

## **History of Economy, Environment and Exploitation**

In the period 2002-2006, the former ASC theme group Economy, Ecology and Exclusion (EEE) intended to contribute to a better perception on development processes in Sub-Saharan Africa by focussing on the question of 'access': access to resources (factors of production, products, services) and to institutions (in its broadest meaning) through which resources are allocated. The opportunities available to rural and urban people to command resources are a major determinant of poverty or wealth rates among people. Research questions that 'guided' many of the EEE research projects conducted from 2002 until 2006 were: Why do some actors have access to certain resources while others do not? Under what circumstances and conditions (economic, ecological, political, legal, social and cultural) and by what mechanisms (decision-making processes) do some actors become excluded from certain resources (lost access) whereas others do not or may even become better off (acquired access)? And what does this mean for people's struggle for survival and their attempts to escape from poverty? Topics of research included the field of coastal ecology, fisheries, urban agriculture, livestock keeping, plantation economics, labour markets, eco-tourism, maize marketing, social security arrangements, and food insecurity. The research projects departed from different disciplinary backgrounds and have been conducted among different societies and communities in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi, Chad, Mali, South Africa and Mozambique. Both rural and urban studies have been conducted as well as studies on agricultural and non-agricultural sectors. The results can be found in a wide range of publications<sup>1</sup> and a collaborative publication presents the main findings of the previous programme in one volume (Rutten, Leliveld & Foeken 2007).

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<sup>1</sup> See the ASC website: <http://www.ascleiden.nl/Research/Researchers.aspx>