

**ASSESSING THE ALIGNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA'S LAND REFORM
POLICY TO PEOPLE'S ASPIRATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS:
A POLICY-ORIENTED REPORT BASED ON
A SURVEY IN THREE PROVINCES**

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1 Introduction

Purpose and scope of the study

The purpose of this study is to shed light on people's aspirations and expectations in respect of redistributive land reform, as well as their general, less personal, attitudes as to what land reform means for South Africa. It thus seeks to inform the debate about land reform and land reform policy in a particular way, e.g. not assessing delivery performance relative to targets, nor by assessing its impact on those who have directly benefited from land reform, but rather by *clarifying the targets* themselves, where targets are understood in both a narrow and broad sense. As such, the study seeks to go back to more fundamental questions: who wants land reform, what do they want it for, and what might be land reform's contribution to national goals such as development and reconciliation?

The design of the study was very simple. It consisted of a survey among primarily black respondents in three provinces, using a structured questionnaire. The survey was conducted according to a probabilistic sample which was designed to ensure adequate representivity at provincial level and according to pre-selected rural and urban 'settlement types.' The reason for focusing on only three provinces – namely Limpopo, Free State, and Eastern Cape – was lack of resources with which to cover all nine provinces. There is no supposition that the results here hold equally for the rest of the country, and indeed, there is some evidence of provincial variation demonstrated in this report, however the reader will have to judge the likelihood as to whether the main findings are or are not of national significance.

By way of background, this study forms part of a larger international initiative called "Measuring Democracy, Human Rights and Governance," or METAGORA. The aim of METAGORA is to promote the use of statistical methods in support of democratic dialogue and evidence-based policy-making, in particular in the context of distributive development. Apart from South Africa, other country partners participating in the METAGORA project include Mexico, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Palestine. Each participating county chose its own development focus area, which in South Africa was land reform. Notwithstanding its name, performance in terms of democratic principles, good governance, and respect for human rights is not necessarily or even primarily understood in a formal manner, for example by measuring the extent to which commitments articulated in the South African Constitution or international conventions are being honoured or violated. Rather, the emphasis is on understanding people's needs and aspirations in respect of land, so as to determine whether existing land reform policy is adequately aligned to them.

This report aims to distil the most important findings from the study, and to explain why they are important from a policy perspective. A more thorough description of the methodology and complete set of findings can be found in the final "Final Technical Report" (HSRC, 2005). In addition, the questionnaire and data set (without identifying information) can be furnished on request.

The structure of the report is as follows. Following this introductory section, there are four sections that convey the main findings:

- Section 2 examines the issue of land dispossession and attitudes towards redress;

- Section 3 quantifies the extent of land demand and seeks to understand the nature of that land demand;
- Section 4 probes people's general attitudes towards land reform in terms of how important it is, how it should be conducted and what it should seek to achieve; and
- Section 5 explores the question of how aware people are of the government's Land Reform Programme, as well as probes people's perceptions of government performance in respect of the Programme.

Thereafter, the conclusion seeks to summarise what the study finds as to the alignment or non-alignment of current policy to what people want, need and expect.

Land reform in the context of South Africa's democracy

The recognition of governments as being legitimate is regarded as dependent upon them having gained power through democratic processes. This reflects the universally accepted principle that democracy, both in gaining power and governing a state, and respect for human rights, are indispensable features of a legitimate state and good governance. Furthermore, respect for human rights is a condition for state recognition in international law.

The universality of democracy as a basis for good governance is rooted in the notion that those who are to be governed ought to have a stake in whom will govern them and the laws and policies according to which they will be governed. Democracy further requires that the electorate is able to make this determination on the basis of policies openly put to them, and that they may make their determination freely, confidentially and without coercion. Furthermore, democracy entails that, once elected, those in power conduct themselves according to procedural rules, primarily those that respect the rights of their citizens. In addition, democratic governments are required to conduct themselves in an open and transparent manner and in accordance with the law and constitution of the state, which is understood as adherence to the rule of law. The respect for human rights is itself regarded as one of the indicators of democracy, while due process informs the notion of good governance and the rule of law.

In South Africa, respect for human rights and the democratic process are imbued with added significance, because prior to the first non-racial democratic elections in 1994, the apartheid state emphatically negated these principles in respect of the majority black population. The mission of post-apartheid South Africa has therefore largely been informed by the imperative to deepen the non-racial system of governance and democracy, and establish a human rights culture. However, even before the turning point of 1994, there was a common awareness that political transformation had to be complemented by economic and social transformation, in particular to redress the material deprivations and denial of opportunities experienced under apartheid. A clear expression of the inclusive nature of transformation was the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) put forward by the African National Congress (ANC) in 1994, which set out a broad plan of transformation which, among other things, touched on all sectors of the economy, improved access to health care, education, etc. (ANC, 1994).

One of the areas highlighted in the RDP “Policy Framework” document is land. Land ownership in South Africa has historically been a source of conflict and contention. Colonial and apartheid policies dispossessed millions of black South Africans of their land and moved them into overcrowded and impoverished reserves, homelands and townships. It is estimated that more than 3.5 million people and their descendants have been victims of racially based dispossessions and forced removals during the years of segregation and apartheid. These racially based land policies were a cause of insecurity, landlessness, poverty and great hurt amongst black people, and also resulted in inefficient urban and rural land use patterns and a fragmented system of land administration. On the eve of the 1994 elections, blacks controlled only about 15% of non-public land, predominantly being the “homelands” and “coloured reserves.”

The unequal distribution of land in South Africa, and land policy, constituted the core of apartheid, and was introduced and first institutionalised by the Glen Gray Act of 1896. The subsequent Land Act of 1913, and revisions in 1939, consolidated the unequal distribution of land along racial lines. Ultimately, this distribution resulted in the formulation of the homeland policy, which constituted territorial and administrative areas where the black population was expected to reside in terms of their ethnic origins. This policy was euphemistically referred to as “separate development.” Legislation was created to control their movement from these “self-governing territories” to ‘white’ South Africa.

Following the formation of the homelands, forced removals took place on a massive scale. ‘Black spots’ – i.e. black communities in areas designated for whites – were eliminated, and black people were dumped in homeland areas. Many black communities were divested of their land in white areas, and the land on which they were resettled was often not suitable for cultivation or grazing, or they were resettled among groups who were forced to accommodate them despite worsening land shortages. Townships around or in urban areas served as cheap labour reservoirs. In 1994, these territories were abolished, and nine provinces were demarcated, many of which included the impoverished former homeland areas.

In dispossessing people of their land, apartheid also deprived people of a number of other related entitlements. Land as a *right* is a historical construct as a result of the history of apartheid South Africa. However, land is also a *resource* which can facilitate the realisation of other rights and entitlements, such as housing, freedom of movement and subsistence. Land Reform in South Africa tries to address both these components – land as a right and as a resource.

Examining policy and the assumptions underlying policy

This study operates at two levels, namely by examining people’s expectations and aspirations in relation to land reform policy, as well as in relation to the assumptions underlying those policies.

In terms of the policies, the “Policy Framework” document of the RDP specified that there should be three main elements of land reform, which were later provided for in the Bill of Rights of the Constitution, and which are and remain:

- Land restitution, involving the restoration of land or other compensation to victims of forced removals;

- Land redistribution, through which people apply for assistance with which to acquire land for farming and/or settlement; and
- Tenure reform, which seeks to improve the clarity and robustness of tenure rights, mainly for residents of former homeland areas.

The focus of this study is on the first two elements, namely restitution and redistribution. In respect of restitution, we seek to establish whether the basic parameters of the restitution programme match what people who have experienced dispossession want and expect, for example, whether and how they should be accorded redress, by whom, and in what form. Similarly, we seek to understand whether the redistribution programme matches or fails to match the nature of land demand that obtains, for example in terms of why people want land, how much they want, etc., as well as in terms of whether the current approach to land redistribution can cater for the magnitude of people's demand for land.

The second level relates to the assumptions underlying these policies. Policies are rarely based purely on perfect, objective information and unambiguous analysis. Rather, policies tend to be informed by a number of assumptions concerning what the policy is trying to achieve and the means whereby these objectives can be met. These assumptions relate to the policy formulators' notions concerning the why, when, how and where of a particular policy, in this instance, land. However, if the assumptions of policy-makers are not informed and or shared by the stakeholders – those who will be affected by the policy, including, and perhaps, most importantly, the “target” groups – the policy runs the risk of being unsustainable in the long run. Part of the thinking that went into the present study was to identify the core assumptions underlying South Africa's land reform programme (especially its redistribution and restitution components), and then to test them against the attitudes and expectations of those to whom the policies are targeted. To be sure, designing a cogent land reform programme is not simply a matter of finding out what people ‘think and want’; there are numerous other considerations as well, related to legal frameworks, resource limitations, technical considerations, etc. However, understanding the target populations is an important ingredient in formulating good policy.

Four core assumptions were identified, largely through a scoping of the RDP “Policy Framework” document of 1994, and the *White Paper on South African Land Policy* of 1997. These are listed below, together with selected quotations from these documents in order to illustrate the various ways in which these assumptions have been articulated.

Land is a personal priority of most rural dwellers

- “Land is the most basic need for rural dwellers.” (RDP)
- “And in implementing the national land reform programme, and through the provision of support services, the democratic government will build the economy by generating large-scale employment, increasing rural incomes and eliminating overcrowding.” (RDP)

Land reform should seek to benefit the masses, with an emphasis on the poor

- “The land reform programme’s poverty focus is aimed at achieving a better quality of life for the most disadvantaged.” (*White Paper*)
- “Land is the most basic need for rural dwellers.” (RDP)
- “This programme must be demand-driven and must aim to supply residential and productive land to the poorest section of the rural population and aspirant farmers.” (RDP)

Land reform is a national priority

- “A national land reform programme is essential for rural development.” (RDP)
- “The RDP aims for land reform to raise incomes and productivity through better use of the land.” (RDP)
- “A national land reform programme is the central and driving force of a programme of rural development.” (RDP)
- “We envisage a land reform which results in a rural landscape consisting of small, medium and large farms; one which promotes both equity and efficiency through a combined agrarian and industrial strategy in which land reform is a spark to the engine of growth.” (*White Paper*)
- “Our vision is of a land policy and land reform programme that contributes to reconciliation, stability, growth and development in an equitable and sustainable way.” (*White Paper*)

Land reform is necessary to redress both the land-related violations against specific people, and the collective injustice of land dispossession

- “To redress the suffering caused by the policy of forced removals, the democratic government must, through the mechanism of a land claims court, restore land to South Africans dispossessed by discriminatory legislation since 1913. This court must be accessible to the poor and illiterate.” (RDP)
- “The land reform programme, including costing, implementing mechanisms, and a training programme, must be in place within one year after the elections. The programme must aim to redistribute 30 per cent of agricultural land within the first five years of the programme. The land restitution programme must aim to complete its task of adjudication in five years.” (RDP)
- “The reform programme must put right the injustices of forced removals...and [it must] give access to land to those who were denied it by apartheid laws.” (RDP)

The study illustrates the extent to which some of these assumptions are well-founded. In some respects, however, the study also addresses instances where policy has over time deviated from these assumptions, and seeks to understand whether there is or is not a basis for these deviations in

terms of people's expectations and needs. In other words, how responsive are policy-makers to would-be beneficiaries?

Survey methodology and execution

Within the confines of the three selected provinces, the study sought to ensure a fair representation of different possible 'land reform constituencies' among black South Africans. Four groups were identified:

- farm dwellers, which for our purposes was understood as blacks residing on commercial farms owned by someone else and located in former 'white' South Africa;
- communal dwellers, meaning blacks residing in a former homeland area;
- urban formal dwellers, meaning those residing in areas designated by Statistics South Africa as urban or peri-urban, and who reside in areas characterised by formal housing structures; and
- urban informal dwellers, meaning those residing in areas designated by Statistics South Africa as urban, but who reside in settlements predominately consisting of informal housing ('shacks').

In order to get an appropriate level of representation among these different 'settlement types' across the three provinces, multistage stratified cluster (probability) sampling was employed. The sampling frame that was used for drawing residents and farm dwellers was largely based on the 2001 census. The 2001 census database contains descriptive statistics (e.g. total number of people, total number of households, etc.) for all the enumerator areas (EAs) in South Africa. However, the reliability of the census has been questioned and therefore a slightly adjusted census-based sampling frame was used which has been developed by a renowned, South African statistician, Professor Stoker. The value of using this sample frame is that a representative sample could be drawn of all of the target groups and geographical areas and the results of the survey could thereafter be properly weighted to the 2001 census-based population figures.

Within each of the explicit strata, EAs from the 2001 census were selected and formed the primary sampling units (PSUs). Within the PSU or EAs, households were randomly selected based on an interval applicable to the EA, i.e. number of households divided by number of households to visit in the EA. At the visiting point the respondent was randomly selected from the present adult household members. The purpose of this was to ensure that the survey covered a range of adult household members, e.g. not only household heads. This strategy implied that it was particularly important to approach households when there was a greater likelihood of all adult members being at home, i.e. during evenings and over weekends.

Originally it was planned to finalise the fieldwork by the end of 2004. However, because of the difficulties experienced in gaining access to commercial farms, the fieldwork relating to farm dwellers was postponed to the following year. A survey company, Development Research Africa (DRA), was contracted to undertake the fieldwork. Phase 1 of the fieldwork was conducted in November 2004. This involved all interviews apart from those with farm dwellers. Phase 2 of the

fieldwork started in February and finished March 2005. In total, 1279 interviews were conducted from among 149 EAs. Tables 1.1 to 1.3 summarise the realisation of the sample and report basic sample characteristics, while Figures 1.1 to 1.3 give a sense of the geographical spread of the EAs.

What these tables do not reflect is the smaller numbers of interviews conducted with commercial farm owners. Since farm dwellers were typically accessed by means of approaching the farm owner, it was decided to interview farm owners in their own right, using a questionnaire that in many respects resembled that of the questionnaire used for black respondents. For the most part, the findings from the interviews with farm owners are not reported here, in part for the sake of keeping the report reasonably brief, and in part because the sample of farm owners was too small to be regarded as statistically representative. (However, the “Final Technical Report” does have a chapter of selected findings from the farm owner interviews.) However, in some sections of the report, the responses of farm owners are reported alongside those of black respondents, though given the small size of the farm owner sample the implied comparisons must be treated with caution. In total, 69 farm owners were interviewed. Of these, 66 (96%) described themselves as white, one as coloured, and two declined to answer the question.

Table 1.1 Number of interviews conducted by settlement type and province

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal	Total
Limpopo	96	241	52	74	463
Free State	128	70	38	22	258
Eastern Cape	86	256	94	122	558
Total	310	567	184	218	1279

Table 1.2 Gender composition of sample

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal	Total
Female	30.5%	68.7%	64.7%	71.1%	58.3%
Male	69.5%	31.3%	35.3%	28.9%	41.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 1.3 Age composition of sample

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal	Total
18 to 24 years	14.2%	20.3%	22.3%	17.0%	18.4%
25 to 34 years	34.1%	19.4%	28.3%	32.6%	26.8%
35 to 59 years	40.1%	35.3%	34.8%	37.6%	36.9%
60 years +	11.6%	25.0%	14.7%	12.8%	17.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Generally, most selected households and respondents were co-operative and supportive. Respondents were generally welcoming and willing to participate in the survey. A significant number was not aware of the implications of the land reform programme. Some respondents, though, were slightly bored by having to respond to issues that they did not really understand.

Figure 1.2 Location of sampled EAs in the Free State province

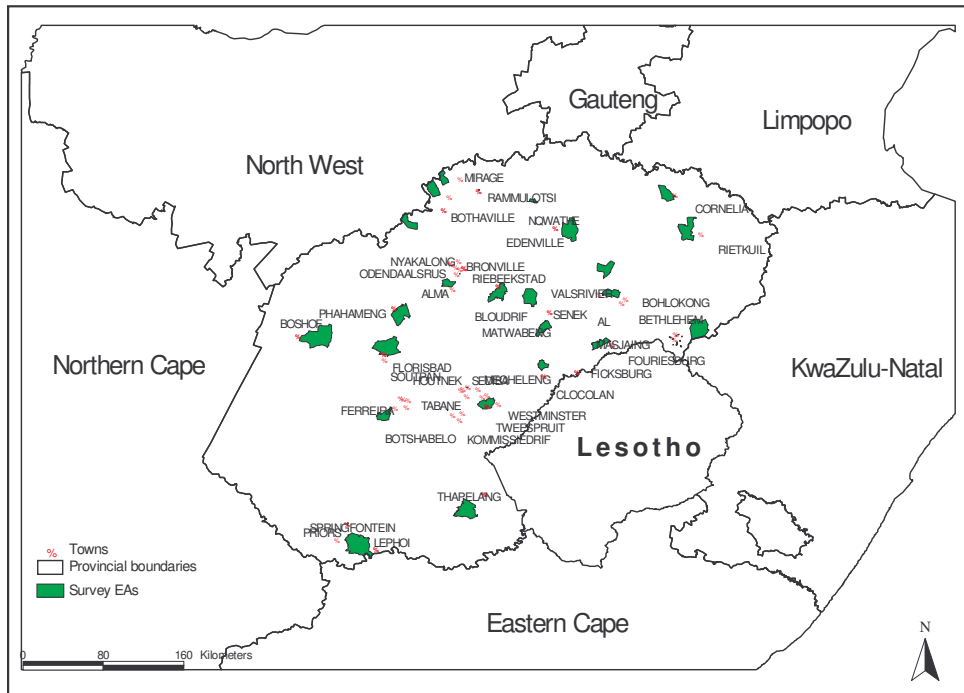
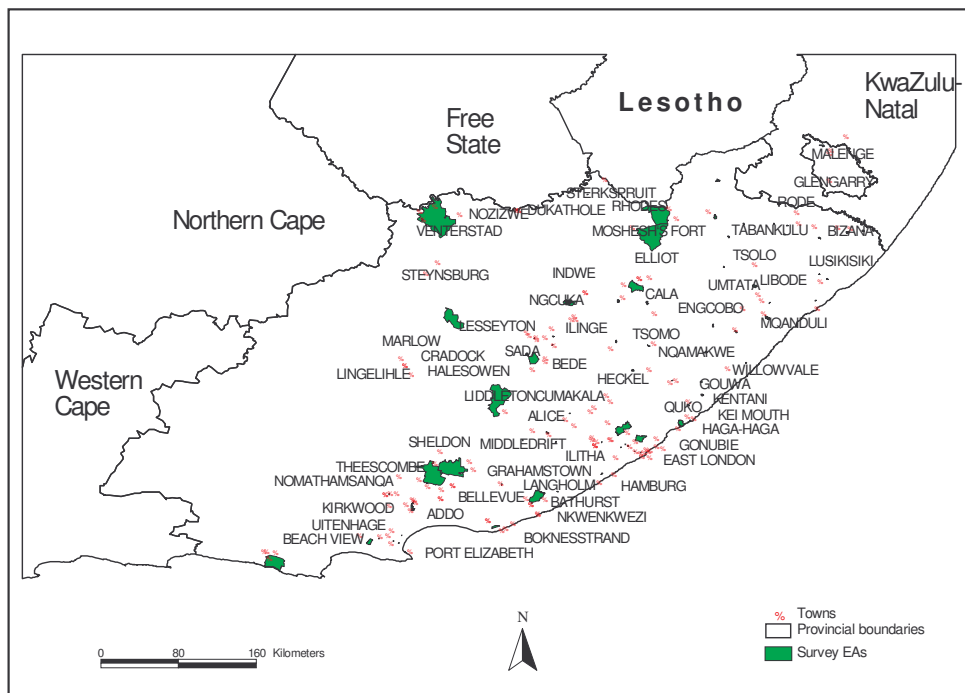


Figure 1.3 Location of sampled EAs in Eastern Cape province



2 Land dispossession and attitudes towards redress

Introduction

This section presents data from the survey relating to respondents' experience of land dispossession, their attitudes as to how such dispossession should be redressed, and actual engagement with the Land Restitution Programme. It must be stressed that the purpose of asking about respondents' experience of land dispossession is not to arrive at an objective, definitive determination of the number of people who were dispossessed – there are more authoritative sources for that purpose (e.g. Surplus People Project, 1983) – rather, the purpose is to understand attitudes related to dispossession, in the context of which is it vital to know whether respondents regard themselves (or their ancestors) as having been dispossessed of land.

Perceived incidence of land dispossession

The reported experience of land dispossession is common but not the norm. Between 7% and 20% of respondents reported that they themselves, or their ancestors, had been subjected to land dispossession, depending on the type of settlement (Table 2.1) and province (Table 2.2).

Table 2.1 Share of respondents indicating their household or ancestors were dispossessed of land, by settlement type

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal
Yes	9.2%	15.4%	14.9%	13.9%
No	74.0%	67.9%	64.5%	72.6%
Do not know	16.7%	16.7%	20.6%	13.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
n	308	556	184	218

Table 2.2 Share of respondents indicating their household or ancestors were dispossessed of land, by province

	Limpopo	Free State	Eastern Cape
Yes	19.4%	7.4%	13.6%
No	64.7%	70.4%	70.1%
Do not know	15.9%	22.2%	16.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
n	453	257	556

A very small fraction of those who had experienced land dispossession indicated that this had happened prior to 1913 (Table 2.3). The significance of this is that 1913, being the year in which the Natives Land Act was introduced, is for purposes of the Land Restitution Programme the year before which people's claims for land restoration are not regarded as valid.

Table 2.3 Year in which household or ancestors were dispossessed of land

Before 1913	0.5%
1913 to 1993	62.2%
Since 1994	1.7%
Do not know	35.7%
Total	100.0%
n	176

Three quarters of those who reported having experienced land dispossession, indicated that ‘whites’ were responsible (Table 2.4). ‘Government’ is also cited as key agent of land loss, and in fact 61% of those who indicated government, also indicated ‘whites’ as being responsible (not shown). Other tribes and other households are also cited, though less frequently.

Table 2.4 ‘Who was responsible for the dispossession?’ (more than one answer possible)

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal	All
Whites	76.5%	70.3%	85.3%	93.1%	76.5%
The government	30.3%	31.9%	28.2%	42.6%	32.0%
The colonialists	3.7%	6.3%	3.9%	28.4%	7.9%
Another tribe	13.4%	8.4%	5.2%	1.7%	7.2%
Another household	4.4%	1.1%	4.0%	9.0%	2.8%
n	32	81	35	28	176

Attitudes towards redress

Most affected households feel that some form of redress is called for (Table 2.5). Why farm dwellers and urban informal dwellers should feel this less frequently than others is unclear, though one should bear in mind the effectively small sub-sample sizes underpinning this comparison.

Table 2.5 ‘Should there be an apology or compensation made to those whose land was dispossessed?’ (As % of those who indicated that that had been dispossessed)

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal
Should be compensated for	52.6%	74.2%	60.3%	54.2%
n	31	76	33	26

As for the form that this redress should take, the first preference is for land money rates higher than land in % (meaning mostly that which was taken, but also alternative land), but there is also a

strong demand for financial compensation, as well as mention of entirely different forms of compensation (Table 2.6).

Table 2.6 ‘What form should this compensation take?’ (As % of those who indicated that their loss should be apologised for or compensated for somehow)

There should be an apology to us	14.1%
We should get the land back that was taken from us	48.3%
We should get some other land back	23.6%
We should be given money	59.3%
We should be given houses	14.5%
We should be given jobs	13.7%
N	120

Among those in favour of some form of redress, government is most commonly identified as the entity that should bear responsibility (Table 2.7). White farmers and whites in general are also singled out, but much less frequently than government. Importantly, the focus on government accords well with how land restitution is conceptualised, in particular the fact that restitution claims are technically claims against the State rather than against particular property owners.

Table 2.7 ‘Who should be responsible for offering compensation?’

The people who stay on the land that was ours	23.4%
The government	82.2%
Whites in general	11.2%
White farmers	18.4%
n	120

Engagement with the land restitution process

Turning now to results from a different part of the questionnaire that deals participation in the land restitution process, Table 2.8 reports that proportion of respondents whose households had lodged a claim, or whose household was part of a group claim.

Table 2.8 Whether household has lodged a restitution claim or been included in a claim (Asked only of those who were aware of the Restitution Programme)

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal
Yes	10.0%	8.9%	17.8%	19.7%
No	82.0%	88.0%	70.4%	80.3%
Do not know	8.0%	3.1%	11.8%	0.0%

Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
n	20	43	73	136

On the face of it, the percentages who answered ‘yes’ are very nearly the same as the percentages who indicated that they or their ancestors had suffered land dispossession (see Table 2.1 above). However, it is important to note that the denominators are different: whereas in Table 2.1, the percentages are calculated relative to all respondents, in Table 2.8 the question was restricted to those who had demonstrated some knowledge of the Restitution Programme (this is discussed more in Section 5), which it turns out is a fraction of all respondents. Indeed, it appears that awareness is a major issue. As shown in Table 2.9, only 28.5% of those who reported having experienced land dispossession could correctly describe the Restitution Programme, suggesting that lack of awareness may have posed a serious obstacle to getting legal redress as provided for in the restitution programme. To be sure, knowledge of restitution is certainly greater among those who reported having suffered land dispossession relative to those who had not – 28.5% versus 9.8% – however, this is little consolation for the majority of those who experienced land dispossession but who were unable to describe the Land Restitution Programme.

Table 2.9 Relationship between experience of dispossession and awareness of the Restitution Programme

		Household or ancestors dispossessed?		
		Yes	No	Do not know
Could correctly describe the Restitution Programme	Yes	28.5%	9.8%	10.4%
	No	71.5%	90.2%	89.6%
	Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	n	177	868	221

Table 2.10 attempts to present a composite picture of the level of engagement in the restitution process of those who describe themselves as having been dispossessed. Among those 177 respondents who indicated that their households or ancestors had been dispossessed of land, 71.5% (on a weighted basis) could not correctly describe the Restitution Programme, and so were not asked further questions about their participation in it. The other 28.5% are divided among those who are part of a claim, those who are not part of a claim, and those who do not know. The main finding is as follows: of those who indicated that they or their ancestors had been deprived of land, only 9% could confidently be said to have lodged a claim or to have been part of a claim.

Table 2.10 Relationship between experience of dispossession and engagement with the restitution process

		Household or ancestors dispossessed?		
		Yes	No	Do not know
Could not describe Restitution		71.5%	90.2%	89.6%
Lodged a claim or been included in a claim?	Yes	9.3%	0.2%	0.0%
	No	18.3%	9.0%	10.3%
	Do not know	0.9%	0.6%	0.2%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
n		177	868	221

This is corroborated by the question of why respondents or their families did not lodge land claims (Table 2.11), that is to say, for those respondents who had demonstrated some knowledge of the Restitution Programme, but who had not in fact lodged a claim. The predominant answer was, rather obviously, that the household had never lost land. The second and third most common answers, however, are rather disturbing: almost 14% did not know how to lodge a claim, and another 8% could not explain ('did not know') why they or their families had not lodged a claim.

*Table 2.11 Main reason household did not lodge a claim
(Asked only of those who were aware of the Restitution Programme and who indicated that they had not lodged a claim)*

Reason did not apply/lodge claim	Share
Household/family never lost land	61.1%
Did not know how to lodge a claim	14.8%
Do not qualify	7.4%
Land claim take too long	6.3%
Do not want the land back	3.1%
Lost land, but before 1913	0.3%
Do not know	5.4%
Other	1.5%
Total	100.0%
n	108

3 Land demand

Introduction

As indicated in Section 1, the founding policy documents (i.e. the RDP “Policy Framework” document and the *White Paper*) suggest a generally pro-poor agenda for land reform, and by implication for land redistribution. Does this automatically imply what land reform should look like? The public policy debate that was sparked by the introduction of the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) sub-programme in 2001 as the ‘flagship’ redistribution vehicle, was in part fuelled by the assumption among some critics of LRAD that ‘pro-poor’ implies ‘small-scale,’ whereas LRAD appeared to have been created for the sake of promoting the emergence of a black commercial farming class. However, those defending LRAD point out that to the extent it does benefit aspirant commercial black farmers, they are themselves predominantly poor by any standard, and moreover the deliberately flexible grant mechanism upon which LRAD is based is designed to accommodate prospective beneficiaries across a wide spectrum.

The present study does not attempt to resolve these debates, but it does seek to inform them by supplementing what is a surprisingly modest empirical grounding. It does this by providing estimates on how many people want land, how much they want, and what they want it for. The idea is not that land reform/redistribution should automatically attempt to meet this demand for land, but that there might be an advantage in designing land reform, and in particular land redistribution, that takes that demand into account. In any event, it is not necessarily a question of which kind of land demand to cater for, but how to strike an appropriate balance between different types of demands.

The section is divided into three main sub-sections, corresponding roughly to the questions of ‘how many people want land,’ ‘how much land they want,’ and ‘what they want land for.’ In addition to providing broad estimates as to these magnitudes, much of the import of the section is to understand the demographics of land demand, that is, but comparing and contrasting different sub-populations in terms of these different dimensions of land demand.

Before proceeding to the findings, one methodological note is in order. In drafting the questionnaire for the study, the research team was uncertain whether they should be asking people whether they ‘want land’ or ‘need land.’ Because it was not possible to resolve this, it was decided to proceed in a manner that was generally inclusive, but which might also allow one to quantify the difference between ‘need’ and ‘want’ (see Technical Report for details). In general we conclude that trying to quantify what share of land demand relates to ‘need’ and what to ‘want’ is not useful, given that the line separating ‘need’ from ‘want’ proves to be very fine. From a policy perspective, ‘need’ is not a qualifying criterion, thus this inclusive approach is suitable for gauging for the demand for land as it could in principle present itself to the local Land Affairs office.

The incidence of land demand

Figures 3.1 to 3.3 provide an overall sense of the magnitude of land demand, that is, those indicating that they either need or want land in addition to what they might already access at present. The overall observation is that the demand for land is robust but not universal. Moreover,

one can discern important differences by sub-population (e.g. settlement type), location and gender.

Figure 3.1 Proportion of respondents who need/want land, by settlement type

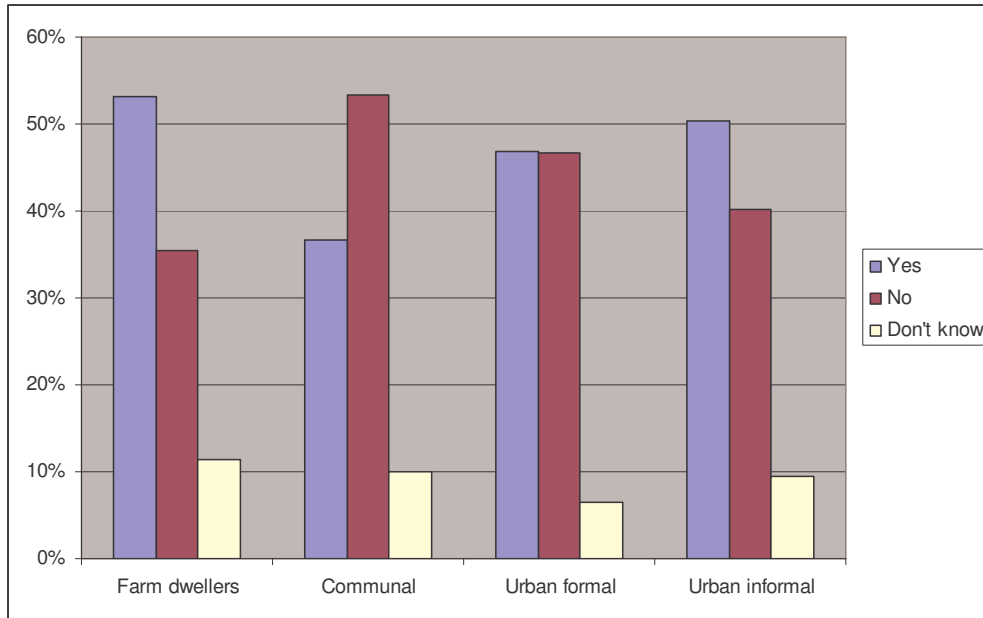
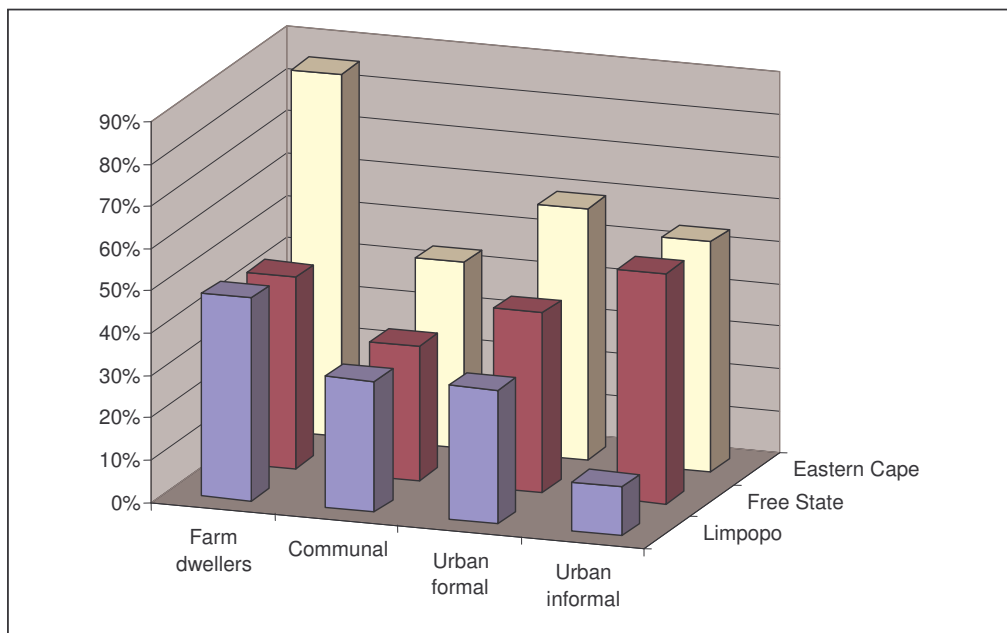
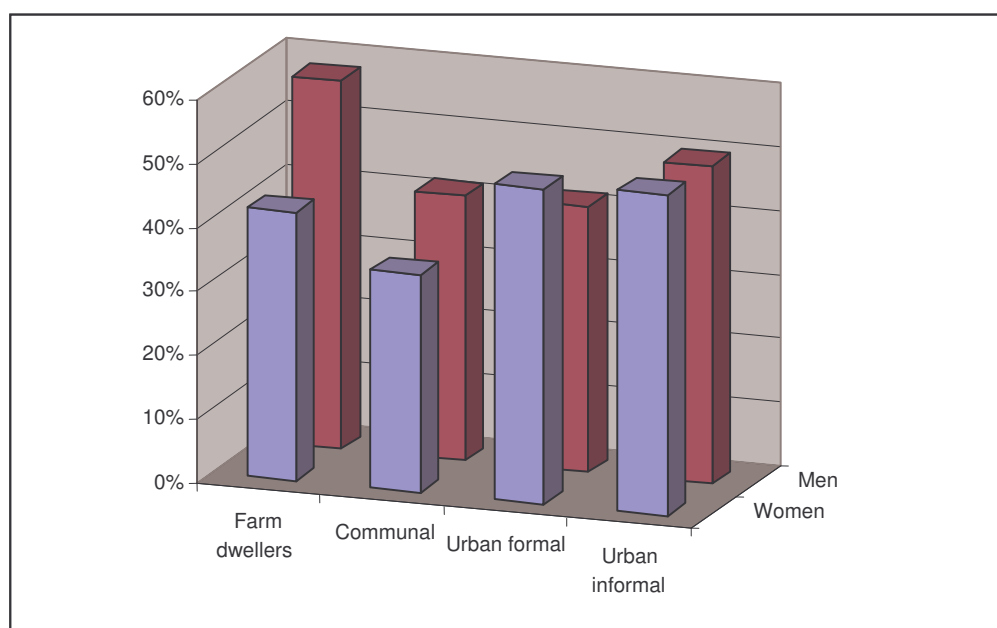


Figure 3.2 Proportion of respondents who need/want land, by settlement type and province



The provincial differences in demands are fairly large with varying patterns within provinces. Figure 3.2 shows that these mainly pertain to relatively higher demand in the Eastern Cape, especially among farm dwellers, and lower demand in Limpopo, especially in urban areas. Furthermore, as indicated in Figure 3.3, demand in rural areas was higher among males than among females and the reverse pattern was found in urban areas. These findings suggest contextual factors that need further in-depth investigation.

Figure 3.3 Proportion of respondents who need/want land, by settlement type and gender



One perhaps surprising finding is the extent of demand among urban dwellers. This demand poses a particular challenge for land reform delivery given the patent difficulty of providing land in the vicinity of urban areas, as well as the likely unfeasibility of supporting a significant relocation from urban to rural areas, where provision of other services (housing, electricity, education, etc.) is more problematic. A real possibility therefore is that having established a sense of the magnitude of this demand, one acknowledges that for the most part it cannot be met. However, it remains to consider what the magnitude of this demand among urban dwellers actually *means*. To some extent this becomes evident in the pages that follow, as well as what might account for gender differences in land demand.

A prevalent perception among Land Affairs officials and those from provincial agriculture departments is that it is difficult to get the youth interested in agriculture, and thus in land reform. Because the approach adopted for this study was to seek to interview a range of different adult household members, rather than only household heads, we are able to provide estimates as the age-dimension of land demand. The finding (Table 3.1) is that while for some sub-populations the youth are indeed less likely to want or need land, overall their demand is quite robust. The flipside of this issue is the also prevalent perception that the demand for land is strongest against the

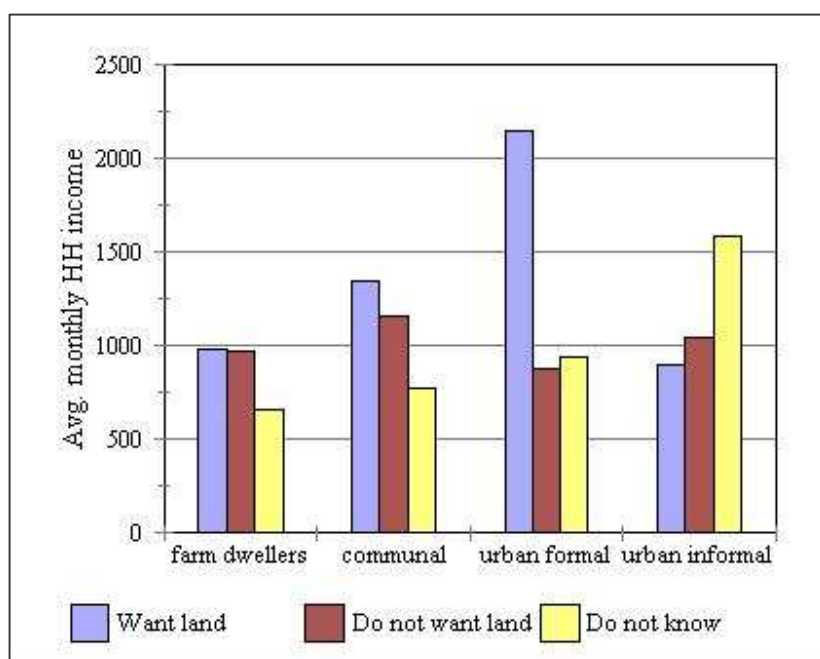
elderly. The table below similarly suggests that this is not the case. Although further enquiry would be necessary, the suggestion seems to be that there is something of a gap between the ‘theoretical’ demand for land, and the demand that articulates itself directly to, say, Department of Land Affairs officials. Assuming there is some truth to the perceptions of officials in terms of how the demand presents itself to them, it is possible that family or household dynamics influence the process according to which this happens.

Table 3.1 Proportion of respondents who indicated that they need/want land, by settlement type and age range (percent who do need/want land)

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal
18 to 24 years	42.3%	36.2%	39.8%	51.2%
25 to 34 years	61.7%	35.7%	67.1%	53.7%
35 to 59 years	51.2%	40.2%	46.3%	51.3%
60 years +	49.3%	31.7%	30.1%	41.0%

Given the abiding concern as to whether land redistribution in particular should be construed primarily as a poverty-reduction measure or as one seeking to build a class of black commercial farmers (and recognising that these are not necessarily mutually exclusive aims), it is important to consider land demand in relation to current household well-being. The approach taken in the study to this issue was to relate demand to average household income. Figure 3.4 shows this relationship for different settlement types. Apart from urban formal dwellers, there is not much to distinguish those who demand land from those who do not in terms of household income. Perhaps what is more curious and worrying is that, among both categories of rural dwellers, there is a marked difference in household income between those who ‘don’t know’ and those who do. Although the ‘don’t know’ category is not large (see Figure 3.1 above), the indication seems to be that poverty actually inhibits people’s ability to formulate a view on whether they would benefit from land or not. This interpretation is given support in Section 5 where we explore the levels or awareness of land reform.

Figure 3.4 Relationship between land demand and average household income



As for why urban informal dwellers who ‘don’t know’ have relatively high household incomes, the reason for this is unclear. The other striking finding is that among urban formal dwellers, those who do want land have markedly higher incomes than those who do not or those who do not know. A plausible interpretation is that urban formal dwellers have an appreciation of the likely costs they would incur if indeed they were to acquire land.

Finally, we report on the reasons given by those who indicated they do not want or need land, for why they do not want or need it. Here the answers differ markedly from one settlement type to the next. Among communal area dwellers, the major reason given for not demanding land is that the household already has sufficient land. Farm dwellers, interestingly, point to the costs associated with having land, which we interpret as a realistic realisation that making use of farmland is expensive, as many people actually acquiring land through land reform would agree.

Table 3.2 Reason for not wanting/needing land among those who do not

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal
We have enough land	13.9%	59.2%	35.8%	19.0%
Will be too costly to have more land	61.2%	13.3%	13.7%	17.8%
Will not be able to move to the land	0.0%	1.9%	5.9%	6.8%
Want to stay where we are now	9.2%	10.9%	21.9%	26.1%
Too long or difficult process to acquire more land	2.2%	1.3%	1.7%	9.8%
There is nothing that we need it for	12.9%	11.8%	17.1%	20.4%
Other	0.6%	1.6%	4.0%	0.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
n	94	284	79	76

Reasons for wanting land

This sub-section digs a little deeper in trying to understand the nature of land demand. The most significant finding is encapsulated in Table 3.3. The predominant reason for which those who demand land do so is in order ‘to grow food’, as distinct from commercial motives and an urge for tenure security. Together with the following sub-section on the amounts of land demanded, this lays the basis for stating that the predominant land demand is for small plots with which to bolster household-level food security through small-scale production. However, as will be shown below, this is not to suggest that those for whom household-level food security is a priority, would not also envisage deriving at least some income from their land.

Table 3.3 ‘What is the main reason you want/need this land?’

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal
To grow food	57.5%	69.1%	50.7%	54.1%

To generate income	16.5%	12.1%	13.9%	13.4%
To have a secure place to stay	14.3%	12.2%	32.1%	31.9%
To use as collateral	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%
To get back what was taken from us	0.6%	4.3%	1.2%	0.0%
Other	11.0%	1.5%	2.1%	0.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
n	176	205	87	121

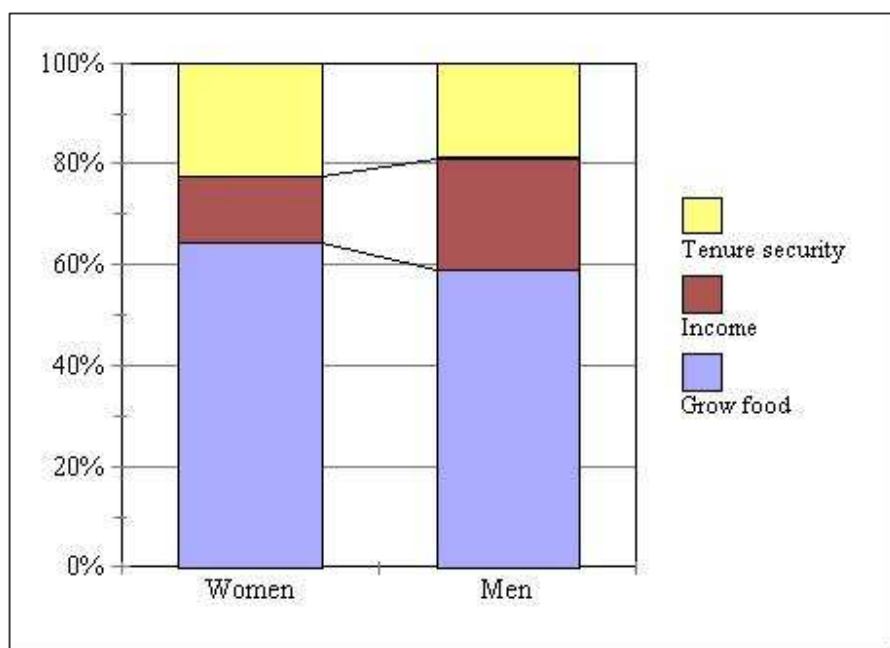
Table 3.4 presents findings from the same survey question, but disaggregates rather according to whether the household had experienced land dispossession. Notwithstanding the fact that dispossessed households are more likely to want land ‘to get back what was taken from us’ (14% versus nil), the predominant reason for demanding land remains to grow food.

Table 3.4 Main reason respondent wants/needs land, by experience of land dispossession

	Yes, household or ancestors dispossessed	No, household or ancestors not dispossessed	Do not know
To grow food	58.6%	63.2%	55.9%
To generate income	5.6%	14.9%	13.6%
To have a secure place to stay	12.8%	20.2%	27.8%
To use as collateral	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%
To get back what was taken from us	13.7%	0.1%	1.5%
Other	7.1%	1.6%	1.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
n	104	396	89

Given the recognition in policy that land reform should serve as a vehicle to benefit women, it is important to understand gender differences in land demand. Figure 3.5 seeks to compare the land demand of women and men in terms of the frequency with which the underlying reason relates to the three main reasons identified above, i.e. to grow food, to generate an income, and to have a secure place to stay (tenure security). The finding is that relative to men who want land, women who want land are more likely to want it for growing food and for tenure security, than to generate an income. Having said that, the differences are not stark. The main inference is that land for household-level food security is the predominant reason people want land, and this is especially true among women who want land.

Figure 3.5 Relationship between gender and reason for wanting land



For the sake of brevity, much of the survey information relating to how people would propose to use additional land is omitted here. However, Table 3.5 is included because it adds texture to the previous discussion of what people demand land for. The main finding is that, notwithstanding the overwhelming importance of land for the purpose of growing food, this should not be assumed to preclude earning an income as well (last row). Another important finding is that, although there might be some employment potential relating to land transferred through land reform, more people who demand land envisage using family labour than hired labour.

Table 3.5 'If you were to get the land you want or need, would you expect...' (Percentage answering 'yes')

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal
To have family members work on it?	83.2%	83.1%	86.1%	83.7%
To hire full time, regular workers to work on it?	70.8%	40.8%	76.6%	65.7%
To hire casual workers from time to time?	59.6%	42.0%	44.6%	56.6%
To operate it with other small-scale farmers?	68.0%	46.6%	46.1%	51.6%
To take out a loan to buy inputs, equipment, or livestock?	82.5%	46.7%	50.6%	72.9%
Your children to take it over from you when you get old/die?	97.6%	91.3%	100.0%	90.1%
To earn an income from it?	96.1%	80.9%	96.3%	92.0%
n	140	143	57	58

Finally, we touch on the issue of people’s willingness to relocate. Among those working in land reform in South Africa, this has long been recognised as a pertinent (and sometimes thorny) issue, in that in many cases land is identified and acquired through the redistribution programme which is far from where beneficiaries reside. Given the difficulty and expense of establishing new homes on the acquired land, it can therefore threaten the viability of the projects, because beneficiary commitment and interest start to wane as the transport costs start to mount. Table 3.6 provides some perspective on this issue, though one hastens to add that people’s ‘hypothetical’ willingness to relocate must not be assumed to represent how they would feel if presented with an actual choice, when the actual support (or lack thereof) for relocation becomes evident. What is interesting therefore is not the exact percentages themselves, but the pattern they give, in particular with communal dwellers being far less willing than other types of respondents to relocate, and farm dwellers being most willing of all. In terms of the latter, this is not surprising, given that farm dwellers often have a limited stake in where they are presently residing. For communal dwellers, however, the policy issue is quite difficult. Do the findings suggest that land redistribution should focus on those who are willing (who in any event represent a non-trivial share)? Or must the strategy for land acquisition be such as to at least partly accommodate those who are not willing to relocate, for instance by focusing on the acquisition of commercial properties that border communal areas?

Table 3.6 ‘Would you be willing to move out of your community to this new land?’

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal
Yes	87.8%	36.1%	59.1%	65.4%
No	8.5%	61.9%	22.1%	31.0%
Do not know	3.7%	2.0%	18.8%	3.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
n	145	140	59	65

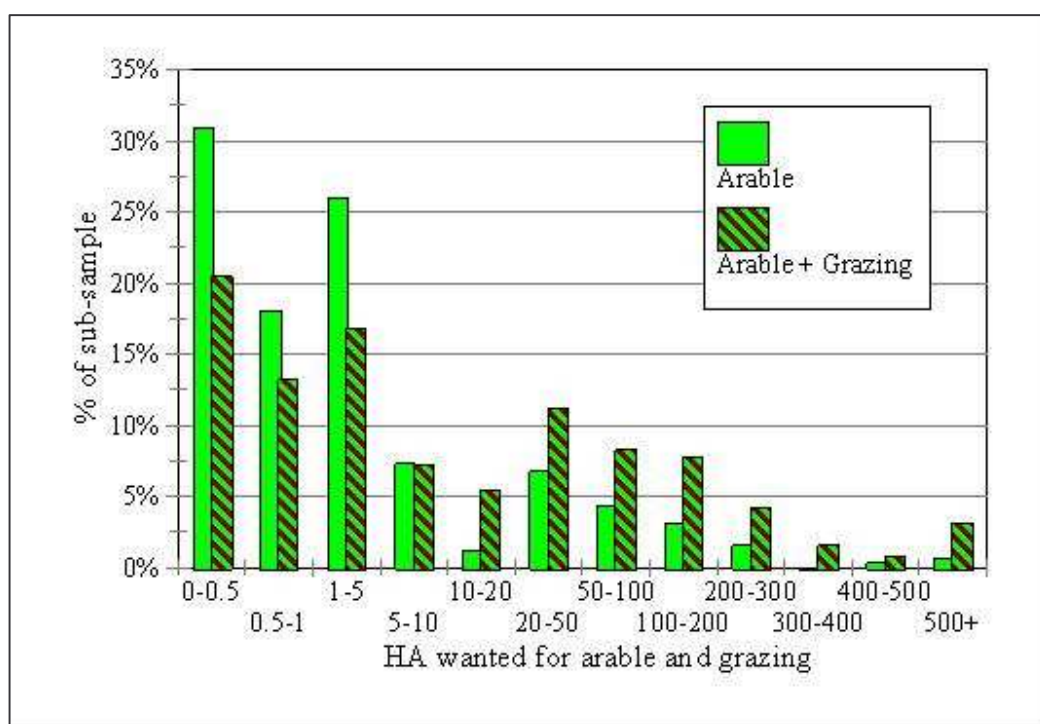
Land demand in terms of area

The last sub-section we present in terms of land demand relates to how much land is demanded by those who demand it. Whereas in the Technical Report this issue is disaggregated in various ways (e.g. by settlement type, gender, age and province), here we seek to portray the overall magnitude of land demand, only recognising the difference between demand for arable land (for field crops and tree crops in particular) on the one hand, and that for grazing land on the other. One technical note is in order. It was recognised in an early phase of the research that it is difficult for people to conceptualise how much land they would want for grazing purposes, not least because most respondents (perhaps excluding farm dwellers) are not accustomed to exclusive grazing areas where this kind of question makes sense. Therefore the approach of the questionnaire was to ask how many livestock or various types they would want to be able to accommodate on their additional land if they were to get some. Using area-specific stocking rates, these were then translated into land areas at the data analysis stage. Given the controversy surrounding the

question of stocking rates, it must therefore be acknowledged that these figures are indicative rather than definitive.

Figure 3.6 presents a histogram showing what share of respondents who want land, want land of different amounts, using size categories (e.g. 5 to 10 hectares) that were constructed ex post. The overall finding is that land demand for arable land is predominantly for small plots, i.e. 5 hectares and less, though there is a non-trivial demand for larger portions. Including consideration of grazing shifts the picture a bit to the right, but the overall pattern remains the same. It should be noted that what is omitted from this picture is the fact that many of those wanting land do not want it for either field crop, tree crop or grazing purposes. Approximately 45% of those who want land in order to grow food indicated that they did not want land for field crop, tree crops or grazing, but rather for gardening. In this event, the questionnaire did not request them to specify how much land they wanted, but one can surmise that by and large it would fit within the first two size categories captured in the figure, and thus present a picture even more skewed towards the left.

Figure 3.6 Land area wanted for field crop, tree crops and grazing, among those who want it



Finally, we ask what this means in terms of the total number of hectares demanded. Table 3.7 summarises, again taking into account the demand for arable land (field and tree crops) and the imputed demand for grazing land.

There are two important observations. First, the extrapolated total number of households wanting agricultural land is approximately 740,000, in comparison to which between 2002 and 2004,

LRAD assisted about 333 households per year in these provinces, representing around one half of one percent.

The second observation is that the amounts of land people want in aggregate in these three provinces vastly exceeds the commercial farming areas of those provinces. Summing the values in the third row from the bottom gives a total area of agricultural land demanded of 53 million hectares, whereas the total commercial farming area of these provinces (i.e. that which was formerly part of ‘white’ rural South Africa) is 27 million (Stats SA, 1998). However, an enormous share of these demanded hectares are demanded by the minority of land demanders who figure in the right-hand tail of the histogram. One way of appreciating this is by acknowledging the enormous difference between the mean and the median land demanded per household. Then, for sake of illustration, if one assumes that redistribution beneficiaries are eligible for no more than twice this median value, then the total land demand for which government would cater drops to 13 million hectares. The point is that, from the simplistic perspective of the ‘land budget,’ the majority of the land demand can indeed be catered for, provided that not too much goes to the minority who would prefer relatively large amounts.

Table 3.7 Extrapolation of total land demand in the three provinces

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal	All
% who want land	53.2%	36.6%	46.9%	50.4%	41.7%
Extrap. total HHs in 3 provinces	112 942	627 174	314 699	157 316	1 212 131
...of whom want for ‘agriculture’	89 017	430 094	164 638	56 438	740187
Avg. amount of land wanted/HH (HA)	105.0	42.7	134.3	52.0	71.2
Extrap. land demanded (HA mn)	9.3	18.4	22.1	2.9	52.7
Median amount of land wanted/HH (HA)	16.0	2.0	10.0	10.0	4.5
Extrap. land demanded if limited to 2 x median/HH (HA mn)	2.1	6.1	3.3	1.3	12.8

Notes:

- ‘% who want land’ – these are same values as represented in Figure 3.1.
- ‘Extrap. total HHs in 3 provinces’ – these figures are extrapolations to provincial level based on the weights assigned to each of the observations.
- ‘...of whom want for ‘agriculture’ – taking into account only those who indicated that they would use the land for field crops, tree crops or keeping livestock; it therefore excludes land that is demanded mainly for ‘gardening’.
- ‘Avg. amount of land wanted/HH’ – the mean number of hectares demanded for agricultural purposes among households wanting land for agricultural purposes.
- ‘Extrap. land demanded’ – the product of the values in the preceding two rows.
- ‘Median amount of land wanted/HH’ – the median number of hectares demanded for agricultural purposes among households wanting land for agricultural purposes.
- ‘Extrap. land demanded if limited to 2 x median/HH’ – the total extrapolated demand for land if no household is eligible for more than twice the value appearing in the previous row.

4 Preferences regarding land reform policy

Introduction

Whereas the previous section probed respondents' wishes or expectations in terms of how they or their households might like to benefit from redistributive land reform, here we focus on people's broader perspectives on how and why land reform is important, as well as on how land reform should be conducted. One of the themes that emerges is that there is a large difference between people's personal wishes, and what they regard as good for the collective. This underlines the fact that land reform has multiple objectives. But whereas this principle of multiple objectives has been explicit in all of the main policy documents related to land reform, our understanding of people's perceptions in respect of these has been limited. Apart from the lack of tangible information such as that furnished through this study, one reason for this lack of understanding is because, indeed, people's perceptions of what land reform is or should be about do not combine into an easily characterised set of coherent settlements. There are in fact what appear to be significant contradictions, which although perplexing, must nonetheless be addressed if government and the nation at large are to develop a considered and ultimately successful approach to land reform.

The relative importance of land reform

Table 4.1 summarises findings related to a question about what respondents regard as the top three 'important challenges facing South Africa today.' Respondents were asked to mention up to three items or issues, without being prompted as to possible responses. The challenges mentioned the most frequently (i.e. by the largest proportion of respondents) were unemployment, poverty and HIV/AIDS. Only 2.6% of respondents mentioned 'land reform issues' among their list of the most important three challenges, although for communal dwellers the figure was 3.5%. Thus land reform does not seem to be perceived to be one of the major challenges in South Africa.

Table 4.1 Most important challenges facing South Africa today, by settlement type (percent of respondents who mentioned among up to three responses)

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal	All
Unemployment	60.3%	70.7%	84.9%	78.1%	74.0%
Poverty	40.6%	46.7%	54.7%	34.7%	46.8%
HIV/AIDS	40.9%	37.8%	48.5%	48.7%	41.6%
Crime and safety	26.9%	27.6%	50.5%	45.0%	34.7%
Service provision/delivery	7.7%	25.7%	6.8%	14.0%	18.8%
Education	10.4%	11.9%	6.6%	8.3%	10.2%
Affordable housing	16.6%	6.7%	6.9%	24.8%	9.4%
Corruption	7.5%	6.6%	7.1%	5.6%	6.7%
Human rights abuses	8.9%	5.5%	3.5%	6.3%	5.4%
Other eco./financial issues	8.2%	4.0%	2.9%	4.2%	4.1%
Environmental issues	2.7%	5.5%	1.9%	1.2%	4.0%
Work-related issues	9.1%	3.3%	2.9%	0.2%	3.3%
Land reform issues	2.7%	3.5%	1.1%	1.3%	2.6%

Price increases/inflation	6.3%	2.2%	0.7%	0.0%	1.9%
Racism	5.0%	0.9%	0.3%	7.6%	1.8%
Family and youth issues	3.9%	1.4%	2.4%	0.3%	1.7%
Xenophobia	1.6%	1.2%	0.0%	1.5%	1.0%
Religion and culture issues	0.4%	0.5%	2.4%	0.0%	0.9%
Political stability	0.2%	0.6%	0.0%	0.2%	0.4%
Other	4.0%	4.8%	3.3%	2.8%	4.2%
Don't know	4.2%	6.7%	0.6%	1.2%	4.5%
n	308	556	184	218	1266

One might wonder whether those who indicated that they want land might identify land reform as a more significant challenge than those who did not. Table 4.2 shows however that this is not the case. On average, effectively, there is no difference.

Table 4.2 Most important challenges facing South Africa today, by land demand (percent of respondents who mentioned among up to three responses)

	Wants/needs land	Does not want/need land	Don't know	All
Unemployment	79.8%	71.5%	61.6%	74.0%
Poverty	41.1%	50.6%	52.0%	46.8%
HIV/AIDS	43.5%	37.3%	56.1%	41.6%
Crime and safety	35.2%	33.1%	40.7%	34.7%
Service provision/delivery	20.7%	19.9%	3.9%	18.8%
Education	9.6%	9.9%	14.1%	10.2%
Affordable housing	11.3%	8.7%	4.2%	9.4%
Corruption	6.2%	6.7%	8.8%	6.7%
Human rights abuses	4.4%	6.4%	4.2%	5.4%
Other eco./financial issues	3.9%	5.0%	0.0%	4.1%
Environmental issues	3.7%	4.6%	1.8%	4.0%
Work-related issues	4.7%	2.6%	0.3%	3.3%
Land reform issues	2.5%	3.1%	0.3%	2.6%
Price increases/inflation	1.5%	1.8%	4.5%	1.9%
Racism	1.4%	2.0%	2.1%	1.8%
Family and youth issues	1.8%	1.3%	3.8%	1.7%
Xenophobia	0.6%	1.3%	0.6%	1.0%
Religion and culture issues	0.1%	1.8%	0.0%	0.9%
Political stability	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	0.4%
Other	6.2%	2.4%	4.2%	4.2%
Don't know	2.9%	5.1%	8.9%	4.5%
n	590	543	133	1266

Does this mean that land reform is not regarded as important? What it seems to suggest is that land reform is indeed not regarded as important relative to other national challenges. As suggested by

some participants at a stakeholder workshop held in 2005, it could be that many respondents focused more on issues which impinge more immediately upon people’s daily lives, such as death, disease, no income and so forth. However, lack of land could also be seen to impinge on people’s daily lives. Possibly the findings in Section 3 provide a partial if not full answer. Given that the majority of those wanted land want small portions for household food security purposes, it stands to reason that in most people’s mind, land reform is not a substitute for jobs that they need even more desperately. Noticing the very low response rate for ‘political stability’ in Table 4.1, it seems furthermore that, in the greater scheme of things, the non-economic objectives of land reform (healing, restorative justice, etc.) do not make it a national priority relative to more pressing concerns. Of course, there is no reason to assume that this picture is static. Part of the ‘under-appreciation’ of land reform may relate to the fact that its benefits have not yet been widely enjoyed, and still less widely observed.

What land reform should look like

Other parts of the questionnaire provide information that both support and contradict this interpretation. One of these parts consisted of a list of statements, in response to each of which the respondent was asked to indicate whether she agreed, disagreed, or felt neutral. Table 4.3 summarises the responses to these statements by indicating the percentage of respondents who agreed. The table also includes figures drawn from the survey of commercial farm owners (almost all of whom were white), despite the fact that this survey was not representative. The statements are listed in order of the extent to which the black respondents and commercial farm owners had similar average responses – thus towards the top of the table, blacks and farm owners tended to agree or disagree with the statements in equal measure, whereas towards the bottom they diverge more and more starkly.

Table 4.3 Attitudes towards land reform (percent who ‘agree’, ranked by difference of extent of agreement between black and farm owner respondents)

	Blacks	Farm owners	Difference
Land reform is a waste of time because young people are not interested in farming	25.0%	33.3%	8.3%
Land reform is my main concern in deciding what political party to support	21.4%	13.0%	8.4%
Gov’t should spend more money on land reform than on education	10.0%	1.4%	8.6%
South Africa should follow the example of Zimbabwe	9.8%	0.0%	9.8%
Women should be allowed to own land	78.4%	88.4%	10.0%
Land reform should be done carefully so that it doesn’t hurt the economy	81.7%	98.6%	16.9%
Whites should be forced off their farms with no compensation	17.0%	0.0%	17.0%
I would like a bit of rural land to call my home	65.3%	84.1%	18.8%
Land should remain in productive use	76.5%	98.6%	22.1%
Land reform should be conducted in an orderly and conciliatory way	68.2%	92.8%	24.6%
Whites should be required to sell their farms	27.0%	0.0%	27.0%
All land in the former homelands should be privatised ...	29.7%	63.8%	34.1%
Land reform is necessary for addressing the crimes committed against black people	49.5%	14.5%	35.0%
Land reform is mainly important for healing and reconciliation	58.9%	17.4%	41.5%
All land should be nationalised (owned by government)	47.4%	1.4%	46.0%

The white South Africans can keep the land, but they must pay for it	54.1%	7.2%	46.9%
Land should be returned to the individuals from whom it was taken	83.6%	36.2%	47.4%
Land reform is essential to improve the economy	68.7%	17.4%	51.3%
Giving people land is fine, but they should have to pay something	36.5%	94.2%	57.7%
Land reform will lead to high land productivity	63.5%	4.3%	59.2%
All black South Africans should receive some land	73.7%	5.8%	67.9%
n	1266	69	na

There are areas of convergence and divergence in the attitudes of blacks and farm owner respondents. Beyond agreement on a number of disparate particular points (e.g. the fact that youth should be involved, that land reform is not a personal political priority, and the fact that women should be allowed to own land), the main area of convergence would appear to be mutual broad support for a conservative approach to land reform, e.g. one that is careful not to disrupt the economy, one that does not involve non-compensated land seizures, and in general one that does not ‘follow the example of Zimbabwe.’ The main areas of difference include the following: i) not surprisingly, black respondents believe white farmers should make more of a sacrifice than commercial farm owners believe; ii) black respondents favour a broad approach to land reform rather than one that focuses narrowly on certain beneficiary groups; and iii) black respondents are more optimistic as to the benefits of properly conducted land reform for beneficiaries and for the economy.

What is perhaps most interesting is the size of the gap between the percentage of the population who want land for themselves, and the percentage of the population who assert that all black South Africans should receive some land. A similar comparison can be drawn between the percentage who indicate that they themselves or their ancestors were dispossessed of land, versus the much larger proportion who see land reform as essential to right the wrongs of the past. The implication is perhaps obvious but warrants emphasis: the need for land reform operates on at least two different planes, namely in terms of benefits to particular households, families or communities, but simultaneously in terms of addressing the need for collective justice/redress.

In terms of the above discussion of the (relative) importance of land reform, the fact that few respondents agreed with the statement that government should spend more money on land reform than on education is fully consistent. There are, however, indications that seem to point in the other direction. Among black respondents, half or more agreed that ‘land reform is necessary for addressing the crimes committed against black people’ (50%), ‘land reform is mainly important for healing and reconciliation’ (59%), and ‘all black South Africans should receive some land’ (74%). Taken together with earlier findings, what this seems to suggest is that although people are in broad agreement with the non-economic importance of land reform – and to a large degree regard these non-economic objectives as more important than the economic ones – they still regard land reform as less important than many other national priorities.

Views differ as to who should be prioritised to benefit from land reform. In terms of those from different settlement types (Table 4.4), farm dwellers favour those who wish to farm commercially and, not surprisingly farm workers. Communal dwellers and urban formal dwellers favour those from whom the land was taken and ‘the poor’. And urban informal dwellers favour the youth, those from whom the land was taken, but most of all the poor. Meanwhile, commercial farm

owners above all favour the youth, followed by those with agricultural skills and those who wish to farm commercially.

Table 4.4 'Who should be prioritised in terms of getting land through land reform?'

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal	Farm owners
The youth	28.1%	23.9%	17.7%	43.1%	97.1%
MK veterans	1.4%	5.9%	5.6%	18.8%	0.0%
Those from whom the land was taken	33.0%	42.3%	47.4%	57.2%	11.6%
Those who wish to farm commercially	40.9%	22.9%	24.0%	38.5%	65.2%
The poor	39.5%	44.9%	53.0%	68.7%	0.0%
Those who do not have enough to eat	19.3%	16.8%	12.2%	40.5%	0.0%
Those with agricultural skills	23.3%	19.1%	26.3%	36.4%	72.5%
Traditional leaders	3.5%	16.2%	8.0%	14.9%	1.4%
Farm workers	36.8%	15.1%	15.6%	32.6%	18.8%
Everybody	15.6%	20.9%	20.6%	30.6%	0.0%
n	308	556	184	218	69

The difference between commercial farm owners on the one hand, and the various categories of black respondents on the other, is perhaps not surprising. What perhaps is surprising, however, is how varied are the views of the different categories of black respondents, not so much in that the preferences they express are so strongly different, but in that, implicitly, their understanding of what land reform should be about is different. For example, urban informal dwellers felt the most strongly that the poor should benefit (hardly a priority for commercial farm owner, incidentally), but *also* were the most likely to feel that it should be people who have agricultural skills. It could in principle be the case that the 36% of urban informal dwellers who identified with the importance of agricultural skills were largely not among the 69% of respondents who prioritised the poor, but in fact this is not the case. The point is that different respondents – as well as perhaps different policy makers – have different assumptions as to whether the poor possess skills appropriate to agriculture in a land reform context.

Attitudes towards land invasions

Notwithstanding the evident preference for a conservative approach to land reform, there are also indications that a significant proportion of black respondents (in sharp contrast to commercial farm owners) would approve of land invasions under some circumstances. Table 4.5 summarises the responses to a set of questions related to these hypothetical circumstances. Extrapolating from the survey results, only 35% of blacks indicated that they would not approve of land invasions under any circumstances.

Table 4.5 'If at all, under what circumstances would you approve of land invasions?' (Percentage of respondents who said 'yes')

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal	Commercial farmers
When land reform is moving too slowly	44.5%	29.9%	34.7%	40.8%	1.5%
When land reform is not benefiting the right people	50.8%	41.8%	43.1%	52.7%	2.9%
When people have no other option for survival	46.3%	36.9%	52.8%	51.7%	1.5%
When people want to take back their ancestral land	42.7%	49.9%	52.4%	59.3%	1.5%
Never	43.2%	37.2%	27.8%	37.5%	97.1%
n	308	555	183	215	69

5 Knowledge of land reform and overall assessment

Introduction

This section summarises findings in respect of knowledge of land reform and the overall assessment of land reform. As with the previous section, care is taken where possible to compare the responses from black respondents to those of commercial farm owners.

Knowledge of land reform

The overarching finding is that there is pervasive ignorance of land reform. Tables 5.1 and 5.2 show this in different ways. Table 5.1 relates to a question that asked respondents to assess their own level of awareness. Table 5.2 summarises the findings from a set of questions in which respondents were asked to describe the three main components of land reform, and these responses were later assessed as either being adequate ('correct') or inadequate. By whichever approach, the extent of ignorance of land reform is high.

Table 5.1 Level of awareness of the land reform programme, by settlement type

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal	Farmers owners
Have heard about the programme and know well what it is about	3.0%	3.5%	2.8%	4.3%	75.4%
Have heard about the programme and know a little bit what it is about	14.7%	9.2%	15.0%	10.0%	18.8%
Have heard about the programme but do not know what it is about	13.4%	6.4%	5.3%	10.5%	4.3%
Have not heard about the programme, but I do know about land reform	7.6%	24.0%	24.5%	14.1%	1.4%
Have not heard about the programme	61.3%	56.9%	52.3%	61.1%	0.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
n	308	556	184	218	69

Table 5.2 Ability to describe/define the three main components of the land reform programme

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal	Farmers owners
Redistribution	5.0%	6.8%	7.4%	10.2%	60.9%
Restitution	10.1%	14.0%	9.8%	13.1%	68.1%
Tenure reform	4.4%	5.6%	4.6%	5.5%	69.6%

A number of comparisons can be made in order to try to understand the nature of this ignorance better. First, the possibility that household heads are better informed than non-household heads is explored (Tables 5.3 and 5.4). The finding is that household heads are indeed more aware of land reform and how it works, but not dramatically so. For instance, among household heads, 54% have not heard of government's land reform, versus 60% among non-household heads.

Table 5.3 Level of awareness of the land reform programme, by household head status

	Household heads	Non-household heads
Have heard about the programme and know well what it is about	4.2%	2.5%
Have heard about the programme and know a little bit what it is about	13.5%	8.4%
Have heard about the programme but do not know what it is about	6.5%	7.7%
Have not heard about the programme, but I do know about land reform	22.1%	21.5%
Have not heard about the programme	53.6%	59.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%
n	720	546

Table 5.4 Ability to describe/define the three main components of the land reform programme, by household head status

	Household heads	Non-household heads
Redistribution	8.3%	5.9%
Restitution	14.0%	11.2%
Tenure reform	6.7%	3.7%
n	720	546

A second comparison made is between respondents who personally or whose ancestors experienced land dispossession, and those who had not. The finding is that those who experienced and dispossession are significantly more likely to be aware of land reform, and in particular of land restitution (Table 5.5). However, even so, the degree of ignorance among dispossessed households is high and cause for concern (see Section 2).

Table 5.5 Level of awareness of the land reform programme, by experience of land dispossession

	Yes, household or ancestors dispossessed	No, household or ancestors not dispossessed	Do not know
Redistribution correctly described	15.0%	5.8%	6.0%
Restitution correctly described	28.5%	9.8%	10.4%
Tenure reform correctly described	15.8%	9.4%	5.6%
n	177	868	221

A third comparison is the level of awareness between those who want/need land and those who do not. As shown in Table 5.6, those who indicate they want or need (additional) land, are more likely to have heard about the land reform programme than those who do not want or need land, though still their level of ignorance is very high. The direction of causality underpinning this correlation is however ambiguous. On the face of it, it could be that those who know more about land reform are more likely to want land, or it could be that those who want land are more likely to have made themselves aware of the land reform programme. It raises the possibility that the demand for land would increase if awareness of the land reform programme were to improve.

Table 5.6 Level of awareness of the land reform programme in relation to whether respondent wants/needs land

	Yes, respondent wants/needs more land	No, respondent does not want/need more land	Respondent does not know if wants/needs more land
Have heard about the programme and know well what it is about	4.6%	2.8%	1.1%
Have heard about the programme and know a little bit what it is about	13.4%	10.0%	6.3%
Have heard about the programme but do not know what it is about	8.4%	6.0%	6.7%
Have not heard about the programme, but I do know about land reform	25.8%	20.4%	11.7%
Have not heard about the programme	47.9%	60.7%	74.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
n	590	543	133

Two other characteristics to which awareness/ignorance are related are household income and level of education. It turns out that both of these are strongly correlated with the level of knowledge about land reform (Table 5.7). First, the income of those who ‘have heard about the programme and know well what it is about’ is about 2.5 times as great as the average, while the income of those who ‘have heard about the programme and know a little bit what it is about’ is

about 60% greater than the average. Secondly, and in the same vein, those who ‘have heard about the programme and know well what it is about’ are 2.7 times as likely to have completed secondary school, while those who ‘have heard about the programme and know a little bit what it is about’ are 44% more likely to have completed secondary school than the average household. This suggests a strong bias in favour of the relatively well off and educated in terms of just being aware that the land reform programme exists, which presumably has a bearing for the ability to get involved in land reform.

Table 5.7 Awareness of the land reform programme in relation to average monthly household income and level of education

	Average monthly household income (Rand)	% of respondents who have finished secondary school
Have heard about the programme and know well what it is about	3031	52.1%
Have heard about the programme and know a little bit what it is about	1884	27.4%
Have heard about the programme but do not know what it is about	969	13.2%
Have not heard about the programme, but I do know about land reform	1071	20.6%
Have not heard about the programme	1021	15.5%
Overall average	1187	19.0%
n	1266	1266

Overall assessment of land reform

Respondents were asked in various ways how they would assess government’s performance in terms of executing land reform. An overall appraisal is shown in Table 5.8. One observation from the table is merely to underline the findings reported above as to the low levels of awareness of land reform. Among those who felt competent to venture an assessment (and in light of the findings reported above it is clear that many of those who did express a view, by their own admission have a relatively low level of awareness of land reform), those who are satisfied tend to be in the majority.

Table 5.8 ‘Are you satisfied with the way land reform is being conducted?’

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal	Total
Satisfied	30.8%	17.2%	24.1%	17.0%	19.7%
Neutral	14.3%	8.4%	13.7%	6.2%	9.8%
Dissatisfied	13.9%	23.6%	17.2%	31.3%	22.2%
Do not know	41.1%	50.9%	44.9%	45.5%	48.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
n	306	554	183	218	1261

Even so, levels of satisfaction with government's performance in respect of land reform contrast with those as to government's performance generally (Table 5.9). What this means exactly is difficult to say, but what is clear is that the absence of a higher level of satisfaction with land reform performance cannot be ascribed to general disaffection with government performance.

Table 5.9 Satisfaction with the way South Africa is being governed at present

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal	Total
Satisfied	79.4%	42.8%	65.1%	31.2%	49.3%
Neutral	8.5%	18.6%	14.5%	28.9%	18.1%
Dissatisfied	10.1%	25.0%	13.8%	31.0%	22.0%
Do not know	2.0%	13.5%	6.7%	8.9%	10.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
n	306	555	183	217	1261

Another noteworthy finding is that satisfaction with the way government is handling land reform among farm dwellers was higher than among any other group. Satisfaction with the way South Africa is being governed was also highest among farm dwellers. Interestingly, an analysis of satisfaction with a number of other issues or areas of delivery (not shown) reveals that farm dwellers are the most satisfied in general. This raises the question whether the isolation of farm dwellers on commercial farms contributes in general to a lower level of dissatisfaction or expression thereof.

Finally, levels of trust in the Department of Land Affairs are significantly lower than trust in national government generally (Tables 5.10 and 5.11). Distrust in the Department of Land Affairs was less in the rural areas than in the urban areas and least strong among farm dwellers. Distrust in the national government was highest among respondents in urban informal areas.

Table 5.10 Trust/distrust of Department of Land Affairs

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal	Total
Trust	25.3%	24.5%	20.5%	12.2%	22.3%
Neither/nor	7.5%	9.0%	10.0%	11.7%	9.4%
Distrust	4.0%	5.2%	15.1%	14.9%	8.4%
Never heard of	50.5%	11.8%	8.8%	15.3%	14.3%
Do not know	12.7%	49.4%	45.5%	45.9%	45.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
n	307	555	185	217	1262

Table 5.11 Trust/distrust of National Government

	Farm dwellers	Communal	Urban formal	Urban informal	Total
Trust	78.6%	69.8%	66.2%	54.5%	68.0%
Neither/nor	10.5%	7.4%	16.3%	10.6%	10.0%
Distrust	8.2%	13.8%	12.8%	20.7%	13.9%
Never heard of	0.3%	1.2%	0.0%	0.9%	0.8%
Do not know	2.3%	7.8%	4.7%	13.3%	7.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
n	307	555	185	218	1263

6 Conclusion

These concluding remarks attempt to summarise some of the main findings from the study, both in respect of areas where there is a convergence between current policy and what blacks want by way of land reform, and in respect of areas where what people want and what policy caters for diverge.

Areas of convergence

There are a number of instances where evidence from the study demonstrates the appropriateness of current policy. Among the most important of these is the fact that land reform has multiple objectives. In particular, from the study it is clear that there is broad recognition of both the economic and non-economic (e.g. healing, reconciliation, justice) imperatives underlying land reform, which to a large extent is matched by the design and execution of current policy.

Second, and notwithstanding the previous point, the emphasis on land reform for productive purposes is also broadly supported. Although there are important distinctions to be drawn in terms of what kind of production is desired versus that which is catered for in policy (see remarks below), by and large there is neither a significant personal demand for 'land for its own sake,' nor much tolerance for the idea generally of redistributing land that does not have personal and national economic benefits. Taking these first two points together, what this means is that for most people, there is no contradiction between the assertion of the importance of land reform as a means of economic upliftment, and the importance of land reform as a means of righting the wrongs of the past and promoting racial reconciliation.

A third important area of convergence is the 1913 cut-off date for land restitution. Concerns about the justifiability of the 1913 cut-off date represent an area of lingering discontent amount some stakeholders. However, at least in the three provinces in which the study was conducted, very few respondents who indicated that their households or ancestors had been dispossessed of land, indicated that this happened prior to 1913. This is not to say that none did (nor is it to dismiss the possibility that among the large fraction of those who could not say when the dispossession had occurred, perhaps a large share would have answered before 1913 if they had had more information), but it does suggest that, by and large, the 1913 cut-off date for land restitution is not highly problematic, at least from the perspective that land restitution aims to redress personal as opposed to collective injustices.

Two other areas of convergence related to restitution are also worth noting. The study provides evidence that those who identify themselves or their ancestors as having been dispossessed, should not be restricted to compensation by means of having land restored. Many respondents stated a preference for compensation in the form of money in addition to or rather than in the form of land, and indeed other forms of material compensation were also identified, e.g. housing and jobs. Furthermore, the vast majority of respondents who indicated that their households or ancestors had been dispossessed, indicated that compensation should be the responsibility of government. This is precisely how the restitution programme is conceptualised, that is, as a claim against the State.

Areas of divergence

Possibly the single most significant finding is the pervasive lack of awareness regarding land reform among blacks. This high level of ignorance has two worrying manifestations. On the one hand, it hinders people from seeking assistance through the land reform programme who might otherwise make their needs or demands known. The most concerning aspect of this is in respect of land restitution, wherein the study found that a large proportion of households who had experienced land dispossession since 1913 did not have sufficient knowledge of land reform to engage with the claims process, which closed in 1998. On the other hand, there is evidence of a bias against those with lower incomes and less education, meaning that the pro-poor objectives of land reform are to some extent thwarted, and implying also that the voice of the poor is likewise disproportionately limited.

The second notable finding by way of divergence relates to the nature of demand for productive land. The study demonstrates that, at least in the three provinces examined, the predominant demand for land among those who want it is for small areas of land on which to grow food for own consumption. While this kind of demand is catered for in the current policy, it is not emphasised. On the contrary, whereas on the basis of our survey it is known that 50% of blacks who want land for productive use (not including gardening) want 5 hectares or less, in 2004 and 2005 less than 10% of redistribution projects in these provinces involved projects that delivered 5 or fewer hectares per beneficiary. The land demand data generated by the study also provide a perspective on government's 30% target in respect of land reform. Whereas a literal extrapolation of the land demand figures implies a total amount of land demanded in the three surveyed provinces in the order of 200% of the amount of commercial farmland that actually exists, the bulk of this demand emanates from a minority who want relatively large amounts of land. In fact, approximately 85% of those wanting land could be accommodated within 30% provided one prioritised those who wanted small rather than large amounts of land. (Of course, this does not take into account numerous other obstacles, such as finding suitably located land, etc.) On the other hand, if one carries on with the average amounts of land per beneficiary presently provided under land redistribution, ultimately only 10% of those demanding land can be accommodated within 30% of the farmland. Apart from demonstrating that the present means of providing land is an inefficient way of catering to the demand, this reveals how problematic is the 30% target in the first place, which distracts from the fact that depending on how one chooses to deliver it, it can meet the needs of either a large or very small fraction of those wanting land for agricultural purposes.

Is land reform stuck in a vicious circle?

There is a final area of convergence that, ironically, ties up closely with the areas of divergence noted above. Considered collectively, they arguably reveal much about the current predicament of redistributive land reform.

The final area of convergence to which we draw attention relates to the finding of the study that few black people identify land reform as a national priority, a finding which is supported by a number of other studies that ask similar questions. Of course, this is not a feature of land reform policy as such, but it is implicit in the situation that currently obtains whereby land reform

commands only a small share of total government resources. Results from this study indicate that there is possibly a mutually-reinforcing situation at work. If it could be convincingly demonstrated that land reform has the potential to make a significant contribution to national objectives, e.g. broad-based household-level food security and poverty reduction, then it would likely be accorded more emphasis by government. But until this happens, then people on the ground are also unlikely in general to perceive land reform as a national priority, and they are unlikely to push for land reform more urgently. The present course of land redistribution – in particular its unsuitability for meeting but a small fraction of land demand – combined with low levels of awareness of the Land Reform Programme (for which the slow pace of delivery is probably partly responsible), are such that the potential efficacy of land reform will remain difficult to demonstrate or even argue for. The fact that land reform has important non-economic objectives does not alter this scenario, given the popular perception among blacks that it is not only important that land changes hands from white to black, but that a large number of blacks actually benefit in the process.

Escape from this impasse will require careful, strategic choices on the part of government. However, left too long, there is also a real possibility that pressure for faster and more radical land reform will grow as patience runs out. An important finding of the study is that many of those who do not regard land reform as an immediate priority – either personally or for the collective – are nonetheless prepared to support land invasions under various circumstances. How likely such a development is, and when it would happen, are impossible to say. But the evidence supports the conclusion that in order to avert such a development, significant changes are necessary not only to the pace of land reform, but to what it looks like.

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