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HIV/AIDS is resulting in far-reaching changes in socio-economic relations, agricultural production and livelihoods in Southern Africa. Recent work conducted by CARE, including a 2005 re-study of a 1993 survey in Zambia, has sought to these out these evolving impacts. While impacts remain varied - and HIV/AIDS is certainly by no means the only factor affecting the trends towards growing levels of rural social economic differentiation and vulnerability - they are more insidious and complex than sometimes assumed. In addition to the more obvious consequences for production, labour and remittances, the complex processes of social fragmentation and accompanying loss of human rights and dignity remain largely out of sight. The article concludes that the impact of HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa will continue to grow and the challenges to mitigate this have yet to be fully understood and absorbed.

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