

## **Rural and Agrarian Development Discourse in a Post-apartheid South Africa: An Agro-ecological Challenge**

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**ABSTRACT** This study examines the impact of rural and agrarian development discourse in a post-apartheid South Africa. Although the African National Congress (ANC) led government introduced the land reform programme almost two decades ago, pointers are that the process has not yield the desired results. Despite the ANC's enormous rural development efforts, land reform programme elicited criticisms by some land claimants, land owners and to a certain extent scholars calling for its total abandonment. Its relevance in attempts to fast-track sustainability for rural and agrarian development has been questioned. Land reform programme is one of the most important rural development strategies employed by the ANC's government. This study interrogates the perceived laxity in the implementation of the land reform programme by the ANC's government despite having policies in place to fast-track the process. Initially when the programme started, it was aimed at poverty alleviation and the creating employment. Therefore, this study shows that there are challenges confronting the land reform programme in South Africa. Furthermore, the study argues that the land reform question is not only a rural and agrarian issue, but a critical social concern of the black South Africans.