



**Women on Farms Project Press Statement
Jonkershoek Evictions Crisis
1 April 2006**

1. The Women on Farms Project is a non-governmental organisation with more than ten years experience of working on the farm lands. Over these 10 years, we have seen a steady increase in the number of evictions taking place.
2. For the most part, laws aimed at protecting the rights of farm workers are used to merely facilitate an orderly exit of black farm worker communities from farm lands. If anything, the case of Jonkershoek illustrates the inadequacies of the existing laws.
3. The evictions should also be understood within context of the broader changes taking place within agriculture. We have seen a significant casualisation and feminisation of the agricultural labour force with particularly devastating consequences for women's livelihoods. Women are generally employed under more precarious conditions than men and enjoy few on the non wage benefits that they would be entitled to as a permanent worker.
4. So even though there are more women employed in agriculture today than ever before, housing contracts remain in the names of men only. This means that women can only access housing through a relationship with a man.
5. In the context of pervasive gender based violence and exploding HIV infection rate, the lack of independent tenure security for women in particular is actually a life and death matter.
6. We call on our government to take seriously its mandate as the protector of the rights of the vulnerable. The laws must be changed, and then enforced. And where the laws are broken, we need to see consequences.
7. These evictions are racist and constitute a profound human rights violation of a community of people who are citizens of South Africa despite their location on private farms.
8. The time has come to indulging white farmers who are clearly not willing to contribute to the transformation agenda of a new South Africa. The time has come to expropriate!

Contact Person
Fatima Shabodien, WFP Executive Director
021 887 2960/1/2 fatima@wfp.org.za