

**IMPACT OF HIV/AIDS ON HOUSEHOLD FARM LABOUR IN  
RURAL FARMING COMMUNITIES**

by

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## DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo for the degree Masters of Agricultural Management in Agricultural Economics has not previously been submitted by me for the degree at this or any other University, that it is my own work in design and in execution, and all material contained therein has been duly acknowledged.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study is based on a survey of 396 farming households from Mabele; Khubu and Nwahajeni communities. The results show that in general, HIV/AIDS status appears to have a significant negative impact on the number of household members working full time on the farm. An indication that households affected by HIV/AIDS are likely to suffer loss of farm labour due to sick household members who cannot work on the farm.

Generally, information on HIV/AIDS appears to have a significant positive impact on the number of household members working full time on the farm. An indication that households that are well-informed about HIV/AIDS are likely to have higher number of households members working full time on the farm.

The study shows that HIV/AIDS is negatively correlated with household farm income. An indication that the higher the number of household members infected with HIV/AIDS, household farm income is likely to decrease. This may be due to shortage of household farm labour. Farm labour shortage results in the reduction of farming operations and loss of total household farm income.

The study shows that the number of household members working full time on the farm is negatively correlated with difficulty to pay for health care; difficulty to pay for agricultural inputs; and difficulty to save money. An indication that as the number of household members working full time on the farm is reduced, it is likely that households will find it difficult to pay for health care, agricultural inputs and saving money.

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## **Definition of terms used in this dissertation**

In this dissertation unless otherwise specified the following words shall have the meanings:

- i. Communal farmer: a farmer who produces for home consumption. These are subsistence farmers. The communal farmer has no freehold title for the land. The land belongs to government, though the communal farmer has the right to use a piece of land through allocation by traditional local authorities.
- ii. Children: Young persons whose ages range between 1 day to 18years (UNICEF, 1995).
- iii. Household: A household can be defined as the unit of production. The members of a household consist of husband, wife, and children from the same parents and close members of the extended family. The members of a household live under the same roof and usually eat from the same pot. A household with infected member will be defined a household affected by HIV/AIDS.
- iv. Youth: young people whose age's range between 18-30 years.
- v. Head of household: a person who is in charge of the members of a household as defined above.
- vi. Rural institution: institution established to serve interests of rural people. These include farmers groups such as marketing co-operatives, vegetable production schemes.
- vii. Mourning period: the period when relatives, friends and the local community observe a period of respect for the deceased which no activities of an economic nature takes place before and after burial. The period varies between regions and tribal groups.



- viii. AIDS: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. The last and most severe stage of the clinical spectrum of HIV related disease.
- ix. HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus. A retrovirus that damages the human immune system thus permitting opportunistic infections to cause eventually fatal diseases. The casual agent for AIDS.
- x. HIV prevalence: Total number of person with HIV infection alive at any given moment in time.
- xi. Pandemic: A global epidemic.
- xii. Seropositivity: Percentage of population tested positive for infection in a blood test.
- xiii. Morbidity: Diseased or relating to abnormal or disordered condition.
- xiv. Mortality: Death rate. The ratio of number of deaths to the population. In this study, death caused by HIV/AIDS.
- xv. UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund
- xvi. IFAD: International Fund for Agricultural Development
- xvii. UNAIDS: Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS