

affected by HIV and AIDS, and that the more food-secure households are those in which both genders are involved in diverse agricultural practices, little is known about the gender context of households that are able to cope with the impact and recover from food insecurity.

The text ends with a discussion of HIV and AIDS in relation to other shocks that befall rural livelihoods and calls for a more holistic research approach that integrates disaster literature with AIDS impact studies. This a relevant position for the southern African context, which is still facing an 'entangling crisis' of weakening livelihood strategies in the face of adverse climatic conditions, increasing liberalisation and reduction of State support for rural systems, adverse terms of trade, and weak governance – compounded by the multiple impacts of HIV and AIDS. This publication and the two to follow provide a starting point to begin to unravel and understand the complexities of rural livelihoods and agricultural production in the context of HIV and AIDS.

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HIV/AIDS, Gender and Rural Livelihoods in Sub-Saharan Africa: African Women Leaders in Agriculture and Environment

By *Tanja R Muller*, *AWLAE Series. No. 2, Wageningen Academic Publishers, The Netherlands, 2005.*
ISBN: 9076998493.

This volume is the second in a series of three which aims to provide a resource base on 'crucial issues' to consider in rural development in sub-Saharan Africa today. In this volume, which focuses on gender and rural livelihoods, Tanja Muller sets out to provide a simple and accessible source book for students, researchers and others interested in this important issue. In this she succeeds. This is a slim volume: part 1 offers an excellent overview of the topic in less than 100 pages, while the bibliography is even shorter, so that in the space of a few hours the reader can gain an understanding not only of useful references but also the themes and ideas that are raised by the interface between gender and HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa.

The publication is timely given the heightened awareness of the importance of addressing the rapidly rising incidence of HIV in women and girls in Africa, as well as the particularly gendered challenges of mitigating the impact of the epidemic, including providing treatment and care. It is rather unfortunate that Muller does not devote more attention to the delivery of antiretroviral therapy (this is covered briefly on page 56) because this is a very important area for research and interventions, but all such bibliographies are time-bound and at the time of compilation this body of work had only just begun to emerge.

The book is in two sections, as noted above. The first half provides a overview of HIV/AIDS and gender focusing on: sexuality and power, impact on rural livelihoods, threats to food security, care in the household, orphans and mitigation. Inevitably much of this overview focuses on women, although men and masculinities are mentioned in the discussion on gender relations, which is a frequent theme. A separate section on men's gendered experience, perhaps focusing on different forms of masculinity and livelihood experience, might have been of interest. The second section, the annotated bibliography, groups the references in five sections looking at HIV/AIDS and gender in relation to rural livelihoods, sexuality and power and wider gender issues, then 'other readings' and worldwide web sources.

Part 1, the overview, is structured around the use of a gender constraints framework developed, as Muller acknowledges, by Naila Kabeer and colleagues (1996, 2000), and adapted by Seeley and colleagues (2003, 2004) for use in exploring the gender aspects of HIV/AIDS mitigation. Muller demonstrates the utility of the framework by first introducing how the three different forms of gender constraints, in relation to women and men's productive and reproductive roles, might be conceptualised for rural livelihoods and gender (using examples), before using the framework to structure her discussion of sexuality, power, widowhood, orphans and mitigation. The framework which looks at gender-specific constraints, gender-intensified constraints and gender-imposed constraints, serves to provide a thread which runs through the overview, allowing the reader to grasp the different forms of constraints (and opportunities) that women and men face in making their livelihoods in the time of HIV and AIDS. Muller devotes much of the

discussion on all her themes to the unequal power relations between men and women which fuel the epidemic. One might have welcomed a more structured discussion on the inequities among different types of women and different types of men, looking at age, socio-economic status and ethnicity for example, which structure women's interaction with other women as well as men, and have a profound effect on the lives and livelihoods of people.

Muller has covered an excellent range of material in this short volume. The annotated bibliography is factual, providing simple abstracts on the article/book content. Muller also includes a listing of other relevant material. The organisation of the bibliography might have been more straightforward; an alphabetical ordering, rather than placing under themes, might have made the materials easier to access.

While the style of both overview and bibliographic annotations is simple and easy to read, I did find the use of extended footnotes, sometimes providing information that seems worthy of being incorporated into the text, rather distracting. That said, this is a useful volume, particularly for students and other researchers, which provides easy access into the complex literature on this important area.

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