

Reverse Empowerment in South Africa's Comprehensive Rural Development Programme

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ABSTRACT This paper reports a testing of the 'reverse empowerment' concept on South Africa's ambitious comprehensive rural development programme (CRDP). The objectives of the study were to provide a brief overview of the rural development policy, to isolate key elements of service delivery, to analyse state budgetary interventions and, to trace evidence of reverse empowerment. The methodology involved nine pilot sites spread across provinces in terms of budgetary allocation for the programme 2009-2013. This was reinforced with a survey of the Department's annual reports for the period 2009-2012 to show the apportionment of spending on services, infrastructure and production. The data was analysed and the results confirm the operation of reverse empowerment because the implementation mechanism of the state is bureaucratic, focuses on service and infrastructure delivery and fails to create space for communities to participate in their own development. The findings have direct implications for state policy.

INTRODUCTION

Since 1997, South Africa has consistently pursued a set of socio-economic policies that cumulatively target the closing of the social gap between the different racial groups. Rural development policy was seen as the means to redress the injustices suffered through apartheid. Focus was put on provision of services and basic infrastructure in order to close the backlogs that had accumulated since 1900 and the consequent inequality. The recently launched comprehensive rural development programme (RSA 2009a; PMG 2009) hereafter shortened to CRDP, is meant to address structural weaknesses in earlier state policy positions with respect to land and rural development (Olivier et al. 2010). Indeed, the change in the name of the department from Land Affairs (DLA) to Rural Development and Land Reform, (DRDLR) in theory indicates a major paradigm shift, hopefully, in government thinking. The impression is that government understands that land reform should form an

integral component of any rural development enterprise (Ruhiiga 2011a). The CRDP is cross-cutting and develops through all sector departments and clusters of the Medium Term Strategic Framework -MTSF, 2009-2014-and the Government's Programme of Action (RSA 2009b). The CRDP encompasses agrarian transformation (Jacobs and Makaudze 2012), rural development and land reform (Jacobs 2012a; Hart 2012). The basic thrust of MTSF 2009 – 2014 is to improve the conditions of life. The MTSF has further stated that the CRDP would include several elements: aggressive implementation of land reform policies; stimulate agricultural production with a view to contributing to food security; rural livelihoods and food security; improve service delivery to ensure quality of life; implement a development programme for rural transport; skills development; revitalization of rural towns; explore and support non-farm economic activities and, institutional capacity building.

Participation measures the extent to which members of a community are consulted and involved in the planning of development interventions for the area. Participation is critical, because in theory, the community takes ownership of any outcomes of such a process and reinforces chances for both continuity and sustainability. But participation and self-help (ANC 2012) are often confused in South African literature; the latter describes a social set up in which households are mobilized and called upon not

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merely to participate in articulating their needs, but more critical, to make material contributions to the entire programme within their areas of residence.

It is claimed that the CRDP is different from past government strategies in rural areas because it is premised on a proactive participatory community-driven planning approach rather than an interventionist approach to rural development (DRDLR 2009a, 2009b). The CRDP aims to become an effective response against poverty and food insecurity by maximizing the use and management of natural resources to create vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities. A CRDP must improve the standards of living and welfare but also rectify past injustices through rights-based interventions and address skewed patterns of distribution and ownership of wealth and assets. The strategic objective of the CRDP is therefore to facilitate integrated development and social cohesion through participatory approaches in partnership with all sectors of society. The vision of the CRDP is to create vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities.

Agrarian transformation is the rapid fundamental change in the relations of land, livestock, cropping and community. Its focus is on the establishment of rural business initiatives, agro-industries, co-operatives, cultural initiatives and vibrant local markets in rural settings, the empowerment of rural people and communities (especially women and youth), and the revitalisation of old, and revamping of new economic, social, and information and communication infrastructure, public amenities and facilities in villages and small rural towns (DRDLR 2010a). Rural development is about enabling rural people to take control of their destiny, thereby dealing effectively with rural poverty through the optimal use and management of natural resources. It is a participatory process through which rural people learn over time, through their own experiences and initiatives, how to adapt their indigenous knowledge to their changing world. A three-pronged land reform programme aiming at tenure reform, restitution and land redistribution, was launched in 1994 (Gwanya 2010). In relation to the CRDP, the focus of the land reform agenda is on reviewing the Restitution, Redistribution and Tenure Reform Programmes.

The CRDP requires a coordinated strategy to meet the diverse needs of the communities

and therefore the participation of various departments across the different spheres of government, non-governmental organizations, research institutions and communities are vital. Central to the three-pronged CRDP is a job creation model (DRDLR 2010b). The job creation model (Gwanya 2010) creates para-development specialists at ward level that are equipped to train and mentor selected community members so that they become gainfully employed. The refinement of the CRDP will continue through selected pilot sites nationally. Phase 1 of the model deals with meeting basic human needs in the form of shelter, water, sanitation, food and electricity. A significant amount of work has already been done at individual sites in this respect. Phase two deals with enterprise development in which infrastructure development is critical. Phase three addresses the initiation of small, medium and micro industries especially linked to agri-processing, village markets, finance and credit facilities (DRDLR 2010a).

The plan is to scale up the CRDP from the initial pilot sites into other sites nationally but linked to the overall planning frameworks within a province. A community profiling initially carried out in target pilot sites provided socio-economic and environmental data for input in planning the requisite projects for each site (DRDLR 2009b). The key lessons emerging from the pilots have in turn provided some guiding principles for the rollout of the implementation of the CRDP. The initial needs analysis carried out in each of the study sites indicate a consistent defect (weakness) in resource potential assessment. It is a simplistic environmental audit on top of which has been superimposed a socio-economic profile of the population. The implications of this are discussed in section 4 of the paper.

Government rural development policy since 1997 has seen a consistent belief in the delivery of infrastructure and services. While in theory, the government subscribes to a bottom-up approach which is premised on mass community participation in addressing specific development needs (RSA 2010c), in practice, the opposite holds. In launching the CRDP, the DRDLR presents itself as the initiator, facilitator, coordinator and catalyst for rural development and agrarian transformation. Development has become a government project and people the dormant recipients of aid: the government is practically re-

sponsible for everything. While this policy may have witnessed major advances in raising living standards, questions of sustainability arise given that no mention is made in available documents of plans for a progressive reduction in direct government involvement. It is in this context that the term 'reverse empowerment' is used to describe a systematic and gradual large scale erosion of the inherent capacity of the people to take control of their own development through community participation.

Research Problem

The structure of budget allocations (DRDLR 2012a), extracted from financial statements of the department in its annual reports indicates among other things, the amount of money budgeted for each trial site, the breakdown of this allocation, the extent of engagement by provincial departments, local municipalities, district municipalities, other national government departments, public corporations and tribal authorities. An analysis of the financing structure per site should indicate the relative role of the DRDLR, other government departments and specific local municipalities within which these selected sites are located. Such an analysis should also indicate flaws in the inherent apportionment of the three tiers of government (DRDLR 2012b); national, provincial and municipal in shouldering responsibility for the development effort. Using a budget financing approach, no studies to my knowledge carried out locally in South Africa have attempted to classify sources of budgetary allocation for the CRDP in order to trace the role of community participation and community self-help.

Objectives of the Study

The purpose of the study is to use budgetary allocations and progress reports in order to measure the performance of the CRDP in the context of the role of local communities in the development equation. Several objectives are specified: to provide a brief overview of the rural development policy, to isolate key elements of service delivery inherent in the policy in spite of changes therein, to carry out a trend analysis in state budgetary interventions, to trace evidence, if any, of contexts where reverse empowerment is evident on the ground. In line with

these objectives, the key question of concern is: Does the CRDP create conditions in which an increasing % of the masses of the people become dependants on the state for their development needs?

METHODOLOGY

Phase 1 presents the study area which appears showing individual nine sites distributed across all provinces (Fig. 1). Phase two of the research design involved desktop research to survey official documents on the comprehensive rural development framework (CRDF) and programme (CRDP) released by the national department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) in order to extract the objectives of the CRDP, the underlying conceptual framework, methodology and financing options. Phase three (3) addresses issues of specification in terms of unit of analysis, variables of interest, and data sources. Phase four addresses analytical techniques for use in generating findings as a means of answering the main research question earlier set. In phase five, the results are presented in the context of the objectives earlier set; that is, in terms of an overview of the framework and programme, key elements of service delivery inherent in the policy, trend analysis of state budgetary interventions, a scenario analysis of the current experimental sites and, evidence of reverse empowerment. With the exception of site 9, in Figure 1 representing Gauteng Province, the rest of the sites are closely linked to the distribution of municipalities that were identified in the integrated and sustainable rural development programme (ISRDP) of 2001. In Table 1, the distribution of wards (administrative units that make up a local municipality) is a reflection of the poorest localities in each local municipality. Gauteng is not included because it is a predominantly urbanised region.

RESULTS

Framework and Programme

The strategic objective of the CRDP is to facilitate integrated development and social cohesion through participatory approaches in partnership with all sectors of society. The DRDLR acts as an initiator, facilitator, coordinator and catalyst in rural development interventions. As

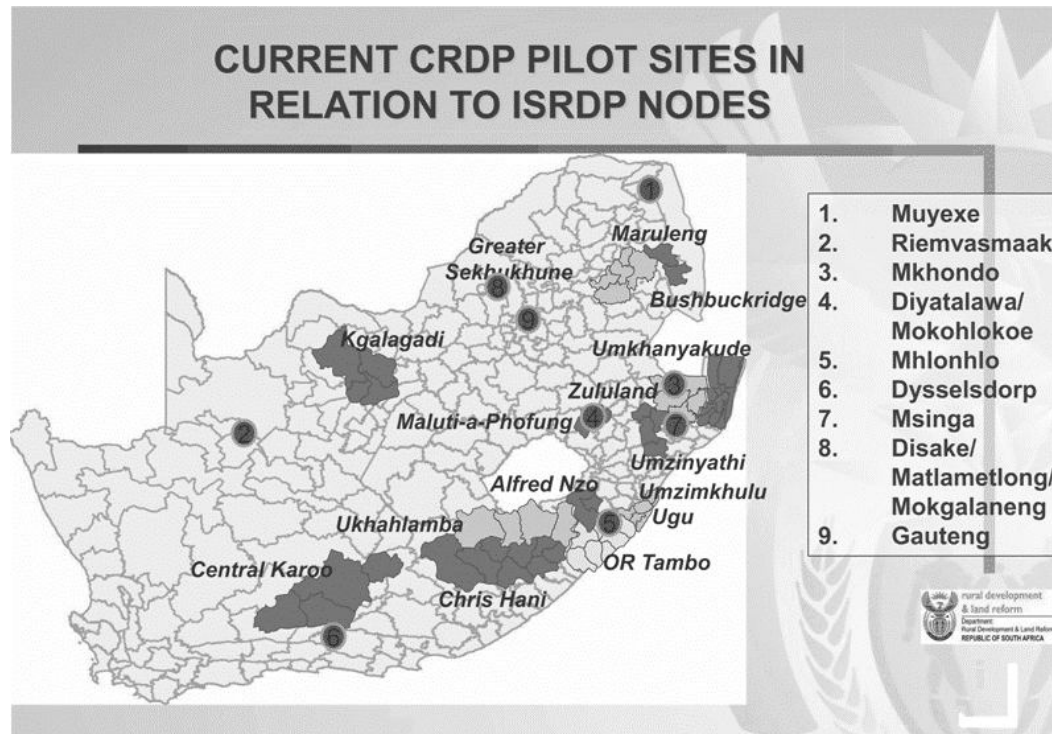


Fig. 1. CRDP sites in South Africa, Oct 2009

Source: Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, Pretoria

an initiator, the Department initiates interventions and strategies in rural areas as part of an integrated approach. As a facilitator, the Department plays an active role in the facilitation of communities and also facilitates interventions

in areas where the Department has no expertise/funding but has identified other sector departments/stakeholders to contribute to the CRDP vision for that area/province. As a coordinator, the department is responsible for strategies,

Table 1: Distribution of sites at ward level

Province	Community	Ward
Limpopo	Muyexe, Thomo, Gon'ono, Dingamansi	Wards 18, 17, 3, and 4
Northern Cape	Riemvasmaak	Siyanda District Municipality area (2 sites)
Mpumalanga	Mkhondo	Wards 1 and 2 (Emahashini, Jabulani Bafazi, KwaNgema, Donkerhoek)
North West	Mokgalwaneng, Disake and Matlametlong	Ward 29
Free State	Diyatalawa/Makgolokwe	Wards 1 and 4 Diyatalawa/ Makgolokwe, Ward 1 Jacobsdal
KZN	Msinga and Vryheid	Wards 6, 7, 8, 9 of Msinga / Ward 5, 6, 7 Vryheid
Western Cape	Dysselsdorp and Mamr	Wards 10 and 12 Dysselsdorp and Mamre (Ward 29 Cape Town)
Eastern Cape and Qumbu (Ngxakolo and Gqunu)	Mhlontlo	Tsolo (Mqobiso and Nombodlana) Ward 2
Total		23

Source: DRDLR Annual Report, 1 April 2009- 31 March 2010. Pretoria

policies and mobilisation of resources from stakeholders to contribute to the objectives of the rural development programme. As a catalyst, the Department plays a change agent role and assists in the complete transformation of the rural space in terms of policies, programmes and projects for the ultimate aim of achieving vibrant and sustainable rural communities. Inter-departmental collaboration (resources, coordination, and project management) at all spheres of government is essential for the successful implementation of the CRDP. Projects must be undertaken in a manner consistent with the integrated development plans, provincial growth and development strategies, area-based plans and other planning frameworks. Projects must be undertaken within a participatory community-based planning approach, packaged and coordinated at provincial level in consultation with local level structures.

In order to co-finance their share of land reform and agrarian transformation projects, the Department of Agriculture launched the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) whose primary aim of CASP is to provide effective agricultural support and to streamline the provision of services to different levels of clients within the farming continuum. The CASP focuses on six pillars : on and off farm infrastructure, Information and knowledge management, financial assistance, technical and advisory services, training and capacity building, and marketing and business development. CASP specifically targets emerging farmers, including women in rural areas. However, as stated earlier, strategic partnerships will be necessary to finance the entire CRDP. It is envisaged that as at the end of 2013, a total of 310 500 households will have been directly supported through the programme translating to an estimated population of 1 397 500 people (Table 2).

Trend Analysis in State Budgetary Interventions

In terms of responsibilities for funding the CRDP, the apportionment indicates diversity across other state departments, provincial governments, local municipalities, public corporations, municipalities and tribal authorities. In two of the sites, the DRDLR accounts for all the budgetary responsibility while in three others, its contribution is 49%, 52% and 53.7%. The contribution to the budget of the local and district

Table 2: Budget allocation and structure per site

<i>Province*</i>	<i>Project*</i>	<i>Total*</i>
		R
Limpopo	Muyexe	50 385 000
North West	Mokgalwaneng, Disake, Matlametlong	125 116 621
Western Cape	Dysselsdorp	250 000
KZN	Msinga	48 670 500
KZN	Vryheid	
Eastern Cape	Mhlontlo	109140000
Mpumalanga	Mkhondo/ Donkerhoek	85 597 437
Free State	Diyatalwa, Tshiame, Mokgolokoeng	10 727 000
Northern Cape	Riemvasmaak	55435000

*Source: DRDLR Annual Report, 1 April-31 March 2010

** Distribution of financing responsibilities in %'s:
1=DRDLR 2=District and Local Municipalities
3=Provincial departments 4= Public corporations and trusts 5=Other national departments 6= Tribal authorities and the local community 7=Mixed apportionment

municipalities appears in Table 2 column 2. This varies between 0 and 24.5%. Note, however that where the DRDLR appears together with a local municipality as shared funding, the amount is captured, instead in column 7. It is most likely therefore that district and local municipalities may be contributing in real terms more funds to the project. In column 3, only North West and Northern Cape make a significant contribution from provincial government departments at 35.9% and 19.2% respectively. Public corporations in column 4 do not appear to be playing any major role in funding the CRDP.

Contributions to the CRDP by the masses of the people in those target local municipalities only appear in the case of North West at 7.8%. The rest of the cells in this column score 0 indicating the total apparent lack of interest in raising contributions from the people likely to benefit from the programme. In column 7, contributions from various government departments indicate attempts at joint inter-departmental co-operation in funding the CRDP. Overall, the total cost of the programme comes to R485 321 558 but on the basis of the departmental budget provided, it is not possible to break this to individual departments where shared commitments are indicated in the budget. In Tables 2 and 3, only the DRDLR consistently appears in each sale

Table 3: Cost distribution of the CRDP budget

	<i>DRDLR</i>	<i>Municipal</i>	<i>Provincial</i>	<i>Public co</i>	<i>National</i>	<i>Community</i>	<i>Shared</i>
Limpopo	24688650	0	0	2015400	22169400	0	1511550
North West	1379283	9759096	44916866	0	1251166	9759096	67562974
Western Cape	250000	0	0	0	0	0	0
KZN	25503342	0	0	0	0	0	23167158
Eastern Cape	29031240	10804860	0	545700	4038180	0	64720020
Mpumalanga	16691499	20971370	0	0	30900672	0	16948291
Free State	10727000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	108271014	41535326	44916866	2561100	58359418	9759096	173909993
Rank	2	5	4	6	3	7	1

Source: Adapted from DRDLR Annual Report, 2010

Table 4: Impact of CRDP on people

<i>Financial year</i>	<i>Number of wards each year</i>	<i>Estimate of households per rural Ward (1)</i>	<i>Estimate of rural households supported</i>
2009/2010	21	2700	56 700
2010/2011	25	2700	67 500
2011/2012	32	2700	86 400
2012/2013	37	2700	99 900
Total	115	10 800	310 500

Source: DRDLR 2010. Strategic Plan. Pretoria: DRDLR

RSA. 2009. Local Government Report. Pretoria: Department of Local Government

against each of the eight sites in the study area indicating a serious commitment in the programme.

Key Elements of Service Delivery

Table 4 shows projections of the impact of the programme by 2013 and based on mean rural household size of 4.5, a total population of at

least 1 397 500 people will have been impacted by the programme by the end of 2014. The distribution of projects at the various pilot sites appear in Table 5 showing a consistent focus on bulk service delivery and infrastructure. This has been the case for all state rural development programmes since 1995. The table hardly shows evidence that the programme has initiated production activities at the level of households in these areas.

Table 5: Distribution of projects per site

<i>Province*</i>	<i>Sites</i>	<i>Projects 2011</i>
Limpopo	Muyexe	Housing, household fencing, satellite police station, public amenities, vegetable gardens, early childhood centre, piped water, renovation of clinic, Housing
North West	Mokgalwaneng, Disake and Matlametlong	Housing
Western Cape	Dysselsdorp	Pack house, fencing
KZN	Msinga	Fencing, housing
KZN	Vryheid	Fencing, cabbages project
Eastern Cape	Mhlontlo	Fencing, renovation of primary school, ambulance, houses, livestock handling facility, early childhood centre, integrated service centre,
Mpumalanga	Mkhondo/Donkerhoek	Primary School, early childhood centre,
Free State	Diyatalwa, Tshiame, Mokgolokoeng	Tarred road, clinic, crèche, housing
Northern Cape	Riemvasmaak	

Source: DRDLR 2011. Strategic Plan 2010-2013

Current Pilot Sites

A survey of existing government documentation on the CRDP does not show the state of the programme as at the end of 2011. What is not clear from available statistics is whether the budgeted funds were effectively deployed in the 2009/2010 financial year and, whether, on the basis of project performance, new financial commitments are forthcoming. Indeed, no indication so far appears as to the status of each of the individual sites in the context of actual budgetary deployment, shift from planning to implementation, changes in original budgetary allocations of 2009, % of individual projects delivered, % of individual projects in progress, % of individual projects still to be initiated, number of projects abandoned and number of projects re-designed. The annual budget for 2011 of the DRDLR indicates an allocation for land reform but there is no evidence that the expanded mandate of the department has been matched by an increased budget.

Evidence of Reverse Empowerment

Tribal authorities still play a significant role in the lives of many rural communities, especially in predominantly African areas. Local chiefs periodically organise gatherings at which issues of concern to the community are openly discussed and the way forward plotted. Where they exist, tribal authorities are able to mobilize the masses of the people not only to participate but also to contribute in kind or in material terms to community projects. The results in Tables 2 and 3 shows consistently across the area, local municipal and district administrations perform better in this regard than communities. The implications of this are discussed in the next section of this paper.

DISCUSSION

What are the implications of the findings in the context of reverse empowerment? Inherent in this key question are several embedded questions: Is the new programme in any way radically different from earlier programmes emanating from the rural development policy? Apart from expanding the scope of objectives and the lopping in of some government departments and local municipalities, the only difference may per-

haps be in the claim that the programme should ultimately produce vibrant and sustainable rural communities. The mechanism for implementing the programme has not changed from the focus on service and infrastructure delivery; an approach that has been followed since 1995. Are there any new assumptions in government rural development thinking that cumulatively force a change in community behaviour towards the role of government?

In theory, the government has since 1995 gone out of its way to engage the participation of communities in planning for development and most development projects claim to be people-driven and pro-poor. In its policy discussion document, the African National Congress (ANC 2012) sees land reform as an autonomy-fostering service delivery rather than state largesse. In the same vein, it blames the conversion of the property systems of indigenous South Africans from common, collective, state etc into exclusive private rights and the suppression of alternative forms of production and consumption for undermining the development of the previously disadvantaged. In essence however, the top-down approach typical of the apartheid regime before 1995 has been retained so that the government still sees itself as responsible for organising interventions in the name of development. It is not surprising that the DRDLR presents itself as the initiator, catalyst and implementer of development. Community participation is not in practice part of this triangular model. The government is still stuck in a paradigm of “developing the people” resulting in a situation where the community has no space and spectrum to engage in its own progress. While the framework talks of the CRDP as community-driven, there is little on the ground to support this claim (DRDLR 2009a, DRDLR 2012a). In the sense that this programme, like many other similar programmes uses a command-control-deliver model typical of centrally planned economies, opportunities for community development, for agrarian transformation and for rural development become compromised. Indeed, apart from organising a simple needs analysis in which the community is organised to indicate priority needs of their area, the rest of the programme and the resulting projects remain a government business. Both the mid-term review (DRDLR 2012b) and the ‘Integrated Growth and Development Plan’ (DWAFF 2012) raise concerns

about problems of coordination in the public sector. Even the local municipalities and district municipalities, which by law are required to engage communities in designing the integrated development plan (RSA 2011) and in allocating budgets thereof are not adequately given the space to play a central role in the programme.

Are these projects designed indirectly to initiate large scale changes in the up-take of development interventions? The choice of a mere 8 pilot sites, later to be rolled out to 160 is a piecemeal approach. Projections by the DRDLR indicate that by 2013, at least close to 1 400 000 people will have had a direct benefit as a result of the CRDP. What is not indicated is the structure and content of this claimed benefit. With consistent funding and scaling up towards a complete roll out countrywide, it should be possible to radically increase the impact of the programme. Already, there is evidence of development change in the form of schools, clinics, police stations, fencing, feeder roads, community halls, piped water and extension of rural electrification taking place in pilot sites across the country. What is missing in this evidence of progress is what is happening to individual households as a result of the programme. No mention is made of actual amounts of additional land, for example, transferred to beneficiaries in the communities where these pilot sites are located. No mention is made about restructuring tenure systems to increase the security of tenure in these areas. Yet, one of the objectives of CRDP is land reform.

Is there evidence in the choice of projects at each site of the need to integrate interventions in order to achieve cumulative growth synergies in time and space? One glaring weakness is that the community profile generated for each pilot site did not include an indication of the potential resource base of the area. The understanding of the methodology of community profiling, at least in theory, is that it generates information that provides a platform for planning. The socio-economic profile is imposed on the resource and environmental base in order to identify a flexible combination of inputs that ideally should build on this base to guarantee continuity and linkages with local knowledge. This is in line with Ruhiiga (2011b) on Sub-Saharan Africa where the strategic location of human settlements is shown to maximise the potential for cumulative growth. Apart from the short term

employment created for local people in carrying out community profiling in each site as part of the job creation model, the resulting specific sub-projects in each site do not appear to show an integrated link with the skills and knowledge base that should have been identified through community profiling. Indeed, at most sites the usual combination of a few projects is repeated across the entire study area (Table 5). Integration, as is understood by planners seems to refer to the participation of many role players as part of a development package for each site. It has nothing to do with the critical need to exploit local knowledge and local practices, an approach that would facilitate learning. Yet, one key principle espoused by government in the name of rural development is to enable people to adapt their own knowledge to the changing world around them. The design and delivery of the project does not create space for this.

On the basis of the results and findings, is there any basis to justify the use of the term reverse empowerment? The comments that appear in the preceding section point to several contexts, critical in the process of rural development and agrarian transformation. From a planning and implementation perspective, the government through the DRDLR is so pre-occupied with delivery at all costs that the demand for sober consultation with key stakeholders, local communities and other departments with a role in rural development has not been adequately addressed. The ANC (2012) in its policy document and DWAFF (2012) both acknowledge problems of developing implementation strategies that accommodate the active participation of the masses of the people. Jacobs (2012a, 2012b; Jacobs and Makaudze 2012; Sebugwawo 2012) raise issues critical in the attainment of sustainable development. This means that community-driven participation, integration and co-ordination are poorly matched in practice. This has been made worse by the inadequate budget commitments not only from the DRDLR itself but also from other sister departments. This position confirms an earlier view by Kariuki (2009) who noted for land reform in Eastern and Southern Africa, the existence of a discord between objectives and the mechanism to implement them. There is no logic why local municipalities within which the selected sites fall were not from the beginning compelled to align their integrated development plans (IDP's) in order to include

some of the targeted projects. This would have had a dramatic increase in the availability of funds for the programme.

Turning to local communities, the programme fails to actively engage people to take control of their own development—one of the ultimate goals of the DRDLR. This position is in line with Greenberg (2010) who concludes that people remain bystanders in their own development. The DRDLR has positioned itself as a central player in agrarian change and rural development at the expense of structures that may be closer to the communities the state wishes to transform. Community participation seems to relate to the initial planning stages of the programme, thereafter, a top-down central state bureaucracy is responsible for delivery of the programme. The details of projects at each of the selected sites do not show the ability of the DRDLR to incorporate local knowledge, practices and already established indigenous livelihoods in generating a progressive platform for continuity into which additional inputs would be integrated. The limited levels of community participation and the absence of a radical clear transfer of land resources to these communities undermines their ability to view development in a different light. This finding is supported by PLAAS (2011) in their submission on the Green Paper on Land Reform 2011 in which they question the lack of clarity on how the government intends to increase the access of households to land. Government is seen—as has been the case before—as the provider of development and the community is conditioned to remain at the receiving end of state largesse. It is noted that there is an extremely low premium put into the need for households to improve their productive capacity in on-farm and off farm activities. These conditions point to the existence of reverse empowerment.

CONCLUSION

The comprehensive rural development programme has been shown to offer some insights on the development front. Through the programme, the government has been able to have a considerable impact on the provision of basic services and support infrastructures to some of the most undeveloped areas in the country. The analysis of the programme was carried out ultimately to tease out evidence, if any, of reverse empowerment. The findings indicate reverse empowerment as one of the unintended out-

comes of development intervention. Problems of design in the programme and questions about the issues of integration, community participation, and appropriateness of the DRDLR to deliver the programme, continuity and sustainability are noted. Overall, the programme is ambitious but it fails to create conditions that cumulatively facilitate communities into taking full responsibility for their own development. The lesson from this study is that there is an urgent need for the government to re-think and review its position on agrarian transformation, land reform and rural development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the findings and the conclusion thereof, three recommendations are made. The government—at national, provincial and municipal level—need a radical paradigm shift in the way development is perceived so that there is a move away from an excessive pre-occupation with delivery of services, infrastructure and projects as evidence of progress to facilitating a process of community empowerment. This calls for the creation of space, opportunities and access to resources to enable households and communities to take control of their own destiny by actively taking responsibility for their own progress. For this to occur, government needs courage to accept that since 1995 limited progress has been recorded in the name of rural development and agrarian transformation in spite of an impressive record of policy and planning documents and the creation of enabling institutions. This calls for a major policy change. While government policy documents and resulting programmes hammer the rhetoric of community participation, the need to create vibrant communities, war on poverty and agrarian transformation, there is urgent need to change mechanisms for implementation so that municipalities, which are closest to the people, actively drive the development effort. The development programme should be an integrated component of existing IDP's so that the state stops, in reality from running parallel and uncoordinated projects with no linkages to existing developments and no potential for generating growth multipliers.

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