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Assessing Land Management Strategies and Social Implications of PLAS Beneficiaries in Mahikeng, South Africa

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Abstract

Governments of several countries adopted land reform as a tool to promote equitable land distribution. Whilst this is a welcome development, making the highest and best use of the land by beneficiaries is a matter of concern. Previous studies found nonchalance and improper utilisation of landed property assets among beneficiaries. Thus, this study aimed to analyse the social implications and land management strategies of the PLAS beneficiaries in Mahikeng, South Africa. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews and analysed thematically using Atlas-ti software (version 22). Findings from the interviews confirmed that beneficiaries were acquiring farming skills, taking permissions from the Department before improving the farm's infrastructure, assessing the farm's reproductive value, piping the farm, maintaining the infrastructure, and making boreholes and dams. It was concluded that the social implications of PLAS in Mahikeng municipality included averting social unrest, promoting equity, alleviating hunger, contributing to the food chain and enterprise development, and facilitating practical training. Accordingly, the study recommends that the Department of Rural Development and Lands monitor and evaluate the land redistribution process to ensure that it meets its goals and objectives and identifies any challenges or areas for improvement.

Keywords: Land reform; Strategies to manage real property; Land redistribution; Social justice; South Africa

Introduction

Black South Africans were initially restricted to areas that comprised less than 13% of the country's total land area, thanks to the Native Land Act of 1913 and the Native Trust and Land Act of 1936. Also, they could not purchase property from white people or enter sharecropping agreements under the legal Native Land Act of 1913 and the Native Trust and Land Act of 1936 (Bradstock, 2006; Valente, 2009). However, after the end of the Apartheid government and the country's transition back to democratic leadership, several issues remain unresolved. The democratic government was required, among other things, to address the issue of black people's historically limited access to land (Valente, 2009). Thus, comprehensive land reform was required for South Africa's underprivileged citizens.

Chapter 2 of the 1997 South African Constitution, which comprises the Bill of Rights that backed land reform, was created to solve the issue. Generally, redressing imbalances in the use and management of land calls for a land reform program. Such imbalances occur in different areas, including (1) if the government is finding difficulty in acquiring land for public projects. (2) whenever land is forcefully taken from the citizens or not equitably distributed. While the former

scenario was the case of Nigeria before the enactment of the Land Use Decree (tenurial reform), Number 6 of 1978, now an Act, Cap L5, LFN 2004, the latter was the case of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) in independent Zimbabwe and the different land reform measures (land redistribution, land restitution and tenure reform), in South Africa.

Land restitution was the primary purpose of remediating the imbalances in independent Zimbabwe. In contrast, land redistribution and land restitution were the primary purposes of correcting the land use glitches in South Africa. Accordingly, various policy reform measures, including (1) Settlement/Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG), (2) Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) Phase I, (3) Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) Phase II, and (4) the Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS) were designed to achieve the South African land redistribution and land restitution programmes. Though the first three measures were short-lived because of their limitations, the PLAS scheme introduced in 2006 remains the land reform instrument in South Africa.

The PLAS scheme was created to support economic growth, provide employment opportunities for eligible beneficiaries, and contribute to equitable land distribution (DLA, 2006). However plausible this measure was, the main concern is in the highest and best use of the land by beneficiaries. We consider it an effort in futility if the scheme's objectives are not realised because of ineffective land utilisation. Thus, the case of FTLRP in independent Zimbabwe readily comes to mind, whereby poor agricultural outputs were recorded despite interventions (Mazwi, Chemura, Mudimu & Chambati, 2019). Accordingly, there were studies, including Antwi & Oladele (2013) in Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality; Antwi and Nxumalo (2014) in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality, all in North-West Province, undertaken in the past.

Similarly, Malatji (2017) in Mompani district, and Avhafunani, Simon, Edzisani, Majela & Imke (2017) in Waterberg District Municipality (WDM), all in Limpopo Province did related studies in the past. The focus of these South African studies was primarily on the inability of black farmers to unlock the full potential of land allocated to them due to the lack of support from the state. Again, apart from studies of Antwi & Nxumalo (2014) and Malatji (2017) that analysed the implications of the PLAS scheme on the beneficiaries, other studies dwelt on the three-first schemes. The current study (1) considers the intervening years between the current and previous studies to replicate or otherwise their findings. (2) Looks at the management strategies employed by the PLAS beneficiaries to achieve the scheme's objectives, and (3) ascertain if black farmers can savour the full potential of land allocated to them.

The study is deemed crucial, for it is conducted when land debates have taken centre stage in the country's political environment. Political parties have differing ideologies on the long-standing land challenges facing the disadvantaged black population. Notable among these was the ANC manifesto during the 2019 elections, which bears the party's willingness to correct the imbalances (Christians, 2021). Thus, this study aimed to analyse the social implications and land management strategies of the PLAS beneficiaries in Mahikeng, South Africa. The subsequent sections present the theory and literature review, the research methodology, the presentation and discussion of results, conclusions, and recommendations.

Theoretical Background and Literature Review

This section is divided into four (4), including (1) the theory that underpins this study; (2) the need for land reform; (3) the social implications of land reform, and (4) strategies used by land beneficiaries to manage their assets. Several theories were used to reflect the land reform programme and how it impacts the people. These included (1) indemnity and taker's gain theory captured in Kratovil & Harrison (1954), Denyer-Green (2014) and Kabanga & Mooya (2018), and (2) the Neoclassical theory of land reform reported in Mukarati, Mongale & Makombe (2020), which we found relevant to this study. Few studies tied the Neoclassical theory to land reform, emphasising growth, poverty, and income inequality. The theory sees land redistribution relative to agricultural development and is thus a significant component of the strategy and policy of economic growth (Zahir, 1975).

The PLAS scheme, premised on achieving equity and social justice in South Africa, has benefitted small farmers and landless peasants. Because agriculture is not only a significant source of employment and a means of subsistence for the rural inhabitants in emerging nations, so agricultural growth is essential to economic development. Therefore, land should be valued and distributed following its marginal productivity. This suggests the theory is suitable for addressing complex real-world issues relating to agricultural productivity and land reform. Economic progress depends on increasing agricultural output and securing land ownership. The theory is said to achieve its purpose if the land is redistributed, as is currently happening in South Africa, even though the pace is slow (Ranwedzi, 2013; Antwi & Nxumalo, 2014; Avhafunani et al., 2017; Malatji, 2017).

Therefore, a strategy for economic growth should emphasise the distributive component of the income resulting from the expansion. Therefore, when making policy, consideration should be given to economic disparity, unemployment, and poverty. The redistribution of rural land and ensuing chances for growth have significant long-term effects.

The Need for Land Reform in South Africa

Land reform in the country became fundamental due to the unjust land ownership confusion brought about by apartheid. Thus, the first challenge South Africa's democratically elected government faced in 1994 was addressing the land distribution inequality in the country. As a result, the government launched a complete reform programme on land redistribution backed by the Constitution, demonstrating its commitment to addressing past imbalances and injustices. The country's land reform initiative is built around three pillars (1) land restitution, (2) land redistribution, and (3) tenure reform.

The three pillars of the land reform programme are aptly captured under sections 25(5), 25(6), and 25(7) of the Constitution. Section 25(5) deals with land redistribution, Section 25(6) deals with land tenure security and Section 25(7) deals with land restitution. Section 25(7) of the Constitution states that: "A person or community who has been deprived of the property after June 19, 1913, as

a result of prior racially discriminatory legislation or practices is entitled, to the extent permitted by an Act of Parliament, either to restitution of that property or equitable reparation". Section 25(5) of the Constitution states the responsibility of the state to undertake "reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to foster conditions which enable citizens to gain access to land on an equitable basis" (Kloppers & Pienaar, 2014).

The third and final pillar of the land reform programme is captured under section 25(6) of the Constitution, which states that: "a person or community whose tenure of land is legally insecure as a result of past racially discriminatory laws or practices is entitled, to the extent provided by an Act of Parliament, either to tenure which is legally secure or to comparable redress" (Kloppers & Pienaar, 2014).

Social Implications of the Land Reform Programme

Land reform transfers ownership or control of land from one group or individual to another, typically to promote a more equitable land distribution or address historical injustices (Chigara, 2019; Chamberlain & Anseeuw, 2019). The government facilitates land acquisition or transfer through various mechanisms, such as land reform programs, land expropriation, or voluntary land sales. The authorities provide financial or technical support to help individuals or organisations acquire or manage the land through subsidies, loans, or training programs. The government monitors and evaluates the implementation of the land reform program to assess its effectiveness and identify any issues or challenges that need to be addressed.

The land reform process is often complex and may involve various actors and stakeholders (Musakwa, 2018). The process needs to be implemented fairly and transparently, with appropriate safeguards and checks in place to protect the rights and interests of all stakeholders (Cousins et al., 2018). Land reform programmes, which are often implemented as part of land redistribution policies, can have various social implications depending on the specific goals and design of the programme and the context within which it is implemented. According to Chigara (2019) and Yang (2021), some potential social implications of land reform programmes include increased access to land.

Musakwa (2018) confirms that land reform programmes can provide individuals or groups previously marginalised access to land, improving their economic and social wellbeing and reducing poverty. Similarly, Sadyohutomo (2018) in Indonesia found that government incentivises farmers to enhance productivity. Thus, land redistribution has halted illegal cultivation, reduced conflict, and improved the income status of the people. In the view of Chamberlain & Anseeuw (2019), land reform programmes can stimulate economic development by providing more people with the opportunity to work and produce goods on the land and by increasing the productivity of the land through improved management practices. Through the facilitation of land reform programmes, Akinola (2020) affirms that it can help reduce social and political tensions by addressing historical injustices or inequalities related to land distribution and promoting a more equitable distribution of land ownership.

Land reform programmes may change land use patterns, as new landholders may choose to use the land differently than the previous owners did. This could have positive or negative impacts on the environment, depending on the nature of the changes and their effects on the land (Adenuga, Jack & McCarry, 2021). The social effects of land reform programs vary depending on the unique conditions, the objectives of the policy, and how the procedure is carried out. It is crucial to carefully analyse the potential social effects of land reform initiatives and work to implement them in a way that advances the general welfare.

Duan (2015) records similar results of farmers' increased food security and income status. In South Africa, large-scale farming without corresponding governmental support is responsible for varied findings in land redistribution programs (Rusenga, 2022; Kirsten et al., 2023). In contrast, to the Indonesian study of Sadyohutomo (2018), the government provides wholesome support to the farmers, leading to a considerable impact on farming practices. The known South African studies included Deninger et al. (2000); Antwi & Oladele (2013); World Bank (2014); Antwi & Nxumalo (2014); Binswanger-Mkhize (2014); Kirsten, Machethe, Ndlovu & Lubambo (2016); Avhafunani et al. (2017); Makombe (2018); Malatji (2019); Zantsi (2019), Amoah & Tyekela 2021, and Zantsi & Nengovhela (2022).

These studies are a significant contribution to the debates on how land redistribution influences the wellbeing of beneficiaries. However, many of these studies focused on the first-three land redistribution instruments in different provinces. Thus a marginal gap still exists to be filled. Antwi & Oladele (2013) in Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality (NMMD), Antwi & Nxumalo (2014) in Dr Ruth Segotmosi Mompoti District, and Kirsten et al. (2016) in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality, were studies done within the same Province of North West, but in different locations to Mahikeng.

Strategies Land Beneficiaries Can Adopt to Manage Assets in Land Ownership

Management of land assets refers to the processes and practices used to use, maintain, and develop land for the benefit of the owner or community effectively and sustainably (Musavengane, 2019). Antwi & Oladele (2013) identified effective planning by selecting crop types or other products in South Africa. Additionally, the land is maintained in a healthy and productive condition through erosion control and other environmental hazards. Also, Ranwedzi (2013) used three case studies to evaluate farm management strategies in Gauteng and found that farmers borrow machines and other implements from neighbouring farms, receive support from the Provincial government and sell cash crops at informal markets.

Aliber & Cousins (2013, and Mudau, Mukonza, & Ntshangase (2018), in a comparative study of Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, report that beneficiaries of land redistribution manage their farmland through training and education on land management practices. The training has shaped land management effectively, leading to improved soil quality and sustainable farming practices. Additionally, the study noted that developing a business plan is another strategy beneficiaries adopt

to manage their farmland to boost income generation. Again, other strategies employed are identifying suitable crops for cultivation and markets for selling farm products.

The practical and efficient management of land assets requires a combination of planning, production, maintenance, development, and governance activities. It can ensure that the land is used sustainably and productively over the long term. It is important for beneficiaries of land redistribution to be proactive in managing their assets and to seek out the resources and support they need to be successful. Adamopoulos & Restuccia (2020) studied the Philippine land reform and found that land beneficiaries seek financial and professional assistance from the government or other organisations to help them manage their farmland effectively. The survey by Akinola (2020) reports the need for beneficiaries to engage the community and build relationships with local authorities and other stakeholders.

Li & Li (2018) surveyed an Illinois farm business to evaluate farm management strategies. The study found that a farm manager's experience and skill are essential to achieving farm productivity apart from farm size. Managers' knowledge and skill could lead to innovative adoption into the farm practice. Thus, from the preceding reviews, differing variables were used to measure farm management strategies; the current study utilised open-ended research that allowed participants to freely express the strategy they employed in achieving their objectives.

Methods

This study utilised qualitative research with a case study design to capture the opinions of ten (10) participants through semi-structured interviews. Five participants were selected from the Department of Rural Development because of their involvement in the land reform processes in Mahikeng municipality. Two of the five participants were chosen from the Strategic Land Acquisition Directorate, which is responsible for buying land under land redistribution. Two participants were chosen from the Property Management Directorate responsible for managing state land. Another official from the Restitution Directorate was chosen to have a mixture of opinions from other relevant directorates.

There are eighteen (18) farm projects under the scheme in Mahikeng with a community of 18 beneficiaries, of which the remaining five (5) participants were part. Two (2) participants (PA1 and PA2) represented themselves and twelve (12) other beneficiaries, while three (3) participants (PA3, PA4 and PA5) represented themselves only (see Table 1). Due to the slower implementation rate of the PLAS scheme, the sampled beneficiaries needed to be more varied. In the past, fewer participants were recorded in similar studies. Ranwedzi (2013) analysed 06 beneficiaries in Mogale City, Gauteng; Antwi & Nxumalo (2014) evaluated 97 beneficiaries in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District, North-West; Avhafunani et al. (2017) and Malatji (2017) used 23 and 18 beneficiaries in Waterberg and Mopani Districts, Limpopo.

The interview session was captured through recording with an audio tape. The researchers transcribed the recorded data into readable notes for ease of comprehension. The transcribed data were linked to the research questions: (1) To what extent have the PLAS beneficiaries managed

their farm effectively in Mahikeng? (2) Has the PLAS beneficiaries' social wellbeing improved since the grant was made to them? The Atlas-ti network diagram was used to convey the results in thematic form. To maintain anonymity, each research participant was assigned pseudonyms (see again Table 1).

Table 1: Participants of the study

Participants	Designation
PA1	Landowner
PA2	Landowner
PA3	Landowner
PA4	Landowner
PA5	Landowner
PA6	Strategic Land Acquisition
PA7	Strategic Land Acquisition
PA8	Property Management
PA9	Property Management
PA10	Restitution Component

Findings

The research results were presented according to the objectives of the study. The researchers explained the thematic analysis through the Atlas-ti network diagram. Thus, the following section presents the results of the study's first objective.

Strategies the Land Beneficiaries Adopt to Manage Landed Property Assets

This section explored how land beneficiaries manage real property assets regarding land ownership or land usage under the lease. The participants' responses to the above research objective are summarised in Figure 1.

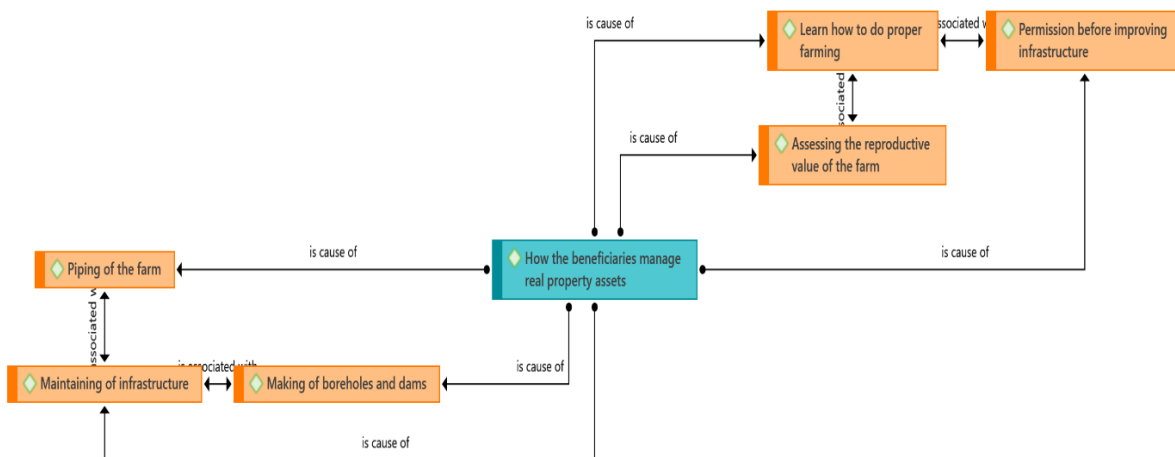


Figure 1: How beneficiaries manage real property assets.

According to Figure 1, the participants agreed that they manage real property assets by learning how to do proper farming, taking permissions from the Department before improving the infrastructure in their farms, assessing the reproductive value of the farm, piping the farm, maintenance of the infrastructure, and making boreholes and dams. Some of the excerpts from the participants are as follows:

PA1 said, "Under land ownership of the real property asset, farmers will be in a much better position and do what works for them at any given time, unlike through the land usage under a lease contract whereby as farmers we are required to request for permission first from the Department before one can improve infrastructure or change land usage for diversification".

PA2 said, "I have conducted a soil analysis study in 2017 to assess the productive value of the farm and have also requested for the mapping of the infrastructure, boreholes, dams, and the piping of the farm, so irrespective of the bundle of rights in place or maybe I should give credit to my knowledge in the corporate world that I have an understanding that this is a business and the management should not depend on either".

PA3 affirmed, "If we could have a secured agreement between ourselves and the Department because now, we hold a caretaker agreement, so we are not sure we can manage the asset better".

PA4 said, "To better manage the real property asset, farmers need to be hands-on full-time, during planting season they need to be present to learn how it is done, infrastructure like water supply fences must be maintained and repaired, irrespective of whether the farm is on title or lease. So that the Department could also realise that the farm is allocated to befitting beneficiaries".

PA5 said, "Farming is a business; farmers must go all out to ensure that the land is productive and that the infrastructure they find on the farm is in a good state. Not only because it is a programme from the government but with having a mind that this is a business on which we survive with the hope that in future one will have a full title of the property". The Department still manages the farmers, transforming them to transition from subsistence farming to commercial farming. That is when we can say that we can allow them to purchase the land, but before these things, the lease would be the most appropriate for our farmers.

Another follow-up question was asked to assess the upkeeping and maintenance of the asset under a lease. The participants' responses are summarised in the Atlas-ti network diagram in Figure 2.

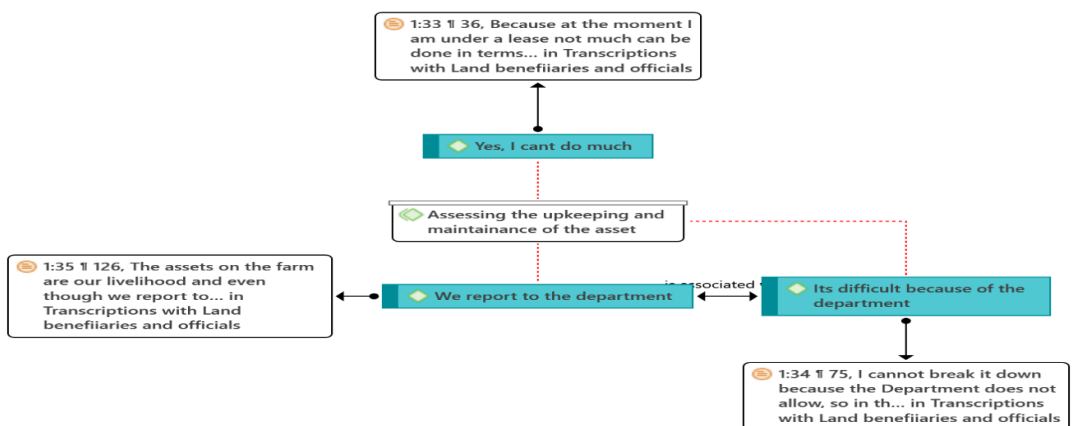


Figure 2: Assessing the upkeeping and maintenance of the asset under lease.

According to Figure 2, the participants agreed they could only do a little since the land was under lease. Another participant said they must contact the Department for approval before going into maintenance. Others confirmed that the maintenance is a tedious process due to the departmental rules.

This section explored how land beneficiaries manage real property assets regarding land ownership or land usage under a lease. According to the findings, the participants agreed that they manage real property assets by learning how to do proper farming, taking permissions from the Department before improving the infrastructure in their farms, assessing the reproductive value of the farm, piping the farm, maintenance of the infrastructure, and making boreholes and dams.

However, the participants agreed they could not be involved in the farm's development since the land is under lease. Another participant said they must contact the Department for approval before going into maintenance. According to Chamberlain & Anseeuw (2019), land assets must be managed effectively and efficiently to be used sustainably and productively over the long term. Confirming this statement, Musavengane (2019) avers that this needs a combination of planning, production, maintenance, development, and governance activities. Beneficiaries of land redistribution should actively manage their assets and look for the tools and assistance they require to succeed.

5.2 Social implications of the land reform programme for Mahikeng residents

This section assessed the social implication of the land reform programme on the people of Mahikeng municipality. The responses of the participants are summarised in Figure 3.

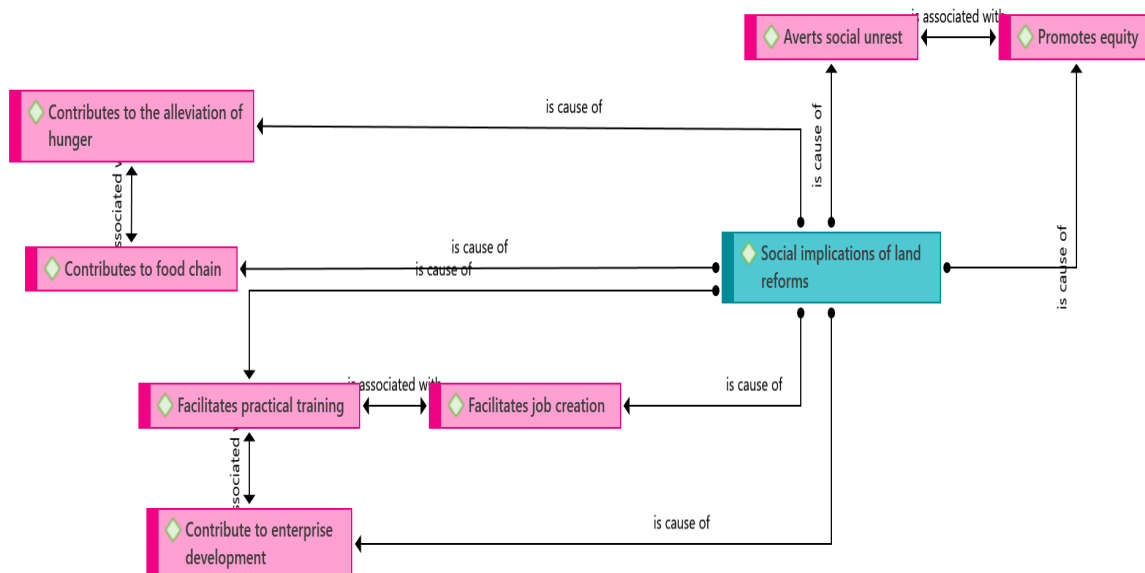


Figure 3: Social implications of land reform

According to Figure 3, the participants confirmed that the social implications of land reforms include averting social unrest, promoting equity, alleviating hunger, contributing to the food chain,

facilitating practical training, facilitating job creation, and contributing to enterprise development. The excerpts from the participants are as follows:

PA1 said, "Job creation as I have employed people from the local area".

PA2 affirmed, "Contributes to the food chain in the area as we are trying to make a living through meat production, and also, we have established vegetable crops on the farm which we sell in the local area".

PA3 said, "The University of North-West in Mahikeng also sends its agriculture students to the farm for practical training".

PA4 affirmed, "In terms of the agriculture transformation chatter, the program mandates the local Agri-industrial cooperatives as part of their mandate to contribute 3% of their net profit for enterprise development and supplier development and transformation of their suppliers change".

PA5 said, "The other one worth mentioning is that the Department, in partnership with the World Food Program in their global hunger alleviation program, and one of the conditions that the Department attached was that they must procure 15% of their goods and services locally".

PA6 said, "Promotes equity through land ownership, reduces poverty, and secures food for poor households. Corrects social injustices and averts social unrest".

PA7 attested, "The social impacts are minimal in that our farmers are not making any social impact on the local economy. They employ foreigners, so the opportunities which would have been meant for locals are being taken by them and do not employ locals, so they are failing to make a social impact in the local economies given these circumstances".

PA9 said, "We need to consider the local social economy and around Mahikeng, there is not much agricultural activity. The area has been mostly turned into residential spaces, and agriculture is still significant".

A follow-up question was asked to know where the beneficiaries operate their farms before going into a lease with the Department. The responses are summarised in Figure 4.

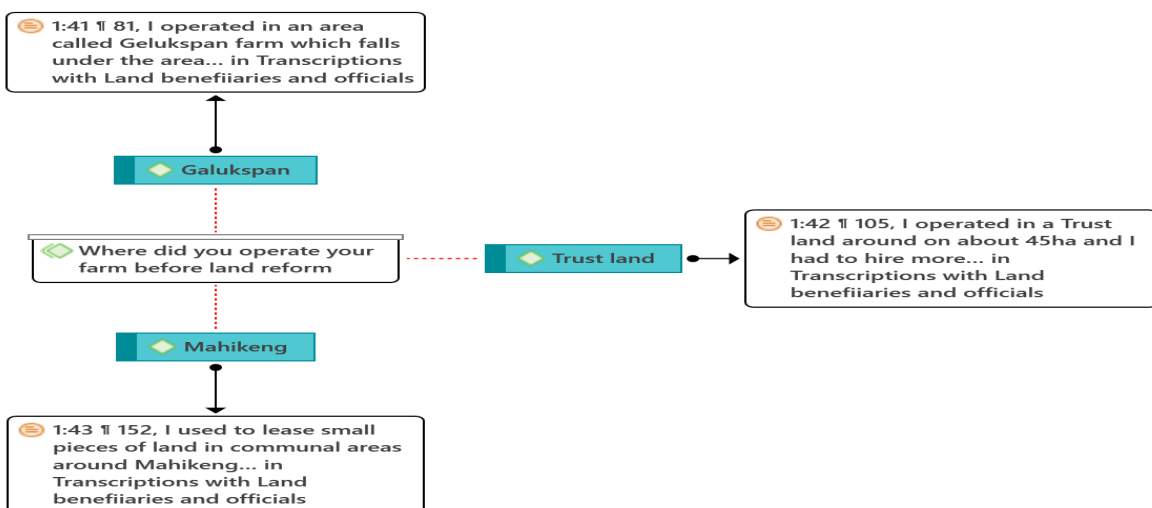


Figure 4: Areas of farm operation before land reform

According to Figure 4, the participants attested that they had operated farms in Galukspan, Trust Land, and Mahikeng. The excerpts from the participants are summarised below.

PA1 said, "I operated in an area called Gelukspan farm which falls under the area of Mafikeng. It was a family-owned farm of 150ha Dryland, I moved to hire more land around the area, and at my peak, I was working 1000ha of mostly belonging to relatives and others communal".

PA2 said, "I operated in an area called Ganyesa before on a piece of land belonging to my grandfather in a communal area under the tribal land".

PA3 said, "I operated in a Trust land around about 45ha, and I had to hire more land from others to increase my production".

PA4 said, "I used to lease small pieces of land in communal areas around Mahikeng".

Another follow-up question was asked to know the markets established by the land beneficiaries since benefiting from the programme. The responses from the participants are summarised in Figure 5.

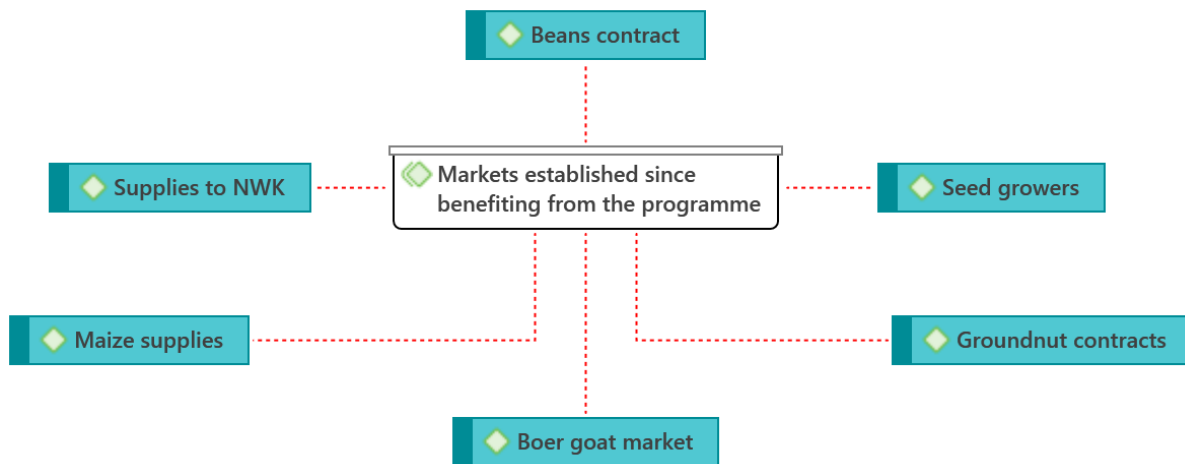


Figure 5: Markets established since benefitting from the lease.

According to Figure 5, the participants confirmed that the markets established since benefitting from the programme include beans contracts, seed growers, groundnut contracts, Boer goat market, maize supplies, and supplies to Noord Wes Koporassie (NWK). This agricultural company sells farm inputs to farmers. The excerpts from the participants are as follows:

PA1 said, "I have a Boer goats' market from Kwa-Zulu Natal and Mpumalanga Province. Being on the farm has enabled me to breed the goats according to the Boer goats' specifications. Accessing the market is much easier, wherein I can control my stock and feed them accordingly. I have been able to tap into the market in other Provinces, unlike when you are farming in communal land".

PA2 said, "I was part of a seed growers' contract of Monsanto, Heineken project on barley contract production. I worked with Omnia in their black farmer commercialisation programme, wherein we persuaded a grain market firm to be appointed with expertise to help design a comprehensive market strategy. I have planted beans on contract, with groundnuts for offtake contracts where the price was

guaranteed. I have worked with the world food program, where I supplied them with 500 ha tons of maize and negotiated a 15% suffix price, and they took care of the transport and storage. In the end, it is all about what is the best mechanisation strategy for my produce".

PA3 attested, "There is only one formal market in the area, so the price is not so good, Suffix price can be low at the time of harvesting, but production inputs like diesel are very high and eats into our profits".

PA4 said, "There is only one common formal market in the area: NWK. I also have Schoeman Boerdery, about 400km from the farm for beans. It is at Delmas, which is very far away in Johannesburg. I also have Roba, where I sell peanuts".

Another probe was made to assess if the skills of the beneficiaries have improved since the lease contract, and their responses are summarised in Figure 6.

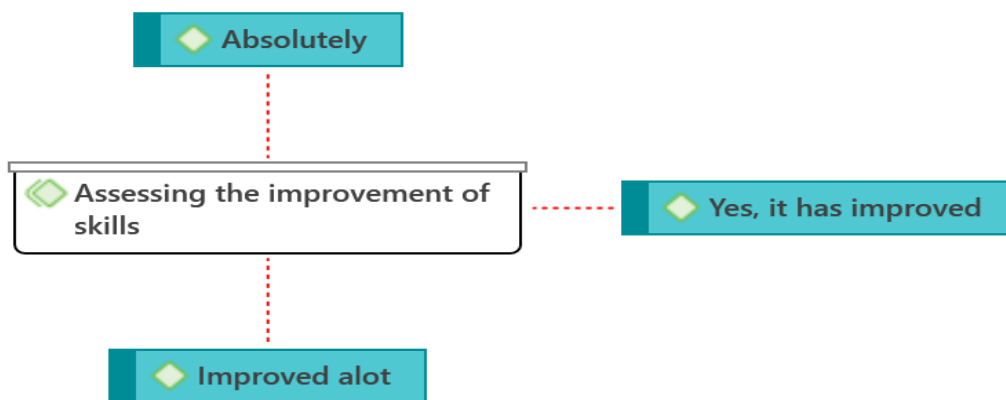


Figure 6: Assessing the improvement of the beneficiaries' skills.

According to Figure 6, the land beneficiaries agreed that their skills have improved since they entered lease contracts with the Department. The direct excerpts from the participants are as follows:

PA1 said, "Yes, I believe so, especially regarding the management of the stock and record keeping. I now understand my expenses and income stream generated".

PA2 said, "Absolutely, my skills have increased".

PA3 attested, "Yes! It had improved a lot because, unlike when I was farming in the Trust land, there was no competition, but being on a proper farm, now I compete with my neighbours and see where I can improve and do better".

PA4 said, "Yes! It had improved a little bit because before, my late husband and son were the ones who were actively involved. Now I must hold the reins, which is still a learning curve; here are some courses I have been attending with the Department of Agriculture".

PA5 said, "Yes! Because now I have my own space where I work".

Another probe was made to know if the income of the leaseholders had increased since getting involved in the lease contract. The summary of the participants' responses is presented in Figure 7.

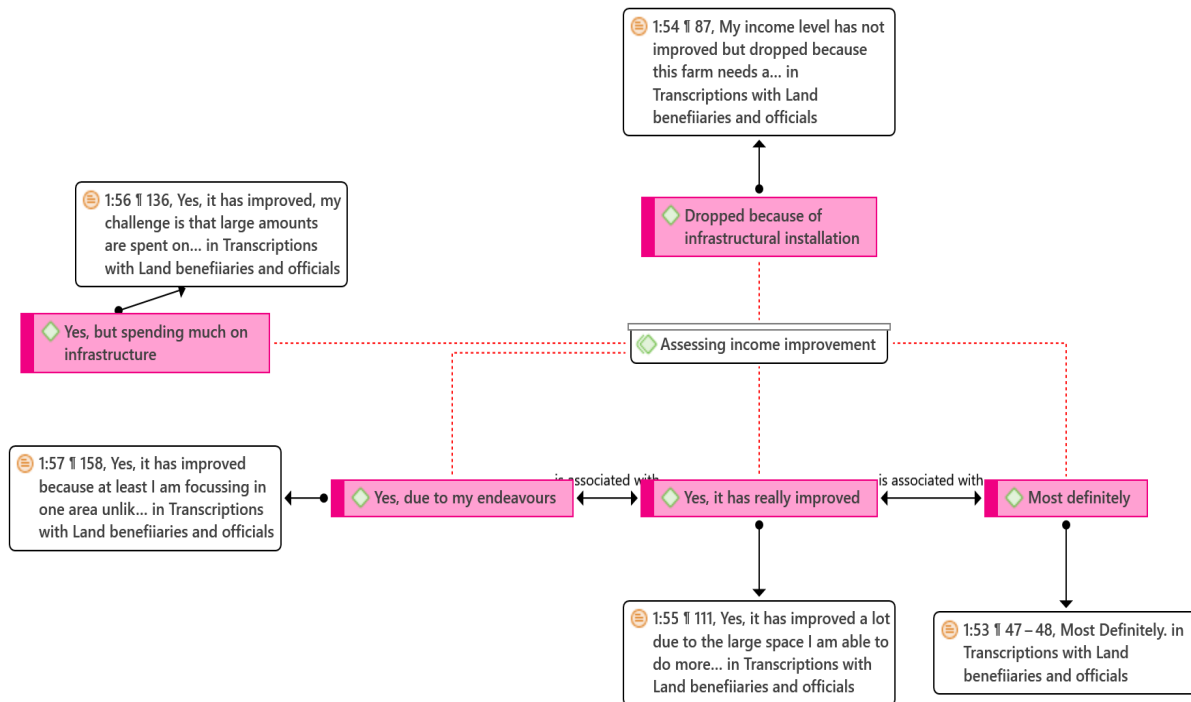


Figure 7: Assessing income improvement of the participants since the lease contract.

According to Figure 10, most study participants attested that their income increased after their lease contract. However, one of the participants confirmed that the revenue dropped due to the maintenance of the infrastructure. The excerpts of the participants are as follows:

PA1 said, "Most definitely, my income increased".

PA2 said, "My income level has not improved but dropped because this farm needs many things. The terrain is rocky, with five different soil types. Since 2014 the farm has been subsidised by income from my other private farm in Gelykspan".

PA3 said, "Yes, it has improved a lot due to the large space. I can do more, and the assistance from the Department contributes to that as well. Back at home, we would borrow money from".

PA4 said, "Most of the agricultural implements that the Department bought from the previous owner are scrap material which I have spent money on trying to repair during planting season".

Discussion of Results

The first objective of this study is to explore the strategies the land beneficiaries use to manage property assets when it comes to land ownership or land usage under the lease. According to the findings, the participants agreed that they manage property assets by learning how to do proper farming, taking permissions from the Department before improving the infrastructure in their

farms, assessing the reproductive value of the farm, piping the farm, maintenance of the infrastructure, and making boreholes and dams. The techniques and procedures used to use, maintain, and develop land for the benefit of the owner or community are the management of land assets (Musavengane, 2019) effectively and sustainably.

Confirming the findings from this section, Mudau et al. (2018) state that beneficiaries of land redistribution can manage land when it comes to land ownership through training and education, develop a business plan, seek financial help, engage the community, seek external funding, maintenance, and development. However, the participants agreed they could not be involved in the farm's development since the land is under lease. Another participant said they must contact the Department for approval before going into maintenance. According to Chamberlain & Anseeuw (2019), land assets must be managed effectively and efficiently to be used sustainably and productively over the long term. Confirming this statement, Musavengane (2019) avers that this needs a combination of planning, production, maintenance, development, and governance activities. Beneficiaries of land redistribution should actively manage their assets and look for the tools and assistance they require to succeed.

The last objective assessed the social implication of the land reform programme on the people of Mahikeng municipality. A "land reform" process involves transferring ownership or control of the property from one group or person to another, usually to promote more fair land distribution or correct historical injustices (Chigara, 2019; Chamberlain. & Anseeuw, 2019). In the empirical study, the participants confirmed that the social implications of land reforms include averting social unrest, promoting equity, alleviating hunger, contributing to the food chain, facilitating practical training, facilitating job creation, and contributing to enterprise development. This conforms to the findings of Chigara (2019) and Yang (2021), who opine that the land reform process can enhance access to land, improve economic development, increase social and political stability, change land use patterns, and reduce potential conflicts and tensions. The participants confirmed that the markets benefitting from the programme include beans contracts, seed growers, groundnut contracts, Boer goat market, maize supplies, and supplies to NWK.

Furthermore, the participants agreed that their skills have improved since they entered lease contracts with the Department. Also, most study participants attested that their income increased after their lease contract. However, one of the participants confirmed that the income dropped due to the maintenance of the infrastructure. The findings in this section prove that the land reform process has improved the economic status of the people of Mahikeng, hence giving them more access to land which might be linked to employment and poverty reduction.

Conclusion

This study explored the social implications of the land reform programme and strategies for managing real property assets. The study adopted a qualitative research method to find answers to the research questions, and this assisted in interacting with the participants, thereby obtaining their opinions. Findings from the study confirmed that the land beneficiaries should adopt the most

effective strategy is to collaborate with the Department of Rural Development and Lands to seek support and technical assistance to develop the properties. The study concludes that the social implications of land reform programmes depend on the policy's specific circumstances and goals and how the policy is implemented. It is essential to consider the potential social impacts of land reform programmes carefully and to ensure that they are implemented to promote the common good of the citizenry.

Recommendations

The study recommends that the land beneficiaries carefully understand the terms and conditions of land ownership and any obligations or responsibilities they may have. After benefiting, they should use a comprehensive plan to make informed decisions about land use. This may involve identifying potential sources of income, such as farming or forestry, or developing a plan for conservation or recreation. They should seek technical support and assistance from the Department, such as training in land management practices or access to financial or marketing resources.

Furthermore, the land beneficiaries should collaborate with their community members to build support and cooperation. Regarding land protection, the beneficiaries should take steps to protect their land from potential threats, such as illegal occupation or environmental degradation. This may involve working with local authorities or community organisations to establish clear boundaries and enforce their rights as landowners. Before developing the assets, land beneficiaries should take permission from the Department before improving the infrastructure in their farms, assessing the reproductive value of the farm, piping the farm, maintaining infrastructure, and making boreholes and dams. Regarding discord, disputes, or misconceptions, they should seek legal assistance and clarification to ensure their rights are protected.

The Department should also monitor and evaluate the land redistribution process to ensure it meets its goals and objectives and identify any challenges or areas for improvement. Also, the Department should foster sustainable land use practices to benefit the environment and local communities. This may involve training new landowners in sustainable agriculture or forestry practices. The Department should assist in the production inputs, interviewing and allocating farms, empowering handicapped farmers, facilitating rural development, marketing the farmers' produce, equitable distribution of land, and monitoring of projects. The Department should also assist small-scale farmers, embark on regular monitoring and evaluation, provide training, and support production.

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