whoever comes to buy, but their numbers are far fewer than those who have a regular partner, and the women who come to buy without an established trading partner are irregular customers. One of the regular Bekwai women who goes to Kwabnakwanta told me, 'If you are a stranger you will not find plantain to buy' (5).

Most of the traders in cassava, plantain, cocoyam and so on have several people that they buy these staple foods from, whereas women who trade in fish, yams and bush meat, and men who trade in fresh meat usually only have one supplier for each type of produce. One Bekwai trader who uses Safokrom to buy wholesale told me that she has six regular suppliers for plantain and cocoyam, but that she will also buy anything else that they bring - pepper, garden eggs or *kantomre*(6), for example, because she will always be able to sell it. She also buys 'on spec', if she can, if she knows there is a demand for something in Bekwai. She says that one of her considerations when buying is the cost of transport. From Safokrom to Bekwai each bunch of plantain she buys costs her ₵10 in a large bus and ₵20 in a small one, and each basket of cocoyam or pepe costs the same amount. However, she deals in large quantities of food, so although she may pay ₵100 or ₵200 to transport it her profits will easily cover the expense.

On the day I went to survey Kwabnakwanta, 11 women came to buy in bulk; seven were from Bekwai, three from Kumasi and one from Anwiankwanta. The following examples of two women in Kwabnakwanta who sell their own produce, illustrates the amounts they sell on a weekly basis:

Akua sells plantain and pepper. She is 26 with two children. Her husband is a farmer and she works on his farms but she also has three plots of her own on which she

grows cocoyam, cassava, plantain, pepe and maize. Between December and January she sells mostly plantain - 10 bunches a week - only on Thursdays. Most other months she sells four or five bunches a week, and during May and June - the 'leanest' time - she may only harvest three bunches a week to sell, and supplements her income with the sale of dried pepper. However the differing availability of plantain and pepe means that she makes the same income all year round. Between September and January five bunches of between 30 and 40 fingers each will fetch ₵1,000, and in May and June three smaller bunches will fetch ₵1,000 (in May when I interviewed her she had just sold one large bunch of 39 fingers for ₵600). She has a regular trading partner from Bekwai, whom she has traded with for three years. In the peak season she expects to make ₵2,000 to ₵4,000 a week. From May to January she sells pepe as well; she sells three 'rubbers' (?) a week but the price is not fixed. In May each 'rubber' is around ₵500, but it can reach ₵1,000 to ₵1,500 and even ₵2,000 in December and January, but by then she only sells one 'rubber' a week. Between November and January she takes the pepe to Kumasi weekly, to one woman who has been buying it from her for three years (her husband's brother's wife). She uses her income to buy cloth and look after her children, although her mother pays the school fees for one of them.

Adua sells tomatoes, plantain, pepper and okra. She also makes soap. Adua is 40, married, and has four children.

She has been selling for six years, and comes from a village three miles from Kwabnakwanta. She intercropped pepper and okra, and plantain and cocoyam on her husband's cocoa farms, and monocrops tomatoes on her own plot. She also has an acre of oil palm, that she planted herself with the profits from the sale of the tomatoes. She sells 12 bunches of plantain a week between September and January when the children are not in school and can help her to bring them to the market for sale. The big bunches fetch c400 and the small c300. At other times when the children are in school she can only bring four herself. She sells baskets of tomatoes in December and May. In December two baskets a week fetch between c1,400 and c1,600 together, while in May four very big baskets fetch c800. She sells okra and pepper between August and January in Kumasi, and goes there once every four days. She sells them in baskets to a woman who gives her c500 and c1000 each. She trades with one woman from Bekwai in Kwabnakwanta and one woman in the Central Market in Kumasi.

In the market in Bekwai, traders who sell food items such as fish and yams travel to fetch them from a great distance. The women who sell dried fish go to Yedji and Mankasim. They all go together in one lorry on a Sunday or Monday and come back on Tuesday. Fresh fish is brought from Kumasi in cartons, where it has come up from the coast packed in ice. Mackerel is c6,500 a carton and is

sold in the market place for ₦6,800, so there is only ₦300 profit per carton. The women who sell yams collect them from Atebubu every two weeks. One woman says she spends ₦40,000 every two weeks. She then sells the yams to people who come from villages to resell in their own areas.

All of the women I interviewed in Bekwai said they had no plans to give up trading as the money they earn is sufficient to supplement their family income, and buy the things they need. For the women who sell their own produce this is the only way they can secure an income, as the possibility of other employment in a rural area is limited.

Differentiation amongst traders

There are clearly important differences between the organisation of marketing for those in an urban environment and those marketing foodstuffs in a rural one, and the data identify the opportunities for some women to trade and the constraints imposed on others. As suggested at the beginning of this chapter, what Roberts (1989) implies and what Lawson (1976) reinforces, is the generalised notion that all West African women trade, without a consideration of the limitations imposed on that trade by other commitments to domestic arrangements. I have suggested that many urban traders are able to trade

on average for longer hours and on more days than their rural counterparts, since their commitments to other activities are less. For example, most of the market women whose husbands farmed said that they were not expected to help on those farms very often. One woman told me, 'Most of us come to the market early and leave late in the evening since we have no husbands, or our husbands are away. Some of us have husbands who have work that keeps them at work late in the evening' This is not to say that their lifestyle is necessarily easier than women who have to divide their time between farming and marketing, or that the opportunity to trade necessarily gives them a greater income, since Lawson (1976) suggests they have to buy what they sell. However, it does establish a strategic difference in opportunity between urban and rural traders.

However, the obvious urban rural divide is not the only place where the difference in opportunity manifests itself - there are also differences between the opportunity of young and older women (as has been implied earlier) and between married and single women and strangers and locals. One of the most marked differences is between older and younger women and their status as married or single. These differences seem to be reflected in the types of food that they sell, and also in the amount sold and the hours spent in the market. Of the women interviewed those who spent the longest time were the oldest and the

youngest. Those with husbands who were farmers spent the least time, and those with school age children spent, on average, less time than those with very small or adult children. The older the women are, the more likely they are to be trading wholesale foodstuffs, and these women spend larger amounts of money when going to buy food crops outside Bekwai than younger women. They have had longer to build up good relationships with their suppliers, reinvest income and acquire status as someone to do business with; all the queen mothers are at least middle aged in Bekwai. Younger women are more likely to trade 'petty items' and prepared foods, especially *kenkey* and bread. These young girls are often trading for their mothers.

All the young women married to farmers in Antoakrom, Safokrom and Kwabnakwanta usually have to allocate some time each day to work on their husband's farms, especially if their husbands have young cocoa. The only married women who said they did not have to work on their husband's farms are over 50. The women also spend some time each day, or at the least some time on three days a week working on their own farms if they have them. During the cocoa harvest all the women whose husbands have cocoa said they are expected to help at least some of the time. Those who worked most helped with the harvesting, the splitting and headloading, and those who worked least helped headloading the cocoa.

Local and stranger status

There were also identifiable differences between the trading activities of local and stranger women. Here the distinction is not between Asante locals and Asante strangers, but rather between non-Asante and Asante traders. In Bekwai, Safokrom and Antoakrom non-Asante strangers sell prepared foods, processed foodstuffs and provisions. They do not sell staple foods. In rural areas this is because they rarely have farms of their own, so they do not have their own produce to sell. In Bekwai, stranger women told me that it was difficult to involve themselves in local trading networks. They said that local producers have well established trading relationships with Asante women. Rather it was easier for them to buy the maize or rice they needed in local markets, or obtain it from their husbands, and to process foodstuffs such as palm kernel oil, groundnut paste and prepare foods such as *kenkey*, porridge, and rice balls. Of the women trading in Antoakrom market, all the non-Asante women trade processed or prepared foods, as well as a few of the local women.

SALE OF PRODUCE BY MEN

Men sell their produce in much the same way as women, although with the exception of meat they rarely trade in food markets. Most of the selling they do takes place in

Antoakrom, or they go to Kumasi or Bekwai if no one comes to buy from them in Antoakrom.

All of the cocoa they produce is sold to the local Producer Buying Division. It is headloaded in sacks to the shed. Oil palm fruit is headloaded to the side of the nearest road on which there is transport, and stacked in bunches ready for a lorry from one of the three palm oil mills in the area. Alternatively it is sold to groups of local women who process it. Maize and rice are sold in much the same way. Potential buyers tend to congregate around the small mill in Antoakrom on the days when it operates, to buy from farmers who are shelling or grinding maize or dehusking rice. In this way regular customers come from Bekwai, Kumasi and Obuasi. Local women who prepare processed foods buy from farmers at the site of the mill, although the quantities they buy are buckets or tins rather than sacks.

Men tend to sell the staple food crops and vegetables from their farms themselves if they are sold in bulk; or they may send their wives to market with the produce but expect to receive the money from the sale. Smaller quantities, however, are often sold in Antoakrom market by their wives to buy meat or fish for the evening meal.

PROCESSING AND PREPARED FOODS

Processing as a means to trade foodstuffs is very time consuming, and women who only sell processed foods, such as stranger women, do not tend to be as involved in their husband's farming activities as other women. Many Asante women process oil and soap for their own use, and some may process one product to sell as a separate income generating activity to their farming. However, those who process several items for sale or produce in bulk are often non-Asante or Asante strangers (see Appendix 5 for a description of the various types of processing.)

Some women process foodstuffs from produce on their own farms, such as *konkonte* (cassava flour), palm oil and *kenkey*, so they may sell a combination of 'raw' and processed and prepared foodstuffs. Others earn an income from the sale of processed or prepared foods alone, and do not grow the crops they use. This is especially true of non-Asante stranger women who may not have access to land. They may help on their husband's farms occasionally, but their major activity is the manufacture and sale of processed and prepared foods.

Prepared Foods

The following example of three non-Asante women who prepare foodstuffs, and do not farm illustrates this

point. The three are all wives of a non-Asante stranger who has acquired land to farm locally, in part through renting, and in part from an *abuna* share of cleared land.

Fatima makes food for sale - rice balls and *konkonte*. Adisa Asasa makes *kenkey* for sale, and Adisa Memunatu makes porridge. These women all live in the same compound and share the responsibilities of child care and supplying some provisions for the household. However, their incomes from the sale of their produce remain separate.

Fatima usually makes palm nut or light soup (8). She serves this with *konkonte* or rice balls. To make rice balls she uses short grained rice cooked until sticky, and then stirs this together to make a thick paste to be shaped into balls. Fatima sells everyday from the compound in which they all live. Rice balls are ¢10 each, *konkonte* is ¢10 per portion, soup is free, but meat has to be bought at ¢20 per piece. Fatima uses rice and cassava that is grown locally, which she sometimes buys on credit if need be. One *olonka*, (six 500g margarine tins) is enough rice for two days, and two 'rubbers' of flour will make enough *konkonte* for four days. Rice is ¢500 per *olonka* and a rubber of *konkonte* is ¢400. She spends about ¢500 on meat and soup ingredients for two days. Her total costs for two days are approximately ¢1,400, and she says she sells food between ¢1000 and ¢1,400 a day, so her profit is between ¢600 and ¢1,400 over the same period.

Fatima is her husband's oldest wife and has been doing this work since she came to Antoakrom 20 years ago.

Adisa Asana makes Fante *kenkey* for sale, which she sells for ¢10 or ¢20 a ball. She buys the maize she uses from local farmers. She uses three or four 'rubbers' of maize a week. Each 'rubber' costs between ¢700 and ¢1000, depending on the time of year. She uses one 'rubber' per batch of *kenkey*. She did not say how many balls can be made from this, but said that at that time (June) a 'rubber' cost ¢700, and her profit is only ¢300 per batch because each ball has to be big at this time as there is plenty of fresh maize in the market. Adisa has been doing this work for 30 years, since she was living with her mother. When she married she brought her business to Antoakrom from Medoma. She goes to the market every day or every other day. She occasionally buys on credit, and usually participates in the *susu* scheme.

Adisa Memunatu makes porridge which she sells early every morning by the lorry stand in the centre of Antoakrom. She soaks the millet for three days before milling. She then sieves it and removes the chaff. She mixes it with water and sieves it again through muslin. The thickened liquid is left to stand overnight. In the mornings she boils water and adds the uncooked porridge. She cooks it until it has thickened to the consistency she wants and then adds ginger, hot pepper and a few other ground

spices. She grinds millet every two days. She buys the millet in Kumasi Central Market, for between c10,400 and c12,000 per sack. If she needs to she can buy the sack on credit as she trades with a friend, although she does not like to do this. One sack will last two weeks. She makes a large container of porridge every day. She sells it in c10 portions, a small calabash costs c20 or c30 and sugar costs an extra c10 per spoon. She sells about c1,000 - c1,200 worth a day. She is the youngest wife, about 32 years old, and has been making porridge for 16 years in Antoakrom.

All three are doing the business that their mothers had done. They do not have their own farms, although when their husband has cleared his land they go to help him plant rice, and harvest it if necessary. The household is fed with produce from his farm and he sells the rest of his surplus produce, and the women buy from outside the household to process. Each one buys what she needs separately, although their husband may help them if they are in difficulty. They say that when there is a household debt to meet their income will go to their husband, but otherwise they keep their own money. With her income Fatima helped one of her sisters in the north get married recently, and Adisa Asana bought cloth and visited her family in the north. Adisa Memunatu has not spent her current savings but is planning a trip home soon. These women cook for their husband on a rotational

basis. One in the morning and one in the evening over a three day cycle. In the mornings he may eat porridge that Adisa prepares, and he may take *kenkey* to his farm or eat rice balls in the house, but in the evening a wife cooks for him.

Palm Oil

The following example concerns a group of nine local Asante women who come from Nsiana, a village 2 miles from Antoakrom, and illustrates the cooperative nature of some processing ventures. It is quite common for women to work together in this way to ease the initial expense that may be incurred. This particular group come to buy oil palm that they then process. They come to buy from one man in Antoakrom every two weeks, and also buy from another man in Antoakrom when he has fruit. All of them are also farmers. The women buy the palm fruit as a group to get a good price, and process it up to a certain stage together. They then divide it equally and each takes her own share to extract the oil. Two groups of relatives make up the nine women. There is one group made up of a woman, her mother's brother's daughters and one friend from church and the other group is made up of three sisters and two of their adult daughters. Each woman spends on average ₵6,000 - ₵8,000 on palm fruits every two weeks, and will make a ₵2,000 or ₵3,000 profit depending on demand. The women first buy the fruit together, and they headload it

home, or take it on a bus if there is too much to carry. They then chop up the bunches and loosen the fruit. After about three days they divide the fruit and process it individually.

One of the women who buys fruit employs young men to pound the fruit once it is boiled, for the second batch of oil. She boils it in a large cauldron and two men pound one cauldron for ₦100. After it is pounded she and her daughter sort the mashed fruit to extract the kernels. They then mix the mashed fruit with water and boil it again to extract the second inferior grade oil. Per load she extracts three tins of oil - a tin is 30 beer bottles. She sells it by the tin to a woman who comes from Kumasi, and if she does not come to buy it her daughter goes to sell it in Safakrom on Thursdays or on Sundays. One tin will fetch around ₦3,000, a bottle ₦100. This palm oil makes up only part of her income as she also sells food crops that she grows herself, and she also trades in cloth.

The second woman from the other half of the group of nine women buys similar quantities to the first woman. She also makes palm kernel oil. She dries the kernels for about a week and then uses school children to come and crack the kernels open. They get paid ₦150 per tin, and she gets three or four tins of kernels from a load of palm fruits - about 60 bunches. It costs ₦150 a tin to have

the kernels milled at the grinding mill in Nsiana. The ground pulp is then boiled with water and the oil comes to the surface. After the oil has been extracted cold water is added to what remains and the oil separates again over night. Four tins will give 27 bottles of oil. Every two weeks this women makes 90 bottles of palm oil and 36 bottles of palm kernel oil, she also farms - but not in her own right as she works on her husband's young cocoa farms and grows plantain, cocoyam, yams and onions on his farms. Her own income comes from oil palm and occasional money that her husband gives her, if she asks, that comes from the sale of the food crops she grows for him on his farm.

Processing and preparing food can either be a part of a woman's income generating activities combined with farming, or it can make up the entire source of her income and take up the major part of her time. Of the 15 women whose primary occupation is related to the preparation of food in Antoakrom eight of them are non-Asante strangers, women who have fewer commitments to farming.

Conclusion

Marketing, processing and preparing food are obviously an integral part of many women's work routines. These activities cannot be overlooked in considering how women spend their time and how they earn money. These

activities are often combined with farming as a means to sell farm produce, or to earn extra income from the sale of some other item. For women who are market traders and do not do any other activity (especially those in urban areas) it is often easier for them to do this than to farm. Farming may not be an option because of access to land; but for many access to labour is the problem. Trading is an occupation that can be carried out alone, whereas farming relies on at least some help from others. For some women it is easier to make a living on their own than it is to involve others, especially if they already provide labour for someone else, or are divorced or widowed, and have little control over the labour of others.

The most marked difference in the trading activities of different women is between those who work in a rural market and those who work in an urban one. Those in the urban markets spend more time trading, and are less likely to have other work (Table 8.2). However, many urban women in paid employment do trade as well. For these women capital to invest in trading may come from paid employment or a business. A friend who is a nurse at Akomfo Anokye Hospital in Kumasi said that at least half her friends who work there are also traders; selling their goods themselves in the day when they are working on a nightshift, or using a friend or relative to trade on their behalf at other times.

All rural women sell part of their produce if they are farming on their own account, although the amount they sell obviously depends on the amount they grow and the needs of their household. If they help their spouses or parents to farm, and are not farming on their own account, they may sell on behalf of those they work with. Most of those that trade or process as an alternative to farming do so because they do not have access to land or labour.

Stranger or local status and age play a part in the different processing and marketing strategies of many women. In the market place younger women tend to sell petty items and processed foods on behalf of others, while older women sell more staple foods. Fifty percent of all the traders in Bekwai market are 35 or below, compared with only 40% in Antoakrom, 34% in Kwabnakwanta and 30% in Safokrom. However, among staple food traders in Bekwai 68% are over 40, in Antoakrom the figure is 50%, in Kwabnakwanta 58% and in Safokrom 60%. Older women are more likely to be wholesale traders or middlewomen, with more capital at their disposal to invest in their trading activity while younger women in rural markets are more likely to be trading on behalf of someone else, and on a smaller scale.

Women all recognise the opportunities urban markets present for the sale of both 'raw' and processed food.

Most of them, however, find their opportunities to trade limited either by the amount they produce and or the time they have to spend working for others or taking care of domestic responsibilities. This may seem obvious - a woman cannot sell what she does not have - but the growth of urban markets is often seen as an incentive to increase production by planners and developers who overlook the constraints imposed by the local economy.

NOTES

1. The chapter is based on Survey 4 (see Chapter 3) and general observations and interviews.
2. There are a few men in the market surveys I conducted - primarily butchers.
3. These market places often act as the local *durbar* ground (meeting place) also.
4. *Garri* is roughly milled dried cassava. *Banku* is a kind of fermented dough made from maize flour
5. She is alluding to the fact that it is those that are known as regular traders to whom the suppliers are more likely to sell.
6. *Kontomre* is the leaves of the cocoyam plant that are used in stews and soups.
7. A 'rubber' is a bucket.
8. Light soup is a thin hot pepper soup.

CHAPTER 9

GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

The preceding chapters have focused on the opportunities and constraints that the local economy places on farming strategies. Access to land, labour and capital, and the opportunity to market and process foodstuffs, even in a matrilineal society, are governed by patriarchal control. As has been shown, this means that women are severely restricted in their farming and income generating strategies. Here I return to the possible influence of government intervention in the agricultural economy at village level, and the failure of policy and practice to overcome these constraints. From my evidence it seems that government policy does little to enhance the role of men or women in agricultural production, but that women are more disadvantaged in this respect than men.

In a statement concerning the government's Agricultural Development Policy, 1986-1988, the Ministry of Agriculture maintained that '...agriculture is the 'prime-mover' of the Ghanaian economy; and it is in the agricultural sector that the battle for long-term economic growth and development is won or lost' (Ministry of Agriculture 1986:1). The agricultural sector has great potential for

development, since Ghana has a good resource base for crop production. However, what the Ministry calls the 'traditional' agricultural sector, and in particular that relating to food production, remains relatively untouched by recent initiatives. Small-scale rural producers are the last to feel the effects of changes in government policy, and often the first to suffer since they are unlikely to be able to afford change. More often than not they seem to miss out altogether. On the whole, the government has failed to have a significant positive impact on growth and development in the rural economy. Thus it appears that any response to economic crisis or change at a 'grass roots' level has been engineered without specific help from the Ministry of Agriculture. This is due to a whole range of factors relating to problems with policy, resources and personnel, some of which are dealt with below. Many of these factors have an historical precedent over a long period, and although the present government is trying to correct some of these mistakes and seek remedies to the problems it faces with the implementation of the ERP, government policy on the whole still fails to reach those whom it would benefit most.

In this chapter the agricultural policy of the Ghanaian government will be outlined and examined, in the light of the food supply and government extension services in the Amansie West District (1) around Antoakrom. As has been

highlighted in earlier chapters the agricultural economy in Amansie West is one of those that has not changed radically over the last 50 years. The main factors of production, as they have been described in this thesis, have remained largely unaltered, with the same kinds of tools, land, labour and capital inputs. However, the response of farmers to price fluctuations and demand from the urban economy has not been static, and there have been various shifts in cropping strategies. The main shift, as has been shown, is towards crops other than cocoa (and now, perhaps, there is some move back again). The response of those in the rural economy, however, has not been matched by those in government office. Positive government initiatives to encourage farmers to diversify their economic activities and grow more food, for example, have been few and far between, and well-meaning 'macro' agricultural policy statements have had little effect on what actually happens on a day to day basis in the local economy. Not suprisingly, the only area in which the government ever takes really positive action is in the cocoa economy. However, although cocoa is one of Ghana's most important export crops it is not the one that feeds the nation. As Mosley, Harrigan and Toye argue 'Perhaps the most obvious weakness [with ERP] is non-cocoa agricultural policy, which has been largely neglected.' (1991 vol 2:169). In this context it is necessary to explore the gap between government policy and actual practice.

Rural farmers are acutely aware of the economy in which they are operating and, in as much as they are able, respond to the needs of that market, as has been shown in earlier chapters. However, their own economy functions within and in spite of macro economic policy at one and the same time, and their strategies are designed to maximise profit while at the same time mitigate against too great a risk. In Amansie West the environment largely protects against too great a shortfall in production and most people eat enough food - even if they are poor - but this is a long way from the kind of self-sufficiency the government is trying to promote for Ghana as a whole.

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT POLICY ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Historically, the government's record in the agricultural sector has not been particularly good. The regimes since independence, whatever their political persuasion, civilian or military, have given more attention to industrialisation than to agriculture, and have exploited and controlled the agricultural sector to meet the interests of the State rather than those of the people. While policy makers see the need for intervention that promotes both industrialisation and a healthy agricultural economy, they do not promote the necessary infrastructural changes to enable this at the grass roots level. This is reflected in the government's agricultural

policies, especially those that focus on crops for the export market and industrial sector.

Hansen (1987) argues that since the Second World War there have been two main ideas concerning agricultural production that have effected government food policy. The first is that there is no real shortage of food in Ghana, only a problem of distribution. The second is concerned with the scale of agricultural production, maintaining that what is needed to improve 'progress' in Ghana is mechanisation (this was dominant post colonial government policy). It was this second notion that led to Nkrumah's policy of large scale mechanised state farms. Although the Convention People's Party (CPP) had a populist foundation and a concern for all Ghanaians, its desire to expand the agricultural production of industrial crops for new industries to reduce imports (for example in tobacco, rubber, cotton, and palm oil) led the CPP to pursue the idea of large scale farms and mechanisation (Kraus 1986). This was part of a general policy of state intervention in the whole economy. Four main working units were established during Nkrumah's time in office: the State Farms Corporation, the Workers' Brigade, the United Ghana Farmers' Council and the Young Farmers' League. Unlike the colonial government's belief that small-scale agriculture could provide what the country needed, the CPP took the opposite view. However, by 1965 the CPP had become

unpopular, following sharp rises in the prices of local foodstuffs.

After the overthrow of Nkrumah in 1966, the succeeding National Liberation Council (NLC) and the Progress Party (PP) governments tried to disengage the state from the economy and particularly from agriculture, in support of private enterprise. The state still supported the idea of large-scale farms, but with private entrepreneurs as the backing, with the state providing the incentives in the form of agricultural credit and fertilizers, high yielding seeds and weed killers. As with the plans of the Nkrumah government, the small-scale farmers who produced the bulk of the country's food needs were ignored. Thus these policies, like those of the CPP, were doomed to failure.

After the NLC and the PP governments, Acheampong's National Redemption Government did take positive steps to promote rural food production and limit food imports with the Operation Feed Yourself campaign in 1972. It was the first real attempt to promote the growth of staple food crops for the internal market. Hansen notes that, 'The state made food a political issue and hinged its legitimacy on it' (1987:45). In addition to encouraging private food production on small plots and encouraging local chiefs to develop communal farm lands, the government provided loans through the Agricultural Development Bank. The loans, and also the distribution of

fertilizers, seeds, and rice did result in agricultural growth, from 2.6% in 1972 to 4.1% by 1975, but this agricultural progress was short lived (Benneh 1979). Unfortunately the aims of the government were not fully realised and its projects badly managed. Although they were being targeted, the local farmers, once again, were not included in the decision making process by policy makers with little experience of rural problems. The government did try to involve young people in its efforts, however, when it established the Ghana National Reconstruction Corps. This organisation attempted to use the youth to establish large scale farming settlements, but this too did not achieve much through mismanagement and corruption.

In addition to these programmes the government tried to make the production of foodstuffs easier by removing import duty on agricultural machinery, and subsidising the prices of improved seeds. Unfortunately however this only brought problems, since although heavy machinery was available for those who could afford it, simple and much more useful implements like the hoe and cutlass virtually disappeared from the market. Most of the provision that was made by the government only benefited wealthy farmers, including credit facilities that were weighted in favour of those who had collateral.

The populist view that the state should focus on patterns of farming already in place to enhance those, and encourage changes the farmers themselves would like to make have been only marginal to successive government interest. Hence, for example, the tendency in the 1960s to encourage large scale capital intensive farming strategies over small-scale production units.

The failure of the government's food and agricultural policy contributed to the general economic 'malaise' in the country, and created the conditions for the overthrow of the regime in 1979. This eventually lead to the restoration of civilian rule under the leadership of Limann. The main policy document on agriculture, the 'Action Programme for Agricultural Production, 1980-1981', repeated the need to produce adequate food supplies for export as well as home consumption. It stated the government's intention to utilise, 'the private small-scale producers, the private commercial or corporate farms, and the parastatal organisations' (1981:3) It is difficult, however, to see any clearly thought out schemes through which the objectives were to be obtained. After a couple of years it was clear that these policies were not having any impact, and in December 1981 the government was overthrown in a coup in which Rawlings came to power with the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC).

Frequent changes in government which have marked Ghana's post colonial years have certainly caused major problems in the agricultural sector. Change is likely to increase incoherence and encourage stagnation rather than development, through problems of coordination and a lack of organisation. As Jonah notes, with reference to the period between 1970 and 1982, 'The weakness of the state was apparent in many different ways..state institutions..had simply lost their power of effective operation..the state was also no longer capable of reaching its citizens and institutions in terms of the delivery of services hitherto considered to be the responsibility of the state.'<1989:26). In this period there were six changes of government with four of those forceable changes by the military. Not suprisingly, therefore, it has been difficult for the agricultural sector as a whole to respond significantly on a sustained basis. As a result of such rapid change agricultural initiatives have tended to be designed by the various regimes as responses to specific situations - Operation Feed Yourself (1972) and Operation Green Revolution (1982) for example.

CURRENT APPROACHES

The Agrarian Reform Policy of the present government is trying to work against what it feels was an historical bias against agriculture. Its more populist approach is

trying to replace 'lip service' on the importance of agriculture, with adequate funding, better pricing policies and infusing of life into rural areas through the provision of basic amenities' (Ministry Of Agriculture 1987b:5). Whether they are succeeding is a different matter. The rhetoric of populist policy measures that include the whole population in their plans is ideologically sound, but governments often find themselves unable to fulfil their promises, however well intentioned.

According to a Ministry of Agriculture report in 1987, agriculture, including forestry, would normally account for about 57% of the GDP, close to 80% of its merchandise exports, and would normally employ 55% of the national labour force. However, since the mid 1970's the production of most crops, and in particular cocoa, has declined progressively. The Ministry of Agriculture cites the major reasons for this decline within the Ghanaian economy as inadequate producer prices and incentives, the lack of organisation and mismanagement of the regional ministry offices and state owned industries associated with agriculture, and inadequate communication between research centres and extension services over a long period. As Dapaah points out, 'Under public sector management, input distribution grew increasingly inefficient. In addition, agricultural producers had to contend as well with deteriorating economic incentive structures as agriculture (especially the agricultural

crop sector) became heavily taxed.' (1987:3). He goes on to say that in 1983 cocoa farmers received only 21% in real terms of the producer prices that they had received in 1970, and that producers responded by either reducing their acreage or by smuggling cocoa into neighbouring countries (2). In 1985 Ghanaians paid very high prices for many basic staples, and the domestic prices of rice, maize and oil palm were 162%, 144% and 162% above international prices (Dapaah 1987). This was obviously good for producers and very hard on consumers.

The problems in the agricultural economy reflected the general collapse in the Ghanaian economy as a whole. GDP had dropped by 0.5% per annum between 1970 and 1982. Real per capita income fell by 30%, import volume by 65%, and real export earnings by 52%. The consumer price index increased by 80% per annum between 1975 and 1982 and by 122% in 1983 (Ministry of Agriculture Report 1986). This dramatic decline led the government to take measures to promote fundamental economic reform.

In April 1983 the PNDC agreed to the stabilisation programme with the IMF and the World Bank supported by a Structural Adjustment Loan. Since 1983 Adjustment Policies initiated by the government with respect to agricultural production have been firstly, the progressive adjustment of exchange rates, and an increase in producer prices and incentives to rehabilitate the cocoa economy;

secondly the elimination of price controls, including the increase in the price of imported maize, rice and sugar to the same level as domestically produced crops; thirdly there have been large cuts in government expenditure, and a reorganisation of public agricultural institutions; and fourthly there is the ongoing rehabilitation of other key sectors of the economy, such as gold, timber and mining, and the infrastructure of transport and communications, which will eventually have an effect on rural people.

Specific aims of the agricultural sector under the Economic Recovery Programme are to ensure self-sufficiency in food crops, and crops that are used as agricultural raw materials such as oil palm and cotton; to maintain a buffer stock of grains for price stabilisation and food security (this applies more specifically to the north where there is more likely to be shortfall), and to reduce post-harvest crop losses by at least 50% by facilitating storage and processing. The government also wants to increase the output of what it calls non-traditional crops, such as pineapples, ginger and fresh vegetables, and also livestock and fisheries. Improving the organisation of the Ministry of Agriculture is a further priority. This includes decentralisation of its activities and improving and expanding research centres and credit and marketing facilities. And it means ensuring returns to farmers, distributors and processors that are high enough to increase productivity (MOA 1986).

According to the Ministry of Agriculture recent figures show that the economy has begun to respond. Agricultural output grew by 10% in 1984 (although this was helped by good rains) and accounted for 57% of the GDP, and in 1985 a further increase of another 4% was recorded. An MOA report of 1986 emphasises,

'that the Government regards the development of a comprehensive and well coordinated food and agricultural policy as a necessary but not sufficient condition for ensuring the attainment of the agricultural objectives under the Economic Recovery Programme (1986-1988). This is due to the fact that in spite of its dominance, the agricultural sector depends heavily on the efficient and smooth running of the other sectors and institutions in the economy to obtain its full potential.' (1986:5).

With this in mind the government wants to phase out what it sees as too great a reliance on direct government intervention in the agricultural economy, and replace this with joint government and private enterprises or wholly private schemes (MOA 1986). MOA reports argue that the government will provide adequate incentives for efficient use of resources in production, marketing and processing by giving farmers and private firms protection and investment incentives within a mixed economy system (MOA 1987).

The main points of the government's agricultural policy are to provide adequate levels of income to 'efficient' farmers, fishermen, processors and distributors, to ensure a good diet for all Ghanaians, and to develop and expand

Ghana's agricultural trade and export market. According to the MOA infrastructure is one of the most important needs in rural areas. While this is undoubtedly true and the provision of adequate roads, water, electricity and a good transport system are important priorities here, the provision of a more regionally based and effective agricultural administration linked to the MOA cannot be overlooked. The provision of information and assistance is one of the main needs of small scale farmers through an effective extension service. While the MOA may recognise this need their policies seem ineffective in trying to address it.

THE PROVISION OF REGIONAL GOVERNMENT INPUTS AND EXTENSION SERVICES.

One of the changes the PNDC is trying to implement with its policy of reforms under the ERP is the decentralisation of government offices. Over the years most of Ghana's governments have recognised the need to do this but few have taken any concrete action. By the end of 1987 the Accra region had 28% of the Civil Service but less than 12% of the population (Jonah 1987). Many observations have been made about the nature of the Ghanaian beauracracy, and in 1975 Woode argued that, 'The conduct of public administration and affairs in Ghana is characterised by a displaced sense of purpose, an urban bias, an elite mentality, nepotism, distrust, paternalism,

disregard for time, and an absence of organisational loyalty.' (1975:35) Little has really changed in the intervening years, as there has been no incentive for overstuffed offices and underpaid workers to rationalise their work. However, since the ERP has been brought into effect, about 15% of the Civil Service have been made redundant or redeployed (World Bank 1987). This has also happened in rural areas where labourers and some office staff in cocoa offices and on government plantations have been made redundant. However, the rural areas are a very different case from those of central government, and the balancing of staffing levels does not appear to be in line with present needs. The extension services in district centres still appear to have more administrators than are needed, while having far too few extension officers to work in the villages. Moreover, these few extension officers are ill-equipped.

The MOA is the principal agency for agricultural extension which is undertaken by its Agricultural Extension and Crop Services Divisions. Other extension services are provided by agencies such as the Grains Development Board, and development projects such as VORADEP (in the Volta Region), an agricultural development project supported by the World Bank and IFAD. CIDA, the Canadian government aid organisation, assists the Ghana Grains Development Project in the Ashanti Region developing improved technology for maize and cowpea production, and other

research and development links. According to the World Bank the number of MOA staff involved in extension is around 2500 in the whole country. They are responsible for managing and distributing inputs (providing seeds and seedlings, farm tools, fertilizers and pest sprays), collecting cash from sales of this produce, collecting rainfall records and crop prices, undertaking market surveys and farm visits, and establishing field demonstration plots. Recently the responsibilities for the supply of non-fertilizer chemical inputs has been given to private traders, but MOA staff are supposed to supervise the distribution of these chemicals. In addition to the CSD which carries out crop extension, other MOA departments operating in rural areas are Veterinary, Animal Husbandry, Farm Mechanisation, Plant Quarantine and Fisheries. The government also operate a Food Distribution Corporation. This gives a guaranteed minimum price for some crops that allows a 20% margin of profit for farmers (Dapaah 1987 pers. comm.). The economy works in a free market way, but if a farmer cannot find a buyer (which is very unlikely) he or she can sell to the FDC at guaranteed prices. The extension services for cocoa are provided by COCOBOD'S Cocoa Services Division. This service has more than 12,000 staff but is in the process of being restructured to about 1,000 in the first instance under the Cocoa Rehabilitation Project as part of the ERP.

The extension services have access to seedlings for cocoa and oil palm that are improved varieties. Cocoa hybrid seedlings are available from COCOBOD, but reports indicate that uptake by farmers depends primarily on the cocoa price (World Bank 1987). Improved oil palm seedlings are available from the Oil Palm Research Centre (OPRC) which is supported by the IDA and MOA, and there is a high demand for these according to Ministry of Agriculture reports (1986,1987). New varieties of maize have been developed by CIDA that can be obtained through the extension services, and demonstration plots are set up by MOA extension staff. Major factors affecting the uptake of maize are whether farmers are convinced by the significant improvement in yield from traditional varieties, and adequate crop prices and seed supplies. For rice and vegetables improved varieties and practices have been developed but these have yet to be widely distributed (World Bank 1987).

The present government has pledged its support to small-scale farmers to improve their efficiency and to become competitive in the world market. High yielding crops and the incentives to plant these are seen as the answer, rather than increasing acreage. This makes sense if the extension services can reach these farmers, since most of them certainly do not have the labour or capital to expand the area they farm, and some of them do not have the land. Higher yielding varieties are much more efficient.

Reasonable returns for these crops are seen as very important incentives by the government, and one of the most fundamental ways in which the economy can be affected at a 'grass roots' level, For non-industrial crops over which there is no price control, the government has to increase returns through raising yields, since eventually it wants to bring down the price of these crops in line with world prices. However, for crops like cocoa, over which the government has price controls, increases in price incentives are planned.

This policy may be effective in the government's long term aim to increase cocoa production, but means that other aspects of the agricultural economy are ignored. As Smith points out, under ERP

'.. the structure of incentives within agriculture has shifted in favour of export producers..In particular, the kinds of commodities consumed by the lower income groups, such as cassava and other traditional crops, need greater attention than in the past to upgrade productivity levels' (1987:35)

It is true that if the government helps cocoa farmers whole families and communities may benefit indirectly from the income that cocoa brings, but it must also be considered that the major beneficiaries are those who are already thriving. Many of the government's agricultural policies favour those who have greater access to the means of production, and these individuals are more often men than women. In Antoakrom there are a large number of

female headed households, and unless these women have enough labour and capital at their disposal they are not in a position to benefit from proposed policy measures in the agricultural economy.

At the same time as it seeks to raise the levels of harvested cocoa the government is seeking to encourage 'multiple uses' of agricultural produce to increase production and demand by utilising locally produced grains, for example, in bread making and brewing beer (MOA 1986). These policies are likely to have an effect on women's income, although the women who use these products may not always be the ones to grow them and may find it difficult to buy them.

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION ON AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT AND PREDICTIONS FOR GROWTH

The MOA depends on regional estimates for its information and policy planning. These are compiled by the extension services. Although the reports of extension workers could be said to be very approximate estimates, considering the constraints under which they work, they are as accurate as possible. The following tables, adapted from MOA documents give an indication at an aggregate scale of recent yields of food and cocoa in Ghana, and the returns to farmers, and the projections of supply and demand by the MOA.

TABLE 9.1 Production of food crops in Ghana - general trends

(in thousand metric tonnes)

CROP	Maize	Rice	Cassava	Cocoyam	Yam	Plantain
YEAR						
1975	343.4	71.1	2398.0	1099.4	709.2	1245.7
1976	286.4	69.8	1818.9	773.3	574	1255.6
1977	274	109	1811	722	535	927
1978	218	109	1895	726	544	940
1979	380	93	1759	794	602	817
1980	382	78	2322	643	650	734
1981	378	97	2065	631	591	829
1982	346	36	2470	628	588	748
1983	172	40	1729	613	354	342
1984	574	76	4083	600	425	760
1985	411	90	3076	580.3	485.4	676.5
1986	495	80	3040	-	660	-
1987	553	81	2943	1000	1001	1005

Source: MOA 1988

TABLE 9.2 Projected growth rates for agriculture - (1988-1991)

(in thousand metric tonnes)

YEAR	1987	1988		1989		1990		1991	
	base year	p p	g r	p p	g r	p p	g r	p p	g r
Maize	553	581	5%	605	4%	625	3%	640	2.5%
Rice	81	88	9%	92	5%	96	3%	99	3%
Cassava	2943	3100	5%	3300	6%	3400	3%	3502	3%
Yam	1001	1060	6%	1102	4%	1157	5%	1215	5%
Plantain	1005	1106	10%	1200	8%	1248	4%	1285	3%
Cocoyam	1000	1100	10%	1155	5%	1185	3%	1232	4%
Oil Palm	51	55	8%	58	5%	60	4%	64	6%
Others	130	138	6%	143	3%	150	5%	224	5%
Food sectors Contribution to overall agric growth			4.1%		3.2%		2%		2.3%

p p is projected production
g r is growth rate

Source: M.O.A 1987

TABLE 9.3 Demand Projection for food crops 1983 - 1990

(in thousand metric tonnes)

CROP	Maize	Rice	Cassava	Yam	Plantain
YEAR					
1983	524	127	1,816	776	2,266
1984	547	133	1,875	803	2,339
1985	571	140	1,932	832	2,410
1986	595	146	1,993	861	2,487
1987	620	154	2,007	891	2,525
1988	646	162	2,067	922	2,580
1989	674	169	2,128	955	2,656
1990	702	178	2,191	989	2,753

Source: MOA 1987

TABLE 9.4 Indicators of surplus production to need in Ashanti Region for 1987

(in thousand metric tonnes)

Net domestic production*	Population 000 persons	Per capita consumption	Human consumption need	Surplus production over need
MAIZE				
60.5	2,257	26	58.7	+1.8
CASSAVA				
448.0	"	167.4	377.8	+70.2

* After allowing 30% for planting and wastage from gross biological production

These crops were the only figures available from the MOA relevant to Ashanti Region

Source: MOA 1988

TABLE 9.5 Cocoa and food price indices

(1963 - 100)

	1970	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981
Cocoa	133	267	333	607	1,215	1,822	2,186	2,915
Maize	177	378	562	1,799	1,835	2,502	6,275	15,152
Cassava	155	441	938	2,378	2,216	2,534	5,535	11,200
Plantain	140	379	772	2,303	3,574	3,823	5,610	6,923
Cocoyam	207	548	1,045	2,725	3,277	4,055	6,519	14,135
Palm Oil	144	471	690	1,210	2,810	3,468	5,120	-

Source: MOA 1986

TABLE 9.6 Trends in producer prices of cocoa and competitive crops

Year	Cocoa c/headload	Maize c/220lbs	Cassava c/200lbs	Plantain c/bunch
1960/61-64/65	5.4	8.6	2.5	0.4
1965/66-69/70	7.0	8.3	3.7	0.5
1970/71-71/72	8.0	14.6	4.5	0.8
1972/73	9.2	18.4	6.0	1.1
1973/74	10.5/12.0	20.0	7.2	1.1
1974/75	15.0	24.9	11.0	1.5
1975/76	16.0	53.1	20.7	2.8
1976/77	20.0	99.0	65.0	5.0
% Increase				
60/65-75/76	200%	520%	730%	600%
60/65-76/77	270%	1050%	2500%	1150%

Adapted from Konings (1986:120)

These tables indicate that there has been growth in production over the last few years. Although Ashanti is only one of 10 regions, and Amansie West a part of that, Table 9.1 gives a general idea of the trends over the whole of Ghana, and provides an indication of the way in which the economy fluctuates over time. Since the late 1970s, the production of most crops has increased (although there is still shortfall in production over the country as a whole). The increase is most noticeable for maize and cassava, two crops that people in Antoakrom told me they had been producing more of in recent years. Cassava as a crop that is now widely used, which in the past was only used as an emergency crop, and maize that is more frequently grown as a cash crop, using improved varieties if they are available. Table 9.2 shows that for the staple food crops in the table there is a reasonably steady increase in production projected over the five year period, with oil palm having the most substantial increase. This again may be generally indicative of the increase in the numbers planting oil palm in areas like Antoakrom, although figures for Ashanti would be more convincing. Tables 9.3 and 9.4 show the projected demand for staple crops and the fact that Ashanti region is meeting those needs in the crops on which there are available figures. There is a shortfall in most crops country wide (compare Tables 9.1 and 9.3), but Ashanti and Bekwai District (as it was then) have reached some of their targets. Tables 9.5 and 9.6 show

the relative prices of cocoa and other food crops and indicate very clearly the value of growing food crops over cocoa during the last 20 years. The market prices of competitive crops have increased dramatically over this period. Table 9.5 shows that over the eleven year period between 1970 and 1981, the price increase of cocoa was only 1/5 of that of maize and cocoyam, 1/4 that of cassava, and 1/2 that of plantain and palm oil. Table 9.6 also illustrates the relative stagnation in the price of cocoa relative to the price of food crops. While the producer price of cocoa has only increased by 2.7 times in the period of 1960-1977, maize had increased 10.5 times, cassava 25 times and plantain 11.5 times. This brings the argument back to the key question as to why more people did not change their cropping strategies. This thesis has attempted to answer this question by showing how differential access to resources allows men greater opportunity including the possibility of altering their cropping strategies in response to these changes in the market. I now want to explore this question more specifically at the local level in Antoakrom to see if the economy reflects government policy and government figures.

LOCAL EXTENSION SERVICES AND THE EFFECT OF GOVERNMENT POLICY

Although the government is in the process of decentralising its Ministries, the MOA is still highly centralised (World Bank 1987). The headquarters in Accra

decide on policy, formulate programmes and decide on the budgets for all ten regions. As a result of this the regional and district offices have no real autonomy, and this is quite apparent in Amansie West. Even with this centralised administration the 'management information system' in Accra is almost non-existent (World Bank 1987), and so if the regional and district offices apply to head office for what they need their requests are likely to take so long that, if they are ever dealt with, they are out of date by the time they receive attention. The Extension Officer in Antoakrom has been waiting for a motorbike (with which all MOA extension officers are supposed to be equipped) for five years (3).

Upgrading the extension services is one of the main areas in which the MOA plans to expand its work and the Bekwai agricultural extension service underwent a change in the organisation of its offices 1987. Within the Department of Agriculture the extension service was divided into Crop Production and Extension as separate offices. Before that time there had been a Chief Agricultural Extension Officer who controlled the MOA offices. After the reshuffle he remained in control of extension, distributing materials, and giving advice to farmers about their planting methods, while a District Agricultural Officer took control of Crop Services propagating seedlings and giving more specific advice about which varieties of crops to use. The Crop Services Division has a nursery at Aniankwanta, near to

Bekwai, in which they grow oil palm, kola, and citrus to sell to farmers. The farmers whom I asked about extension services, however, complained (if they knew about the nursery at all) that the seedlings and seeds should be sold on a credit basis since the prices were prohibitive. Other inputs like spraying machines are even less affordable. At the present time the MOA has one agricultural extension officer for every 5000 farmers nationwide. The Extension Office has twelve officers in what was the Bekwai District, each officer is responsible for an area of approximately 125 square miles, and most of them are without transport of any kind. They have low salaries, around ₦10,000 a month (1988), and are rarely paid the travel allowance that they also qualify for. It is therefore extremely difficult for them to realise the government's aims of outreach to farmers. Farm visits for example are impossible in all but the nearest farms to the village in which the extension officer lives (Chief Agricultural Extension Officer, Bekwai: pers. comm.).

There are many problems that extension staff face other than low salaries and inadequate transportation. Although the government plans change and development it does not provide the resources or particularly clear guidelines about how its policies should be implemented. The extension staff complain that there is no specific role for them, that it is difficult to impose ideas on farmers who do not have the time or the resources to listen. The

extension officers themselves recognise the limited resources many farmers have, and are fully aware that what they do only targets a few farmers who can afford change and innovation. Extension staff also complain that there is no material back-up provided for the advice that they are able to give (seeds or fertilizers may be unavailable). Further to this there is little in-service training and no technical literature for them to refer to, and there are also no formal programmes of work.

The Extension Officer in Antoakrom is typical of many in the kinds of problems he faces every day. He can not even afford to go into Bekwai to pick up the resources farmers request, or to receive instruction from his District Office. He is very well educated and complains bitterly about his training and expertise going to waste and not being fully recognised. There is no serious evaluation of his work, and in twelve years as an Extension Officer he has never been promoted. He feels that he is being overlooked and underused. His education merits this frustration. He went to primary school in his own village, but then when his older brothers went to Accra he went with them, and they paid for his secondary school education. He took 'O' levels in Form 5 in 1972, and then applied to Kwadaso Agricultural College where he went in 1973. He spent three years there, taking both practical and written courses. He graduated in 1976 and was appointed to the Extension Service in the Ministry of

Agriculture. He started off working in Manso Mim, but was transferred to to Bekwai District, where his home village is located, in 1986.

Without resources and little incentive to help local farmers, and with such a low salary, he spends a lot of his time farming for himself. His own village is about 20 miles from Antoakrom, and so as an Asante stranger he borrows land from farmers in Antoakrom to grow food crops to consume and sell. He monocrops maize, and is also planting cowpeas and beans. He is also in the process of negotiating with the Pakyihene for land on which to plant oil palm. His wife, who lives with him in Antoakrom, works on his maize farm, but also plants cassava and plantain and cocoyam on other land which he borrows. He says that he could not live without this extra income, which he says makes up the major part of his earnings. The World Bank (1987) actually estimates that staff at all levels in the MOA earn no more than 10% of their total income from their MOA employment, and argue that both effectiveness and morale of their staff suffer as a result. This is obviously true in this man's case, since he spends little time performing the job that he enjoys and was originally trained to do.

Problems identified by the District Extension Officer in Bekwai reflect the problems and constraints felt by the village Extension Officers. They are summarised in annual

reports, that always raise the same issues. Lack of transport and the high farmer to extension staff ratio is a constant problem, as is a lack of supplies and delay in the supply of materials the government promises, such as improved seeds, fertilizers and demonstration materials. Facilities in the offices in Bekwai are cited as inadequate, as is staff housing which the Ministry has an obligation to provide. For the farmers themselves the local MOA argues the need for more improved planting materials, since when these do arrive the amount is always inadequate. There is also a lack of storage and distribution centres for these materials, and those that are available are too centralised, even in Bekwai, for many of the farmers in outlying regions. There are also insufficient storage facilities for harvested crops in rural areas, for maize, citrus and tomatoes for example.

An insufficient number of nurseries is also recognised, especially ones that are in close proximity to growing areas (as in the case of Aniankwanta). Markets are also seen as a problem, with inadequate facilities, which are hampered by communication and transport facilities in most production areas, in the form of bad roads and insufficient transport. Lack of credit facilities is a prohibitive problem for most farmers, especially women. As was discussed in Chapter 7, the government's policy of making loans available to farmers through the Agricultural Development Bank is not working effectively, since

measures to ensure repayment mean that many people are not eligible for these loans, and the money goes to those who already have sufficient capital or collateral, mostly men. It is not feasible for really small scale farmers to expand production under these conditions.

The problems seem to relate directly to the gap between policy and practice, most of which derive from a restricted budget. The materials the district MOA office needs for its workers, and to provide for local farmers, could be made available with greater financial resources. Were regions to have control over their own budgets, the situation might be alleviated, but even with decentralisation the allocation of funds is not ideal. More money seems to be needed throughout the Ministry of Agriculture, and careful allocation at the regional level may not be sufficient. While the government argues for the provision of incentives to farmers and private enterprise, and may do this through a general liberalisation of the economy, as yet it has not provided the necessary materials in the form of capital and technology.

The district office of the MOA in Bekwai identifies the same incentives for production as the central offices in Accra. It provides recommendations for solving the problems that are also recognised by central government - improving transportation so that farmers can market produce more easily, improved loan schemes, increasing in

the number of field staff and so on. These are needs that may increase interest in higher yields by improving production techniques and thus come closer to reaching the governments targets for self-sufficiency, and the provision of a good diet for all Ghanaians. Increasing yields will also bring increased export possibilities in certain areas. These are the three main concerns of the present governments agricultural policy. One of the points raised earlier has a significance here, because in spite of these seemingly insurmountable problems farmers in Amansie West District work within these constraints and around them to produce the food they need for household consumption and sale. The Annual Survey of Agriculture (MOA:1987) suggests that 86% of farms in Ashanti Region are cultivated mainly for subsistence, but doubt can be cast on this figure. Certainly in Antoakrom and surrounding villages the figure is much lower. I would go so far as to say that the figure could be reversed, and it could rather be noted that 86% of farmers market a substantial proportion of their output. Few farmers in Antoakrom worked on a subsistence basis alone.

Access to development initiatives

Gender differentiation in access to land, labour and capital has been discussed in earlier chapters; this kind of differentiation is also apparent in access to the extension services, and is an issue that is not dealt

with in any MOA literature. While attention is given to small scale units of production, and there is some appreciation of the problems these farmers face in the production and marketing of their crops, no mention is made of women in particular, and they remain an undifferentiated category. The government is convinced that with the right incentives and inputs small scale farmers will be able to produce more and expand their farming enterprises, but for many women and also for some men this is not the case. While the opportunity and incentives may be there, restricted access to labour or capital may prohibit some farmers from developing their farms, as this thesis has tried to show. While extension services are supposedly directed at all farmers, it is common that the help they give is not targeted at those who need it most, but to those who ask for it and can afford to utilise the advice given, rarely women.

Of the many women that I discussed the extension services with in Antoakrom, only two had received any help or advice from the Ministry of Agriculture or from the local extension officer, and none of the others were really aware of the kind of help available. The only help they cited was that of the Cocoa Services Division; they knew that it was possible to acquire seedlings, insecticide and sprays for disease and pest control. As far as food crops were concerned some knew there was an office in Bexwai and a nursery at Aniankwanta, but had not ever used these

services or knew what they really involved. Those who did know about the extension service, and had benefited from the advice of the the local extension officer were the wealthier male farmers, and the two women, mentioned in earlier chapters who had other businesses and were farming largely for sale. In the 1991 survey the percentages of those who had received help from the extension services showed a similar picture. Of the men who were interviewed 49% had received some sort of assistance, compared to only 4% of women; and no women had actually consulted the extension services of their own accord, compared to 50% of men.

Two particular extension initiatives that have reached some farmers in Antoakrom and surrounding villages are both the work of outside donor agencies. These aid programmes have been given in support of the Economic Recovery Programme. In 1988 the Sasakawa Global 2000 Project, administed by the MOA, used Antoakrom as one of its test sites. This Project was coordinated as the result of a conference in Geneva in 1985, with the assistance of a Japanese philanthropist, Sasakawa, ex-president Jimmy Carter, and Professor Norman Borlaug. In Ghana the Project started to improve maize and sorghum productivity. It recommended the use of high yielding seeds, fertilizer, and improved planting methods, weeding and storage. The Sasakawa project (known locally as 'Jimmy Carter') aims to target small-scale farmers through the Ministry of

Agriculture. The project set up a revolving fund in Accra and bought fertilizer and improved seeds from the Ghana Grains Development Board to distribute to farmers through the Department of Extension , and the farmer is expected to repay costs in cash or in kind after harvesting, ₵4,100 per farmer. The technology is transferred through the establishing production test plots; each grown by a farmer with supervision from an extension officer. The farmer is supposed to follow the instructions given, and explain the system to 10 other farmers during the growing cycle. Each plot is one acre in size, and to show the potential of this technology the farmer is supposed to cultivate another acre next to the test plot using traditional methods. The Project provides the extension officers with fertilizers and improved seeds to carry out the tests. The maize that was used in Bekwai District was sent to four sub-districts, of which Antoakrom was one, with a view to expansion in subsequent years if the trials proved successful. The expected return is 15-20 bags of shelled maize, unless there is an unforeseen problem such as drought, and it is recommended that the maize ideally be monocropped, although it can be intercropped with cassava.

This project has benefited as many women in Antoakrom as it has men, although by chance rather than design (hence these women were not included in the discussion above). In Antoakrom the project involved 55 farmers being given seed maize and fertilizer, and advice on planting and

caring for the crop by the agricultural extension officer. Of the 55 farmers in Antoakrom 25 were women, a suprisingly large percentage. However, this was primarily because the agricultural extension officer gave out the seed maize to his friends and, as a very committed Christian, his church members. His friends were the local chiefs and wealthy farmers who gave him land and asked his advice, and most of his church members were women.

In a report on the impact of Structural Adjustment, Ewusi (1989) argues that

'The Sasakawa Project has achieved substantial results...The Projects thousands of participating farmers are the clearest testimony of the keen interest that farmers have in adopting higher yeilding production practices, especially where they find the recommended technologies to be appropriate... Global 2000 is not only transferring new technology, but is also providing a means to implement it.' (1989:30-31).

Ewusi sounds very confident about its success, but it is just as likely, in the long term, to suffer from insufficient supplies of fertilizer and seeds, as any other initiative on the part of the MOA. The Project itself does not import the fertilizer and seed maize it uses, but relies on buying its supplies from the government (4).

The second initiative is one supported by Technoserve Incorporated. Technoserve is a private American non-profit making development organisation that was registered in Ghana in 1972, with the aim of improving

the economic and social well-being of low income people. The organisation is dedicated to helping these people start small agricultural enterprises, by providing management, technical assistance and training, with a view to helping them develop their own businesses, increasing productivity and increasing their incomes (5). Before committing itself to a project Technoserve first evaluates its potential for success using the following criteria:

'Each enterprise should have a potential for achieving economic viability, have a potential for improving the social well being of low income people, have a potential for replication, have as broad a base of ownership as is possible and practical, have appropriate local leadership, be labour intensive where technically and economically feasible, use locally available raw materials wherever possible, have adequate local participation in equity investment, be ecologically appropriate to the local environment.' (Technoserve 1988).

One of Technoserve's main principles is that as the project becomes established, it phases out its support until it is withdrawn completely. Technoserve receives much of its support from Churches and Church Organisations, Foundations, Corporations and Individuals. It also receives some support from USAID.

Technoserve established an oil mill cooperative in the area in 1984. This cooperative has 34 members of which 26 are men and only 8 are women, although oil palm is a crop that women are rarely able to grow. There are also four permanent workers, all of whom are men - a 'digester'

operator (the pounder to crush the fruit), a press operator, a supervisor and a security guard. There is a seven member executive committee, of whom two are women, that decides on the membership and management of the oil mill, and holds the funds. Three women and two men have planted oil palm that is not yet bearing, but the other members all have bearing farms. The cooperative has around 600 acres in various stages of growth. Most members who have oil palm go outside to buy more, since those who grow it also process it. The mill is not for the exclusive use of members only, and other people come to use the presses. These are mostly women who buy oil palm from farmers in the area, and bring them to the mill rather than process the fruit by hand.

TABLE 9.7 Use of the mill in May 1988

	Members				Non Members			
	Male Number	Tons	Female Number	Tons	Male Number	Tons	Female Number	Tons
Growers processing own fruit*	6	7.7	-	-	-	-	-	-
Traditional processors using mill#	-	-	2	6.5	-	-	3	3.51
New entrants to processing	3	1.5	2	0.82	-	-	32	13.83
Growers processing both own and purchased fruits	2	3.22	3	5.6	-	-	-	-
Total	11	12.42	7	12.92	-	-	35	17.34

* The men in this category often send their wives to process

These women used to process using traditional methods. Some growers in the cooperative do sell to processors in the mill if they do not want to process the oil themselves and some divert the fruit to market women in Kumasi, although this is not allowed by the cooperative.

Those who joined the cooperative payed a minimum unit share of c5,000 (up to a maximum of c50,000). In the beginning the mill took a 10% share of all the fruits sold to the society, which was added to the share capital to pay off the loan from Technoserve and to meet overheads. Now the milling fee from non members is used instead of the 10%. Those who have shares in the mill receive the profits at the end of the year in proportion to their initial investment. Eventually when the loan has been paid

off these members will own the mill. For those who grow their own fruits, one acre of oil palm yields between 3-5 tons of fruit a year. One ton of fruit makes one drum of oil that sells for ₦24,000-₦25,000. So from an acre of oil palm it should be possible to make between ₦75,000-₦125,000 per annum (although this is obviously not clear profit). For those who process what they buy, palm fruits cost ₦12,000-₦14,000 a ton (60-80 bunches). It costs each non member processor ₦2025 per ton to press the fruits (₦135 per press, 15 presses per ton). A ton of oil palm costs about ₦16,000 to process including the purchase of the fruit, although this figure can be reduced to about ₦10,000 if the fruit is the processor's own crop (₦10,000 included the overheads of maintaining the farm).

The mill has to operate at fairly cheap rates, and the purchasers ensure themselves regular suppliers as the mill is in competition with three other oil mills in the area, all of whom send out lorries to purchase fruits. Some farmers bring their fruits to sell to processors at the mill, but the processors also go to the farmers. So far the mill appears to be quite successful and is covering its overheads. In the first few months of business, however, the prices the mill was offering to farmers for their fruits was too low, and the other mills in the area bought all the fruit, so the cooperative could not cover its own costs. One of the problems the mill does face, however, is that some of the employees are also farmers,

so they go to farm first and come to the mill to earn an extra income, and the same is true of many of the processors as well. This means that the mill is working nowhere near its full capacity. Another problem the cooperative faces is that because the oil has a high fatty acid content it spoils quickly, and there is no way to store it. The demand for oil is now high, and sale is not difficult at the moment. Members and non members alike sell the oil to women who come from Bekwai and Kumasi markets, and also to secondary schools in the area.

These two initiatives are exceptional in the area around Antoakrom, and were both instigated by outside agencies. The government is obviously trying to set out policies that will enable the agricultural economy to develop, but is failing to implement these at a 'grass roots' level without external intervention of this kind. What the government seems to be attempting with its ERP is a revitalising of the economy after the economic crisis of the 1970s and early 1980s. There are few major changes in agricultural policy, rather what the government seems to be attempting is to stabilise the economy as it once was. It is one thing to try to rejuvenate the economy, but it is quite another to sustain long term growth and development. While farmers around Antoakrom and in Amansie West District are able to work within and around the agricultural economy as it now stands, they are doing this with little government support.

In the research carried out in Antoakrom in 1991 questions were asked in Antoakrom and Nsiana (2 miles west of Antoakrom) about the knowledge people had of government policies and programmes. In particular questions were asked about knowledge of ERP and PAMSCAD (Programme to Mitigate the Social Costs of Adjustment). PAMSCAD is the Government's post-adjustment package to relieve some of the problems caused by adjustment. Table 9.8 shows that few people had even heard of ERP or PAMSCAD, and that women were much less likely to have heard than men

TABLE 9.8 Knowledge of ERP and PAMSCAD in Antoakrom and Nsiana (1991).

	Antoakrom		Nsiana	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Heard ERP	39%	9%	16%	-
Not heard ERP	61%	91%	84%	100%
Heard PAMSCAD	61%	9%	52%	11%
Not heard PAMSCAD	39%	91%	48%	89%

Media coverage is likely to be the only official contact the majority of the population will have with these initiatives, so these figures are hardly surprising in an area where there are no regular deliveries of newspapers (few people can read anyway), and where there is no electricity, so televised coverage of projects related to ERP or PAMSCAD do not get broadcast (6).

One of the specific aims of the government under ERP has been to streamline publicly owned agricultural

enterprises. This has meant making many workers redundant, especially those in the lower grades. This happened in the cocoa offices in Antoakrom in 1987, when 210 staff at the local government cocoa plantation and cocoa offices were made redundant. Of the 210 redeployees, 77 were women. For all of these workers this obviously caused great hardship. Although many of the workers were also farmers, their monthly salary, however small, was a substantial part of their cash income. For women, as has been discussed in Chapter 7, the only way to secure a bank loan was to be a government employee with a monthly salary. So the women who had been redeployed in Antoakrom had not only lost a major part of their monetary income, but also their chance of securing a loan.

In 1991 interviews were conducted with some of those who had been made redundant in Antoakrom to see if their lives had changed as a result. Many of them did not know why they had been made redundant, and were not aware of the government's intentions. One of the women interviewed is a typical example of what had happened to the redeployees. She had been a labourer on the cocoa plantation, and when she was laid off in 1987 she was given two years basic salary as redundancy money. Like many of the redeployees she was forced into the informal sector and started trading cloth. This was causing her some hardship because many of her customers bought on credit and did not pay her what they owed. Her salary had been small, but it was

regular and guaranteed. In 1990, two years after they had been made redundant PAMSCAD offered the redeployees loans to help with farming, or to establish a small business. but after initial meetings were held the redeployees heard nothing else. the same woman voiced the opinions of many of the redeployees when she said, 'We have heard nothing, I do not think the money will come, they [PAMSCAD officials] are just making fun of us.'

Conclusion

The way in which these initiatives are received, if they are received at all, is closely linked to social and economic organisation. While many of the policies outlined above are proving ineffective because of the problems of implementation, many will never make very much difference in Antioakrom anyway. Switching to labour intensive crops when labour may not be available to all, encouraging farmers to use more inputs to increase yield when the money to pay for them is unavailable to most, and expecting farmers to believe in and adopt new strategies when their own methods have been working adequately within the parameters of land, labour and capital available to them and with limited contact with the purveyors of this information is naive at the very least. A blanket approach to the needs of all farmers cannot possibly work in view of the differentiation that occurs in most, if not all, local economies.

In its Statement of Agricultural Policy, 1989-1993, the government recognises many of its shortcomings,

'In spite of the positive initial responses to the policy reforms [under ERP], the country still faces the formidable task of achieving food self sufficiency and realising the considerable potential for agricultural exports. This is because the productivity of the small holder, who accounts for nearly 80% of agricultural production, is very low even compared with the levels achieved in other African countries. The low productivity is largely attributable to limited use of available technology packages, the non-timely delivery of inputs (particularly fertilizer), low availability of credit for purchase of inputs, and weak infrastructure. Government resources are a major limiting factor; budgetary allocations for the mobilisation of extension agents are inadequate, and the importation of fertilizers and the purchase of seed by the Government is almost always delayed due to bureaucratic bottlenecks and the non-availability of cedi funds.' (MOA 1988:1).

This M.O.A. document argues for similar reforms as previous agricultural policy documents, and its prescriptions for action are the same as before. Prospects for change do not appear great, and statements such as this beg the question as to how the next few years will be any different from those that have just passed.

NOTES

1. Under the system of decentralisation a new agricultural district has now been set up in Amansie West. The extension officer in Antoakrom now works for this department, although the District Officer in charge of Amansie West has not yet stationed himself in Manso Nkwanta. He prefers to work from Bekwai as all the stores for the MOA are located there, and there is a lack of facilities in Manso Nkwanta. Communication with Kumasi (and his home town) are also much better.
2. In Antoakrom evidence suggests that the response was the former, since people were too far from borders to smuggle.
3. He finally received the motorbike in 1990 - 8 years after his first application.
4. On my return to Antoakrom in 1990 I asked the extension officer about the success of this project, and he said that it was failing. Farmers were not paying off their loans, and few new farmers were taking up the chance to plant this maize. The reason he cited for this was that farmers preferred to plant local maize than this improved variety. They said that they could not sell this maize as easily as local types of maize because the flavour was different, and those that they usually supplied did not want to buy it.
5. I have heard doubts cast over the ideologies and methods of this organisation, but this particular project seemed to be operating very well, and was well used and managed by farmers living in the area.
6. Many people felt the effects of these initiatives, as will be shown, but did not always realise that what happened to them was as a result of an ERP or PAMSCAD initiative.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has set out to explain the farming system in Antoakrom as I found it in the late 1980s. It has examined the organisation of the farming economy in Antoakrom in order to discover the most significant factors that shape the choices farmers make in their cropping strategies. I have attempted to do this by looking at influences on farming patterns that are both external and internal to the local economy, since there are many different explanations for cropping strategies given in the literature on farming economies. Moreover, it seemed important to look at external as well as internal influences on the farm economy in the light of the changes that have taken place in the 'macro' economy in Ghana over the last 20 or 30 years - in particular the decline in the cocoa economy that had previously been so important in Antoakrom and the surrounding area.

The literature cited in the introduction presents views that look at the organisation of the farming system from opposite ends of the spectrum. There are studies such as those of Chibnick (1978), Hart (1982) and Lipton (1982), that emphasize the role of government intervention and political change in influencing and shaping the farming

system, and there are studies such as those of Guyer (1980, 1981a, 1981b, 1984a, 1984b), Vellenga (1977) and Mikell (1984, 1986), that look at the social organisation of the local economy to explain farming strategies,

What I have shown in my analysis is that those explanations that look at external factors are limited as interpretations of change or development. Although some of them go some way towards recognising the effect that differential access to resources may have, they do not really address this issue. In this respect it is not what they say, but rather what they leave out of their analysis that is of importance. For example, while Lipton looks at urban/rural bias and the problems of redistributing technology and other resources to the rural poor, he does not discuss differentiation in the local economy that might affect uptake of these measures. Likewise Chibnick, in looking at the value of 'subsistence' production and the effect of market price as an incentive, does not consider other factors that may influence a farmer's decision about what he or she grows. In much of this literature there is an implicit assumption that a certain stimulus or a particular policy measure will promote a particular response from all farmers. However, as my own data clearly show this is not the case. While my evidence has shown that there have been shifts in patterns of production as a response to the drop in the price of cocoa, these shifts have been restricted to

certain members of the population. As was stated in the introduction, while opportunities for diversification or expansion may arise, many individuals are not in a position to take advantage of them.

While I do not dismiss the effect that government policy has on farming strategies, it appears that it is the negative rather than the positive impact of these policies which reaches the farming community. For example, the slump in the demand for and price of cocoa obviously had a detrimental effect on all farmers - and trying to work around this has been impossible for many. Policy measures to relieve this situation (including those under ERP) have had few positive effects at the grass roots level. For example, price incentives are not what they seem in an economy where inflation is rampant, and specific policies designed to target disadvantaged groups in the population are haphazard in their dissemination to say the least (Chapter 9).

The argument developed in this thesis is that factors internal to the local economy are much more important in explaining the response of individual farmers to stagnation or the opportunity for change. In particular, I have emphasised the importance of gender and stranger/local status. In this period of macro economic crisis and political upheaval, that was outlined in Chapters 2 and 9, the social and economic structures that give access to

resources have remained in place, largely unaltered within the local economy. This means that for men and women there has been little change in the overall control of these resources and this has had a marked effect on their response to the 'macro' economy.

The studies of Vellenga, Guyer and Mikell, for example, all support and reinforce the data I collected. In her work in Brong Ahafo, Vellenga emphasises the problems in the acquisition of labour that women face as an explanation of their farming strategies. Mikell, working in the same area, looks at the problems women have, in spite of the matrilineal system, in their access to land and other property and the effect this has on their status. She argues that women are being squeezed out of the cash crop economy. In most of her work Guyer examines the position of women in the farming economy, and pays particular attention to the division of labour by sex.

In this thesis I have sought to explain the farming system in terms of access to resources and, as has been shown in Chapters 4 to 8, understanding gender divisions in the access to the resources of land, labour and capital is fundamental to understanding the farming system. Although male and female farming systems do not appear to be fundamentally different in terms of the crops they grow, patterns of production are limited for women to a greater

extent than they are for men because of their control over these resources.

The empirical data in Chapter 4 show very clearly that men farm more plots than women, and that their individual plots are larger. I found, for example, that farm plots belonging to men were on average twice as large as those belonging to women. Men also have a greater diversity of crop combinations. While a few women may, for example, grow oil palm and monocrop maize, and an even smaller number grow rice, it is not as common for women to farm these crops as it is for men. Although many women do have cocoa farms, and are now planting cocoa, their plots are much smaller than those of male farmers, and not necessarily as well maintained.

The subsequent chapters on land, labour and capital explain farming strategies in terms of gender differentiation in access to these resources. Chapter 5 shows that, in spite of local rhetoric, acquisition and rights to land favour men rather than women. Men, for example, appear to have a greater range of possible choices in their access to land than women. Figure 5.1 showed that women use fewer different means for acquiring land, and do not use leased, borrowed or sharecropped land as men do. The discussion of labour use in Chapter 6 also shows a marked division in access between men and women. Men have rights to the labour of their wives and other

household members, while women who are female heads of household are often alone with small children or other women. Men often have a greater cash income with which to hire labour, because of their returns from farming and/or because of their additional business interests outside their farming enterprise. Further to this, as with land, men have a wider variety of methods for the acquisition of labour than women. For example, women do not use *nnobua* arrangements, and women have access to far less household male help, or contract or daily labourers (especially male labourers - who are more expensive than women) (Figures 6.1 to 6.4). It is difficult for female household heads to gain access to adult male labour, and these women often have to rely on good will. The most vulnerable amongst these women are those who are divorced or widowed with young children.

Chapter 7 showed that these women are the most vulnerable in their access to cash income also, with little adult male help and young children to support, there is often no one else to bring money into the household. As with land and labour, women are disadvantaged in their access to money. The female heads in my sample either do not have the time, the initial capital needed to invest in farming or business, or the support from other household members to generate an adequate cash income. Whilst they do use diverse methods to obtain a cash income, their methods are not often as lucrative as their male counterparts'. With

the support of other household members including wives, men's cash income is not always used for immediate consumption, as is most often the case with female heads. As the data from 1988 and 1991 show, men also have more chance of acquiring a formal loan than women, and appear to rely less on expensive informal loan arrangements as women are forced to do.

In this respect wealth and, to a lesser extent, age become factors that occasionally overcome inequalities in gender relations. As has been shown, the few women who do have the cash to spend on their farming activities can gain access to the necessary land and labour to do so. Those farmers, both men and women, who have suffered least in the last 10 to 20 years appear to be those who have already accumulated wealth, and have been able to adapt farming strategies, and those who have suffered most are the poorest who are least able to adapt. Age has also been shown to be significant in as much as most of those in a position to expand or diversify their farming strategies are at least middle aged. They may have already accumulated some wealth, and often have the status to acquire the necessary land and labour.

Marketing is one way that women can make a cash income. For some rural women this involves the sale of 'raw' goods from their farms, while for others this is processed or cooked. Some women try to add to the income they make

from their farms by trading items such as cloth. However, as was highlighted in Chapter 8 this seldom compensates them for the constraints placed upon them in terms of land and labour. Marketing is a means of income generation; but for most women the amount they make from the sale of their goods is used in the day to day needs of their household. As was explained in Chapter 8, this is not only because the amounts they sell are small, from small plots, but also because they do not always have the time to spend marketing and processing foodstuffs. Trading relationships with middle women or in the market place are often good but there are often other constraints that prevent them from doing this.

The points made so far about marketing relate to rural women, but Chapter 8 also considered the differentiation between urban market traders and rural ones. This further highlights the problems rural women face in trying to make money from trading, because their obligations as wives or daughters in the domestic sphere often prevent fuller participation in the market economy. Elson (1993: pers. comm.) highlights the problems that arise when the role that women play in 'social reproduction' (for example cooking and child care) is ignored in models of macro economic change.

If government policy and macro economic factors are to influence the local farm economy in a significant and

positive way, then gender differentiation must be fully understood and taken into account. This point is made in Chapter 9 in looking at state intervention in agriculture. The possible effects of government policy and recent Adjustment programmes were examined at the local level. Evidence from policy documents shows that while the government has come some way towards understanding the problems that the economy is facing, it is having problems putting these into practice. Here gender differentiation is highlighted once more. While implementation is a problem generally at the local level, women benefit less often than men, and have much less knowledge of government initiatives.

Although I have presented this conclusion thus far as if new opportunities for change have emerged over the last 20 years, economic stagnation has meant that people are diversifying their farming strategies in an attempt to maintain their general standard of living. Furthermore, it can be argued that the strategies being pursued by farmers are not fundamental changes but rather adaptations to an ailing economy. It is therefore difficult to predict whether any changes in cropping strategy, particularly with reference to crops such as oil palm, are long-term changes or part of a cyclical process that is a response to periods of growth or collapse in the wider economy. In one sense this thesis is about *limits* to change - many people are 'trapped' within the cocoa

economy, and it is difficult to make the transition to other crops. While there is an obvious need to produce more food as well as export crops in Ghana, and the government is going some way towards trying to facilitate this, the economic history of the area around Antoakrom means that people still see themselves as cocoa farmers. To be seen as a 'successful' farmer it is important to grow cocoa; this is true even for stranger farmers who grow cocoa if they can afford it.

The results from the data show clearly that gender differentiation is the most significant factor in shaping the choices farmers make at the village level in response to changes in the wider economy. However, my evidence also shows that local or stranger status has an important influence on farming strategies. While it is obvious that differentiation based on stranger status is not as marked as differentiation based on gender, it certainly affects cropping strategies. Table 4.12 shows that as a percentage of their total crop strangers farm more rice, staple food crops and oil palm than locals, but less cocoa. Although in some cases the difficulties of acquiring land and labour can be overcome by making cash payments, or more occasionally by entering into some other kind of reciprocal arrangement, stranger status remains significant - especially of course for women. As a stranger woman it is almost impossible to acquire land without an external source of income to pay for this. Few

stranger women are heads of household in Antoakrom, and if they become divorced or widowed most stranger women are forced to leave the land on which their husbands worked, since they have no rights to it. Labour acquisition too is limited for stranger women, since without an adequate income there are few networks of friends or relations to fall back on. Non-Asante women are not expected to farm on their own account and their income generating activities are limited to the sale of cooked food or trading in foodstuffs or other items for sale.

The data presented in this thesis show the importance of understanding the organisation of the social relations of production. This is important if successful attempts are to be made in reshaping or changing the local economy. My evidence shows that diversification of cropping strategies in response either to stagnation or to specific government policies is not possible or practical for all farmers. Much of the theory that was presented in the introduction assumes that adequate measures to enhance productivity such as new cropping strategies, improved varieties and better extension services; and appropriate steps being taken to encourage production such as increasing price incentives, will lead to a more effective and productive agricultural sector that includes all farmers (Hart (1982) and the World Bank (1987) for example). Even those who recognise that some farmers do not have access to the same resources as others, and that this will affect the

influence of these programmes and policies, still see this more in terms of differentiation related to wealth and class than to gender.

While the macro economy inevitably influences the local economy (as Chapters 1 and 9 have shown) it is the structures in place within the local economy which inhibit or promote farming strategies. As has been shown, the price fluctuations of cocoa have caused farmers to minimise risk by shifting their farming strategies if they are able, and the market and urban demand for food crops and agricultural raw materials has created new opportunities, but it is gender relations that ultimately shape farming patterns. There are of course other social and economic conditions already in place that also affect farming strategies. As I have shown, local or stranger status, wealth and age are all significant, and it would be naive to ignore these factors. The use of case study material has shown that individual cases are different enough to illustrate the range of variables that have to be considered in accounting for individual actions. However, explanations of farming strategies that ignore differentiation in general, and gender issues in particular, are of little use when it comes to policy planning.

So often in the literature large or small scale economies are discussed as though they are 'uniform' in structure.

and the assumption is made that all members of a community are farming the same crops using the same resources. Government policies and/or development initiatives are designed with a particular 'model' of a farming economy that may be very far from the 'norm' or truth for many of the individuals within it. While it is inevitable that this will happen to a certain extent, it is of vital importance to look more closely at the grass roots level. In doing this, as I have attempted to do for Antoakrom, it may become apparent that some sections of the population are disadvantaged in some way. Policies may then be seen to be inappropriate.

This thesis has shown the fundamental importance of gender relations (and to a lesser extent other forms of differentiation) in explaining current farming practice, and thus highlights once again the need to deal with women's issues at the local level within the farm economy. As Bryson notes,

'..there is a notable gap between knowledge of the specifics of women's roles and identification of the implications of this information for agricultural transformation and overall development.' (Bryson 1981:29).

In many ways this statement could be used to describe the situation in the rural economy as a whole - and not just the position of women within it - if differentiation is

not taken into account the gulf between policy and practice will remain.

APPENDIX A

MAJOR STAPLES - ENGLISH, TWI AND BOTANICAL NAMES

Cassava	-	Bankyi	-	Manihot esculenta
Cocoa	-	Koko	-	Theobroma cacao
Cocoyam	-	Mankanni	-	Xanthosoma sagittifolium
Maize	-	Aburo	-	Zea mays
Oil Palm	-	Ntomme	-	Elaeis guineensis
Plantain	-	Bodwo	-	Musa paradisiaca
Rice	-	Emo	-	Oryza sativa
Yam	-	Bayere	-	Dioscorea spp.

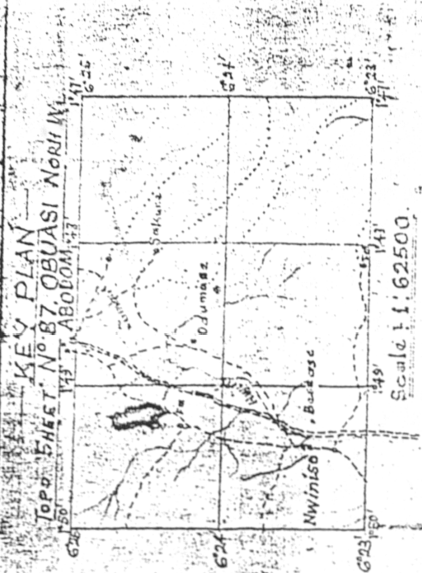
APPENDIX B

TWI GLOSSARY

abunu	sharecropping arrangement (half shares)
abusa	sharecropping arrangement (one third for the sharecropper, two thirds for the owner of the land)
abusua	lineage
afuo	field and fallow (total land owned by a farmer)
akpeteshi	local spirit based alcohol
asamando	spirits of the ancestors
banku	maize balls
eyuo	a type of antelope
fufuo	cassava and plantain/cocoyam pounded together
'grasscutter'	a large rodent
kenkey	maize balls
kokote	a type of bush rat
konkonte	cassava flour
kantomre	a leafy green vegetable
krom	village/town
kusie	a type of bush rat
kyidomhene	'rear guard' chief
nnobua	communal labour group
odekuro	chief
ohoho	stranger
ohema	queen mother
olonka	a measure - 6 x 500g margarine tins
omanhene	paramount chief
otwe	a type of antelope
owansane	a type of antelope
susu	a savings/loan scheme
zongo	part of a village or town where strangers live.

APPENDIX C

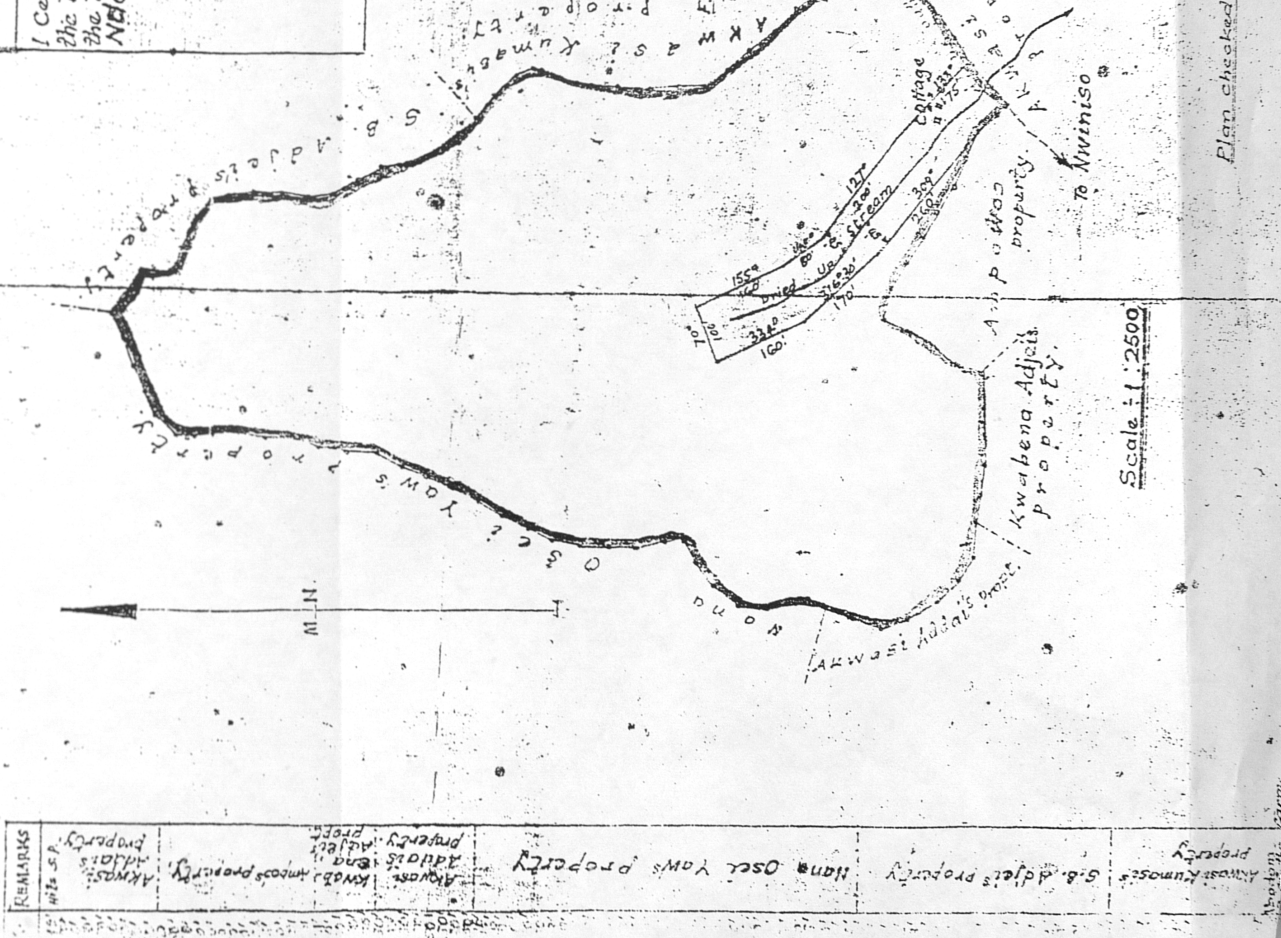
PLAN OF COCOA FARM -
 PROPERTY OF KWAME NDKOKOBA
 SITUATED AT BANDA, ON WIROMPE
 TRAIL LAND. EDGE SHEWN IN PINK
 ACREAGE 20.6



I Certify that PLAN of this cocoa farm
 the boundaries as delineated hereon is
 the bonafide property of Kwame
 NDKOKOBA.

€ Nana Wivrompehene of this District
 Elder No. (1)
 Name: Nana Wivrompehene
 Elder No. (2)
 Name: Wivrompehene (Ingalasi)

This is PLAN Marked 'A' referred
 to in affidavit of Kwame NDKOKOBA
 Sworn before me today
 1987 at _____
 (Commissioner for Ombuds)



Scale: 1:2500

Plan checked & approved by: _____
 Licensee: GARY WOOD

APPENDIX D

Methods Used in Processing

Local Soap Production

To make soap, cocoa pods, plantain skins or the mesocarp of oil palm fruits are burnt. The ash is sieved into water, and boiled. What precipitates when this is cooled is like soda. This is then mixed with a small amount of 'hard' or 'white' oil (this is inferior grade oil - the unclarified second extraction of the palm fruit for example). When these are mixed the result is a brown or whitish substance that is rolled into balls for sale. Local soap lathers very well, and it is said to be good for skin rashes.

Palm Oil

The first day the bunches are collected they are chopped up and left for three days, to loosen the fruits. It then takes one to two days to boil the fruit in water and the oil that comes to the surface is strained off. This is the best quality 'soft' red oil. Once it is soft the fruit is pounded in a mortar and then stirred in hot water. The oil, fibre and water are strained to separate out the fibres. The remaining liquid is boiled until it clarifies. The remaining good quality oil is strained off the top, and inferior quality oil is then taken from the remaining liquid once it has settled, and the 'hard' sediment can be used for soap. Palm oil can be used for cooking and has a very distinctive flavour that is well liked in the area.

Palm Kernel Oil

This is made using the same basic process except that it is extracted by cracking the hard kernel inside the fruit, and using this to produce an oil not unlike coconut oil in taste and appearance. This is used largely for flavouring rice dishes and *kantomre*.

Cassava Starch

Cassava is grated after peeling and washing. It is then mixed with water, and a muslin is used to sieve it. The starch settles and the water is drained, and the starch sediment dried. To use the starch, water is boiled, the starch powder added and clothes wet in the solution.

Konkante

Konkante is cassava flour. Cassava is dried for two or three weeks after washing and peeling. It is then ground into a smooth powder and sieved. To use it is added to

boiling water, and cooked into a kind of dough not unlike mashed potato.

Kenkey

Kenkey is made out of maize flour. The maize is dried, then soaked for three days, and milled. After it is milled it is added to water and fermented for one day and the flour moulded into a dough. At this stage this dough can be used to make *banku* (a kind of cooked dough for eating with fish and hot pepper) by boiling with water and adding a little cassava flour, or it can be made into a porridge. For *kenkey* the uncooked dough is divided into two. One is boiled and cooked, and then the uncooked half is added. The dough is then wrapped in plantain leaves to make Fante *kenkey*, and maize leaves for Ga *kenkey*. And then it is cooked again.

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