

Averting 'New Variant Famine' in Southern Africa: building food-secure rural livelihoods with AIDS- affected young people

Research Report

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• Background

Southern Africa is the region worst affected by AIDS, with adult HIV prevalence rates between 2.1% and 26.1% (UNAIDS 2008). In tandem with this pandemic, several countries have experienced recurrent food crises (SADC-FANR 2003). De Waal and Whiteside (2003) hypothesised that this indicates a 'New Variant Famine' (NVF), wherein inability to access food relates more to AIDS than to environmental conditions. The significance of AIDS relative to other factors is disputed (Ellis 2003; Gillespie 2005), but evidence exists that AIDS damages agricultural livelihoods (Gillespie and Kadiyala 2005) and AIDS-affected households proved particularly vulnerable in the 2002 food emergency (SADC-FANR 2003). The urgent need to improve understanding of AIDS' medium-to-long-term impacts has been widely recognised (DFID 2004).

Children and youth are commonly viewed as pandemic victims and burdens on households, with most attention focusing on orphanhood. However, young people are affected in different and complex ways apart from being orphaned, and often make valuable contributions to their households, especially in times of AIDS-related crises (Ansell and van Blerk 2004, Robson *et al* 2006). Numerous reports have linked AIDS' impacts on young people and their long-term food insecurity, through, for instance, orphans' failure to inherit property and resources (Kimario *et al* 2003; Munthali and Ali 2000); inability to retain rights to land which they are too young or inexperienced to farm (Slater and Wiggins 2005; White and Robinson 2000); or interruption of intergenerational knowledge transfer following parental deaths (Hlanze *et al* 2005; Loevinsohn and Gillespie 2003; Mphale *et al* 2002; White and Robinson 2000). Hitherto, however, reports have only addressed isolated aspects of young people's livelihood prospects, and most lack substantive evidence. Impacts of AIDS on young people's attitudes and dispositions remain neglected. This report responds to the clear need to understand better how AIDS affects young people's livelihood participation in varying geographical/livelihood contexts (Pinder 2003).

Theoretically, the research employed the sustainable livelihoods approach (SLA) initially developed by Chambers and Conway (1991) (Appendix 1). A livelihood is said to be sustainable when it has the resilience to survive shocks, including sickness, deaths or environmental disasters. The (agricultural and non-agricultural) livelihood strategies people adopt, which depend on access to a range of assets, determine their resilience (including food security) or vulnerability. Access to assets and opportunities to pursue particular strategies are shaped by structures and processes operating at both micro- and macro-levels. This framework was, however, adapted to take account of three criticisms: 1) relative neglect of macro-level policies and conditions (Arce 2003; Murray 2002; Toner 2003).; 2) neglect of social relations (of, for instance, class, age, gender, kinship and generation) in shaping young people's access to livelihood opportunities (Arce 2003; Blaikie *et al* 1994; de Haan and Zoomers 2005; Murray 2001; Sneddon 2000; Whitehead 2000); and 3) failure to recognise the complexity of decision-making about livelihoods (Arce 2003; de Haan and Zoomers 2005).

• Objectives

The research aimed to generate new, in-depth understanding of how AIDS, in interaction with other factors, is impacting on the livelihood activities, opportunities and choices of young people in rural southern Africa. This was intended to support the development of policies and interventions that enhance AIDS-affected young people's prospects of achieving sustainable, food-secure livelihoods throughout the region. The following objectives remain unchanged from the original proposal:

1. To improve understanding of the ways in which AIDS is impacting on young people's involvement in household livelihood strategies in rural southern Africa

Objective met. See discussion of research questions 1, 2 and 3 below. The report concludes that AIDS is having varied but seldom systematic impacts on young people's livelihood activities.

2. To assess the ways in which wider policy, institutional and economic environments condition the context-specific livelihood opportunities available to AIDS-affected rural young people
Objective met. See question 2 below.
3. To elicit AIDS-affected young people's perspectives on their current situations and future prospects, and to understand how their aspirations and decisions are shaped
Objective met. See question 3 below.
4. To improve understanding of spatial dimensions of rural young people's livelihood responses to AIDS
Objective met. See questions 1-4 below.
5. To generate evidence in relation to the NVF hypothesis, particularly regarding long-term food security implications of the impacts of AIDS on young people
Objective met. See results section below. Evidence suggests that, at the individual level, AIDS is but one of many factors affecting young people's access to livelihoods and choice of livelihood strategies with impacts differing by individual circumstance. It is unlikely to have a systematic impact on long-term food security.
6. To work with young people, development practitioners and policy makers, to develop guidelines for appropriate policy responses and interventions to support AIDS-affected young people in achieving sustainable livelihoods
Objective met. See question 5 below. A policy briefing is also in preparation.
7. To provide an innovative model for similar studies in other settings
Objective will be met. The benefits and weaknesses of the methodology are discussed below and are being addressed further in a conference paper and journal article in preparation as detailed under 'Outputs'.

• Methods

The research adopted a case study approach to provide in-depth contextualised understanding that is analytically generalisable (Bagchi *et al* 1998; Ellis 2000; Yin 2003). Malawi and Lesotho were chosen from the six countries allegedly experiencing NVF (Appendix 2). In each country, one village was selected for in-depth fieldwork: Nihelo in densely populated Thyolo District in southern Malawi and Ha Rantelali in the relatively remote Maluti Mountains in Lesotho (Figure 1). The Research Assistant (Hajdu) resided in the villages, while the other researchers made several visits. Field assistants were recruited locally.

A participatory approach was favoured, reflecting an ethical imperative to research *with* people, and because participatory methods produce 'situated, rich and layered accounts' (Pain 2004:653) and are particularly suited to research with children (Ansell 2005; Boyden and Ennew 1997; Hart 1992; Johnson *et al* 1995; Punch 2002; Young and Barrett 2001). Researching together to investigate complex causal chains addressed the need for livelihoods research to anticipate future change (Murray 2002). Nonetheless, participatory methods are not unproblematic: they do not directly tap objective experience or unmediated perspectives (Kesby 2000), and apparent consensus views often conceal powerful interests (Guijt and Kaul Shah 1998) and the multiple/conflicting knowledges held within any group or individual (Cameron and Gibson 2005). Collective participatory methods were thus supplemented by research with households and individuals. Moreover, to link micro- and macro-contexts (Murray 2002; Whitehead 2000), National Steering Groups (NSGs) were established (Annex 2) and interviews were held with national level policy-makers.

AIDS, a proxy based on sickness and death was used initially to identify AIDS-affected young people, and progressively refined as further information about individuals emerged (Appendix 4). AIDS' impacts on young people are diverse, and the research sought to explore this diversity rather than simplistically distinguish between categories of affected and unaffected.

Stage 3: Interviews with policy makers

Interviews were conducted with decision-makers in district and national level government departments, donor and UN agencies, national and international NGOs. 33 and 49 interviews were conducted in Malawi and Lesotho respectively, exceeding the 10-15 per country originally proposed. These focused on perceptions of the impacts of current policies, legislation and activities pertaining to young people, AIDS and food security; and responses to issues arising from the fieldwork. Interviews were recorded and transcribed.

Stage 4: Interviews with young people

Preliminary data analysis suggested a need for further detailed empirical accounts of the impacts of AIDS on individuals over a sustained time period. Hence in-depth life history interviews were conducted with all available 18-24-year-olds during the dissemination phase (27 in Malawi and 21 in Lesotho). These were recorded, transcribed and translated.

Analysis

There are no explicit frameworks for analysing participatory research (Pain and Francis 2003) beyond an imperative to involve participants where appropriate. Throughout the fieldwork, researchers, participants and NSGs interrogated the emerging findings in relation to their own knowledge. Following the fieldwork, transcripts, notes and visual materials were entered into NVivo for coding and in-depth analysis in critical dialogue with the SLA framework. Matrices were used to examine differences between communities and 'categories' of young people. Causal network charts were employed to build logical chains of evidence. Findings were verified by crosschecking across the research team, looking for negative evidence and testing explanations for coherence (Miles and Huberman 1994). The dissemination phase incorporated participatory analysis and development of policy recommendations.

• Results

This section summarises preliminary empirical results in relation to each research question.

1. In what ways are AIDS-affected/unaffected young people involved in livelihood activities?

Young people undertake activities both to fulfil their immediate livelihood needs and to secure their longer term prospects through accruing livelihood assets (Appendix 1). Future food security depends on the balance between the two.

The project participants' principal activities are set out in Appendix 15. While most aged under 18 attended school, the prominent livelihood activities among older youth in Lesotho were herding livestock (young men) and farming and domestic work (young women). In Malawi activities were more diverse, with many young people growing vegetables for sale on *dimba* (riverside plots irrigated by watering can), labouring for other villagers ('*ganyu*'), and running informal businesses, besides cultivating subsistence crops. Beyond these principal occupations, all young people undertook other daily, weekly and seasonal activities to support themselves and their households. In Nihelo, for instance, Lucius³ (aged 13) combines school with farming, making baskets and *ganyu*. Moreover, Appendix 15 only provides a snapshot view. Many of the 18-24-year-old Malawians had previously operated small businesses, generally baking and selling food or trading goods such as fish or maize. In both communities several had undertaken paid work, mostly in town

³ Pseudonyms are used for all participants.

or (in Malawi) on agricultural estates, and at the time of the research, ten young people from Ha Rantelali were employed (in low-skilled work) elsewhere.

It is striking from Appendix 15 that orphanhood and other impacts of AIDS do not appear to have a generalised impact on the principal livelihood activities young people undertake. While several participants reported having left school upon the death of a parent (usually a father), school attendance was higher among AIDS-affected than unaffected participants, and AIDS-affected 18-24-year-olds had on average progressed further through school. While such quantitative measures cannot be generalised beyond the two communities, they do emphasise that many young people drop out for reasons unrelated to AIDS.

Among the young people who have left school there is little evidence for a systematically different experience of employment or business among those affected by AIDS (although again there are specific stories of the impacts of AIDS). *Dimba* cultivation was practised in equal measure by AIDS-affected and unaffected youth. In Lesotho, most young men reported leaving school in order to herd, a roughly equal number working for their own family (usually unpaid) as for unrelated families (remunerated with a cow a year). Surprisingly only one participant herding for an unrelated family was an orphan. Equal numbers of affected and unaffected Ha Rantelali youth were working away from the village. The only livelihoods in which AIDS-affected youth were underrepresented were the more lucrative informal businesses in Nihelo such as building.

2. What livelihood opportunities are available to AIDS-affected young people and what shapes access to these?

The livelihood opportunities available to young people fall broadly into categories of subsistence agriculture; cash crop production; livestock rearing; business; local casual employment; and migrant work (including formal sector, agricultural estate and domestic work). Rewards (and levels of security) vary within and between categories. In Nihelo, for instance, tea estate or casual work pays around 100 kwacha/day⁴, radio repair might earn 350 kwacha/day, bicycle repair 800 kwacha/day, while a teacher is paid 12,000 kwacha/month.

Engagement in any livelihood requires access to livelihood assets. Knowledge of opportunities is vital, both broad possibilities and specific job opportunities. Most livelihoods require skills, some at higher levels or less readily attained. Business and agriculture require capital for inputs and equipment. Different types of agriculture (such as *dimba* cultivation) require particular types of land. Some forms of (better paid) employment require educational qualifications, and access to urban employment requires a place to stay.

Shaping access to these prerequisites are factors operating at diverse scales. Employment possibilities, for instance, reflect international market conditions and trade agreements (which no longer favour Malawi's agricultural estates but have encouraged a burgeoning of garment factories in Lesotho). National policies including those on education, vocational training, business finance, social protection, and agriculture strongly affect access to secure livelihoods.

Differences between the communities are partly explicable by national level differences, but local conditions also play a role, shaping awareness of opportunities, the availability of markets and environmental conditions. Nihelo's plentiful (but impoverished) markets and limited agricultural land present very different prospects for business and agriculture than the remote harsh environment of Ha Rantelali. There are also significant cultural differences, including between patrilineal traditions in Lesotho and matrilineal in southern Malawi, which affect how marriage impacts on young people's livelihoods.

At a more individual level, access to opportunities reflects the availability of ideas, encouragement, and resources from among personal acquaintances, particularly committed adults. Many in Nihelo learned skills

⁴ Exchange rate: 250 kwacha = £1.

from their friends. Social networks are also important for learning about job opportunities, and providing accommodation near places of employment.

AIDS impacts on these individual circumstances and can diminish livelihood options and chances of success. AIDS can reduce the money available to invest. Conversely, young people whose parents die sometimes inherit land, livestock, equipment and even money that they can employ, provided these are not seized by others. AIDS in the household may also mean less attention and encouragement from adults. It can impact on social networks, which are of particular importance for those affected by AIDS. Some of the most successful young people in the study were orphans who had support and encouragement from adult relatives. Other AIDS-affected young people were vulnerable because of weak social networks, exacerbated by AIDS-related stigma and gossip. Significantly, marriage disrupts the social networks of men in Malawi and women in Lesotho, reducing some livelihood opportunities. The quality of social networks also reflects individual personality, with likeable young people gaining better opportunities.

Temporality is vitally important. Young people's lives change quickly and they have to take 'once-in-a-lifetime' decisions, such as leaving school or getting married. This makes them especially vulnerable to AIDS-related disruptions, with potentially long-term effects on future livelihoods. Typically, after leaving school a young person has a window of opportunity before marriage gives them new responsibilities. During this period, they may experiment with different livelihood activities, provided they have access to financial capital and encouragement. Many secure financial support from parents at this time, but if their parents are sick or have died, their opportunities are reduced.

3. How do AIDS-affected young people make decisions about livelihood strategies in their transitions to adulthood?

Young people's livelihood strategies develop over time, with aspirations, plans and actions the dynamic outcomes of events and circumstances. All options carry opportunity costs.

School children in both villages aspire to formal sector careers requiring secondary education. Some Malawian schoolchildren had more modest ambitions: repairing radios or becoming car mechanics. This difference reflects the exposure of young Malawians to diverse local opportunities, while Basotho children rely on images propagated in school. Most children wished to continue education as long as possible. While many recognised their families could not afford secondary fees, they envisaged spending a few years earning money to pay for themselves. Basotho herdboys were the only participants who had decided strategically to leave school, usually because they saw herding their family stock as a way to secure their futures, but sometimes at the insistence of a guardian. For most others, leaving school was precipitated by exam failure; parental sickness or death; poverty (lack of uniform, soap, school user fees); pregnancy or marriage.

Young people make a progression of livelihood decisions after leaving school. Most expect a rural future in the long term, but some with acquaintances in town seek paid work, often hoping to saving money for further education or training, rather than simply to subsist. Others seize opportunities as they arise, for instance when recruiting agents visit Nihelo. In Malawi many unmarried school leavers borrow money from parents to start a small business – an option that is less available to AIDS-affected youth. Young people's plans at this stage are often highly strategic, taking into account relative start-up and running costs of different business options, as well as their own talents and dis/abilities.

Deciding to marry is pivotal, and can be strategic. Men generally need to marry to access land, particularly in matrilineal southern Malawi. Malawian women saw marriage as a solution to inadequate family support. Six of the eight paternally orphaned female participants aged 17+ said they married because they needed assistance. This was, however, also true of four of the eight young women deemed unaffected by AIDS. Girls in Lesotho were less enthusiastic about marriage. Nyefolo, for instance, rejected the prospect because 'most men around here don't work so it becomes difficult to eat'. Despite the livelihood drawbacks, however, few women remained unmarried for long. In contrast, only three Basotho male participants were

married, reflecting the need to accumulate cattle for bridewealth, a livelihood consideration for young men. Significantly, several fatherless Basotho women had been married by men who lacked cattle, as payment of bridewealth was not required. In both countries young people's resources limited their marriage options. In Nihelo, for instance, Rex observed that he 'couldn't be picky' because, as an orphan, he had nothing to offer a wife.

Marriage alters available livelihood options. Most married youth aspire to more lucrative livelihoods. Many in Lesotho expressed interest in learning new skills, while Malawians planned to (re)start businesses, often by earning money through *ganyu* to invest in progressively more resource-intensive and profitable ventures.

4. Do the livelihood strategies adopted reduce or increase long-term vulnerability?

Young people attribute hunger and poverty to household employment loss, marriage (particularly young women in Ha Rantelali), poor harvests or sickness or death of family members. Sources of potential security include income from employment (especially in households with several migrant workers); pensions; livestock (particularly in Ha Rantelali); and good social networks offering food or casual employment in times of need. To reduce vulnerability, livelihood strategies need to help young people avoid challenging circumstances and develop sources of security.

It is far from clear that continuing in education improves rural young people's livelihood prospects. With a few exceptions (the teacher in Ha Rantelali and three builders in Nihelo), those who attended secondary education, whether resident in the village or elsewhere, were not engaged in more secure livelihood ventures.

Many Basotho boys chose herding over education. The wage of one cow a year should accumulate as the cattle breed. However, cattle are vulnerable to drought (a quarter of Ha Rantelali's cows died in 2007), disease and armed cattle theft. Herdboys are also vulnerable to maltreatment by employers, who commonly provide poor conditions, impose penalties for loss or injuries to animals or fail to pay at the end of a year. Nonetheless, herding does allow some boys to accumulate valuable assets.

Casual work is often understood as a livelihood strategy for people in desperate situations, which increases long-term vulnerability by eroding human, natural, physical, financial or social capital (Bryceson 2006). However, some young people with no dependants and reliant on parents or guardians for food and shelter can, in the short-term, invest their earnings for a small business such as tomato growing.

Many young people in Malawi and some in Lesotho had engaged in business of various forms, but most had ultimately failed, for myriad often unpredictable reasons. Some businesses are more lucrative than others: these generally have higher start up costs and greater risk associated with failure. However, failure need not imply livelihood vulnerability unless money has been borrowed: businesses generally generate income for a time and can provide valuable experience and contacts. Nonetheless, having engaged in a relatively lucrative business did not appear to offer long-term security.

Young people from both communities had undertaken migrant work, usually as urban domestic workers, but also on agricultural estates in Malawi and in garment factories in Lesotho. Experiences were mixed. Some had enjoyed domestic work and were paid well, although very few had made any savings and several had experienced sexual abuse. Work on agricultural estates was considered poorly paid (worse than *ganyu*), physically gruelling and a short-term last resort to secure subsistence. It also removes people from their fields at crucial times. Similarly, while Basotho girls envisaged investing factory wages in furthering their education, the paucity of wages and high living costs around the factories seldom permitted money to be saved. Moreover, many factory workers are hired by the day and reportedly resort to sex work to supplement their income.

Marriage is highly significant in young people's livelihood trajectories. Young women generally become dependent on husbands (and in-laws), while young men gain independence, but also new responsibilities. Young wives in matrilocality almost universally felt marriage had improved their lives, although some were abandoned by their husbands, leaving them vulnerable to poverty, especially if they had children. In patrilocality Ha Rantelali, by contrast, many young married women felt their lives had deteriorated, with husbands unable to find work and unwilling to allow their wives to seek employment elsewhere.

5. How might AIDS-affected young people's prospects of achieving sustainable rural livelihoods as adults be enhanced?

The findings above and outputs from dissemination workshops support a range of policy recommendations, some of which we highlight below.

Free primary education and bursaries for vulnerable children have enabled many AIDS-affected young people to continue attending school. However obstacles remain, including schools charging 'development fees', requiring uniforms, and excluding pregnant or married girls. These (often unsanctioned) practices need eliminating. To assure future food security, however, educational curricula need to be more relevant to rural livelihoods. In pursuing the elusive goal of formal sector employment (heavily promoted by schools), schoolchildren forego other opportunities to accumulate resources.

At the dissemination workshops, young people, communities and policymakers called for vocational training to be more widely available. Only one young person in the study had received formal skills training, and informal training was expensive for those without personal connections. Varied interventions are needed. In Nihelo, young people required guidance on sustaining businesses, while in Ha Rantelali the challenge is to identify suitable business opportunities. In both countries, opportunities and mechanisms for tapping non-local and international markets must be identified. Many youth have skills, but would benefit from start-up grants targeted at potentially productive activities.

Minimum levels of security are needed to enable young people to expend time and resources on anything beyond day-to-day subsistence. Agricultural policy can provide safety nets. Young people in Nihelo considered efficient delivery of Malawi's fertiliser subsidy vital. This allows more production from small fields, and frees time from labouring to pay for food or fertiliser. It does, however, inhibit innovative (environmentally more sustainable) alternatives to maize cultivation. In Lesotho, investment in household food production is deemed inefficient in view of cheap South African grain imports. In the mountains, however, where prices are higher and income generating options more limited, household production remains important. The Lesotho government responds to food insecurity with food aid and food-for-work schemes. These valuable safety nets do little to assist young people to develop sustainable long-term livelihoods. In contrast, land allocation committees are enabling otherwise landless Basotho youth to acquire livelihood assets. This benefits orphans who have had to leave their home villages, as well as others who fail to inherit.

Both Malawi and Lesotho have introduced cash transfer programmes. In Lesotho, old age pensions, introduced in 2004, have benefited AIDS-affected children, many of whom live with elderly relatives. Malawi is instead targeting ultra-poor, high-dependency-ratio households in a scheme that has yet to reach Nihelo. Such measures offer security to recipient households, allowing young people to remain in school or invest in business. The greater prosperity of poor households also expands the market for casual labour and small businesses, providing opportunities to other youth.

Directly targeting AIDS-affected young people with any intervention is generally inappropriate, not because AIDS has no effect, but because it does not predict vulnerability. In Nihelo, all households were poor and vulnerable. In Lesotho a minority were significantly less vulnerable, among them households of former miners who died leaving large herds as well as orphans. Interventions targeted at AIDS-affected children may also weaken social mechanisms through which children receive care, by shifting responsibility from extended families to the state or providing incentives for children to live apart from adults. Furthermore,

social protection measures should better accommodate the transition in AIDS-affected households when an adult dies. Food aid to AIDS patients, which also benefits their children, stops when the patient dies. In contrast, bursaries are hard to obtain until a child's parents have died (by which time some have left school).

• **Activities**

Dissemination

- Presentations in Malawi
 - Faculty of Social Science Conference, Chancellor College
 - University of Malawi College of Medicine Dissemination Conference
 - Seminars at Chancellor College (two)
 - Chancellor College Research Dissemination Conference
 - National AIDS Commission Research Dissemination Conference
 - Society of Malawi
- Presentations in Lesotho
 - Institute of Southern African Studies, National University of Lesotho
- Presentations at international conferences
 - International Childhood and Youth Research Network conference, Nicosia, Cyprus
 - XVII International AIDS Conference, Mexico City
 - Exploring Time-Space Data, Time-Space and Life-Course ESRC Seminar, Lancaster University
 - Royal Geographical Society / Institute of British Geographers annual conference, Manchester (2 papers)

User engagement (see 'Impacts' for details)

- Three National Steering Group meetings per country
- 'Reverse-cascade' dissemination process: workshops with young people and communities developed key messages for policy makers
- Policy workshops in Blantyre, Lilongwe and Maseru developed policy recommendations

• **Impacts**

It remains premature to identify definite impacts. However, considerable effort has been made to engage with potential users. National Steering Groups (NSGs) were established in Malawi and Lesotho, and each met three times. (For membership see Annex 2). These advised on prevailing food security and livelihood situations; relevant policies and programmes; choice of field site (in Malawi); practical methodological issues; ethical questions; and on our preliminary interpretations of the research findings. Members received notes from meetings, information leaflets and briefing notes, as these were produced.

Interviews were conducted with 82 policy makers and practitioners at local, district and (principally) national levels (compared with 10-15/country originally proposed) (Annex 2). These provided opportunities to raise awareness of the project and preliminary findings, including through the distribution of information leaflets. Participants were also invited to the dissemination workshops.

Dissemination activities were held in August/September 2008. Participatory feedback and dissemination with the young participants and their communities fed into policy-focused workshops with representatives of government, NGOs, UN agencies and donors in Blantyre, Lilongwe and Maseru (12, 11 and 24 participants respectively – Annex 2). Invitations targeted personnel with influence within their organisations. Preliminary research reports were distributed for discussion, and all attendees (along with NSG members and interviewees) will receive an extended project report and policy briefing. The report and

briefing will also be sent to named individuals in key ministries (notably Finance), donor and UN agencies, as advised by key informants, the National AIDS Commissions and academic institutions. Online dissemination will take place via id21, ELDIS, the Southern African Regional Poverty Network (SARPN) and the Southern Africa HIV and AIDS Information and Dissemination Service (SAfAIDS).

We are applying for follow-on funding from the ESRC and 'International Engagement' support from the Wellcome Trust for further dissemination and policy-influencing activities.

• **Outputs**

- Publications submitted / in press / in print
 - Hajdu F, Ansell N, Robson E, van Blerk L and Chipeta L 'Sustainable rural livelihoods for AIDS-affected young people in Southern Africa – what potential do income generating activities (IGAs) have?' submitted to *Geographical Journal*
 - Hajdu F, Ansell N, Robson E, van Blerk L and Chipeta L in press 2009 'Socio-economic causes of food insecurity in Malawi' *Society of Malawi Journal* 62(2)
 - Ansell N, Robson E, Hajdu F, van Blerk L and Chipeta L 2009 'The new variant famine hypothesis: moving beyond the household in exploring links between AIDS and food insecurity in southern Africa' *Progress in Development Studies* 9 (3) 187-207
 - Robson, E, Chipeta L, Ansell N, Hajdu F, van Blerk L 2008 'Averting 'New variant famine' in Malawi: Building Food-Secure Livelihoods with AIDS-affected young people' in *Proceedings of Chancellor College Research Dissemination Conference*, 8-10th April 2008, Chancellor College, Zomba, Malawi.
 - van Blerk L, Ansell N, Robson E, Hajdu F and Chipeta L 2008 'Youth, livelihoods and AIDS in southern Africa' *Geography Compass* 2(3) 709-727
 - Robson E, Ansell N, van Blerk L, Chipeta L and Hadju F 2007 'AIDS and food insecurity: 'new variant famine' in Malawi?' *Malawi Medical Journal* 19(4) 136-137
- Website
 - project website <http://www.brunel.ac.uk/about/acad/sse/chg/projects/nvf>, hosting briefing notes and information
- Datasets
 - The full dataset has been offered for deposit at the ESRC Data Archive.

• **Capacity Building**

- The Research Assistant attended two workshops on participatory methodology, and ESRC research training on: 'Research Ethics as Practice in Non-UK Research Settings' before beginning the research.
- The project engaged 14 local research assistants. These were trained and gained experience in field assistance (translation and the facilitation of participatory research), and/or in transcription and data entry using appropriate computer software. One was subsequently recruited to a Masters course in Scotland.
- A Geography lecturer at the University of Malawi, Lucy Chipeta, has participated extensively in the Malawi-based research, including writing publications. She is being supported by the co-investigator to apply for a PhD place and funding.
- Chipeta, two Malawian field assistants, the RA and co-investigator (Robson) received training on AIDS from the Malawi Network of AIDS Service Organisations.

- Participation in NSGs gave opportunities for research users to engage with the research process.
- In connection with the research, we secured further funding from Brunel University, which we used to sponsor related research projects by academics at the National University of Lesotho. Seroala Tsoeu (Political Science) investigated the socio-spatial impacts of the garment industry (where some young women from Ha Rantelali work); Nthabiseng Chaka (Institute of Southern African Studies) explored the experiences of grandmothers caring for orphans in and around Ha Rantelali; and Lehlohonolo Moeti (Geography) mapped young people's access to resources in the village using GIS. Findings were presented at a conference on 'Food Security and AIDS in Lesotho' that we organised at the National University of Lesotho. A special issue of a Lesotho-based peer-reviewed journal, *Review of Southern African Studies*, is planned to showcase these projects, along with other joint publications.
- The project has involved developments in participatory methods, and a paper on the methodology will be presented at the RGS-IBG Conference (Manchester, August 2009) and subsequently prepared for publication.

• Project Linked Doctoral Studentships

N/A

• Future Research Priorities

The wider applicability of the interrelationships identified through this research might usefully be examined through large-scale quantitative research across diverse settings.

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