AN ASSESSMENT OF RECAPITALISING A POST-SETTLEMENT SUPPORT PROGRAMME IN SOUTH AFRICA: THE CASE OF GERT SIBANDE AND EHLANZENI, MPUMALANGA

BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis entitled "*An assessment of recapitalising a post-settlement support programme in South Africa: the case of Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni, Mpumalanga"* is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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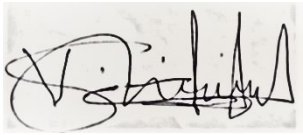

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Signature Date

DEDICATION

Gratefully and thankfully, I dedicate this thesis to God the father, God the son, and God the Holy Spirit. Without you, I would not have done it.

Thank you, Lord!

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADRIDGELIGHT	Agri Delight Training and Consulting Institution
AFGRI	Agri Service Proprietary Limited
AgriSA	Agriculture South Africa
ANC	African National Congress
AZAPO	Azanian People's Organisation
BKB	Agri - Solution
CASP	Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme
CARP	Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CHS	Commission on Human Security
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CSLR	Center for the Study of Law and Religion
CWP	Community Work Programme
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery
DALRRD	Department of Agriculture Land Reform and Rural Development
DLA	Department of Land Affairs
DPME	Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
DRDLR	Department of Rural Development and Land Reform
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighters
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FTLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IILS	International Institute of Labour Studies
KJV	King James Version
LARP	Land and Agrarian Reform Project
LEWC	Land Expropriation Without Compensation
LRAD	Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development
NCP	National Contact/Contributory Point/Pension
NDP	National Development Plan
NPC	National Planning Commission PhD

PLAS	Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy
PMG	Parliamentary Monitoring Group
RADP	Recapitalisation and Development Programme (also known as RECAP)
RECAP	Recapitalisation and Development Programme
SADT	South African Development Trust
SAHO	South African History Online
SD	Sustainable Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SLAG	Settlement and Land Acquisition Grant
UNDP	United Nations Development Report

SUMMARY

Attempts to redress the dispossession of native South Africans from their land by colonialists have had many setbacks mainly as a result of inadequate post-settlement support to beneficiary farmers. Despite the implementation of various land reform programmes since 1994 as instruments for addressing land injustice, promoting land utilisation, and combating other land-related problems, there is compelling evidence of land inequality, rising poverty levels, land agitation and farm battles. Given the importance of post-settlement support and the crucial role of land reform in the South African economy, the research objective was to use the human security theoretical standpoint to critically examine the implementation of the Recapitalisation and Development Programme (RADP, also known as RECAP) introduced in 2009 through the lived experiences of beneficiaries in Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni in the Mpumalanga province.

The qualitative study was carried out via telephone interviews with thirty participants selected through purposive and snowball sampling techniques. The findings indicate that the RADP has empowered beneficiary farmers to become independent; however, the objective to transform them into commercial farmers is still a work-in-progress. The findings highlight the importance of the programme in addressing challenges such as inadequate funding, lack of coordination among stakeholders and insufficient technical expertise, coupled with the need for constant monitoring and evaluation. The persistent problems with the unsuccessful implementation of land reform projects are partly due to an entitlement mentality on the part of the farmers and negligence on the part of the government. This has had negative impacts on the transformation of both the farmers and the agricultural sector. Furthermore, injecting income into each new land reform programme without changing the mindsets of farmers is futile. The thesis concludes that it is vital for the government to invest more efforts into achieving its objectives, as the RADP can provide the necessary resources and support to help beneficiaries make their land productive and improve their livelihoods.

Key words**:** Beneficiary, Black farmers, development, farming, land reform, post-settlement support, recapitalisation, RECAP, Gert Sibande, Ehlanzeni

NKOMISO

Miringeto ya ku lulamisa ku tekeriwa misava ya vona ka Maafrika-Dzongaxidzi hi vakoloni yi vile na swiphiqo swo tala ngopfungopfu hikwalaho ka nseketelo wa le ndzhaku ka ku hakeriwa wo ka wu nga enelangi eka van'wamapurasi va vavuyeriwa. Hambileswi ku veke na ku simekiwa ka minongoloko ya mpfuxeto wa misava yo hambanahambana kusukela hi 1994 tanihi switirho swa ku tirhana na nkavululami wa misava, ku kondletela ntirhiso wa misava na ku hungutiwa ka swiphiqo leswi fambelanaka na misava, ku na vumbhoni byo khorwisa bya nkandzingano wa misava, tilevhele ta vusweti leti tlakukaka, nkantshamiseko wa misava na tinyimpi ta mapurasi. Loko ku tekeriwa enhlokweni nseketelo wa le ndzhaku ka ku hakeriwa na xiave xa nkoka swonghasi xa mpfuxeto wa misava eka ikhonomi ya Afrika-Dzonga, xikongomelo xa ndzavisiso a ku ri ku tirhisa xiyimo xa xithiyori ya nhlayiseko wa vanhu ku kambela hi ndlela ya vukhensivusoli nsimeko wa Nongoloko wa ku Nyika Timali hi Vuntshwa na Nhluvukiso (RADP, lowu tlhelaka wu tiveka tanihi RECAP) lowu tivisiweke hi 2009 hi ku tirhisa mitokoto leyi hanyiweke ya vavuyeriwa eGert Sibande na Ehlanzeni eka xifundzakulu xa Mpumalanga.

Ndzavisiso wa risima wu endlwile hi ku tirhisa tiinthavhiyu ta tiqingho na 30 wa vatekaxiave lava hlawuriweke hi ku tirhisa tithekiniki ta masampulelo ya xikongomelo na yo landzelerisa lava bumabumeriweke. Swikumiwa swi komba leswaku RADP yi havexerisile matimba van'wamapurasi va vavuyeriwa ku va va va lava tiyimelaka; hambiswiritano, xikongomelo xa ku va cinca va va van'wamapurasi va xibindzu ka ha ri ntirho lowu yaka emahlweni. Swikumiwa swi kombisa nkoka wa nongoloko lowu eka ku tirhana na mitlhontlho yo tanihi ku nyikiwa ka timali loku nga enelangiki, mpfumaleko wa ntirhisano exikarhi ka vakhomaxiave na vutivikulu bya xithekiniki, swi katsana na xidingo xa ku vuvekatihlo bya nkarhi hinkwawo na nkambelo. Swiphiqo leswi phikelelaka hi nsimeko lowu nga humeleriki wa tiphurojeke ta mpfuxeto wa misava hi xiphemu swi hikwalaho ka miehleketo yo tivula ku va va ri na mfanelo eka xiphemu xa van'wamapurasi na vusopfa eka xiphemu xa mfumo. Leswi swi vile na mikhumbo yo homboloka eka ncinco wa havumbirhi bya van'wamapurasi na sekitara ya vurimi. Ku yisa emahlweni, ku nyika malinghena eka nongoloko wa mpfuxeto wa

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Maritokulu: Muvuyeriwa, van'wamapurasi va vantima, nhluvukiso, vurimi, mpfuxeto wa misava, nseketelo wa le ndzhaku ka hakeriwa, ku nyikiwa timali hi vuntshwa, RECAP, Gert Sibande, Ehlanzeni

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Ndingedzo dza u lulamisa u pfuluswa ha vhadzulapo vha Afrika Tshipembe kha mavu avho nga vhakoloni dzo vha na zwithithisi zwinzhi zwo bveledzwaho nga u sa vha na thikhedzo yo eḓanaho nga murahu ha u tendelana kha vha vhuelwa vha vhorabulasi. Nga nnḓani ha ha u shumiswa ha mbekanyamushumo dzo fhambanaho dza mbuedzedzo ya mavu u bva 1994 sa tshishumiswa tsha u lulamisa u sa lingana ha mavu, u ṱuṱuwedza u shumiswa ha mavu na u lwa na dziṅwe thaidzo dzi elanaho na mavu, hu na vhuṱanzi vhune ha khou kombetshedza u sa lingana ha mavu, u gonya ha ḽeveḽe ya vhushai, khakhathi dza zwa mavu na na nndwa dza bulasini. Ho ṋetshedzwa ndeme ya thikhedzo ya nga murahu ha u tendelana na mushumo muhulwane wa mbuedzedzo ya mavu kha ikonomi ya AfrikaTshipembe, tshipikwa tsha ṱhoḓisiso ho vha u shumisa vhuimo ha thiori ya tsireledzo ya muthu u ṱola ndeme ya kushumisela kwa Mbekanyamushumo ya Nyengedzedzo ya khephithala na Mveledziso (RADP, i dovha ya ḓivhea nga u pfi RECAP) yo ḓivhadzwaho nga 2009 nga kha tshenzhemo ire hone ya vhavhuelwa ngei Gert Sibande na Ehlanzeni ngei vunduni ḽa Mpumalanga.

Ngudo ya khwaḽithathethivi yo itwa nga kha inthaviwu ya luṱingo na vhadzheneli vha 30 vho nangwaho nga kha thekhiniki ya tsumbonanguludzwa hu na zwo sedzwaho khazwo na u livhiswa nga muṅwe mudzheneli. Mawanwa a sumbedza uri RADP yo maanḓafhadza vhorabulasi vha vha vhuelwa u swika hune vha ḓiimisa nga vhoṱhe, naho zwo ralo, tshipikwa tsha u vha shandukisa u vha vhorabulasi vha mbambadzo u kha ḓi vha mushumo u re kati. Mawanwa o ombedzela ndeme ya mbekanyamushumo kha u amba nga ha khaedu dzi ngaho sa ṱhahelelo ya ndambedzo, u sa vha na tshumisano vhukati ha vhadzhiamukovhe na ṱhahelelo ya vhomakone vha zwa thekiniki, zwo ṱangana na ṱhoḓea ya u dzulela u ṱola na u linga. Thaidzo ine ya khou bvela phanḓa na u sa bvela phanḓa ha u shumiswa ha thandela dza mbuedzedzo ya mavu zwi khou vha hone nga nṱhani ha kuhumbulele kwa vhuṋe kha tshipiḓa tsha vhorabulasi na u litshedzela kha tshipiḓa tsha muvhuso. Hezwi zwi na masiandaitwa a si a vhuḓi kha tshanduko ya vhuvhili havho vhorabulasi na sekithara ya vhulimi. U i sa phanḓa, u ḓadzisa mbuelo kha mbekanyamushumo iṅwe na iṅwe ntswa ya mbuedzedzo ya mavu hu si na u shandukisa kuhumbulele kwa vhorabulasi ndi ḽifhedzi. Thesisi yo pendela

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Maipfi a ndeme: muvhuelwa; vhorabulasi vha vharema, mveledziso; vhufuwi; mbuedzedzo ya mavu; thikhedzo ya nga murahu ha thendelano; RECAP; Gert Sibande; Ehlanzeni

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Land is at the heart of the South African government's ambition to create a more equal society in a country described as one of the most unequal in the world (Hall, Edelman, Borras Jr, Scoones, White & Wolford 2015:468-488). In the 17th century, the natives (Africans) did not treasure and protect their land until colonialists started showing an interest and evicted them forcefully. Amongst these was a Dutchman named Jan Van Riebeek, who, after several visits to the coastal areas, started establishing permanent settling areas for colonialists and for imported slaves from Asia who would farm and attend to the crews of ships on transit (Gouws 2018:111-127). He used Autsumao (Herry), chief of the Goringhaikonas, as an interpreter in the cattle bartering transactions (South African Government, Department of History 2019).

The contact between Africans and colonialists in the territory, now known as South Africa, was an extremely violent affair, which led to one of the most brutal colonial-era dispossession policies ever experienced anywhere in the world, ultimately leading to an official race-based government policy that came to be known as Apartheid (Dominguez & Luoma 2020:65). Colonialism in South Africa greatly differed from the experience in other African colonies like Nigeria and Ghana, where the presence and activities of colonialists centred mainly on the production and shipping of commodities along the coastlines (Gillespie 2017:974-992) with very little colonial infrastructure in the interior. It was more pervasive, touching almost all aspects of socio-political life, and was instituted by settlers who had no intention of ever leaving. South Africa was their new permanent home (Van Breda & Swilling 2019:823-841).

The dispossession of Black people started with the creation of the very first important White settlements (Kelley 2017:267-276). In 1894 the government of Prime Minister Cecil John Rhodes of the Cape Colony voted the *Glen Grey Act*

into law to reorganise land, labour, and government relations (Clark & Worger 2016:3-18), thereby changing land management by those occupying it under customary tenure. Henceforth, a plot of land was to be attached to a title with a clear single owner or group of owners. The *Glen Grey Act* further disenfranchised Blacks from voting in the colonial parliament. Finally, the act also set up a taxation policy, which required Blacks to pay taxes to the colonial government (Clark & Worger 2016). The Khoi and San were almost exterminated as White settlers wiped them out in struggles over their land and labour. Progressively, Chinese, and Malaysian indentured labourers replaced the Khoi and San (Jordan 2018). The rise of White towns increased mining activities in the Highveld, and the arrival of more European settlers accelerated the dispossession of the natives, and even some Whites, to create room for European companies and interests (Jordan 2018).

The *Natives Land Act of 1913* (Walker 2014:655-665) pushed Blacks into approximately 8% of the space that is now South Africa, and the land on which they were settled was then managed by the South African Development Trust (SADT), and so, technically, Blacks still did not own the land on which they had been resettled. The Beaumont Commission pushed for this land to be increased, and it was progressively increased to 13% in 1936 (The Helen Suzman Foundation 2013:4-10). The *Natives Land Act* (Walker 2014:655-665) forbade Blacks from buying land outside the reserves held by the SADT.

Over the next four decades, the apartheid government enacted a slew of laws to keep the races separate and dispossess Africans of all their property rights within South Africa. Prime Minister Daniel Francois Malan's National Party passed the *Group Areas Act in 1950* to further push out the Blacks from the very fertile "black spots" (Kenny 2020:500-521). This was accelerated in 1951 when Malan passed the *Bantu Authorities Act*, creating homelands for Blacks based on ethnic groups. The SADT areas became *de-facto* countries (Bantustans), some of which later had their presidents and governments: Gazankulu, Bophuthatswana, Venda, Transkei, Ciskei, KwaZulu, Lebowa, QwaQwa, KaNgwane and KwaNdebele. To visit the Republic of South Africa, the Blacks, now officially foreigners, had to carry passports or 'pass books' as they were known. In 1951 the *Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act* (Kronman & Jönsson 2020:371-387) was enacted to force people off

the land where they had settled with the permission of White owners. By the time the apartheid system ended in 1994, 87% of South Africa's 122 million hectares of land had been transferred to Whites, who were only 11% of the population (Lahiff 2014:586-596). Approximately 60,000 White commercial farmers had roughly 83 million hectares of the most fertile commercial farmland in the country, or 68% of South Africa's total surface area (Lahiff 2014).

Blacks resisted the apartheid policies, often at great cost to their lives. Organisations like the African National Congress (ANC), the United Democratic Movement (UDM) and The Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) were set up to fight for a non-racial South Africa (Jordan 2019:1-4). Confining 90% of South Africa's population to 13% of the land created a long-lasting legacy of pervasive poverty, inequality, and unemployment within Black communities. The 1994 Constitution's (South Africa, Dept. of Justice 1996) promise to build a just and fair society for all South Africans begins with dismantling this terrible legacy.

The Constitution (South Africa, Dept. of Justice 1996) obliges the South African government to implement land reform processes. To "operationalise" the dictates of the Constitution, the Department of Land Affairs developed a White Paper on Land Reform in 1997 (Akinola 2020b:1-2), which begins by acknowledging that land ownership in South Africa has long been a source of conflict. The history of conquest and dispossession by means of forced removals, and the racially imbalanced distribution of land resources has left the country with a complex legacy (South Africa, Dept. of Land Affairs 1997:1). Land and agriculture have been identified as two of the solutions to the problems of poverty, inequality and unemployment that affect Black South Africans disproportionately (South Africa, Dept. of Land Affairs 1997: 1). According to Kepe and Hall (2018:128-137), this is in contrast with the reality as the government is no longer consistent with the project of decolonisation. Consequently, inequality and unemployment rates are climbing as state officials control even the smallest aspects of land redistribution in terms of farms (Kepe & Hall 2018).

The challenges recorded in the slow process of transferring land to Blacks are mirrored in the negligible state support offered to most Black farmers (Hall

2014:29). Furthermore, giving land to Blacks does not mean they will become good farmers overnight. Commercial farming requires many different skills, such as accounting, marketing, soil-science, project management and water management, among others.

Land reform beneficiaries must acquire all these skills to ease their transition to enable them to become flourishing commercial farmers. As an initial attempt at land reform, the Settlement and Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG) was not necessarily geared towards agricultural production. Beneficiaries received R16 000 to acquire land for any purpose of their choice, including agriculture. By 2001, less than 2 million hectares of land had changed ownership from Whites to Blacks (Aliber 2013:5). The deadline for transferring 30% of the country's roughly 83 million hectares of agricultural land from Whites to Blacks was shifted to 2004 and later to 2014 (South Africa, Dept. of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR 2019:3). From the aspirations in 1997, this figure had almost become the main land reform objective (Aliber 2013:5). By March 2018, a total of 8 330 865.72 hectares of land had moved to Black hands through restitution, tenure reform and redistribution with 1 809 400.1 hectares transferred within the 2011/2012 financial year (South Africa, Dept. of Rural Development and Land Reform 2019:3). This confirms the reality that twenty-five years after the beginning of the democratic project, less than ten million hectares have been given to Blacks.

The Parliamentary Monitoring Group (PMG) acknowledged in 2004 that most of the land that had been transferred to Blacks was underutilised and that most projects set up on these lands had failed (South Africa, PMG 2017:1). Following this, the government decided to become more directly involved to ensure the success of agricultural projects. This led to the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) in 2004 (Mkodzongi & Lawrence 2019:1-13), the Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS) in 2007 (Aliber 2019) and the Recapitalisation and Development Programme (South Africa, DRDLR 2015: xxiii), henceforth abbreviated as RECAP) in 2010. These initiatives introduced measures such as mechanisation finance, irrigation schemes, on-farm training, and value chain support (South Africa, DRDLR 2015: xxiii). Caps in the financial support were removed, and the government aid was directed more at projects that stood a

greater chance of success. However, there is a sense among beneficiaries that these changes are meant to help the politically connected and that getting post-settlement support is akin to winning a national lottery (Hall 2014:8).

The RECAP was designed to make post-settlement support more robust and guarantee greater success for beneficiaries and to ensure that Black farmers are given sufficient time and resources to equip themselves to become large-scale farmers. The official strategy was based on heavy capitalisation, business plans, the selection of more well-off beneficiaries and the partnering of beneficiaries with mentors who are established commercial farmers. Still missing, however, was who should qualify for post-settlement support, what that support should entail and the reciprocal responsibilities of beneficiaries in respect of the state and their communities (Hall 2014:43-45).

Maka and Aliber (2019:37-45) list the main objectives of the RECAP as being:

- To attain greater food security.
- To help emerging farmers become commercial farmers.
- To increase agricultural production.
- To create jobs in the agricultural sector.

The RECAP has been implemented for more than a decade now, yet it is still not clear that any successful Black farmers were created through the programme (Hall 2014:1). In addition, it is unclear how farmers fare when the five-years of the RECAP support cycle ends. Beyers and Fay (2016:41-43) proffer that land reform has led to unanticipated disempowerment and new forms of activism. They also suggest that the pursuit of justice through policy deliberation has resulted in merely empowering elites. What can be concluded is that land reform in South Africa has led to the expansion of laws passed by an already-overburdened state that, at the same time, lacked the administrative capacity or resources to implement these.

The inability to create a class of successful Black farmers is a challenge. In the first instance, South Africans have established that twenty-two years after vowing to transfer at least 30% of the available approximately 83 million hectares of farmland

from Whites to Blacks, less than one-third of that goal had been actualised by 2019. Through their initiative and with the funds provided to them, Blacks bought under 10 million hectares (South Africa, Dept. of Rural Development (DRD) 2019: 3).

The government's failure or inability to redistribute land to Blacks at a faster rate has meant that land has remained a highly charged and emotive topic, which social formations can exploit to incite political change or a rebellion. Political parties like the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and Black First Land First eagerly used land-related themes to attract more electors during the 2018 presidential elections (Mokone 2018: 1) Since then, little effort has been directed at helping Black farm owners. Thus, the study seeks to assess the recapitalising of a post-settlement support programme in the case study areas of Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni Districts in Mpumalanga Province. It is worthy to note that the RECAP is an agricultural support programme to farmers.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The post-settlement support programme in South Africa was established to support previously disadvantaged land reform beneficiaries (Spierenburg 2020:280-299), as the government's ambition to create a more equal society in a country described as one of the most unequal in the world. However, the programme has faced several challenges, including inadequate funding, lack of capacity, and poor coordination among stakeholders. This has led to a low success rate, which has had a negative impact on the livelihoods of the beneficiaries.

The government is committed to using land to solve the poverty, inequality and unemployment challenges which affect Black South Africans disproportionately and is disproportionately concentrated in former homeland areas (Saifaddin 2020). The Constitution authorises the government to ascertain that land is accessible to all citizens, and the *Comprehensive Rural Development Strategy* and the *National Development Plan* identify land and agrarian transformation as steppingstones out of poverty and precarity for poor Black South Africans (Hudson, Hunter & Peckham 2019:1-14). The argument is that land is a multipurpose asset for residential purposes, agricultural consumption and strengthening the livelihoods of residents.

Tyekela and Amoah (2021:1329-1337) states that several programmes set up to promote land and agrarian transformation – SLAG, LRAD, CASP – have all failed because of underinvestment, the unavailability of proper post-settlement support, the inability of beneficiaries to transform their allotted lands into viable projects, irrigation problems and challenges accessing finance from financial institutions.

The RECAP programme was set up to resolve these challenges. Its priority was to recapitalise and develop failed farms. It aimed to address the challenges of the previous land reforms programmes by pairing novice Black farmers with experienced White farmers for a period of five years (South Africa, DPME, 2016:1). However, the RECAP, just like the programmes before it, started with several major challenges, among which was the fact that unqualified applicants were selected for the programme (Binswanger-Mkhize 2014:253-269).

Hall (2014:33) notes that some mentors are managing all the project money and resources without involving programme beneficiaries. The RECAP funds are used to acquire land, which remains under government ownership until the beneficiaries show that they can manage it properly (Hall, 2014). However, with only 25% of the funding going to post-settlement support, the government of South Africa unintentionally repeats the mistakes that have plagued CASP for over two decades (Homsy, Lui & Warmer 2019:572-582). As a result, the National Planning Commission (NPC) indicated that *"… by 2030, South Africa should observe meaningful and measurable progress in reviving rural areas and in creating more functionally integrated, balanced and vibrant urban settlements"* (South Africa, NPC 2011: 260).

The RECAP was designed to guarantee greater land reform success. The main purpose of the RECAP is to address the challenges of the previous land reform programmes. Its priority is to recapitalise and develop failed farms (Hall 2014:1). Unfortunately, the programme has not been oriented towards innovation. Black peasant farmers are increasingly encouraged to partake in agricultural investments to alleviate poverty and increase livelihood security. Protracted poverty and livelihood insecurity amongst Black people inspired this study, because the aim

was to understand why Black people are still suffering under the yoke of poverty despite countless material and financial incentives to back government policies for improved agricultural productivity (Mkhabela *et al* 2022: 2137314). Simply put, the question was *"why are people still suffering even when the government is in favour of helping the Black majority?"*

The main research objective was to examine how the beneficiaries experienced the implementation of the RECAP in Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni, both in the Mpumalanga Province of South Africa[1].

The secondary objectives are to:

- Examine who qualifies for the RECAP in Gert Sibanda and Ehlanzeni Critically and what kind of support is officially offered to those who qualify.
- How government policies and agricultural post-settlement support programmes sustain Black landowners in Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni.
- Assess and evaluate the role of the RECAP in enhancing livelihood security of the beneficiaries and communities as a whole.
- From the perspective of the beneficiaries, assess the RECAP's viability in developing Black commercial farmers in Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni.

The following questions were explored in terms of the RECAP in Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni:

- What is the problem with the unsuccessful implementation of the various land reform policies?
- Why do the problems persist?
- What is the role of the government and the beneficiaries in the positive or negative outcomes of the land reform policies?

[1] The "implementation" is used here is because the study was not looking at how the RECAP was planned or the moment of its implementation, but instead the focus was on capturing the lived experiences of people precisely because the RECAP was implemented.

- What is the impact of these policies on the government and the country as a whole?
- How does the RECAP differ from other notions of successful land reform?
- To what extent can the RECAP be successful, as implemented in Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni?

1.3 REASON FOR THE SELECTION OF THE STUDY SITES IN THE MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

Siyongwana and Shabalala (2019:367-380) explain that Mpumalanga is a province in the eastern part of South Africa, bordering both Mozambique and Swaziland. The province was created in 1994 following the end of apartheid and the establishment of a democratic government in South Africa. They further add that prior to the establishment of the province, the area, now known as Mpumalanga, was part of the former province of Transvaal. Mphela, Ramusi and Mphasha (2021:1-20) further add that during apartheid, the region was divided into three separate regions, namely the Eastern Transvaal, Northern Transvaal, and KwaNdebele, and these regions were largely divided along racial lines, with the White minority controlling the economy and political power in the region.

After the end of apartheid, Mphela *et al* (2021:1-20) indicate that the new democratic government sought to create a more equitable society and address the historical imbalances in land ownership and access to resources. As a result, Sihlangu and Odeku (2021:1-5) mention that as part of this process, the new government established the province of Mpumalanga, which was created from parts of the former Transvaal province.

According to Zulu, Ngidi, Ojo and Hlatshwayo (2022:1-9), Mpumalanga is a diverse province with a rich cultural heritage and abundant natural resources, and is home to a range of ethnic groups, including the Swazi, Zulu, and Ndebele, and has a vibrant tourism industry, with attractions such as the Kruger National Park, the Blyde River Canyon, and the historic gold-mining town of Pilgrim's Rest. Niyimbanira (2017:254-261) further adds that the province is also a major producer of coal, timber, and agricultural products, and has a growing manufacturing sector.

In debating the heritage and natural resources, Netshakhuma (2019:178-196) states that the Mpumalanga Province, which is the second smallest of the nine provinces in South Africa, has almost half of the country's high potentially arable land. Zulu *et al* (2022:1-9) mention that beneath its grasslands and cultivated farms are vast coalfields, which not only play a major role in the generation of this nation's electricity, but also earn significant revenue from the export market. Nxesi (2016) explains that the Mpumalanga Province is situated mainly on the high plateau grasslands of the Middleveld. Mozambique and Swaziland border the province to the east and Gauteng to the west. In the north, it shares borders with Limpopo, to the south-west with the Free State and to the south, KwaZulu-Natal. The capital is Mbombela (formerly Nelspruit). The Mpumalanga Province is divided into three municipal districts, which are further subdivided into 17 local municipalities. The district municipalities are Gert Sibande, Nkangala and Ehlanzeni. With a total area of 76,495 square kilometres, it is the second-smallest province in South Africa (Mpumalanga Provincial Government 2010). According to Statistics SA (2019:18), the province had a population of 4 592 187 people in mid-2019.

The Ehlanzeni and Gert Sibande District Municipalities are amongst the three district municipalities in Mpumalanga. The districts produce citrus fruit, mangoes, avocados, guavas, paw-paws, litchis, bananas, granadillas, sugar cane, pecan and macadamia nuts, potatoes, sunflowers, maize, and peanuts (South Africa, DRDLR 2015/16:64). The Kruger National Park and the Maputo Corridor are situated on the eastern side bordering the Ehlanzeni district. Ehlanzeni and Nkangala District Municipalities border Gert Sibande to the north, KwaZulu-Natal and the Free State to the south, Swaziland to the east, and Gauteng to the west (South Africa, DRDLR 2015/16:64).

1.4 THE RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

There are several reasons why the Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni Districts in Mpumalanga are suitable locations for an assessment of recapitalising a post-settlement support programme. Primarily, there is little information on the number of successful Black commercial farmers assisted by the plethora of government-initiated post-settlement support packages (SLAG, CASP, PLAS, RECAP).

Ndlovu and Masuku (2021b:661-674) and Zulu, Ngidi, Ojo and Hlatshwayo (2022:1-9) state that the agricultural sector is one of the major sectors in the province, and the two districts, with a diverse range of crops and livestock, and it has a large number of smallholder farmers and emerging commercial farmers, many of whom have benefited from land reform programmes. Furthermore, Ebhuoma, Donkor, Ebhuoma, Leonard and Tantoh (2020:1792155) link the agricultural sector and beneficiaries and explain that, as a result of the land reform programme, significant numbers of farms are being redistributed to previously disadvantaged individuals and communities. Zantsi (2019:135-147) likewise mentions that the province has a high number of land reform beneficiaries, making it an ideal location for assessing the effectiveness of post-settlement support and recapitalisation programmes.

Kirshner and Baptista (2023:1-22) point out that the province has a relatively well-developed infrastructure network with connections and access to ports in neighbouring countries. This makes it easier to transport agricultural products to markets and access inputs and equipment for farming. In addition, Ndlovu and Masuku (2021b:661-674) and Zantsi (2019:135-147) indicate that a significant amount of research has been conducted on land reform and agricultural development in Mpumalanga, providing a wealth of data and information that can be used to inform the assessment of post-settlement support and recapitalisation programmes.

However, since the government displayed a more utilitarian form of decision-making in the various land reform strategies, however, these strategies have not been successful with regard to their implementation. Akinola (2020a:215-232) states that despite the implementation of land reform programmes as instruments for addressing land injustice, promoting land redistribution, and fighting other land-related problems, there is still compelling evidence of land inequality, rising poverty levels and farm battles.

Consequently, the state management must formulate more costly strategies to achieve its objectives in land reform.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Researchers have begun to identify those de-contextualised generalisations about farming by analysing the effects of the land reforms in South Africa, which made land available to peasants that used to fall under the previous agrarian structure (Mkodzongi & Spiegel 2019:2145-2161). This research contributes to debates about land reform as suggested in the title, and the research problem, and the research objectives are all shaped by the aim of examining the case of Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni in the Mpumalanga Province, where Black farmers are increasingly encouraged to partake in agricultural investments to alleviate poverty, increase their livelihood security, and create jobs.

Land reform and livelihood are significant topics in development studies and the literature on land studies shows connections between land and livelihood security. In this regard, Scoones *et al* (2019:117-134) state that land identification is the process of recognising suitable land for livelihood needs, specifically either for settlement or agriculture. As such, the prime source of livelihood is land of socio-economic value for settlement and farming. Thus, agriculture is the most important aspect of rural development. This is evidenced in the various land reform programmes introduced after the apartheid regime. Lahiff (2020:43) and Aliber (2019:9-10) indicate that land reform programmes ought to implement exactly what they intend. In this regard, the redistribution of land should incorporate the livelihoods and social details of land use. In debating land use and livelihood in development studies, Hebinck, Mtati and Shackleton (2018:323-334) state that people's land needs, which go beyond the agricultural use, mould their livelihoods. Thus, to sustain livelihood security, people will have to own assets.

Poverty and unequal access to land are listed among some pertinent matters in present-day South Africa. Redressing social injustice is critical for democratic governance, and this merits a study of the land, policy implementation, socio-economic justice, and development in South Africa. In 2018, following Cyril Ramaphosa's confirmation as the President of the Republic, the EFF mobilised people around the issue of expropriation without compensation. In turn,

Ramaphosa's response was to suggest that his government would discuss appropriation without compensation to speed up land reform (Mokone 2018:1). Yet even today, with more than a decade of promises to alleviate poverty, create employment, increase development, and sustain the lives of the rural Black poor, the government still faces challenges in implementing the policy to achieve its aim. Debates on land can quickly inflame the public discourse but also shows the impatience of Blacks to own and farmland. The slow process of land transfer and the charged emotive undertones that come with debates on land require careful and accurate research to bring the real situation to light.

There is little information on the number of successful Black commercial farmers assisted by the plethora of government-initiated post-settlement support packages (SLAG, CASP, PLAS, RECAP) in both districts. The conception of land has to be changed from just being regarded as part of a political message. There are too many people and communities who depend on a clear, more effective solution to get more people to own land and transform it into productive units, and this cannot be done by playing the political blame game. This research is a careful, deliberate, and rational process of dissecting the RECAP to gauge its effectiveness.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to inform policies and programmes aimed at improving the effectiveness of post-settlement support for land reform beneficiaries in South Africa. The study also provides valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with recapitalising the programme and the potential impact of such an intervention on the livelihoods of beneficiaries in the Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni Districts of Mpumalanga.

1.6 SCOPE AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1.6.1 Scope of the study

Gert Sibande is bordered by the Ehlanzeni and Nkangala District Municipalities to the north, KwaZulu-Natal and the Free State to the south, Swaziland to the east, and Gauteng to the west. The district is the largest of the three districts in the province, making up almost half of its geographical area. It is comprised of seven

local municipalities: Govan Mbeki, Chief Albert Luthuli, Msukaligwa, Dipaleseng, Mkhondo, Lekwa and Dr Pixley ka Isaka Seme. It is also known for its economic and livelihood activities such as subsistence farming, mining, and manufacturing.

The Ehlanzeni District is comprised of four local municipalities: Bushbuckridge, City of Mbombela, Nkomazi and Thaba Chweu. Mbombela (previously Nelspruit) is the capital of Mpumalanga, situated in the City of Mbombela Local Municipality, which is also the home of the Mpumalanga Provincial Government and, as a result, is the most concentrated economic hub within the province. It features three border gates to Swaziland and Mozambique (Matsamo, Komatipoort and Mananga border gates) and, therefore, movement of people from neighbouring countries to the district, and from Gauteng to either Swaziland or Mozambique. This should ideally create a catalyst for the economic and livelihood activities such as agriculture, mining, and tourism in the area (www.municipalities).

The two research sites were selected because of their economic and livelihood activities such as agriculture, mining, and tourism. In addition, their geographical locations vis-a-vis neighbouring countries mean that they are potentially well placed as part of a trade route for the many agricultural commodities produced. Despite these advantages, however, there is little to no information on Black commercial farmers in both districts. This study is an attempt to address this gap by evaluating issues of the RECAP and aspects of land reform and redistribution, as land ownership is a major challenge facing the people in the two research sites and insufficient post-settlement support to the farmers is an issue of concern. The study only focused on the RECAP, a land redistribution programme, as implemented in the selected case study areas of Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni districts as explained in the rationale section (1.4) above. The RECAP beneficiaries, aged 18 year and above, were the target population group, with eligible characteristics in farming history, current productivity, post-settlement support beneficiary and shows some elements of livelihood security.

1.6.2 Delimitations of the study

The selected case study areas do not paint the complete picture of land reform for commercial agriculture in South Africa, but the researcher will provide a contextual and textured description of the RECAP in the selected area. In addition, the fieldwork was undertaken during hard lockdowns period with travel restriction in place. As a result, the researcher resorted to extensive review of the literature and telephone interviews as the research design, using thematic analysis of semi-structure interviews. The timeline for data collection was from April 2021 to October 2021 with thirty participants from both districts. Moreover, siSwati and isiZulu are foreign languages to the researcher. Some respondents are not comfortable to diverge information to a foreigner, because of their cultural beliefs. To address this limitation, the researcher recruited two research assistants, who were trained on telephonic data collection, and the researcher worked closely with the extension workers in both districts.

1.7 JUSTIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a qualitative case study of a land reform programme, namely the RECAP as implemented by the government of South Africa, especially in the Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni Districts in the Mpumalanga Province. The study identifies gaps in policy implementation in the RECAP support programme. This research is based on a descriptive qualitative design in pursuing the research objectives. The methodology is based on an interpretivist paradigm that foregrounds people's framing of their lived experiences (Rhodes 2019:12).

Regarding the sampling, the researcher used a non-probability sampling technique as it is impossible to delimit the population under study completely. For this research, a purposive sampling technique was used. Purposive sampling involves selecting a sample on the "*basis of your own knowledge of the population, its elements, and the nature of your research aims" (*Moser & Korsten 2018:11). The researcher purposefully selected participants who are deeply familiar with the study site as they are beneficiaries of the RECAP.

The sample was drawn from the population of Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni in the Mpumalanga Province of South Africa. The first sampling step was the selection of the farms mainly based on their involvement with the RECAP. Five farms each were selected from Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni Districts. Details on how these farms were selected are discussed in greater details in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

The second step was selecting participants pertaining to the farms identified. The research participants were those associated with the selected farms and deeply familiar with the study site. They were beneficiaries of the RECAP drawn from a list obtained from the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD). Although this list can be roughly construed as a sampling frame that could have enabled probability sampling, the researcher was aware that the list was not complete or updated. The list was hence just used as a starting place to identify possible data rich persons who might be eligible for purposive selection. The initial identification of possible research participants was done with the help of the Mpumalanga Department of Agriculture Land Reform and Rural Development. Once this first group was identified, they proposed others who fitted the criteria to be part of the study. Hence, a combination of purposive and snowball sampling was used to increase the integration of these hard-to-reach populations (Bacher *et al* 2019:1-6). The snowball sampling was most helpful as most of the beneficiaries on the department's database had changed their telephone numbers and could not be reached.

In qualitative research, replication of thematic analysis can be challenging, and replicability is not assumed for a qualitative study. Haven and Van Grootel (2019:229-244) note that many articles omit a detailed overview of qualitative process. This makes it difficult for inexperience researcher to effectively mirror strategies and processes and for experience researchers to fully understand the rigour of the study, as it is only briefly discussed creating difficulties for replication.

The population sampled comprised respondents 18 years and above. Accordingly, data were gathered from the respondents using a semi-structured interview guide and individual interviews. Each interview took between 15 and 30 minutes.

1.8 JUSTIFICATION FOR THE THEORETICAL APPROACH

Engwicht and Grabek (2019:185-207) state that the human security approach includes a framework for understanding and addressing the multiple and interconnected threats that individuals and communities face. A human security approach, according to Engwicht and Grabek (2019), emphasises human rights, social justice, and empowerment and seeks to ensure that people have access to the resources, opportunities, and protection to live healthy and dignified lives. Pemunta, Ngo, Djomo, Mutola, Seember, Mbong and Forkim (2021:1875598) explain that this approach provides a comprehensive perspective on the challenges faced by land reform beneficiaries and farmers in the Global South. Montague (2023:1-35) argues that a human-rights based view of security takes a range of factors into account, including economic, social, and environmental conditions, and recognises the complex and interconnected nature of these conditions.

Given that the human security approach prioritises the needs and perspectives of the most vulnerable and marginalised individuals and communities, it recognises the importance of gender equality, social inclusion, and non-discrimination. It seeks to ensure that all people have access to resources and opportunities to thrive (Devi & Das 2022:1-10). Galiè and Farnworth (2019:13-19) add that a human-rights based view of the security of livelihoods places a strong emphasis on empowering individuals and communities to take control of their own lives and destinies. Yagboyaju (2019:270-286) adds a further dimension, namely that the human security approach looks at long-term sustainability in policy and programme development.

Underscoring the multisectoral approach, Oscar, Gomez, and Des Gasper (2013:4) show that a human security approach undergirds strategies that create “political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity.” Gumede and Ehiane (2022:1-10) suggest that a rights-based take on human security foregrounds policy tools that are contextually fitting.

Breslin and Christou (2015:1-10) describe this approach to human security as intentionally protective, precisely because people's livelihoods are affected negatively because of economic needs, violence, disease, pervasive poverty, poor access to land and water and chronic destitution. Moreover, human security in these terms relates to the governance of tenure (Waisova 2019:75-99) and good land governance and land use planning, which should be aimed at empowering people as stated in the RECAP's objectives.

From a human security vantage point, the equitable distribution of land plays a key role in ensuring sustainable livelihoods. Gumede and Ehiane (2022:1-10) argue that livelihood security means putting the poor first. Ibrahim, Hassan, Kamaruddin, and Anuar (2018:157-161) add that land is a complex asset for livelihood construction, with De Haan (2017:22-38), and the International Labour Organisation (ILO 2014:162) and call for people-centred development. This also implies foregrounding the role of institutions and human interactions in context (Gjørv 2018:221-226; Newman 2010:77).

Qaim (2020:127-137) notes that the human security notion of livelihoods is grounded in the principles of human rights, social justice, and dignity. It recognises the inherent worth and value of all individuals and seeks to ensure that policies and programmes respect and uphold human rights standards. Hence, the background justifies why this theoretical approach was selected to provide a comprehensive, inclusive, and rights-based perspective on the challenges faced by land reform beneficiaries and farmers that can help to inform the development of effective policies and programmes that promote human security and well-being. These theoretical tenets complement the RECAP's goal of enhancing the human security of Blacks because of the emphasis on protecting a limited vital core of human activities and abilities (Cassotta, Hossain, Ren & Goodsite 2016:71-91) with the view to empowering people to take over their own affairs. Chapter 3 of this thesis unpacks the theoretical approach used fully.

1.9 CLARIFICATION OF KEY TERMS

Although key terms are discussed in this thesis as they present themselves, a few general terms are defined here as an orientation to the approach.

- **Black farmers**

This refers to Black people who were excluded from South Africa's formal agricultural economy on the basis of their skin colour and who have recently begun to engage in farming on a larger scale to sell crops and livestock on the market with the support and assistance of the state (Koot 2023:303-322).

- **Development**

This refers to supports that enable human capacity development, infrastructural development, and operational inputs on other newly acquired properties (South Africa, DRDLR 2015/16:64).

- **Land reform**

Land reform refers to all the initiatives rolled out by state bodies in South Africa to transfer land from Whites to Blacks in order to create a more even pattern of land ownership in the country. It rests on three main pillars, namely, restitution (returning land with freehold titles or communal legacy occupation forcibly taken .by Whites after the 1913 Land Act to their rightful owners), redistribution (transferring land from Whites to Blacks) and tenure reform (reforming tenure laws to ensure that all South Africans can own land anywhere they choose within the ambit of the law) (South Africa, DLA 1997).

- **Post-settlement support**

This refers to all the goods and services provided to the beneficiaries of land reforms to help them turn their plots into successful commercial farms. In the case of the RECAP, post-settlement support includes obtaining title deeds for the plot, help with preparing a business plan, help with farm infrastructure, including

irrigation schemes, mechanisation, and connection to value chains, among other aspects (South Africa, DRDLR 2015/16:64).

- **Recapitalisation**

This refers to the capital renewal or restructuring of poor and previously disadvantaged and under-producing agricultural enterprises of Black farmers who are beneficiaries of the state's land reform programme (Sihlangu 2021:15).

- **Small-scale commercial farmers**

Small-scale commercial farmers are known to be occupying small farms on freehold and community land. This classification is based on the land size and ownership, the type of farming, farming methods, and the motive of farming (Soper 2020:265-285).

1.10 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

In this first chapter, the researcher presents an introduction to this research.

Chapter two presents the literature review to this study. This chapter centres on a discussion of the importance of the land question in South Africa, the complicated legacy of the geography and agriculture of apartheid and the difficult road travelled by the democratic government in its attempts to make land ownership and agriculture more democratic.

Chapter three discusses land reform, livelihood, and the human security theoretical framework. The first section touches on land and livelihood. Then follows a section that covers the RECAP and human security and critiques of the state land reform approach implemented to produce successful Black commercial farmers.

Chapter four focuses on the research methodology. This chapter also highlights the background of the geographical site where the field research was done, the research participants, the data gathering methods used to get information, the data interpretation method, as well as other relevant issues.

In Chapter five, the researcher gives a narrative presentation of the information collected in the study. It is presented in sections based on the most relevant themes emerging from the data-gathering phase.

Chapter six is a summary presentation of the overall results. Guided by the main research questions, several sections are summarised to make the conclusions clearer before suggestions for further research are presented.

1.11 CONCLUSION

The rationale behind the research and the objectives of the study are outlined in this chapter. The challenges in implementing land reforms have been shown, and this form the bases to understand what influences the unsuccessful implantation of the various land reform support programme. A discussion of the literature review follows in the next chapter.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The land has spiritual and social connotations. Humans are gregarious by nature, and when they form social relationships in a particular area, that place becomes an anchor. It gives them a sense of purpose and belonging. According to the biblical book of Genesis 1:9 (King James Version) (KJV), the heavens and earth have their origin in God. The earth (land and water) formed dry land, which God gave to mankind for sustenance. Consequently, the original purpose of land use was to be a primary source of livelihood for mankind. Other factors eventually came into play to diversify the use of land.

Adaopoulos and Restuccia (2020:1-39) note that because land is a primary source of livelihood, land reform (land division and relocation) is thus a poverty-alleviation strategy, especially for the penniless. In South Africa, this notion of land reform, although with slightly different meanings, has been around from the colonial periods through apartheid, and to the present post-apartheid era. Akinola (2020b:1-2) highlights that in 1913, the earth inquisition (the owners, exploiters, controllers, and beneficiaries of land) prompted debates among South Africans.

Moyo, O'Keefe and Sill (2014:68) and Asibey, Agyeman, Amponsah and Ansah (2020:35-60) note that the debates on could, in part, be due to the lack of a well-defined land reform scheme, as in countries, such as Brazil and Chile, for example, where well-documented land reform schemes enabled the successful implementation of their land reform policies. Spierenburg (2020:280-299) suggests that land is an important element in the South African government's ambition to create a more equal society in a country described as one of the most unequal in the world. Wegerif and Guereña (2020:101) add that the disproportionate distribution of land is the gateway to the unequal distribution of tenure rights and the power people have to control and benefit from the land. Despite data limitations on the measurement of land inequality, Geyer and Quin (2019:1-21) indicate that

there is an agglomeration of land in honour of the government, at the detriment of most local farmers and rural areas.

Democracy in South Africa came with promises to create an equal society in which the state's wealth would be distributed evenly among all citizens. Spierenburg (2020:280-299) states that the country, following the fall of apartheid, has a recognisably advanced system of land redistribution with policies that, however, are implemented ineffectively because of the absence of relevant factors such as resources, patience, and other practical considerations. Ndhlovu (2019:131-151) notes that to deal with underdevelopment in the Black population; the government introduced a spate of de-racialisation and equity actions that reflect the precepts of redress in the country's constitution. Furthermore, concerns have been raised regarding the settlement of new farmers dating from the onset of the country's land reform programme in 1994. Greenberg (2019:143) notes that sharp inequalities in the process of land accessibility and dispossession have hindered the restructuring of land for encampment and agricultural production, as land policies are turned into diplomatic affairs. Yet these policies are essential to advance the economy and restore balance among the fundamentals of justice, equality, and sustainability.

2.2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON POST-SETTLEMENT SUPPORT PROGRAMME IN SOUTH AFRICA

The endemic poverty, inequality and unemployment among Black South Africans are untenable and are part of the country's legacy of the past unjust apartheid laws. The Helen Suzman Foundation (2013:1) further adds that the 1913 and 1918 *Land Acts* and other laws before and after that period designed to keep the races apart (such as the *Glen Grey Act of 1894* and the *Group Areas Act of 1950*), resulted in a situation where over 83 million hectares of the most fertile lands in South Africa were transferred from Blacks to Whites. These laws further kept Blacks from farming and agricultural activities, thus, creating a situation where almost all the country's food was produced by a small group of White farmers. According to the Helen Suzman Foundation (2013:1), Blacks are generally absent from commercial farming, and even the poor and vulnerable must buy their food from White farmers. As a result of these disparities, Rogan (2018:90-104) notes that food security

remains tenuous and highly contested since the majority of the farmland is controlled by the White minority. This claim is supported by statistics on landownership by race, as seen in Table 2.1 below.

TABLE 2.1: LAND OWNERSHIP BY RACE, SOUTH AFRICA 2017

Race	Land (hectares)	Share of farms and agricultural holdings owned by individuals	Share of total SA land
White	26 663 144	72%	22%
African	1 314 873	4%	1%
Coloured	5 371 383	14%	4%
Indian	2 031 790	5%	2%
Co-owned	425 537	1%	0.3%
Other	1 271 562	3%	1%
Total	37 078 289	100%	30%

Source: State land audit (2017)

The audit indicates that Whites possess the bulk of the land under individual control. It is evident why Blacks depend on White farmers for their food supply.

The end of the apartheid regime in South Africa in 1994, saw the newly elected government introducing several programmes of land reform. These post-settlement programmes were instruments for addressing the injustices of the past, promoting land utilisation, and combating other land-related problems, by improving the livelihood of the previously disadvantaged people (South Africa, DLA 1997:7). Yet, after decades of implementing these reforms there are compelling evidence of land inequality, rising poverty levels, land agitations and farm battles. Black people's distress under the yoke of poverty despite countless material and financial incentives to back government policies for improved agricultural productivity is a cause for concern.

2.3 THE LAND QUESTION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The land question in South Africa is about the resolution of great land dispossession, and injustice that relates to changes of centuries old structural process of land dispossession, through which Black people were turn out of their land, for the benefit of minority White people (Chitonge 2022:722-739). The land question seeks ways to ensure that large scale redistribution of land is taken from the minority Whites to the majority Blacks who are poor. This will ensure a reduction of both urban and rural poverty, while transforming the economy.

2.3.1 The land before colonialism

In the 17th century, Africans (the natives of the land) did not treasure and protect the land they possessed until colonialists started showing an interest and forcefully removed them from their lands. As a result of the forced removals, many Blacks had to migrate to other areas. Strockmeijer, De Beer and Dagevos (2019:2430-2446) state that global migration flows have inspired researchers to study migration strategies. These authors indicate that for many migrants globally, whether to return home or stay in the destination country was dictated by the socio-economic factors and the satisfaction they got from the generated income while in exile (Strockmeijer *et al* 2019). The strategic location of South Africa in the world on a trade route, in addition to the socio-economic benefits in the land, attracted many migrants.

South Africa's territory has been inhabited for thousands of years and Gowdy (2020:1-9) notes that the early civilisations were composed of hunters and gatherers who moved freely across the land, surviving on abundant game. They kept cattle, sheep, and goats. Animals grazed on lands that were held under a commonage system. According to Colony, Dye and La Croix (2020:33-58) upon the arrival of the first ship at the Cape Colony, the natives signalled that they did not want the Europeans there and tensions boiled over when the Dutch insisted on setting up a base camp in the Cape. Baderoom (2019:37-50) further adds that the Dutch were ready to use guns to achieve their objectives of settling up a base camp in the Cape. Although the natives warned the Dutch to leave as soon as their boat

arrived, Measey, Hui and Sonners (2020:115-151) opine that the Dutch company eventually set up a base in Cape Town and made it their African headquarters. It was a point from which they could explore the South African territory, and it was also a convenient stop on their way to India. As a result of the Dutch settlement in the Cape, violence erupted between the Whites and the natives. Jordan (2018:2) reports that the Khoi and San were almost exterminated in skirmishes with White settlers over land, and progressively, these natives were replaced by Chinese and Malaysian indentured labourers.

Flomenhft (2019:277-301) states that in 1652, when the Dutch colonised the Cape of South Africa, they introduced the Roman-Dutch legislative scheme from their country and, under such a system, the owner of surface land also owned everything below. That legal system was retained under British leadership that started in 1806, and, by 1836, the Transvaal was established, and the rights to own land and various minerals tied to personal possessions, were allowed. In this regard, Musavengane and Leonard (2019:135-146) state that the British legal system soon posed a problem as this law was unchallenged. Lawhom and McCreary (2020:452-474), when debating about land and minerals, note that land was providing and still provides food and has been seen as the first generator of wealth. The wealth that comes from the ground in the form of crops and extractives provides revenue and succour for families.

Hillbom and Green (2019:119-151) recount from 1920 to 1950 the colonial authorities increased interventions such as the extraction of minerals in the local economy to gain economic and political dominance. Some of these experiences involved farmland; consequently, the natives had to migrate to other areas in search of peaceful livelihoods. These authors further add that the farmland-related racial and ethnic disparities affected the livelihood of the natives and caused the colonial authorities to become gate-keeping states. Ultimately, this era was marked by a rise in territorial and economic imbalance among the local population (Austine 2019:626-627).

Sturiale, Scuderi, Timpanaro and Matarazzo (2020:1453) highlight the economic inequality faced by the natives, whose entire existence revolved around farming.

Heydinger (2020:91-108) and McCune, Perfecto, Avilés-Vázquez, Vázquez-Negrón and Vandermeer (2019:810-826) in contrast, illustrate that as a result of the economic inequalities, the natives were prompted to seek employment within the country, thereby, neglecting the important role of farming. Oueslati, Salanié and Wu (2019:225-249) and Horst and Marion (2019:1-6) further add that the neglect of farms affected agricultural productivity in the rural areas as the native farm workers tended to be tenants and labourers as opposed to owners, and that such farmers earned a lower agricultural income per individual compared to the Whites as indicated in the above table.

Generally, when people are unemployed, they survive through farming, and when there are many job opportunities, they leave their farms to sell their labour (Marais 2020:352-379). This is evident in South Africa, where most households in the erstwhile “homelands” grow most of their own food. When there is work in the factories and mines, people from these rural households migrate to sell their labour (South Africa, StatsSA, 2019).

2.3.2 The land question during colonial times

What is worth noting about this enduring and globally relevant topic are the issues of who owns the land, who uses the land and who controls and benefits from the land. As a result, the question of efficient agricultural production, food security and poverty alleviation will be addressed. Kraster (2020:18) indicates that the experience of land has been that of a world without borders in which advanced countries take advantage of the ignorance of less advanced countries. Leonard, Parker and Anderson (2020:1-2) further note that land usage during colonial times had an indirect effect on agriculture. Bottici and Challand (2013:60-61) link the effect on agricultural land to the dominant economic mode of production, called capitalism, which was imposed on South Africa. Considering that all agricultural systems are based on land, ownership and access to farming land are crucial factors in deciding on these systems (Leonard *et al* 2020:1-2).

Agricultural produce is most affected when land is controlled by relatively few people. Racial domination and land dispossession gave vast expanses of

agricultural land to the Whites, hindering Blacks from active farming. Akinyemi, Mushunje and Sinnett (2019:1663691) affirm that the challenges recorded among rural householders are on the rise and could impact the distribution of agricultural land. The distribution of land is done under the tenure system, in terms of restitution and redistribution. Suchá (2020) and Hull and Whittal (2018:102-117) indicate that land tenure systems are concerned with the allocation of resources, and the duration and conditions of their use. Bucheli and Kim (2015:1-26) and De Vos and Cumming (2019:331-346) further state that land tenure defines the allocation, transfer, utilisation, and management of property rights. Property rights can then be characterised as exclusivity, inheritability, transferability, and enforcement mechanisms related to land. Thus, property rights define the legitimate use of land (Lawry, Samii, Hall, Leopold, Hornby & Mtero 2017:61-81).

Mkhabela, Ntombela and Mazibuko (2022:2137314) point out that the accumulation of land and differentiation among farmers who owned land occurred unhindered by communal tenure and, that as long as the capitalist's intention was not to deprive the natives of their land, they could have co-commercialised the land with a mutual understanding. In this regard, Belnart (2018:365-367) highlights the uncertainties surrounding the land rights of significant proportions of South Africans laying claim to land based on customary tenure and hindered by the capitalist system of land transfers. The Bible links the uncertainties of land possession and agricultural production and likens the dispossession of Blacks to the experience of the Egyptians in the books of Genesis 47 to Exodus and states that the Egyptians did not have a problem with the Israelites carrying out farming and agricultural activities among them. The issue arose when the Egyptians realised that the Israelites were prospering on their land. The Egyptians decided to discontinue the communal tenure and instituted extremely harsh measures against the Israelites, making it difficult for them to farm.

Similarly, White farmers suppressed Black farmers, creating a situation of insecurity and inequality amongst the Blacks, and paving a pathway for their dispossession. Ritchken (2017:432-434) states that the situation gave rise to a hostile agricultural policy towards Black farmers and farming. South Africa is an extreme case of how a powerful minority of settlers asserted themselves as

farmers and became commercial farmers during a time when Blacks were forced to abandon their land and service the White-run economy. Tischler (2019:123-124) argues that as much as inequality and dispossession were rising, Black smallholder farmers were forced to relinquish their farms to inexperienced White farmers. As a result of this disrupted pattern of farming from smallholder schemes to commercial farming by the White minority, Obi and Ayodeji (2020:98) ascertain that more often than not, this disruption interfered with food crop production, and this situation created the platform for higher local prices compared to the export market.

Fall and Roberts (2019:99-103), in debating food crops and high prices, note that most of the crops required as part of the regime of coercion, were those in high demand in Europe, and as a result, there was always a situation of a lack or shortage of local food crop that eventually contributed to rural poverty. With food shortages becoming endemic, the situation led to increased poverty and malnutrition, which increased susceptibility to disease (Fall & Roberts 2019). Through its processes of accumulation and dispossession, Mwanika, State, Atekyereza and Österberg (2020) conclude that land seizure precipitated food insecurity. These White minority groups could also be compared to the Midianites and Amalekites in the Bible who allowed the Israelites to farm their land, and during the harvest, who camped on the land of the Israelites, and after taking all their crops, leaving them with nothing, thereby, creating a state of absolute poverty within the camp of the Israelites as indicated in the Book of Judges 6:3-6 (KJV).

Jordan (2018:1-4) explains that all aspects of the land issue in South Africa entailed “ethnic cleansing,” the systematic dispossession of Blacks and the seizure of their lands. He notes that Blacks were successful farmers in the White republics that later became the Union of South Africa. Francis and Webster (2019:788-802) indicate that before the *Land Acts* there were successful Black and coloured farmers, tenant farmers and small-scale farmers in the Cape Colony, producing grain and meat before being dispossessed of their land and becoming labourers.

The racial heart of the land question is undeniable. Knight and Rogerson (2019:2) note that other factors, such as the socio-economic aspects have evolved in the

functioning of separate procedures that inform the land question. Koot and Büscher (2019: 357-374) link race to the possession and dispossession of land and state that the slogan of *"give the land back,*" persists as the belief that people are entitled to ongoing current and future land possession. Mtshiselwa (2015:27), in debating race and land, notes that distress over Black land is reflected by the verse *sikhalela izwe lethu,* "we are crying for our land."

2.4 THE COMPLICATED LEGACY OF RACIAL BIGOTRY

South Africa is a notable example of the difficulties associated with a democratic change in the postcolonial period, for Giaimo (2016:143-182) notes that over three hundred years, European Caucasians and their offspring who succeeded them, imposed a system of separation of the races and the marginalisation of Blacks and non-Whites dubbed apartheid. Ryberg *et al* (2020:921) state that apartheid subscribed to an economic racial hierarchy, which the White minority executed by the autocratic refutation of land entitlement. As a result, land eligibility was highly segregated, and the ruling class subjugated Blacks and relegated them to the role of cheap labour-power to feed the capitalist economy. They note that Blacks were apportioned about 7.8% of South Africa's land, which did not include the Cape Colony at the time (Ryberg *et al* 2020:921).

Leonard, Parker and Anderson (2020:1-2) accentuate the fact that since Adam Smith and David Ricardo, experts have been stressing the significance of agricultural land distribution for economic recovery. They state that apartheid had a negative and indirect impact on agriculture as most of the crops were produced to feed the capitalist economy. Adding to this debate on agricultural produce, Bottici and Challand (2013:60-61) indicate that the apartheid government was focused on developing the agricultural land and plundered the natural and human resources. Zhan (2019:1) further asserts that the apartheid government neglected the value of small-scale food production and failed to protect the land rights of natives, acts which often triggered protests. As a result of the rebellion on the part of small-scale farmers, the apartheid government instituted various measures with regard to Black farmers as Cousins, Borras, Sauer and Ye (2018:1-11) note that

small scale farmers had to endure the impact of land and resource grabs when they were deprived of their basic products and livelihoods.

Spierenburg (2020:280-299) explains that the debates on land dispossession are not only indicative of economic reaction to change but are also disputations over land and the reforms in place. When linking land possession and economic change, Tischler (2019:127) sees the legacy of land dispossession as being intimately associated with slavery and indentured labour, since land for the Blacks was, and is, a form of an independent livelihood, which is preferred to wage labour, as this gives Blacks a sense of security. Consequently, Mkodzongi and Spiegel (2019:2145-2165) mention that land laws had to be put in place to dispossess the Blacks of their land.

In 1894, the Cape Colony voted the *Glen Grey Act* into law to reorganise land, labour, and government relations (Petty, 2019:436-444). Furthermore, Glover (2019:251-284) opines that the *Glen Grey Act* further disenfranchised Blacks from voting in the colonial parliament, and finally, this act set up a taxation policy requiring Blacks to pay taxes to the colonial government. This law was enacted to deprive Blacks of their land, giving rise to White towns. Jordan (2018) notes that the rise of White towns, the increase in mining activities on the Highveld, and the arrival of more settlers from Europe accelerated the dispossession of the natives and even some Whites to make space for European companies and interests.

Mafumbu, Zhou and Kalumba (2022:3971) argue that after the *Glen Grey Act* was implemented, it was not long before the *Natives Land Act of 1913* was instituted. This shows how the Whites minority strongly wanted the land on which Blacks were settled. Smith (2019: 277-295) illustrates that the *act* further pushed Blacks into approximately 8% of the space that is now South Africa, and the land on which they were settled was then placed under the management of the South African Development Trust (SADT), and so, technically, Blacks still did not own the land on which they had been settled. As a result of international pressure, Ryan (2017:1) and The Helen Suzman Foundation (2013:1) state that the Beaumont Commission later determined that the area reserved for Blacks had to be increased and by 1936, the Black territory was increased to 13% of the country's total landmass.

To make matters more difficult for the Blacks, Lilja (2020:48-59) notes that the *1923 Urban Areas Act* forbade granting of new freehold titles to Blacks. Davis (2018:2-4) states that in 1948 Daniel Francois Malan, leader of the Afrikaner National Party, secured a majority win in the poll under an inexplicit motto of apartheid set on intensifying the existing structure of segregation (South Africa History Online 2019), an official government policy to keep the races apart in a separate development dynamic, together with the *Group Areas Act in 1950* and the 1951 *Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act* (Arieli 2019:1-17). After the election, Blacks were denied residence or property ownership in White areas (Davis 2018). They were also not allowed to date or marry Whites or move freely in White areas without carrying a “passbook” (Arieli 2019:1-17).

Welsh (2015:37) indicates that the pass laws had to be instated because of the rapid influx of Blacks from the rural to urban areas, for Blacks were viewed as a source of competition for poorer, unskilled Whites. Steyn (2017:418) states that the 1963 law presumed that the millions of hectares of land locked up in the reserves should be opened to coloured farmers who wanted to farm commercially (Steyn 2017). There was a negotiated compromise between Black and White elites regarding economic policies and their post-apartheid trajectory (Tyekela & Amoah 2021:1329-1337). Huchzermeyer and Karam (2016:91-100) mention that a doctrine associated with the Stallard Commission of 1922 was reinstated, making urban Blacks “temporary sojourners” whose appropriate homes were in the reserves. According to the South African cabinet, the effect of these laws was to strip Blacks of their property rights completely and confine them to overcrowded territories where few business opportunities existed (Huchzermeyer & Karam 2016). Chirisa, Mukarwi, Matamanda and Maphosa (2019:283-286) state that this created a legacy of unemployment, inequality, and underdevelopment, which continues to affect Black South Africans disproportionately to this day (South Africa History Online 2019). Maka and Aliber (2019:37-45) posit that by the time the apartheid system ended in 1994, 87% of South Africa’s 122 million hectares of land had been transferred to Whites, who were only 11% of the population.

2.5 LAND REFORM GLOBALLY

The literature on land reform is extensive, indicating the interest of scholars in this topic. Austine (2019:626-627) states that the 1979 *World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Developmen*t agreed that "*the equitable distribution and efficient use of land are indispensable for rural development and increased production for the alleviation of poverty.*" To this end, since 1960, the vast land reform laws around the world have still not fulfilled this promise of the equitable distribution and efficient use of land (Mkhabela *et al* 2022:2137314). For example, Fisher (2018:38) argues that in South Korea and Taiwan, broad land reforms initiated by the state were carried out at the start of development schemes after the war that had left them poor, but their implementation did not improve their economic standing.

Adding to this line of debate, Iscan (2018:732-761) states that the economic growth reverses progressive gains in carrying out land reform programmes in several countries such as Mexico, Venezuela, Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea. Likewise, in countries such as Chile, Von Bennewitz (2017:1793-1795) indicates that the implementation of land reform was cancelled purposefully by public policies leading to economic inequality in the possession of land. Thus, Von Bennewitz (2017) establishes a correlation among non-landowners and rural poverty and poor access to land. Ramutsindela and Hartnack (2019:195-201), in debating inequality and land reform, acknowledge that the perspectives of implementing various land reforms does not change the unanticipated results of land reform schemes in different territories.

Gray (2018:257-274) states that some African countries attempted to copy similar land reform policies and failed but recognised the necessity for asset redistribution in the achievement of post-war development. In post-war development societies, policies and/or constitutional arrangements ought to be designed according to the needs and resources available for governance. Therefore, Chitonge (2022:722-739) explains that borrowing/copying policies from one society and applying them to another society, results in a major setback for the government and the inhabitants of that society. Concerning copying land reform policies from the western world to implement in some African countries and the consequences of

constitutionalism, Ndulo (2017:271) argues that constitutional arrangements are meant to enhance a sense of national belonging. This is, however, a major challenge for countries, such as Sudan, Burundi, Rwanda, and the Republic of Congo, where the Constitution protects the impoverished the least (Akinola 2020a:215-232). Thus, land reform in these countries will create more insecurity and inequality amongst the less privileged.

Allsobrook (2019:418) states that discourses about land and policies in Southern Africa are as composite as they are awkward. In this regard, Neudert, Theesfeld, Didebulidze, Allahverdiyeva and Beckmann (2020:347-367) affirm that access to land and ownership at large, needs successful and robust land policies, which were greatly influenced by the existing land ownership patterns. Ramutsindela and Hartnack (2019:195-201) further argue that the outcomes of racial land ownership and land reform policies are evident in countries like Zambia and Botswana, where the allotment of land under freehold ownership at self-rule is 13.5% and 6%, respectfully. Mkodzongi and Lawrence (2019:1-13) indicate that the land reform policies have been critiqued for favouring the minority local elites over the poor and marginalised masses.

Scoones, Murimbarimba and Mahenehene (2019:88-106) attest that land reform in Zimbabwe in 2000 saw the redistribution of about eight million hectares of farmland formerly inhabited by White commercial farmers. Mkodzongi and Lawrence (2019:1-13), in debating land reform and redistribution, remark that Zimbabwe's Fast Track Land Reform Program (FTLRP) started with a rapid process of land acquisition by the government for resettlement. This process basically replaced the takeover land reform. As a result, Mwambari (2019:1-12) states that this new dimension produced the current complications for farm workers and new platforms for the agrarian class emergence fight.

Mkodzongi and Lawrence (2019:1-13) state that land redistribution eroded the underlying logic behind colonial agrarian relationship based on racial monopoly over land that deprived poor peasants of land-based social reproduction. As such, vulnerable groups, such as the rural poor, struggle with extreme poverty as a result of food shortages. Vorster (2019:1-2) also highlights the case of Zimbabwe, which

resulted in a food crisis following the land distribution that destabilised the commercial agriculture.

Wily (2019:15-17) concludes that the outcome of copying land reform policies and implementing them in another country is demonstrated by the high level of inequality and insecurity amongst the rural poor as most people are forced to move to urban areas to sell their labour in exchange for a better livelihood. Neudert *et al* (2020:347-367) argue that despite decades of land reform, activities remain extremely inequitable and, globally, the land is increasingly controlled by a small minority while the numbers of the landless swell rapidly, triggering rural poverty amidst extensive movements pushing for land reforms.

2.5.1 Land reform in South Africa

Through land reforms, the government hopes to eventually achieve equity and increase productivity by merging agrarian and industrial schemes to boost growth (South Africa, DLA 1997:7). In other words, land reform serves the purpose of shrinking the inequity gap by empowering Black farm workers who become owners, while others who have been jobless, become contributing citizens helping to build the economy. Wissink (2019:57-73) explains that land reform resolves the demands of complainants evicted from urban settlements demarcated as White-only areas by the government's Group Areas Act. Wissink (2019:57-73), in debating land ownership and land reform policies, notes that with the termination of the apartheid regime, the newly appointed cabinet launched a programme of land reform without deliberating on the probable outcomes. As indicated above, land reform aimed to empower Black farm workers by giving land to the disadvantaged, however, land ownership in the case study areas is still a challenge as most of the land are owned by the government.

Azadi and Vanhaute (2019:96) indicate that land reform highlights the fluctuating positions and course of the ANC party and the Tripartite Alliance. They are of the opinion that enforced land reforms can improve the well-being and livelihood of the Black population, support economic growth, development, and stability sustainably and equitably, while ensuring reconciliation. In support of the debate on land

reform, Akinola (2020b:1-2) illustrates that reform programmes were tools for preventing lawlessness and tackling further land-related complications, such as access to land, land use and the lack of post-acquisition support for new landholders. Lawry *et al* (2017:61-81) state that, in as much as land reform instruments were put in place, these did not address the increasing poverty, upheavals and conflict. Spierenburg (2020:280-299) adds that land imbalances and struggles impact farm dwellers' abilities to access land and farm for commercial purposes negatively.

Although it was the intention of the ANC government to improve the well-being and livelihood of the Black population through land redistribution, Kepe and Hall (2016:27) state that South Africa was in a recession when the ANC government came into power, and the country's financial situation informed investments in land reform. Akinola (2020a:215-232) explains that taking over the government at a time of money shortage meant that land reform from the beginning faced major constraints. Hull, Babalola and Whittal (2019:1-28) add that many short-term land reforms have been introduced since 1994, including the Recapitalisation and Post Development Programme (RECAP), which was designed to make post-settlement support more robust and guarantee greater success for beneficiaries and to ensure that Black farmers are given sufficient time and resources to be agriculturally productive. Unfortunately, Hull and Whittal (2019:97-113) conclude that underfunding has characterised land reform from the beginning to date, thereby affecting the intended outcomes of the programmes.

For the historical reasons outlined above, land reform in this study is chiefly seen from the vantage point of redistribution. Gumata and Ndou (2019:503), define redistribution as, *"an effort by the government to modify the distribution of land ownership and entitlement to land."*

The 1994 *Land Restitution Act* urged individuals or communities negatively affected by 1913 apartheid laws to apply to get the land back (restitution) or seek damages (financial) (South Africa History Online 2019). Hull, Babalola and Whittal (2019:172) support this definition by adding that land tenure is broadly defined within a South African context as "*policies that seek to strengthen the property*

rights of those who already occupy land under various relatively insecure forms of tenure," notably in the communal areas and on commercial farms. Jankielsohn (2017) further adds that the act makes provision for the restitution of rights.

As an initial attempt at land reform, the Settlement and Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG) was not necessarily geared towards agricultural production. Beneficiaries received R16 000 to acquire land for any purpose of their choosing, including agriculture. By 2001, land measuring less than two million hectares had moved from White to Black possession (Aliber 2013:5). The deadline to transfer 30% of South Africa's roughly 83 million hectares of agricultural land from Whites to Blacks was shifted to 2004, and later to 2014 (South Africa, DRDLR, 2019:3, henceforth DALRRD).

The Parliamentary Monitoring Group (PMG) acknowledged in 2004 that most of the land that had been transferred to Blacks was underutilised and that most projects set up on these lands had failed (South Africa, PMG 2017:1). Following this, the government decided to get more directly involved to boost the chances of success of agricultural projects. The outcome was the creation of the *Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP)* in 2004, the *Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS)* in 2007 and the *Recapitalisation and Development Programme (RADP, henceforth abbreviated as RECAP)* in 2010. These initiatives introduced measures, such as mechanisation finance, irrigation schemes, on-farm training support and value chain support (South Africa, DALRRD 2015: xxiii). Caps on financial support were removed, and government aid was directed more towards projects that stood a greater chance of success. However, there is a sense among beneficiaries that these changes were meant to help the politically connected and that getting post-settlement support was akin to winning the lotto (Hall 2014:8). By March 2018, Blacks had received land totalling 8 330 865.72 hectares of arable land through restitution, tenure reform and redistribution (South Africa, DALRRD 2019:3). Dlamini and Ogunnubi (2018:339-360) explain that this confirms the reality that twenty-five years after the beginning of democracy, less than ten million hectares have been handed to Blacks.

2.6 RECAPITALISATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (RECAP)

The RECAP was designed to make post-settlement support more robust and guarantee greater success for beneficiaries and ensure that Black farmers are given sufficient time and resources to equip themselves to become commercial farmers. Hall (2014:43-45) states that the official strategy was based on heavy capitalisation, development of business plans, selection of generally more well-off beneficiaries and the partnering of beneficiaries with successful mentors, mainly already established, commercial farmers. Still missing, however, was who should qualify for post-settlement support, what that support should entail and the reciprocal responsibilities of beneficiaries regarding the state and their communities (Hall 2014). Notwithstanding, at the time of undertaking the implementation of the RECAP, Maka and Aliber (2019:37-45) and the University of Pretoria Business Enterprises (2013:1) note that the main objectives of the RECAP were to:

a) increase agricultural production

b) guarantee food security

c) graduate emerging farmers to become commercial farmers, and

d) create job opportunities within the agricultural sector. In addition to the above, to establish rural development monitors as last reported by the University of Pretoria (University of Pretoria Business Enterprises, 2013:1).

The RECAP has been implemented for over a decade, yet it is still unclear whether there are successful Black commercial farmers (Hall 2014:1). Moreover, it is unclear how farmers will fare after each five-year RECAP support cycle ends. Beyers and Fay (2016:41-43) proffer that land reform has led to unanticipated disempowerment and new forms of activism. They also suggest that the pursuit of justice through policy deliberation has resulted in merely empowering elites. What can be concluded is that land redistribution in South Africa stretched the laws passed by an already-overburdened state that, at the same time, lacked the administrative capacity or resources to implement these laws.

2.6.1 RECAP within the context of agriculture

Knight and Rogerson (2019:1-2) and Baby, Guillocheau, Braun, Robin and Dall'Asta (2020:53-65) indicate that South Africa has large dryland areas in the centre and west regions and a small proportion of farmable land. Linden, Grass, Joubert, Tscharntke, Weier and Taylor (2019:2069-2078) and Israel and Wynberg (2019:404-417) highlight the fact that that the Highveld is at the heart of mercantile farmland and is appropriate for grain and livestock. This extends to the cliff coastal belt in the Western Cape. In addition to the fertile agricultural areas above, Knight (2019:7) notes that farming in the central part of the Cape is mostly limited to the production of standard irrigated crops.

Bank and Hart (2019:411-426) indicate that the government acknowledges the crucial role agriculture plays in sustaining food security in the economy. As a result, the arrangement of land for cultivation should be given more scrutiny for effective outcomes. Consequently, Scoones, Mavedzenge and Murimbarimba (2019:117-134) state that the financing of land for agriculture should point to productive growth. The Department of Agriculture (South Africa, DALRRD 2019) states that it is the responsibility of the department to contribute to employment, supply food to local markets, and earn foreign exchange for the country through the export of agricultural products working in line with the *Strategic Plan for Agriculture* (South Africa, DRDLR 2019), which foregrounds development and de-racialisation via newcomers to farming. Yet, the department indicates that there is limited planning towards this direction, and agricultural policy is lacking in concepts offering efficient land use for improved production to position agriculture as a new and revived player in economic development (DALRRD 2019).

Maka and Aliber (2019:37-45) mention that the RECAP was instituted to address farming associated difficulties, such as the lack of farm knowledge and skills training. In this regard, Knight (2019:7) argues that the practical knowledge and skills learned have to be transferred to other young farmers in order for them to continue indefinitely with farming, thereby building a carreer from where they are to where they want to be in future. Sihlobo (2023), for example, states that the lack

of farm knowledge and skills training affects farmers using irrigation systems at initial production. Maka and Aliber (2019:37-45) indicate that such production difficulties disrupt the food value chain and defeat one of the RECAP's objectives of sustainable agriculture. Battersby and Haysom (2019:169) further mention that these disruptions end up placing extra responsibility and cost on food companies and successful farmers, some of which is transferred to the consumers through food price inflation. This contradicts the RECAP's mandate to tackle the food poverty faced by the rural poor. Leonard *et al* (2020:1-2), in debating land reform and agricultural policy, note that the case of South Africa is questionable as the economy is stricken with poverty, inequality and insecurity, especially among the rural Black population.

Jordan (2018:1-4) explains that there were successful Black small-scale, commercial farmers before the *Land Acts* (Jordan 2018:1-4) were instituted by the apartheid government, and that South Africa is an extreme case of how a powerful minority of settlers asserted themselves as farmers and became commercial farmers, while Blacks were forced to abandon their land to service the White-run economy. Zhan (2019:1) notes that although the value of small-scale food production was neglected in favour of commercial production to feed the capitalist economy in the past, the RECAP was established to transform successful small-scale Black farmers into commercial farmers in their own right.

Battersby and Haysom (2019:169), Horst and Marion (2019:1-16) and Greenberg (2019:145) note that the apartheid partitioning of agricultural arrangement is still prominent in the economy. In this regard, Qange and Mdoda (2019) and Arnould and Press (2019:508-527) further add that the segregated farmlands owned by the Whites still dominate the landscape. Kwarteng and Botchway (2019:98) argue that the segregated landownership that dominates the agricultural sector today is the direct cost associated with the emotional takeover of land from White farmers without adequate preparation on the part of the government, composed of both Whites and Blacks, and that it was a display of immaturity as each camp was determined to retain their sphere of influence. The forceful land seizure was no assurance to Blacks that having the land would enable them to become commercial farmers. Akinola (2020a:215-232) indicates that land expropriation is

a right granted to states under international law. However, Vorster (2019:1-2) explains that this right does not permit states to abuse their power by the unlawful seizure of properties without following due process or paying the proper compensation. Notwithstanding, it is not clear if the Black-led government had mapped out how this idea of expropriation without compensation would be achieved and translated into the solution for Black farmers' landless situation.

Moolman (2020:33) states that the lack of prioritisation on the part of the government to ensure a smooth transition of landownership from Whites to Blacks was destabilising, since this move was a clear-cut expression against the Constitutional Court's sentiments on land reform. Viljoen (2020) adds that the extreme political war against the forceful seizure of land hinders the RECAP's objectives from being actualised, as the White minority were those with the farms, the expertise and they were also the majority employers. Furthermore, Mkuhlani, Crespo, Rusere, Zhou, and Francis (2020:7-29) and Valdivia, Antte and Stoorvogel (2017:11-26), in debating segregated land and agriculture, opine that deliberate lack of investment in Black smallholder farms resulted in the growing social crisis in the former homeland.

Rambauli, Antwi and Mudau (2021:13-29) and Tarekegne, Wesselink, Biemans and Mulder (2021:481-502) state that the structural adjustment plans for agriculture should have outlined how land for agriculture should be utilised for future production. The argument is that as long as the government's intention was not to deprive the Whites of the land, which was legally owned, they could have co-commercialised the land with Black farmers with a mutual understanding. This would have established a sustainable dual management system and increased agricultural production, as well as the number of small-scale Black farmers transformed to commercial ones. Consequently, the realisation by White farmers that the government wanted to expel them from the agricultural sector obliged them to withhold the land, the finance for agriculture, as well as their skills and knowledge of commercial farming (Viljoen 2020). As far as agricultural production is concerned, Hall (2014:29) further mentions that the challenges recorded in the slow process of transferring land to Blacks are mirrored in the small amount of state support that is offered to most black farmers. It could be argued that the slow

process of land transfer hinders future productivity and causes the Blacks to continue depending on produce from White farms to sustain their livelihood.

As a result of the small amount of support from the state, Hanrah, Touhy, McHugh, O'Loughlin, Moran, Dillion, Breen, Wallace and Shalloo (2019:548-558) and Barton, Westgate, Foster, Cuddington, Hastings, O'Laughlin, Sato, Willig and Lindenmeyer (2020:1-2) indicate that farmers still receive low prices for some of their agricultural products despite the high production costs associated with some of the produce. Thus, the economy is still affected negatively by poverty and inequality. Barton *et al* (2020:1-2) further add that, in as much as farmers suffer from declining prices, there is a move to backyard gardening in civic and rural areas capable of supplying the surrounding households, but not for commercial purposes. Aliber and Mdoda (2015:18-37) state that this type of farming is mostly among household for additional food supply.

It could be concluded that giving land to Blacks does not mean that they will become good commercial farmers overnight (Akinola 2020a:215-232). The absence of education and experience in agricultural matters means that Black farmers will need a great deal of mentoring to be completely successful farmers. In fact, commercial farming requires many different skills, and tailoring subsistence farming to meet the various challenges associated with large-scale farming also requires an informed effort. Ngam (2021:131-152) further adds that land reform beneficiaries, therefore, need to acquire skills such as accounting, marketing, soil science, project management and water management to enhance their chances of being prosperous farmers.

2.6.2 RECAP within the context of job creation

Chimhowu (2019:897) states that land had been managed under customary tenure by all those who lived on it. Therefore, the indigenes who lived on the land cultivated it to provide food for themselves and their families. As a result, the issue of poverty and inequality was scarce. However, with increasing dispossession as the years went by, Blacks had to abandon their land through the various land reform schemes to become labourers (Akinsola & Akinsola 2019:237-244). Mtero

(2017:190-200) further adds that the dispossession of the people's land was fatal to their livelihood security as land was seen as their last means of survival. Formal job opportunities were rare, as a result, farming was the only form of self-employment and crops from ploughing fields were their only hope for sustenance. Therefore, one could live on the incomes derived from the crops produced on the fields, or indirectly through their sale on a yearly basis. In KwaZulu-Natal, for example, Spierenburg (2020:280-299) notes that labour tenancy, which was a form of occupation for the Blacks, continued much longer as a result of the consensus between property owners and Black tillers. This accord permitted Blacks to reside and keep cattle for a livelihood in exchange for their labour. The outcome of such a system was the breakdown of the agricultural practices of the Black farmers, which have affected their farming abilities negatively to date.

Hornby and Oettle (2020:15-20) indicate that labour tenants faced costly liabilities as they were clear-cut tenants, not possessors. In effect, that was the form of employment that could sustain them at that time. Brandon and Sarkar (2019:73-109) add that while many of the farmers were poor, most of them were reluctant to leave their present homes and providing their labour was the only source of income. Bunce (2020:328) notes that under colonialism and apartheid, the relationship between landowners and labourers was that of master–slave. Therefore, slavery was being revived to suit the landowners, and the gender segregation of work was predominant.

Due to the resistance to forced labour instituted by the 1913 *Native Land Act* and the *Pass Law* after the introduction of apartheid, Marais (2020:352-379) states that White farmers in and around the De Beers diamond mines at Kimberley in the Northern Cape Province as well as the gold mines of Witwatersrand, for example, found it difficult to recruit cheap African labour. Mtero (2017:190-200) links the existence of mines and farm lands and avers that some rural farmers were dispossessed of their farms and given alternative land for farming, which was less fertile compared to their previous prime agricultural land. Ngam (2021:131-152) argues that this had a negative impact on the agrarian livelihoods of the settled households, and the food security of these households was affected. As a result, Devereux and Tavener-Smith (2019:1-21) add that some of the labourers had to

search for temporary jobs and casual work locally since the rural poor lack resources and social networks to sustain themselves in distant urban areas, while searching for employment. This added to the widespread helplessness and poverty in rural communities.

Webster and Englert (2020:279-293) further point out that because of these labour laws, the country had a dualistic labour system that lasted till the 1970s and restricted some workers' rights to non-locals through the bargaining councils (now the Labour Relations Act or LRA) because of communication difficulties between workers of the two races. Linking Black and White labour relations, Hlatshwayo (2018:378-392) indicates that it was only in 1979 that the state recognised trade unions representing the black workforce, which spurred the rapid growth of this industry and in the 1980s, were instrumental in defining the new labour code.

The role of trade unions provided new opportunities for the government to follow a dual-track strategy, which according to Alford, Barrientos and Visser (2017:721-745), involved the regulation of labour and the deregulation of exports which saw labour legislation extended to agriculture, aiming to modernise labour relations and improve working conditions whilst disbanding national, state-controlled, marketing boards and opening the economy to global market competitors. It could be argued that the government opened new opportunities for workers' organisations and trade unions to provide better workplace conditions. Brandon and Sarkar (2019:73-109) and Spierenburg (2020:280-299) further claim that the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), in particular, became more influential with the new democratic government and set out to protect the trade unions' framework. It could be argued that COSATU had a negative effect on the farmers, since it intensified their subjection to international trade rivalry. In this regard, Satgar (2019:580-605) explains that the new land and labour policies aroused fear in White property owners in relation to their capacity to hold onto the land.

Geyer and Quin (2019:1-21) and Chirisa *et al* (2019:283-286) indicate that despite the government's promises to distribute the state's wealth equally, in line with the human security theory, with the aid of the RECAP, it was discovered that state policies favour the accumulation of land to the detriment of most local farmers and

rural populations who do not own land. Consequently, access to land as the primary source of livelihood to alleviate poverty, especially for the penniless, is a challenge as the rural poor still face the same hindrances and complicated procedures regarding land access as those in place during the apartheid era. Hebinck, Mtati and Shackleton's (2018:323-334) theory of land access states that such land arrangement basically deprived people's land needs and agriculture for food production which shaped the rural poor's livelihoods.

One could infer from the above argument that extra scrutiny by the trade unions of state actions on matters of workplace interrelationships between labourers and employers have been on the rise in recent years. Hastings (2019:921-942) notes that this is the key to promoting the identification of labour representatives in procedures at workplaces. To this end, Murray and Durrheim (2019:2623-2640) argue that the South African domestic labour market, for example, is rife with racial inequality, which has continued to date despite extensive transformative efforts in the labour market. Passaretta and Wolbers (2019:382-408) note that farm workers, in addition to domestic helpers, are the most exploited. As a result, the Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fishery (South Africa, DAFF 2017) observes that the number of farm workers seem to be decreasing on commercial farms.

Pillay (2020:1), Novikova *et al* (2019:1-7), Ranchhod and Daniels (2020:1-24), argue that one cause of the decline in the number of farm workers is the promotion of machines and scientific advancement, which have replaced poor seasonal workers. When debating the agricultural work decline and scientific advances, Bartelsman, Lopez-Garcia and Presidente (2019:32-39) mention that the agricultural decline in rural areas happens without significant levels of growth in other sectors of the economy to absorb the shed farm labour numbers adequately. Hebinck, Mtati and Shackleton (2018:323-334) characterise the situation of the decline of agriculture workers in an economy with limited labour absorptive capacity as jobless de-agrarianisation. This holds true for the South African context, where the collapse of agricultural activities amongst rural households gave raise to post-displacement unemployment or underemployment. Marais (2020:352-379) links labour and wages and states that waged work is the platform which promises livelihood security. The challenges recorded in getting a liveable

income on a fixed term are distressful given that the rate of unemployment is on the rise, mostly among single-headed households whose inadequate income is incapable of providing basic food items. Omotayo and Aremu (2020:9562) further assert that this contributes to the frequent economic violence nationwide.

Webb (2016:219) states that the South African farm workers' strike of 2012 and 2013 revealed the uneven nature of agrarian change in the post-apartheid period and the process of rural class formation. The rural areas, however, remain victims of grinding poverty and inequality inherited from centuries of dispossession, underdevelopment, and violence. Though agriculture contributes less than 3% of the overall gross domestic product (GDP), Borgna, Solga and Protsch (2019:116-132) note that it remains an important and crucial employer of the rural poor.

Chirisa *et al* (2019:283-286) conclude that many farm workers in the post-apartheid period and those who work under the RECAP enjoy limited benefits of their labour rights despite a host of legislations to protect these rights. As such, policies intended to be pro-poor have inadvertently resulted in evictions from commercial farms, which have increased the level of unemployment and insecurity among unskilled rural workers. Consequently, glaring poverty and inequality reign.

2.6.3 RECAP within the context of food security

One of the RECAP's objectives is to ensure sustainable agricultural production and guarantee food security to the rural poor and the less privileged in South Africa. Therefore, the production of agricultural commodities is a priority for the government to achieve this objective successful. Mamabolo and Sebola (2021:132-135) state that food security includes the natural aspects of food, which include accessibility, availability, utilisation, and stability. They indicate that access to land by the majority of the less privileged can bring down the level of hunger and increase access to food security, as many people will be encouraged to cultivate the land. In other words, access to land and economic resources for farmers can ensure food security and promote an increase in the standard of living of the poor. This is achievable when agricultural production is done on both a small and large scale, given that the RECAP's aim in the context of food security is to ensure that

sustainable food production increases with the growing demand for agricultural goods.

Rakoena, Maake and Antwi (2022:169-176) argue that although access to land has improved among the previously disadvantaged in the past years, the ability to use and benefit from agricultural resources by the majority is still a challenge as control over resources is left to a hand full of people. Binswanger-Mkhize (2014:253-269) links the availability of resources and access to land and states that the beneficiaries of land redistribution programmes in the country have insufficient support in terms of agricultural resources and do not always receive satisfactory farm compensation. For example, delays in agricultural implementation disrupts the production process and results in major food insecurity. Mahmood *et al* (2020:175-184) also note that there has been a decline in farm production and the potential threats to food security as increasing numbers of the poor go without food. Frongillo, Nguyen, Smith and Coleman-Jensen (2019:330-335) add that this accounts for the global concern about food insecurity which has remained a critical challenge. However, targeted efforts to increase agricultural resources for both small-scale and commercial farmers may help to enhance the sustainability of livelihoods and encourage community food security.

Samuel, Sylvia and Casadevall (2019:1656402) note that the sustainable livelihood objective is dependent on agricultural production. However, several factors, such as agro-ecological and bio-intensive farming methods have impacted agricultural food production negatively. Sylvester (2020:277) and O'Laughlin, Bernstein, Cousins and Peters (2013:1-15) add that practising sustainable farming and ensuring food availability for all is a predominant challenge in this current century. Zhou and Staatz (2016:198-212) indicate that the total number of underfed people has been on the rise due to an increase in food insecurity, which is connected to equity, justice, and employment, plus a sustainable environment.

Pawlak and Kolodziejczak (2020:1-20), in debating food insecurity and undernutrition, argue that reducing poverty and improving food security remain a serious problem worldwide and agricultural production has a much greater impact

on changing the situation. They attribute undernutrition in African countries, and South Africa in particular, to the Malthusian concept of 'population growth' while the supply of natural resources for productivity in agriculture tends to decline. This accounts for the hunger that is widespread in most rural communities and is attributed to the many food production systems being unsustainable.

Defining food security, the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO 1996) states that it is the mass accessibility of food a country has through adequate food production or importation. During the 1996 World Food Summit, this definition was expanded to include "a*nybody regularly having physical, social and economic access to safe sufficient nutritious food that meets their nutritional needs plus an active healthy life*" (FAO 1996:483). Greenberg (2019:146) further adds that South Africa is generally food-sufficient, but misdirection and incompetence in food distribution cause inadequacy in some areas. Chakona and Shackleton (2019:87-94) link food insecurity and the mode of distribution and state that widespread fear of food insecurity looms over the country according to various failed land reform policies.

Van der Berg, Patel and Bridgman (2022:722-737) link malnutrition and food insecurity and state that poverty often manifests in poor nutrition. They add that poverty persists in many rural households in South Africa, and the poor often run out of money to buy food. The possible outcome of food insecurity is hunger. They are also of the opinion that food insecurity affects children's livelihood negatively and causes malnutrition which can extend to insecure livelihoods in adulthood. Odunitan-Wayas, Alaba and Lambert (2020:149-152) further state that food insecurity in many households in rural areas in South Africa became a reality during the solid lockdown period. They indicate that the overburdening restrictions during the COVID-19 period, engendered continuing food insecurity, increasing poverty and malnutrition. In debating food insecurity and COVID-19, Clapp and Moseley (2020:1393-1417) explain that these threefold (continuing food insecurity, increasing poverty and malnutrition) aftershocks intensified the hardship of the rural poor, and coupled with social injustice and income inequality, compelled most of the rural poor to migrate to urban centres in search of better livelihoods.

In addition, Workie, Mackolil, Nyika and Ramadas (2020:100014) note that the whole food system was disrupted during the COVID-19 pandemic and significantly impacted the agricultural sector and food demands. They mention that the unexpected result was an upwelling in unemployment and a reduction in commercial activity. As a result, Odunitan-Wayas, Alaba and Lambert (2020:149-152) contend that the pandemic created tensions and food insecurity as a consequence of a decline in food production and household income. They further point out that the aim of land reform is to address such challenges and ensure stability in the agricultural sector.

Drysdale, Moshabela and Bob (2019:95-110) and Barrios, Gemmill-Herren, Bicksler, Siliprandi, Brathwaite, Moller, Batello, and Tittonell (2020:230-247), in debating food security and land reform, note that the agro-food output plays an important role in ensuring that there is sufficient food security nationwide. They attribute food shortages in some areas to the fact that nationwide food security measures are lacking, plus no standardised course of action to monitor and evaluate food security. As a result, Christian, Obi and Agbugba (2019:94-104) argue that this is due to the racialised agrarian transition predicated on land dispossession. Nyabaro, Mburu and Hutchinson (2019:277-292) link race to dispossession and the challenges in agrarian farming and state that land equity is replacing the existing structure of ethnic expropriation and locating land for wider food security strategies.

Battersby and Haysom (2019:169-173) and Anderson, Weber, Fabricius, Glew, Opperman, Pacheco, Pendleton, Thau, Vermeulen and Shaw (2020:115-118) state that food insufficiency continues to plague South Africa. At first, this was initially seen traditionally as having an impact on rural areas. However, this point of view changed with food insecurity affecting both urban and rural areas, which, in effect, informed policy and food security responses. Anderson *et al* (2020:115-118) further say that food insecurity is driven by poor policies that affect the food security system.

Food insecurity and well-being are often closely linked. Employment, income, and expenditure on food ascertain a household's power to get enough food. Chakona

and Shackleton (2019:84-97) note that the significant poverty rates in South Africa make it difficult for most households to meet their food needs. Satgar and Cherry (2020:317-337) link food insecurity and household poverty and single out unemployment as being a major factor in driving food insecurity. They highlight past attempts to address food insecurity through tackling household poverty by providing social grants. Drysdale, Moshabela and Bob (2019:95-110) and Satgar and Cherry (2020:317-337) point out that distress over food insecurity is undeniable in regions such as Limpopo, Kwa-Zulu Natal, and the Eastern Cape.

Devereux and Tavener-Smith (2019:1-21) observe that farm workers do not produce food for their family's consumption. However, in debating employment and income, they state that the fluctuation in employment and income in the agricultural sector is reflected of the cultivation patterns that affect most rural households. Snoxell and Lyne (2019:219-227) and Bishwajit, Kota, Buh and Yaya (2020:34-43) further add that in food insecure households, malnutrition persists as well as poverty and famine-related challenges, such as depression. Williams and Satgar (2020:265-278) allege that these consequences are most evident and common in the adult population, some of whom are vulnerable because of dependents and climate change, which affects farming. Wegerif (2020:797-200) links food security and income and states that workers in the informal sector, particularly the agricultural sector, have some of the biggest challenges in terms of livelihood and income; they earn extremely low wages, live in poverty and experience high levels of food insecurity.

Candel and Daugbjerg (2019:169-178) advocate that food insecurity should be considered from the perspective that it is triggered by the various land reform policies, both in the past and present, that have rendered healthy foods expensive for the greater part of the population. Bishwajit *et al* (2020:34-43) and Oldewage-Theron, Abu, Nguyen, and Saha (2020:1-15) link food insecurity and land reform policies and state that both have caused food price inflation and fluctuations in general, such as consumer price inflation, leaving the system liable to major volatility. As a result, Webb (2016:231) describes how a lack of alternative forms of employment, especially in rural areas, has given rise to food insecurity in most communities. Battersby and Haysom (2019:169-173) argue that the government

has not earmarked funds for municipalities to tackle food insecurity systematically, considering that the municipalities are closest to rural areas. At this stage, the government has abandoned its vision of small-scale agrarian reform in favour of black commercial farming.

2.6.4 RECAP within the context of poverty alleviation

In the pre-apartheid period, black communities accessed the land unrestrictedly, and they had a form of livelihood since everyone utilised the land according to their skills. A reversal took place during the apartheid era, for they lost their livelihoods alongside access to their land, and they became vulnerable to poverty. Mnini and Ramoroka (2020:321-329) note that land was the main income source for a reasonable living standard. Fransman and Yu (2019:50-79) state that a key objective of the government at the dawn of democracy was to reduce the shortage in basic needs and inequality between Whites and Blacks stemming from the apartheid regime, and one approach to achieve this has been the implementation of several large-scale economic programmes. Heydinger (2020:91-108) adds that the economic goal of alleviating poverty includes but is not limited to the redistribution of land to achieve swift development through geometric growth and better service delivery.

Driaux (2020:1-19) and Butcher (2019:242) explain that the scarcity of foodstuffs and services increase poverty, which in effect, is what the government is trying to resolve. Poverty and the insufficiency of common necessities are rife in the countryside, thus requiring rural development schemes as outlined among the main objectives of the RECAP: to alleviate poverty and to empower the rural poor. Tischler (2019:124-125) links insecurity and poverty and notes that greater insecurity and poverty amongst the black population was due in part to the infamous *Native Land Act* of 1913 (Tischler (2019), which limited African landownership to 7 to 8% of the land mass and put restrictions on sharecropping and tenure. Neveling (2019:182) further asserts that the *Native Title Act* of 1913 also served to dispossess many black families and created an urban lumpenproletariat.

Branco (2016:1222-1228) argues that the RECAP's objective to alleviate poverty and empower the rural poor was impracticable. He mentions that ensuring that an individual's right to land is secured could possibly imply that some other individual would end up being deprived of this same right. Therefore, land redistribution through land reform becomes a tool to acquire the land of the Black masses that was dispossessed due to the numerous land laws. Guo and Liu (2021:105418) state that for the rural poor, land is a source of empowerment and development. They opine that since most rural poor could cultivate their own food, the land acted as a platform to acquire valuable knowledge for their livelihood. Guo and Liu (2021) further indicate that the land increases their value as the dependency rate is lessened and a sense of independence gained, consequently, insecurity and poverty are reduced.

Sinyolo, Mudhara and Wale (2017:63-76) state that there is a correlation between poverty and several measurable indicators of one's lifestyle, consequently poverty alleviation can affect multitudes in rural areas positively. Yamamori (2019:70-80) further adds that poverty can be measured through the concept of 'relative deprivation' based on the needs of an individual or a group of people, but also on what they lack in comparison to the rest of the society. Fransman and Yu (2019:50-79) refer to this comparison as an objective or subjective measure of poverty. Ndaguba and Hanyane (2019:1-11) note that the measurements of poverty are centred on the realisation of policies and schemes engendering social growth and welfare, as well as well-being and sustainability. To meet the government's aim to eradicate poverty, countless revolutionary enterprises targeting reform were validated and executed with the advent of democracy. Most of these reforms had sustainable strategies to eradicate poverty, but they faced numerous challenges at the implementation phase. The RECAP was one of those reforms that was enacted to alleviate poverty among the rural communities.

Sihlangu (2021:42-44), in debating land reform and its implementation, notes that the RECAP has benefited some of the rural poor and helped them to break out of poverty. However, she mentions that the RECAP falls short of its original intended purpose to alleviate poverty amongst rural communities. Furthermore, she indicates that the reasons for the failure of past reforms were because the reforms

were never appraised before implementing the RECAP. Asongu and Kuada (2020:1-6) links land reforms and skills and states that beneficiaries should have enough time to enable them to implement what they have learnt to resolve rural poverty. Sihlangu (2021:42-44) agrees with this statement and mentions that land reform in the country has not sought to alleviate poverty strategically amongst the rural poor.

Bond and Malikane (2019:803-820) state that the ANC alerted the citizenry of its plans to transform its policy framework into the social-democratic Reconstruction and Development Programme ((RDP), and many successive programmes including the ongoing Recapitalisation and Development Programme (RDP now RECAP)[2] following a 1994 power takeover. Yet, the subsequent macro-economic and micro policies in each of the developmental or social policy arenas were neoliberal (market-oriented). Chatterjee (2019:839-859) argues that implementing neoliberal policy in South Africa was not a good idea in a country with two extremes. After more than twenty years of democracy, Francis, and Webster (2019:788-802) find that the there is still a great deal of inequality in our country. Hence, it could be argued that the policy framework did little to reduce poverty and inequality among the racial groups.

Oluwatayo and Babalola (2020:120-121) note that the proportion of the population living in poverty in South Africa declined from 66,6% (31,6 million persons) in 2006 to 53,2% (27,3 million) in 2011 but increased to 55,5% (30,4 million) in 2015. And the number of persons living in extreme poverty (persons living below the 2015 Food Poverty Line of R441 per person per month) in South Africa increased by 2,7 million, from 11 million in 2011 to 13,8 million in 2015 (South Africa, StatsSA, 2017). The racial inequality in wealth distribution is undeniable. In this regard, Butcher (2019:241-248) and Cheteni, Khamfula, Mah, and Casadevall (2019:1586080) state that South Africa surpasses peer middle-income countries in terms of inequality and poverty rates, with such income poverty affects the

[2] Recapitalisation and Development Programme (RDP or RECAP). Public Hearings: Committee's draft report. Rural Development and Land Reform. 25 February 2015. www.pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/20057

vulnerable mostly, including Black women, children, the uneducated and rural inhabitants. Francis and Webster (2019:788-802) and Zimbalist (2017:151-167) further point out that income poverty has triggered an economic slowdown with high inflation and growing unemployment due to the high levels of inequality.

Phasha and Moyo (2020:432-438) link food insecurity and the various land reforms and note that the RECAP, in its implementation process to alleviate poverty, has encountered numerous challenges and even the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (henceforth DALRRD), the department at the centre of land reform and pre-and post-settlement support, in its Strategic Plan 2015-2020, admits that little attention has been paid to land development and post-settlement support to ensure that the redistributed land is used to its best potential. Vorster (2019:1-2) also notes that the DALRRD explains that most of the attention has been on transferring land to previously disadvantaged groups now favoured by the land reform programme.

Ngumbela, Khalema and Nzimakwe (2020:830) state that land reform, if administered accurately and constructively, would help to resolve rural poverty in the country. However, the rural communities are suffering from a severe and damaging lack of information, basic materials, and cultural benefits. Mujuru and Obi (2020:1-17) link poverty and food security and assert that the availability of food within a household in the rural communities is determined by the resources available to purchase food as well as other basic needs. Sihlangu (2021:42-44) argues that within the South African context, land reform and poverty alleviation are hampered by the lack of a clear theoretical and empirical way of linking the issues in a holistic intervention to address this situation.

Hall and Kepe (2017:122-130) argue that there are various situations where only a few land reform projects obtained support despite the allocation of budgets for this purpose by government departments. It is worth mentioning here that political ideology should be separated from poverty alleviation. Soudien, Woolard and Reddy (2019:313-318) and Oluwatayo and Babalola (2020:120-121) hold that the country's efforts at reducing poverty have sometimes yielded fruits, an example

being the key policy interventions to provide social grants catering to children less than 18 years old, the disabled, and pensioners. Such social grants may lift people out of poverty but may have the unintended consequences of rendering the poor more vulnerable and impoverished as many young adults spend their lives waiting for grant money. In debating poverty and social grants, for example, Chitonge (2022:722-739) mentions that a sustainable solution for the rural poor is one which can boost rural productivity and give these residents a continuous income source to alleviate poverty and not provide a temporary solution without specified outcomes.

The above discussion illustrates that the objective of the RECAP to alleviate poverty among Black South Africans has failed, while poverty among the rural poor is on the rise. Therefore, the government of South Africa will have to redirect policy implementation in a more focused way to achieve this objective. In this regard, Isaac and Bongiwe (2020:83-96) note that the three elements of land reform (redistribution, restitution, and land tenure) have not solved the land problem in the country.

2.6.5 RECAP within the context of sustainable development

Prado, Arce, Lopez, Grarcía and Pearson (2020:303-327) define sustainable development (SD) as development capable of continuing to expand people's opportunities, whereas Mensah and Casadevall (2019:1653531) regard SD as expanding opportunities that also satisfy the requirement of those living in present times without disadvantaging future generations. Sustainable land use can comply with this definition of SD as suggested by Saisi (2019:448-462).

Farming remains a way of tackling food insecurity and ensuring human progress. In this regard, Dawson, Martin, Camfield (2019:926-946) note that the intensification of agricultural production in sustaining the livelihood of the rural poor is a crucial part of any programme focusing on human development and ensuring food security and meeting future generations' needs.

Regarding land use and sustainable development, Solly, Berisha, Cotella and Rivolin (2020:1257) highlight that the foundation of economic development, especially in the rural areas, is land for agricultural purposes on which farmers and other communities base their livelihoods. She states that the intention of land reform is to reduce poverty. Therefore, land plays a consequential role in small-scale business investment strategies, which is seen as a tool to achieve sustainable development. Feliciano (2019:795-808) links land, livelihood and sustainable development and mentions that agricultural food production is an essential route out of poverty for many people living in rural areas. Therefore, she states that land reform is a component of sustainable development that can achieve its objectives through land reform, if implemented within the jurisdiction of the law.

Asongu and Odhiambo (2019:647-656) state that Africa's situation is peculiar because the continent experiences extreme poverty despite having natural riches to satisfy a growing populace. Asongu and le Roux (2018:457-467) further claim that more people are experiencing poverty since the economic gains have not reached the poor masses. Mokhutso (2022:1-20) links the rich natural resources in South Africa to poverty and states that the poverty trends are a cause for concern, as the land reform programmes and the RECAP, in particular, was aimed at reducing extreme poverty and deprivation amongst the vulnerable groups. However, he argues that South Africa's poverty dynamics denote a regression rather than a progression.

Ogujiuba and Mngometulu (2022:1-23) further mention that South Africa is amongst the upper-middle-income countries in the world, but that many households are impoverished and lack basic access to education, energy, safe drinking water, and health care for a sustainable livelihood. They indicate that the RECAP had to advance the impoverished citizens' lives by decreasing poverty and inequality. Nhapi (2022:84-98) adds that, notwithstanding the objectives of the SDGs for socio-economic transformation and to eradicate poverty, reducing poverty levels, and lift the poor permanently and underprivileged people out of poverty, poverty has continued and still exists.

Yuan, Li and Wangi (2020:85-89) and Haywood, Funke, Audouin, Musvoto, and Nahman (2019:555-569) state that in 2015, the international community adopted seventeen global goals for sustainable development (SDGs) to improve people's lives by 2030. Adding to this, Fuller and Dwivedi (2019:207), Tchamyo (2019:317-338), Asongu and Odhiambo (2019) and Boluk, Cavaliere and Higgins-Desbiolles (2019:847-864) further mention that the objectives of the SDGs were to assist the needy in eradicating poverty and ensuring a peaceful society for all.

The RECAP policy has adopted the SDGs' goals in its framework with the aim of eradicating poverty and inequality, improving livelihoods and sustaining development, especially at the rural level. Higgs and Hill (2019:25-31) further add that SD comprises three crucial segments for its full achievement: economic growth, environmental responsibility, and social justice. Ntlou (2016) links SD and economic growth and states that the sustainability of land reform for agricultural projects in South Africa must be regarded as an essential aspect of food security, for agriculture is recognised as the engine of economic growth. She mentions that farms that profit from the RECAP are obliged to advise the government on the viability of sustaining the farms once the government terminates support to achieve the millennium sustainable development goals.

It could be said that the RECAP, through some of its objectives, allied itself with the UN SDGs without the development intervention of an integrated approach taking into consideration. Marten (2019:584-599) states that the SDGs place a further emphasis on the need to improve the welfare of the most vulnerable. This, in turn, places great demands on the government because of the wide-ranging nature of the SDGs.

De Magalhães, Koh, and Santaeulàlia-Llopis (2019:926-946) and Haywood *et al* (2019:555-569) add that SDGs within the South African context should consider both the human and economic resources available regarding, such an ambitious project. Both De Magalhães *et al* (2019) and Haywood *et al* (2019) contrast SDGs with the *National Development Plan (NDP),* which emphasises the need for constructive partnerships. This is in line with one of the RECAP's objectives, namely to partner mentors and mentees to achieve the desirable outcome of

transforming Black small-scale farmers into commercial farmers (Stoffelen, Adiyia, Vanneste, & Kotze (2020:414-432); Maka & Aliber (2019:37-45)). It is one salient aspect of the RECAP to link beneficiaries with mentors to achieve economic growth, sustainable development, and food self-sufficiency.

2.7 DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT AND LAND OWNERSHIP

Akinola (2020b:1-2) indicates that the former government was noted for racial prejudice regarding land evictions. The present regime is compelled to solve the land issue. As a result, the regime is pressed to apply countless plans of action to rectify land inequality and operation administration. Koot, Hitchcock and Gressier (2019:341-355) argue that the government has recorded numbers of interconnected land disputes that could defeat the efforts of the RECAP to fully achieves its objectives in the implementation of land reform.

Jankielsohn (2017:1-5) states that land in South Africa signifies power and dominion instead of an asset in the utilisation of food production to expand livelihoods, particularly among the rural poverty-stricken inhabitants. As a result, Ndhlovu (2019:131-151), Hull, Babalola and Whittle (2019:172) and Dlamini and Ogunnubi (2018:339-360) note that disparities shape the course of action with which land and opportunities are made available. As a result, attempts directed at solving this problem are often too narrow and negate the promises made to the marginalised Black population regarding restitution.

Bank and Hart (2019:411-426) and Fraser (2019:893-912) demonstrate that prejudicial colonial and apartheid schemes relegated indigenous peoples to only about 10% of the land. Leonard (2019:579-594) mentions that such land inaccessibility triggered considerable suffering and privation among hundreds of thousands of native South Africans, justifying its prominence at the heart of the anti-apartheid battle. Akinola (2020b:1-2) further states that the legal basis for land ownership in South Africa is anchored in the 1993 and 1996 Constitution (Section 25(7) (South Africa, 2007), and the Restitution of Land Rights Act of 2004 (South Africa, 2004). Allsobrook (2019:408-418) and Gumata and Ndou (2019:503) mention that land ownership change must modify restoration and possession, as

they serve different key functions to preserve the economy and the livelihoods of citizens.

South Africa's land reform objective, according to Hart, Chandia and Jacobs (2018:111-120) is about handing land to Blacks from Whites. However, Jankielsohn (2017:1-5), Goodwin (2017:571-593), Spierenburg (2020:280-299) and Scoones, Murimbarimba and Mahenehene (2019:805-835) state that land reform consists of two basic components, namely:

- A political component that is about land as part of the political transformation of society as a whole, land to live on, and land for sustenance. Politically, land reform is used to garner backing for the state at crucial moments to suit its political agenda.
- An administrative component that refers to the capacity of governments to implement land reform. Land reform requires a large and widely distributed group of well-trained field or extension staff who are able to inform people of their rights, facilitate legal processes of land acquisition and redistribution, as well as to ensure the sustainability of land reform through agricultural support services to new and emerging farmers.

On the whole, it must be noted that the intention of land reform was to compensate and inspire Blacks to return to the agricultural sector. Marsals, Nteme, Cloete and Lenka (2018:105-125) show that the available evidence through the various failed land reform programmes implies ineptitude on the part of the government. Marsals *et al* (2018) justifies this by pointing out that little is known about the number of successful Black commercial farmers that the plethora of government-initiated post-settlement support packages and the RECAP, in particular, have helped.

2.8 CONCLUSION

Land availability is pivotal for vulnerable groups in agricultural communities since it guarantees income sources and a better livelihood through its exploitation. There is a saying that an idle mind is the devil's workshop. When more people are

encouraged to get involved in agriculture, the level of crime automatically goes down as this is a job that keeps them busy. Agriculture provides a means of earning a living, while also affecting investment incentives and financial market access capacity. Moreover, land in the hands of the vulnerable decreases poverty levels with an overall impact of increasing the country's economic growth. The next chapter will look at land reform, livelihoods, and the human security – the theoretical perspective of this study.

CHAPTER THREE: LAND REFORM, LIVELIHOOD AND HUMAN SECURITY, SOME THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Human security concerns have been instrumental in shaping the discourse on land issues. Discussions in the previous chapter highlighted the literature introducing the concept of 'land and land reform' within which the core of all human life is understood. This chapter will focus on the existing theories on the relationship between land reform, livelihoods, and human security relating to agriculture, together with the policy considerations and implementation strategies necessary to scrutinise the hypothesis under study.

Land reform has a direct impact on the production of agricultural commodities. This influences food security positively or negatively and determines the livelihood and security of the natives. Milhorance (2020:36-52) and Doyle (2015:14) argue that to shape laws certifying land ownership titles after land reform, the colonial powers took advantage of the naiveté of the indigenous population and received their endorsement for the legitimatisation of their actions. Denied the right to autonomy by taking over their land, the food security and livelihood of Black indigenes were destroyed successively, and the impact of this is still felt to this day.

Chirisa *et al* (2019:283-286) add that although land was taken forcefully from the tribal natives, the possession of their land did not represent conquest, but rather occupation, which rendered the natives vulnerable. As a result, coupled with the pass laws restricting urban-rural movements, Britwum and Dakhli (2019:499) state that the law relegated Blacks to rural settlements. This settlement dynamic reshaped agricultural production in favour of market-oriented agriculture in urban areas at the expense of the rural areas, where there have been recurrent food crises till the present time.

Ryberg, Tulemat, Stolten and Robinius (2020:921) and Ryan (2017:1) state that separate agricultural areas greatly contributed to the vulnerability of Blacks as land entitlement was set apart under the apartheid rule. As a result, the land title structure had to be questioned for a number of reasons. Prominently, a small minority owned most of the fertile land and controlled the major river sources, as these channels were used to export commodities to other parts of the world, while the majority of Blacks were moved into overcrowded areas and locked out of agricultural production. This prompted the first democratically elected president, Nelson Mandela, to institute a number of political liberation reforms to end the long struggle of Blacks against the apartheid rule. In this regard, Beresford (2020:65-79) and Stoffelen *et al* (2020:414-432) note that at the dawn of democracy, many Blacks visualised a new South Africa free from racial segregation of all types, with hopes of getting an adequate food supply and livelihood security for the poor. Yet, many still have unanswered questions in this respect.

As suggested in the previous chapter, the redistribution of agricultural land in South Africa to date comprises three components: namely:

- Land tenure that is about schemes granting rights to people occupying communal and commercial land under risky terms.
- The restitution of land rights that were lost as a result of the application of apartheid laws.
- Land redistribution, that is, ownership of land according to the transformation principle of representation (Venter 2020:11-13).

There has been an undeniable fight for land rights since independence, with a higher population pressure on the government. Ubink and Pickering (2020:178-199) note that the regime of President Cyril Ramaphosa passed land rights into law, forgetting the multi-dimensional levels regarding customary law. As a result, the regime ignored the conceptualisation of those who enjoyed equality before the law in terms of property rights and *vice versa*. Consequently, according to Lawry *et al* (2017:61-81) land rights and security are unavoidable as they invariably reflect the pains of the past. They opine that legal recognition of the customary arrangement is necessary for livelihood security to be attained at the rural level.

The section that follows examines land and livelihood in South Africa, focusing on land identification and how reform contributes to people's livelihoods.

3.2 LAND AND LIVELIHOOD IN SOUTH AFRICA

Land, in the context of livelihoods, would include all the different ways in which land is used to support basic needs such as food, a place to live, and financial resources. Montague (2023:1-35) indicates that economic, social, and environmental factors all relate to a human-rights based view of security and a complex and interconnected livelihood strategy. Cousins and Walker (2015) say that livelihood is the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources), and activities required for a means of living.

3.2.1 How land identification shapes livelihoods

Scoones *et al* (2019:117-134) state that land identification is the process of recognising suitable land for livelihood needs, specifically either for settlement or agriculture. Accordingly, the prime source of livelihood is that land has a socio-economic value for both settlement and farming. Thus, agriculture is the most important aspect of rural development. This is evidenced in the various land reform programmes introduced after the apartheid regime. The DALRRD mapped out a plan of action to identify land for agriculture. However, countless challenges encountered during the implementation phase created more obstacles to livelihood attainment.

Neves (2017:16) states that although agriculture holds an important place in the country, there is a decline in the production of agricultural commodities despite various land reform programmes aimed at ameliorating the living conditions of impoverished rural dwellers, thus making them victims of food insufficiency. This motivates rural-urban migration. Aliber (2019:9-10) further points out that the absence of secondary data means that there is little guidance about people's land needs. He further proposes a more inclusive approach to land allocation with the municipalities playing a key role, given their proximity to the people.

Lahiff (2020:43) and Aliber (2019:9-10) indicate that land reform programmes ought to implement exactly what they intended to implement. In this regard, the redistribution of land should incorporate the livelihoods and social details of land use. In debating land use and livelihood, Hebinck, Mtati and Shackleton (2018:323-334) state that people's land needs, which go beyond the agricultural use, mould their livelihoods. Thus, sustainable livelihood security implies, people will have to own assets. Unfortunately, many Black farmers in South Africa and the case study in particular are yet to become rightful landowners. This is contrary to the above assertion and amongst the many reasons for the unsuccessful land reform implementation.

3.2.1.1 Land, livelihood, and gender

Although the focus of the study was not primarily on gender, it features whenever issues of property rights, benefits and risks at the farm level are analysed. The dynamics of landownership and livelihood resources for security are deeply gendered, however, the RECAP's resources were equitably distributed amongst all who qualified in the two research sites.

According to Shackleton (2020:1-10), the main victims of the loss of land, especially communal land, are women and children since they often become homeless and insecure. In addition, Born, Sillane and Murray (2019:409-423) and Sulle, Mbaya, Codispoti, Atananga, Moseti and Mugehera (2019) further claim that the restricted land access and command over resources arise from historical issues and gender biases. As a result, Reddy (2020:1-21) states that women's inability to access land and resources is a major hindrance to their empowerment, and that land reform should enable women to own land for structural changes in their lives. Moussié and Alfer (2018:119-131) indicate that to strengthen the empowerment of women for sustainable livelihoods, a thorough understanding of their situations is important. In this regard, Jaga, Arabandi, Bagraim and Mdlongwa (2018:429-444) mention that women and children are major suppliers of abundant cheap labour and commodities from internal markets. Therefore, securing decent livelihoods requires land, better incomes, and householders' abilities to cope with vulnerability.

Neveling (2019:183) recalls that the South African labour history was the first that made the “myth of the male breadwinner” dominate gender relations. Discrimination led to the devaluation of women’s labour. As a result, Tischler (2019:134) notes that commercial farming was racialised as Black peasants were forced to work on White farms. Therefore, the land restitution and land reforms introduced after 1994 are yet to deliver any substantial changes. Although everything is mapped out theoretically in the Constitution (South Africa 1996), considerable efforts need to be made for the implementation process to be successful. The failure of the regime to meet the expectations of Blacks anticipating improvements in their lives can incite worse crises.

3.2.2 How land reform contributes towards livelihoods

A target of South African land reforms was to establish procedures capable of increasing agricultural production among a sample of native farmers engaged in modest commerce by providing better irrigation. Chikozho, Makombe and Milondzo (2019:13-19) state that this has been difficult to accomplish with the consequence that land redistribution policies have contributed little towards improving the livelihoods of the recipients. To address the role of the government and beneficiaries in the success or failure of these policies, Handley (2016:61-62) asks a challenging political-economy question using a Latin phrase “*Cui bono*?” which means *who stands to gain, who benefits*? In relation to land, she indicates that 20 years into the country’s democratic era, identifiable groups have benefited disproportionately from the post-apartheid dispensation deliberately structured to benefit the privileged elite at the expense of the poor.

Greenberg (2019:148) remarks that *Tenure and Land Reform* (Labour Tenants) *Acts*, both passed in 1996 (South Africa, 1996a), sought to secure tenure and land rights for farm dwellers on commercial farms. Nonetheless, farmers exploited ambiguities in the laws to sack workers on functional grounds, while disregarding the role of secured livelihoods in fighting poverty. Permanent land-holding rights were only granted after a long period on the job. Brooks (2020:165-218) comments that combined with global competition, such laws facilitated preventive evictions,

the demolition of farmers' living quarters, and an exodus of the occupants to increasingly populated "informal" settlements near cities and along some transport corridors. The movement triggered insecurity among dwellers in and around informal areas and technically, this increased the level of unemployment and food scarcity, thereby affecting the livelihoods of the inhabitants. Williams and Satgar (2020:265-278) and Handley (2016:61-62) mention that democracy could have created a more accountable state better able to alleviate poverty, reduce inequality, generate growth, and improve the living standard of Blacks.

Bourblanc and Anseeuw (2019:191-207), Mtshiselwa (2015:27) and Aliber (2019:9-10) indicate that when the *Settlement and Land Acquisition Grant* (SLAG) ended, some of its objectives were yet to be fulfilled as it had focused on resettlement but not economic development. Consequently, SLAG stalled without achieving its livelihood objectives. In 2001, the *Land Redistribution and Agricultural Development Policy* (LRAD) replaced it (Bourblanc & Anseeuw 2019:191-207). The design of the LRAD explicitly allowed for the implementation of a wide variety of redistribution projects and increased the amount of money given to beneficiaries. It also switched the qualification of beneficiaries from households to individuals. Anseeuw *et al* (2015:35-36) and Hall (2014:45) highlight that this meant that two individuals from the same household could receive their grants and apply for the same plot of land, thereby increasing the financial security of their project. However, the LRAD's objective to create a class of Black farmers and increase livelihoods failed, since many collected the funds but did not use them for the intended outcomes. This further hindered individual households' abilities to access significant assets and services.

Newton (2017) and Erasmus (2017:4) indicate that shortly after the LRAD, the *Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme* (CASP) was launched to offer a support package to qualifying beneficiaries among whom were the hungry and vulnerable. Although previous land reform programmes were yet to produce a final outcome, in October 2007, the government introduced the *Land and Agrarian Reform Project* (LARP) (Markowski-Lindsay *et al* 2020:59-69). LARP aimed to create agricultural villages, settle villagers in hubs around agricultural towns, and develop some amenities around these areas, such as schools, hospitals, and

houses. These interventions never materialised. The lingering issues are that such land reform measures were all market-based and resulted in the acquisition of isolated pieces of land, all without adequate support, and the application of a top-down consultation in business plans. As a result, the poor became more vulnerable, and the increasing insecurity affected people's livelihoods.

Inadequate support, poor communication and confused lines of responsibility have all contributed to the failure of land reform measures. Despite this failure, Hull *et al* (2019:172) notes that 50% of people who were given access to land are farming and many feel that their lives have improved as a result, but Crosby (2015:40) highlights that very few of the farms transferred to previously disadvantaged beneficiaries are still operational. Government policies affect livelihood outcomes, which in turn, influence the use of land and access to assets. Furthermore, Gwandure and Mayekiso (2018:489-490) opine that "new" commercial farmers face unanticipated losses due to climate change and the prevailing economic policy of land expropriation without compensation that hinders the minority White farmers from sharing their expertise.

In 2010, the *Pro-Active Land Acquisition Strategy* (PLAS) (South Africa, DRDLR, 2015:15) was implemented, and the government launched yet another programme known as the *Recapitalisation and Development Programme* (RDP: also known as RECAP) (South Africa, DRDLR, 2019:68) to support the beneficiaries of land reform processes who had received little or no support from the government since 1994 (South Africa, Dept. of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, 2016:1). The RECAP's foundational document states clearly that it is aimed at distressed farms (The University of Pretoria Business Enterprises, 2013:2). Such farms could have come to their beneficiaries through any of the land reform programmes (Moyo *et al* 2014:68).

One cannot discuss the issue of land reform without raising the question of Land Expropriation Without Compensation (LEWC) since 2012. It could be reasoned here that the reforms did not do much to ameliorate the living standards of Blacks. In this regard, Kwarteng and Botchway (2019:98) explain that the state abused its power by unlawful seizure of properties without following due process or paying

the right compensation. Moolman (2020:33) indicates that there was a lack of prioritisation against the background of the current discourse regarding land in the country and a clear-cut expression of the Constitutional Court's sentiments on land reform. Mtero and Hall (2020) and Viljoen (2020) affirm that the government seemingly "cooked up" a politically motivated idea of expropriation without compensation which hindered RECAP from achieving its objectives, since the minority Whites were those with the farms, financial resources, the expertise and constituted the bulk of employers.

Vorster (2019:1-2) and Clark (2019:10-11) highlight that a policy of the White minority government triggered a White monopoly on farming and land ownership twenty years post that era. In this regard, Kaunda and Kaunda (2019:89-99) state that the argument of the supporters of reform was strong, considering that the land was seized with no recompense. Therefore, it should be given back to the Black majority now living in poverty. However, the government did not allocate any land-reform budgetary increase for this purpose. In other words, Moolman (2020:33) indicates that there was no budget allocation to implement such a project. Notwithstanding all the confusion, Kwarteng and Botchway (2019:98) and Mtero and Hall (2020) further allege that the complicated politics within the ANC as well as fierce opposition from the left, influenced the government to accept the "land expropriation without compensation" approach as a suitable land reform policy.

Despite the challenges associated with executing land reform schemes for healthier livelihoods, Fransman and Yu (2019:50-79) and Heydinger (2020:91-108) note that the government is making a greater effort than ever to achieve its objectives. As a result, Koot and Büscher (2019: 357-374) and Venter (2020:11-13) state that while restitution compensates for past wrongs and helps establish a place-based identity, it is no panacea to addressing historical discrimination and present-day subjugation. Venter (2020:11-13) further adds that the government has settled 80 664 claims, satisfying 2,1 million beneficiaries at a cost of R40 billion, some have been awarded financial compensation, and has restituted 3,5 million hectares of land for agriculture and that can benefit the economy. Of these claims, 160 463 originated from female-headed households (Venter, 2020).

3.3 RECAP AND HUMAN SECURITY

The human security framework informs this study. Human security cannot accomplish its full aptitude without incorporating sustainability. 'Sustainable livelihood' is a unifying concept according to Neves (2017:35-40) who argues that the quest to maintain a livelihood binds people to their land and communities. Furthermore, it also improves health and enables better resource management for widespread gains.

3.3.1 Human security theory

The United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security and the Commission on Human Security (CHS) define human security as *"*…to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfilment" (United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security 2009:6-9). Cao and Wyatt (2016:413-430) further define human security as defending the natural rights of individuals from harmful and extensive situations and painful disturbances that affect daily routines. Oscar *et al* (2013) indicate that some factors are necessary to sustain efficiently implemented human security policies, notably, by creating political, social, environmental, economic, military, and cultural systems that together, give the subjects the building blocks of survival, livelihood, and dignity. Chirisa *et al* (2019:283-286) support this definition by adding that security is an articulated assemblage of practice, whereby policy tools are mobilised contextually.

Breslin and Christou (2015:1-10) hold that human security is consciously protective by virtue of recognising that individuals and communities face deadly challenges from economic crises, violence, communicable infections, and development schemes that, rather than aiding land and poverty reduction attempts, compound the situation by triggering pollution, water scarcity and debilitating poverty. This should be seen against a comprehensive understanding of human security as concerns about human rights developing mainly within the framework of tenure administration. As a result, Waisova (2019:75-99) notes that "land issues" that affect human rights could be superior to instructions of governance of tenure affairs. Adaopoulos and Restuccia (2020:1-39) further add that good land

governance and land use planning should be aimed at empowering people as stated by the RECAP's objectives. In this regard, Dassah (2018:137-145) argues that for any meaningful empowerment to take place in the lives of people, there must be some opportunity structures conducive to allow individuals to transform their land into effective productive land.

The CHS affirms this by stating that land tenure and land administration are multifaceted and depend on several national and circumstantial elements pertaining to numerous, yet contradictory laws, regulations, customs, and insights (United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security. 2009:6-9). In other words, the ways people gain access to land, utilise, manage, and pass it on not, only appear as forms of empowerment to address political and economic exclusion, but are relevant in valuing, defending, and fulfilling human rights. In this regard, De Haan (2017:22-38) and Jarvis (2019:107-126) highlight that empowerment was at the core of the initial livelihood and security studies and land, therefore, whether legal or customary, it is regarded among the people as a source of security.

Scoones and Murimbarimba (2020) add that land plays a key role in remote areas as a major form of natural capital for generating income, although it faces serious environmental, and reform challenges. Therefore, land is the most critical asset for the poverty-stricken people. In this regard, the equitable distribution of land emerges as a crucial factor in the campaign for ensuring the rights of individuals and their livelihoods. Solly *et al* (2020:1257) state that the equitable distribution of land is required for human security and sustainability. This is still work in progress as most land in South Africa and in the two research sites in particular are government-owned, and most of the farmers are on lease agreements.

On this note, Didarali and Gambiza (2019:2219) further add that sustainable development can never be achieved unless interests of the poor are prioritised; only then would the livelihoods of the poor be ensured to combat impoverishment. Chirisa *et al* (2019:283-286), Ibrahim *et al* (2018:157-161) and Gumede and Ehiane (2022:1-10) link poverty and livelihoods and state that the neoliberal discourse postulates that poverty and inappropriate practices of land and policy implementation are threats to the livelihood of the poor. As a result, livelihood

security (needs, interests, and priorities), both short and long-term, for the poor should be objectives for development and are essential in communities experiencing countless ever-changing procedures in land reform. Edga (2018:93-110) and Bond (2015:411-413), in debating land and livelihood, note that colonialism crushed land use patterns in South Africa, and the high population density in small areas put pressure on these areas and created an environment characterised by human insecurity.

Land reform and redistribution began to pick up steam following independence. Gyapong (2020:150-155) illustrates that despite their willingness to provide livelihoods, reduce poverty levels and modernise rural areas, the country's initiatives to reform the land policies have experienced difficulties in meeting their goals, for such programmes have been drawn up and executed independently from related programmes, and they have not been aligned with the general roadmap for rural development. As a result, De Haan (2017:22-38) and ILO (2014:162) add that impotence, marginalisation, and imbalanced asset allocation among the poor, constituted aspects of the broader concerns of people-centred, bottom-up methods to tackle the livelihood difficulties of the poor.

As a people-centred concept, Waisova (2019:75-99) notes that 'human security' views the person as being at the "centre of analysis." It, therefore, looks at wide-ranging circumstances that affect the means of surviving and earning a living negatively as well as the dignity of people, and identifies the point at which, if exceeded, at which human life becomes unbearable. This research emphasises people-centred development because the RECAP focuses on improving the livelihoods of Black people and empowering them. Empowerment implies a "bottom up" approach. Homsy, Liu and Warner (2019:572-582) note that empowering people permits them to build and exploit their abilities fully and to take part in seeking solutions to ensure the survival of those in the community, including themselves. Against a human security perspective, Dutta and Thaker (2020) state that empowering people with regard to land and its use for livelihoods foregrounds the role of institutions and human actors in interaction and context. Gjørv (2018:221-226) further adds that the view of development does not have a singular focus on instrumental goals but on human development and human rights.

These theoretical tenets complement the RECAP's goal of enhancing the livelihood security of Blacks because of the emphasis on protecting a limited vital group of human activities and abilities. Cassotta *et al* (2016:71-91) and Devereux (2018:184) state that the view to empowering black people to take control of their own affairs after a century of land dispossession, which created issues of inequality, unemployment, illiteracy and endemic poverty in black communities, particularly predisposed Blacks to become especially vulnerable to livelihood shocks and uncertainty. Waisova (2019:76-78) indicates that human security has interested the academia and lawmakers, resulting in heated discussions about its scope, the threats to be addressed, its transformation into policy, and implementation. Ultimately, the overriding objective of the RECAP is to spotlight the ignored problems and enact policy to empower Blacks.

3.3.2 Human security and welfare

Cousins, Borras jr, Sauer and Ye (2018:1060-1085) state that welfare policies are programmes geared towards assisting the poor, unemployed and the marginalised in society. These include, but are not limited to healthcare, empowerment, and housing, as articulated by the RECAP programme. USAID states that the possession of land is vital in shaping the revenue and opportunities available to a household and could pave the way for better ways of earning a living, autonomy, and well-being (Women's land rights and women's economic empowerment: 2021). The government of South Africa further suggests that giving land to the rural poor is a major source of empowerment, and land remains a central pillar of welfare (South African History Online: 2019).

As mentioned earlier, gender was not the main focus of this study, but given the percentage of women who are beneficiaries of the RECAP in the two research sites, the researcher was compelled to comment on their role in land ownership, as the RECAP programme was fair and impartial in its award to the beneficiaries. Anderson *et al* (2021:193-208) add that historically, women have been marginalised when it comes to owning land and their land rights are either relegated to their husbands or adult sons. For most women in the two research

sites, land is used to secure a livelihood for their families and to develop their communities. Sharaunga, Mudhara and Bogale (2019:1-25) suggest that larger proportions of women have access to land and are contributing to the farming value chains.

Scully and Jawad (2019:553) indicate that colonial authorities first introduced welfare in an attempt to improve the living conditions and, hence, counteract the increasing demands for political change. De Simone (2020:168-183) further adds that after this visionary start by the colonial authorities to cater for the welfare of the locals, efforts were made to consider human security in policies. The concept was thus incorporated in the discussions linking development and security. Thow, Greenberg, Hara, Friel, Du Toit and Sanders (2018:1105-1130), in debating welfare policy and security, note that social policies aimed to provide security to vulnerable peasants. However, the policy objectives articulated in economic growth have created tension within government's plans for overall economic development. Scully and Jawad (2019:556) further add that the anti-social policy of colonial authorities was aimed at reducing the security of the peasants, including the restriction of land ownership and the subsidisation of White capitalist farmers. The move compromised black farmers' abilities. Where efforts were made to protect black farmers, they involved forms of violence and life-threatening conditions.

Milhorance (2020:36-52) notes that the eventual emergence of social welfare for Blacks became a widespread political issue. He adds that policies aimed at restricting access to land led to consequences and a decline in rural incomes, undermining the ability of rural households to gain a livelihood. Schwalbe, Relly, Cruikshank and Schwalbe (2019:1920-1930) state that with the shift in policies, the human security framework identified a greater need for security purposes, which had previously been overlooked. Olson (2019:445-464) and De Simone (2020:168-183) add that the extensive human security essentials justified the feminist scholars' argument that security debates were too focused on body counts and bags from military conflicts rather than everyday experiences capable of destroying people's ability to survive, earn and lead dignified lives. Because human security concentrates on the vulnerable aspects of humanity, in particular, this indicates

that the applicability of human security was narrow. Dorlach (2021:767-783) further alleges that the issues of human security urged the colonial states to recognise their obligation to provide livelihood security.

Tillin and Duckett (2017:253-277) state that the post-apartheid government has given prominence to social policies around land reallocation and strengthening human competencies, since no other issue distressed Black South Africans as much in terms of welfare. In this regard, Adebayo (2019:147-162) notes that the government has tried to address some of the injustices suffered by Blacks in the past, including land-related issues. Kuokkane and Sweet (2020:89-90) mention that after several “failed’” attempts to execute land reforms, which did not take the welfare of Blacks into consideration, the government chose to implement land expropriation, which could not resolve the insecurity of Blacks because of the shortfall in finance and the lack of skills necessary for commercial farming.

Chimhowu (2019:897-903) argues that the government’s willingness to carry out joint land reform schemes intended to address the historical wrongs, reallocate wealth and accelerate economic development was jeopardised by part of the population being angered by the slow rate of the policy implementation, the failure to transform the acquired land to successful farming enterprises, and a top-down managerial style which ignored the human security aspects of Blacks. In this regard, Olson (2019:445-464) and Müller (2019:1609-1631) note that this method of empowerment has created unstable relationships and even division between people of different social classes and races as witnessed today in the South African society. At the same time, Akinola (2020b:1-2) acknowledges that it is the government's responsibility to “*bring all people into the economic mainstream*” of a secured livelihood. Strategically, Blacks who are the masses and represent the main targets of land reforms have been excluded from policy actions, and very few have profited significantly from land redistribution, despite the intended objective of the RECAP. Consequently, the issues pertaining to the security of the livelihoods of Blacks have motivated many critics worldwide to question the South African land reform programmes.

3.3.3 The human security theory of comparative justification

The human security approach is a framework for understanding and addressing the multiple and interconnected threats that individuals and communities face. In recent years, contemporary scholars like Cousins and Walker (2015) have escalated the debate in human security to include issues related to human rights, social justice, and empowerment. Such a broadened understanding of human security encourages a holistic view of assets and resources that can help communities thrive and survive. In particular, the livelihood framework posited by Bvuma and Marnewick (2020:3149) considers five major areas of sustainable livelihoods, namely human, social, financial, physical, and natural. This merges with an agrarian political economy view that foregrounds unequal power relations and their structural dynamics (Bunce 2020:328; & Shivji 2023:108-119).

The three notions, namely livelihood (defined as adequate stocks and flows of resources and cash to meet basic needs), security (defined as ownership of, and access to resources and income-earning activities, including reserves and assets to offset risk, ease shocks and meet contingencies0, and sustainability (defined as the maintenance or enhancement of resource productivity on a long-term basis) combine in a human security perspective. For example, a household may be enabled to gain sustainable livelihood security in many ways-through ownership of land, livestock, rights to grazing, fishing, hunting, or gathering; through stable employment with adequate remuneration; or through varied repertoires of activities. This makes the human security framework an ideal theoretical foundation for the study because the RECAP programme granted access and ownership of land to farmers.

In this study, the human security approach enabled the researcher to examine how farmers use their RECAP resources and strategies to increase their livelihood opportunities. In particular, the interconnection between farmers' livelihood formation, and operational empowerment as implicit in the objectives of the RECAP can be evaluated from a human security vantage point to gain a comprehensive understanding of farmers' concerns.

The purpose of the human security approach in this study is to identify barriers faced by farmers. Moreover, human security in these terms relates to governance of tenure (Waisova 2019:75-99) and good land governance and land use planning, which should be aimed at empowering people as stated by the RECAP's objectives.

3.4 CRITIQUES OF THE LAND REFORM APPROACH OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT

The government envisaged a land reform policy capable of bringing about reconciliation, security, growth, and economic advancement, achieved justly and sustainably (Kepe & Hall 2016:27). This, however, is a reality still to be realised as the country's land redistribution programmes have a long list of predictable failings that have been apparent from the beginning up to the present time. As a result, Fernandez (2020:23-68) states that land reform programmes were chronically underfunded from the beginning. Piotrowski (2019:1-20) and Soper (2020:265-285) adds that the use of a market-based approach in land acquisitions, specifically the "willing buyer-willing seller" approach was problematic. This approach itself shows that the process relies on the willingness of White farmers to sell land and the government's willingness to buy it. Aliber (2013: 4) observes that in such a situation, it becomes the seller's market since the seller holds all the cards.

Spierenburg (2020:280-299) blames the slow progress of land reform since the end of apartheid on this approach, as it the problematic face of the "property clause". As a result, Du Plessis (2017:32-33) argues that this approach predominantly privileged White farms owner over the voiceless and has slowed down land transfers considerably as neither Blacks nor the government are financially capable of carrying out such a project of land acquisitions. Cousins and Walker (2015:15) and Aliber (2013:5) raise the fact that land reform has never been a priority since 1994, considering its allocated budget has been less than 2% of the total budget.

The "willing-buyer willing-seller" approach compounds the financial challenges to acquiring land on the open market, as suggested by the World Bank. Roman and

Ruiters (2020), in debating the financial inefficiency and the bureaucratic nature of the abovementioned voluntary buying and selling approach, admit it has been a key factor in hindering land reform. The South Africa Parliamentary Monitoring Group (PMG) (2017:1) states that the only group that believes that the voluntary buying and selling approach to land acquisition must be maintained is Agriculture South Africa (AgriSA), an association of predominantly White commercial farmers who still dominate the major supermarket and export supply chains.

As a result of this voluntary approach, Mahule (2015:12) adds that historically disadvantaged individuals are most affected by the non-fulfilment of land reform programme objectives. Akinola (2020b:1-2) state that land redistribution was aimed at instituting legal channels for land to be claimed through restitution. However, the market-based "willing-buyer willing-seller" approach is further constrained by provisions of the Constitution's Section 25 (5) (South Africa, 1996) which require the state to implement land reform within its available resources. The Office of the Land Valuer-General (OVG 2018:1) further posits that if the market-based approach is maintained for land distribution, it will take South Africa more than a century to achieve its objectives at the current pace.

Another obstacle in land redistribution is determining the quantity of land being reallocated in comparison to the financial compensation paid for historical injustices. Mudau, Mukonza and Ntshangase (2019:69-90) and Davis (2019:217-231) indicate that most claims lodged are not for land redistribution, but cash compensation. This poses a problem since the government cannot afford cash compensation for all claims. As a result, Timperley (2020:1-23) notes that instead of addressing historical injustices, most claims coming from city dwellers have sought monetary compensation rather than land. Again, there is still a high level of social stratification caused by the land reform issue. In this regard, Dhiaulhag and McCarthy (2020:34-54) add that the end of apartheid did not end racial divisiveness, and that, irrespective of its origins, it remains a core factor in contemporary debates on land reform.

Racial tension among individual groups resulting from land reform is undeniable, and according to Dugard (2019:135-160), such issues continued after the collapse

of apartheid. This raises the silent question regarding how the nation can deal with this racial divide. Despite the ANC's revisions of its past, its strategy is still based on national democracy. Lodge (2019:287-299) and Vorster (2019:1-2) argue that the party theorists in the 1950s conceptualised national democracy, and it should not be pitted against the market-based approach. They further say that while land as a commodity concept recognises land redistribution and deracialising of commercial agriculture, its supporters tend to disregard land reform as a rapid solution to destitution in rural areas. This also poses a dramatic problem as RECAP's aim to create commercial Black farmers is yet to materialise. In all, Langford (2019:1), and Scoones *et al* (2013) state that significant funding has gone into the agrarian land and agrobusinesses over the last two decades. Gunnoe (2014:478-504) further adds that this, to an extent, has decreased the government's control over the food supply chain.

3.5 CONCLUSION

Introduced in the colonial era, racial segregation and exploitation in South Africa became a part of the state policy of apartheid under the National Party from 1948 to 1994. Following the 1990s transition to democracy, the government adopted settlement policies on a progressive framework aimed at realising the socio-economic rights of citizens in the constitution. However, this political settlement has yet to translate into an economic and social settlement that results in just livelihoods, human security strategies and equitable service delivery that address historical grievances.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher discusses the methodology used in this study. The purpose of this study was to describe and analyse the way in which the RECAP has been implemented in Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni. To this end, the researcher investigated:

- Who qualified for the RECAP in Gert Sibanda and Ehlanzeni and what kind of support was offered officially to those who qualified.
- What kind of government policies and agricultural post-settlement support programmes are available to Black landowners in Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni and whether these provide the kind of help they need and receive.
- What role did the RECAP play in enhancing the livelihood security of the beneficiaries and community as a whole?
- From the perspective of the beneficiaries, the viability of the RECAP in developing Black commercial farmers in Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni.

In the second chapter, the researcher outlined how multiple factors that influence human security tend to converge on a need to acquire land as a means of secured livelihood. Jarvis (2019:107-126) states that although there exists a long history of initiatives designed to prioritise the protection of people within the international system, the notion of a “human security” came to prominence following the 1994 publication of the United Nations Development Report (UNDP). This conceptualised the term “human security as “freedom from fear and want” (UNDP 1994:24) and subsequently constituted a crucial point in foreign policy discourse (Newman 2016:2). Browning and McDonald (2013:243-44) indicate that some critiques of the human security framework postulate that the success offers troubling proof of its inability to co-opt traditional security frameworks. In other words, human security may be sufficiently malleable to legitimise greater state control over some resources, for the case of this study, beneficiaries of the RECAP, or land redistribution, in the name of protecting economic and other human security

issues. The data collection for this study was thus done with the human security model in mind.

As stated in Chapter 1, the researcher decided to adopt a qualitative approach to answer the research question, the main and specific research objectives, alongside data collected (specifically the themes explored) based on the human security model as described in Chapter 3.

A qualitative approach was chosen because while data may be available on the successive implementation of land reform policies nationwide, not much is known about the successive implementation of the RECAP policy in the Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni districts of the Mpumalanga Province. Furthermore, there is no clear understanding of how many successful Black farmers have moved from being small-scale farmers to commercial farmers, or whether their agricultural production has increased, as well as how the prospects of creating employment for others have been achieved as an outcome of these interventions.

4.2 REFLECTING ON A QUALITATIVE TELEPHONE APPROACH

Before describing the research design, the researcher pauses to reflect on the reasons for using telephonic interviews in this study. As a research tool, interviews have long been the dominant technique in the field of qualitative research. Farooq (2015:3) states that traditionally, qualitative research interviews are conducted on a face-to-face basis. He indicates that scholars have argued that this “natural encounter” is necessary for the interviewer to build and maintain a rapport with interviewees. This creates a relaxed and friendly environment for the interview that is critical in stimulating interviewees to speak freely and openly about the topic at hand. Leavy (2017:7) mentions that qualitative research is sometimes described as naturalistic because it aims to understand and explain behaviour in a natural setting and that researchers do not control or contaminate or bias the research setting. Ludidi (2015:133) indicates that the setting in qualitative research is a naturally occurring event and the interaction between the researcher and the participants does not have a pre-determined course established by the researcher.

The researcher decided to use telephonic interviews when applying for the ethical clearance for this study because social distancing measures were in place to protect all stakeholders in the research process from possible infections with the COVID-19 virus. Although these social distancing measures were repealed in 2022, the researcher implemented her agreed-upon data collection strategy (for the purposes of ethical clearance) and decided not to apply for a change to face-to-face interviews because, at that juncture, she had already made preliminary arrangements and collected some data with the telephone interviews. In addition to the telephone interviews, the researcher did extensive review of the literature with the relevant stakeholders, computer-based and internet-transmitted material were used.

Because of this choice in favour of telephone interviews, some of the contextual and naturalistic strengths of the qualitative interview, as mentioned above, had to be forfeited (Pell *et al* 2020:1-11). In this light, the researcher used the strength of the natural encounter to build the interviewees' confidence and to ensure that they were relaxed and speak freely. Therefore, the researcher did not delve directly into the research questions, rather, the researcher asked some introductory questions to ensure that the interviewees were in a position to talk freely. For example, the research would start a conversation as follows:

Res: Hello Ma'am/Sir (given the interviewee's identity). How are you today?
The response to this first question would determine if the researcher would carry on or postpone the interview session.
Interviewee: I'm good/well. How are you?
Response: I'm blessed. Thank you.

At this phase, the researcher would introduce herself and ask if the interviewee could spare a few moments for some research questions. If the answer was in the affirmative, the researcher would begin with the topic introduction, and briefly state the purpose of the research, and finally ask for clearance to start with the research questions. By that time, the researcher must have created a friendly environment for the interview (Mills 2019).

On the other hand, when the answer to the first salutation was negative, the research tried to adjourn the session to a more convenient time when the interviewee would be more at ease. It should be noted that these interviewees are farmers, and they do not rely heavily on the telephone as part of their daily work as opposed to people who work at the call centres, as suggested by Farooq and de Villiers (2017:291-316). Thus, their experience and comfortability with the time spent on the telephone was taken into consideration as their mood on the telephone could be identified or detected from how they sounded. The informed research consent and respect for the rights of the interviewees was one of the established principles of the university and research ethics (Husband 2020:206). The centrality of the consent is that interviewees can give their views voluntarily with full information about what it means for them to take part in the research, and that they give permission before they can take part in the research, and there was no undue influence on the participants to consent to be interviewed. They were further made to understand what the research is and what they are consenting to.

Shekhar, Prince, Finelli, Demonbrun and Waters (2019:6-8) opine that qualitative research is concerned with making sense of human experience and meanings attached to the experience from the perspective of the participants themselves. This particular feature of the qualitative method could still be maintained in telephonic interviews, because it still allows for the subjective viewpoints of the research participants to be the starting point of the discussions and the analyses. According to Lim, Riggs, Shankumar, Marwaha and Kilpatrick (2018:320-328) the goal of such research is to elicit the experiences of specific situations and action sequences from the participants' world as opposed to offering generalised opinions. Taking these characteristics of qualitative interviewing into consideration, the researcher found that the telephone interviews allowed for interpersonal communication in the absence of face-to-face meetings and presented a cost-effective alternative given the unpredictable issues around COVID-19 that beset the world since 2019. Branney *et al* (2019: 483-503) illustrate that when both the researcher and the participants are familiar with the telephone as an instrument of communication, good rapport can be built. In addition, Branney, Reid, Frost, Coan, Mathieson and Woolhouse (2019:483-503) observe that a wide range of qualitative

studies have been conducted using telephone interviews in response to how communities adapt to change.

The strength of selecting a qualitative orientation for this study was that such an inquiry foregrounds the narratives of the research participants to determine how human experiences unfold in the social context in which they occur (Thomas 2017:23-41). Thus, the researcher aimed to determine how the participants assess the successful implementation of the RECAP programme, and the rich themes that were extracted from the transcripted interviews confirmed that the telephonic interviews, when conducted with great care and respect, enabled conversations about lived experience.

4.3 THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND INTERPRETIVISM AS A CHOSEN PARADIGM

4.3.1 Research design

A qualitative research design was used to answer the research question, and to meet the objectives of the study. Interviews were used to gain rich detailed understandings of the lived experiences of the participants. The interview data were triangulated with secondary sources from previous works. This design was useful because while data may be available on the successive implementation of land reform policies nationwide, not much is known about the successive implementation of the RECAP policy in the Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni districts of the Mpumalanga Province.

4.3.2 Document analysis

Documents analysed included articles and policy documents about the RECAP and land reform. The rationale for using document analysis design was to combine with the telephonic qualitative research method as a means of triangulation. This was to draw upon multiple sources of evidence, to seek convergence and corroboration through the use of different data sources and methods. By

triangulating data, the researcher attempted to provide '*a confluence of evidence that breeds credibility'* (Dzwigol 2020:1-8).

4.3.3 Interpretivism as a chosen paradigm

The researcher used a descriptive qualitative research design, and the methodology was based on an interpretivist paradigm, which foregrounds people's framing of their lived experiences and the world around them (Rhodes, 2019:12). This is particularly important with respect to the fieldwork underpinning the research, namely, the farm-level case studies in which there are a multiplicity of subjects engaged in the redistribution process. The interpretivist approach was suitable in addressing the main research objective, which seeks to understand policy implementation from the perspective of the various relevant stakeholders involved in these processes (state officials, civil society groups and resettled farmers) (Flick 2014) and the complexities of farm-level experiences and interactions.

Alharahsheh and Pius (2020:39-43) state that interpretivism has to do with wanting to develop deep and textured insight into interconnected factors that create different human experiences, and that from such experiences, people make meanings, with such meaning-making being the focus, because interpretivism argues that human beings cannot be investigated in a way similar to the physical sciences. In this regard, interpretivism examines divergent incidents that lead to the development of different understandings and experiences of social realities. Based on such an understanding of interpretivism, the researcher assumed that the research participants were experts in providing specific interpretations of their state of affairs. As a result, the data gathered and analysed were not directed at gauging generalised trends, but instead on representing situated viewpoints (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2019).

The interpretivist paradigm guided the researcher and her assistants in their search to uncover the factors influencing progress in the case study areas through the collection and interpretation of the qualitative data. As a result, the researcher reviewed different factors, such as behavioural aspects based on participants'

experiences, and their description of reality based on their assumptions and beliefs. In addition, the interpretivist paradigm also underpinned the research to be more focused on the specific topic (Groh 2018:1-47).

Gunbayi (2020:44-56) states that the interpretivist paradigm has features that guide research such as:

- Focussing on the whole experience rather than considering only certain parts of it. Although the researcher analysed the process of the RECAP as separate themes in the next chapter, she was able to plot out the process via the themes and then deconstruct them.
- Exploring individual experiences through the interviews. The researcher asked for the opinions and attitudes of the interviewees in their own words and focused on their interpretations to share their meanings.
- Using probes and follow-up questions to explore the objectives of the study fully. The researcher examined the participants' views and asked for clarifications to create a new reality, given that understanding is always incomplete.

4.3.1 Interpretivist ontology

Alharahsheh and Pius (2020:39-43) define ontology as the nature of reality. Furthermore, ontology refers to the different assumptions regarding the actualities of the participants' environment (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019). These beliefs shape the way in which the researcher studied the participants' behaviour regarding the success or failure of their farm projects (Irshaidat 2022:126-160). In line with such an interpretivist ontology, the researcher endeavoured to understand the farmers' working lives and, to determine how it influences the implementation of the RECAP. The assumption was that the farmers' experiences of the RECAP gave them a unique perception of secured livelihoods. The researcher also adopted an interpretive ontology according to which, a single phenomenon may have multiple interpretations rather than a single truth. Such a multiplicity of meanings is determined by processes and contexts (Kankam 2019:85-92). In this

light, the researcher endeavoured to understand the diverse thoughts, views, feelings, and perspectives of the participants.

However, this paradigm presents a limitation as the results cannot be generalised to other people and contexts. This implies that the small sample and the contextual specificity of the case studies cannot be applied in inference to other land reform initiatives. Another criticism of interpretivism is that its ontology is subjective rather than objective (Irshaidat 2022:126-160). Here, the research outcome is affected by the researcher's own belief system (Kankam 2019:85-92).

Given the fact that the RECAP is concerned with the transformation of the Black farmers into commercial farmers, the farmers in the case studies areas are of prime importance. Hence their subjective views and personal interpretations are of crucial importance (Spurk, Hirschi & Dries 2019:35-69). Furthermore, the study focuses on the unique experience of each farmer as opposed to the facts and data to give meaning to the subjects, as the RECAP aimed to transform Black farmers' experiences into meaningful realities (Navalta, Stone & Lyons 2019:1-8).

4.3.2 Interpretivist epistemology

Saunders *et al* (2019) observe that epistemology has to do with assumptions about knowledge, specifically answering questions about what constitutes acceptable, valid, and legitimate knowledge, and how researchers can communicate knowledge to others without bias. Therefore, it is concerned with how a researcher aims to uncover knowledge to represent specific realities (Alharahsheh & Pius 2020:39-43). Following an interpretivist epistemology meant that the researcher was aware that the narratives and stories of participants had to be foregrounded as legitimate representations of their lived realities.

4.3.3 Interpretivist axiology

Irshaidat (2022) indicates that axiology refers to the role of values and ethics that make an individual aware of the consequences of their choices. It builds credibility, and respect for others' decisions. The researcher acted ethically and explained the

research process and objectives to the interviewees. Here, the researcher was careful and thoughtfully instructed the assistants on the significance of creating a trusting environment during the interview processes. Working as a team, the researcher and assistants reflected daily on the possible impact of their own values and beliefs on the data-gathering process. Consequently, the researcher had to decide how to deal with both the team's values and ethics, and those of the participants. In all instances, the research ideology was to write down our reflections on our own values as well as the choice of data collection techniques. For example, our approach to the research entailed giving a voice to the lived experiences of the farmers while allowing ourselves to gain deeper insight into the unique experiences of each farmer. This was done by paying close attention to the farmer's narratives during the telephone interviews.

The interactions between the interviewers and the participants allowed the team to immerse themselves in the participants' narrations when asked about their farming history, the RECAP experience, current farm productivity, and post-settlement support. Here, the focus was on their experiences and, how they make meaning out of those experiences (Ngozwana 2018:19-28). The team gathered thick, rich data, stories, and examples of how participants gave meaning to the research themes.

The information received from the participants was unexpected, in that what they described had not been anticipated by the researcher and her assistants. Specifically, many positive views were expressed on the RECAP, but issues were raised that caused concern. These are presented in the next chapter.

4.4 THE POPULATION AND SAMPLE

Non-probability sampling, in particular purposive sampling, was used for the study. It is important to note that non-probability sampling techniques are often used when it is not possible to delimit the population under study completely. In addition, qualitative approaches do not value statistical generalisation. Gentles, Charles, Ploeg and McKibbon (2015:1) highlight that purposive sampling may not allow for

statistical generalisation, but it still provides a strong basis for generating pertinent fieldwork evidence for a given research topic and objective.

In terms of purposive sampling, Lamm and Lamm (2019:1-8) state that the process of selecting relevant participants includes considering their specialist knowledge of the research topic and capacity or willingness to participate in the research. Moser and Korsten's (2018:11) state that purposive sampling involves selecting a sample "*on the basis of your own knowledge of the population, its elements, and the nature of your research aims."* Bacher, Lemcke, Quatember and Schmich (2019:1-6) illustrate that alternatively, non-probability sampling is used when there is no reliable sampling frame. They indicate that qualitative researchers rarely determine the sample size in advance (Bacher *et al* 2019).

4.4.1 Sampling

The sample was drawn from the population of Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni in the Mpumalanga Province of South Africa. The first sampling step was the selection of the farms based mainly on their involvement with the RECAP. Five farms each were selected from the Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni Districts. Details of how these farms were selected, are discussed below under purposive sampling in section 4.4.2.

The second step was selecting participants from the farms identified. The research participants were those associated with the selected farms and who were familiar with the study site. They were beneficiaries of the RECAP and were drawn from a list obtained from the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD). Although this list can be roughly construed as a sampling frame that could have enabled probability sampling, the researcher was aware that the list was not complete or updated. The list was hence just used as a starting place to identify possible data rich persons who might be eligible for purposive selection. The initial identification of possible research participants was done with the help of the Mpumalanga Department of Agriculture Land Reform and Rural Development. Once this first group was identified, they proposed others who fitted the criteria to be part of the study. Hence, a combination of purposive and snowball

sampling was used to increase the integration of these hard-to-reach populations (Bacher *et al* 2019:1-6). The snowball sampling was most helpful as most of the beneficiaries on the department's database had changed their telephone numbers and could not be reached.

Since the researcher was interested in those who were beneficiaries of the RECAP, purposive sampling was the most appropriate sampling tool to be added since it allowed the researcher to select participants who fitted the defined criteria (Abbas & Eksandy, 2020:1-13). Parker, Scott and Geddes (2020) and Naderifar, Goli and Ghaljaie (2017:1-4) state that snowball sampling offers the advantage of having a high-quality sample as participants who have already been interviewed, identify other people who fit the selection criteria. Snowball sampling worked well in this study as it became clear that without it, some of the participants would not have been identified.

Mills (2019) advises that the golden standard, as far as numbers of participants in a qualitative study are concerned, the researcher should continue selecting data rich individual until the criteria for redundancy or saturation are reached. The theory of data saturation in research methods, also described as information redundancy, is the point in the research process when no added information is discovered in data collection and/ or analysis, and this redundancy signals to researchers that data collection may cease (Braun & Clarke 2021:201-216).

Because all interviews were transcribed immediately, the researcher and her assistants could locate the process of saturation principally at the level of data collection. Hence, the researcher and her assistants concluded that after thirty interviews, no further details had emerged with regard to the themes and subthemes. The table below gives a snapshot of the study participants.

TABLE 4.1 DETAILS ON THE REALISED SAMPLE

No	Pseudonym	Gender	Education	Employment status: Works/Farms	Agricultural training/District
1	Mr W	M	Standard 7	Small-scale farming	Yes. EH
2	Ms P	F	Grade 12	Small-scale farming	Yes. EH
3	Ms B	F	N2 biz Mgt	Small-scale farming	Yes. EH
4	Mr L	M	Form 1	Small-scale farming	Yes.EH
5	Mr LL	M	Matric	Small-scale farming	No. EH
6	Ms Z	F	Standard 9	Small-scale farming and Community worker	Yes. EH
7	Mr A	M	Standard 10	Small-scale farming and Community worker	Yes. EH
8	Ms A	F	Standard 4	Small-scale farming	Yes. EH
9	Mr S	M	Standard 8	Small-scale farming	Yes. EH
10	Mr Sh	M	Standard 8	Small-scale farming	Yes. EH
11	Mr W	M	Matric	Small-scale farming	No. EH
12	Ms R	F	Diploma	Small-scale farming	No. EH
13	Mr S	M	Certificate	Small-scale farming	Yes. EH
14	Ms T	F	Matric	Small-scale farming	Yes. EH
15	Mr K	M	Standard 9	Small-scale farming	No. GS
16	Mr M	M	Standard 10	Small-scale farming	Yes. GS
17	Ms K	F	Standard 5	Small-scale farming	Yes. GS
18	Mr D	M	Tertiary level	Small-scale farming	Yes. GS
19	Ms M	F	Standard 6	Small-scale farming	Yes.GS
20	Mr M	M	Matric	Small-scale farming	No. GS
21	Mr Mb	M	Matric	Small-scale farming	No. GS
22	Mr S	M	Standard 2	Small-scale farming	Yes. GS

No	Pseudonym	Gender	Education	Employment status: Works/Farms	Agricultural training/District
23	Mr Mn	M	N6	Small-scale farming	Yes. GS
24	Mr Ts	M	Standard 5	Small-scale farming	No. GS
25	Ms J	F	Diploma	Small-scale farming	Yes. EH
26	Mr Mt	M	Degree	Small-scale farming	Yes. GS
27	Ms Sy	F	Matric	Small-scale farming	Yes.GS
28	Mr Ng	M	Form 3	Small-scale farming	Yes. GS
29	Ms My	F	Standard 10	Small-scale farming	Yes.GS
30	Ms Ma	F	Standard 8	Small-scale farming	Yes.GS

Source: Author, based on the field notes.

The above breakdown of the realised research sample indicates that the majority of the participants were male, the ratio being 18:12 for male: female. All the participants had some level of scholarly attainment, ranging from standard 2 to a PhD degree. The employment status shows that 28 participants were full-time farmers who operated on a small-scale level. One male and a female owned a farm, but also work as community workers. The above sample illustrates that most participants from the Ehlanzeni (EH) and Gert Sibande (GS) Districts had agricultural training. Twelve farmers from EH had had agricultural training; while three farmers mentioned that they had not received any training. Likewise, 11 farmers in GS stated that they had received training, whereas four denied that they had received any training. Chapter five will present a detailed discussion in the bio-demographic section.

4.4.2 Purposive and snowball sampling

This research study utilised purposive and snowball sampling methods to identify the farms and the participants to take part in the study. This study followed what Esra (2020:688-699) relates to as purposive and snowball sampling under the classification of a non-probability sample. The sample comprised a feasible

number of farms, five each from each case study area, and three participants each per farm in each case study area, who would be part of the research voluntarily within the timeframe that would allow for the generation of adequate data. The justification for selecting the purposive and snowball samples was to determine how the participants regarded, understood, and interpreted the RECAP objectives.

In this regard, the researcher chose the Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni Districts respectively simply because of their location and farming history. Given the fact that the Mpumalanga Province, to which the districts belong, was listed amongst the land reform beneficiaries in the country, added to the fact that subjective selection was done. Furthermore, the geographical location and its rural setting provided a good contrast with the city centre. The choice of the Mpumalanga Province was of special interest to the researcher since she is not a South African citizen and has never stayed in the province. Therefore, the element of bias in the study was eliminated. However, bureaucratic or “red tape” matters had to be addressed as a protocol before meeting the gatekeepers. This posed a considerable challenge as much time was wasted while waiting to be granted access.

The farms were selected from a list of the RECAP beneficiaries’ farms. The list was obtained from the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, (DALRRD) in Pretoria. This was followed by another list from the Mpumalanga Province. The purpose was to establish similarities between both lists. It is worth noting that there were some differences between the information about some of the beneficiaries on the list obtained from Pretoria and that from the province, and most of the contact details were mismatched. After acquiring both lists through email from these departments, the researcher and her assistants started calling the farm owners. This process was difficult, because in many cases, the phone numbers were incorrect. Hence, the researcher and her assistants called on the help of extension workers from the DALRRD to assist by giving them the new telephone numbers.

Another advantage of purposive sampling, as a suitable technique for identifying beneficiaries of the RECAP relevant to the study, was the fact that it permitted the

investigator to select research participants in accordance with the characteristics of the population and the objectives of the study, as this process depended on the researcher's judgement because of the knowledge of the study's context (Abbas & Eksandy, 2020:1-13). This was done to sieve out unrelated responses that did not fit into the research context.

Purposive sampling was thus found to be suitable because the researcher wanted to learn from the perspectives of the participants who lived in the two districts under investigation. There were two participants who were purposely selected because they were also community workers who interacted with the community daily. Both these research participants were also regarded by others as community leaders, hence they were already trusted by the farmers and functioned as gatekeepers, enablers, and referents for further interviewees.

4.4.3 Snowball sampling

One of the methods of sampling in qualitative research is snowball sampling, distinguished by networking and referral (Mawhinney & Rinke 2019:502-512). The researcher normally begins with a small number of initial contacts who fit the research criteria, and then asks them to recommend other contacts who fit the inclusion criteria and who potentially might also be willing to participate (Mawhinney & Rinke, 2019:502-512).

The researcher had to utilise this method at some point since some of the participants did not answer their phones. Secondly, some of the participants complained about the time constraints. Accordingly, the researcher and her assistants had to ask some participants to recommend other potential participants. The initial identification of possible research participants was done with the help of the Mpumalanga Department of Agriculture Land Reform and Rural Development. Once this first group was identified, they proposed other potential candidates for the study. Snowball sampling, a non-probability technique, served the purpose of increasing the inclusion of inaccessible populations (Bacher *et al* 2019:1-6). Snowball sampling was extremely helpful as most of the beneficiaries featured on

the department's database had changed their phone numbers and could not be reached.

4.4.4 The gatekeepers

Marland and Esselment (2019:685-702) make a case for working with gatekeepers by being sensitive to any power hierarchies in the study context. If a member of the upper strata does not grant permission for some information to be released, the researcher becomes stuck at that level, awaiting feedback. Therefore, Rapp, Moody and Stewart (2018:190-199) advise that the researcher must be mindful of the considerable power imbalances that may exist in a selected study site.

For this study, negotiating access proved to be a lengthy process, firstly due to the lockdown regulations and workers working from home. Obtaining clearance from the Department of Agriculture Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) was extremely slow, and considerable time was spent at this level since the researcher could not bypass this step. The researcher experienced considerable obstacles to get access to the director in charge of the RECAP project, as he had to authorise the clearance process. This obstacle caused a major delay in the timeframe of the project as other government departments at the provincial level were not willing to assist the researcher, without a permit to conduct the research. The researcher sensed that the reason behind the delay was that most of the departmental employees worked from home due to the COVID-19 regulations. As a result, email communication was also slowed down because the people in charge of responding were not always available, and emails were forwarded from one person to the next. Although the researcher had originally called to ask for assistance, the unwillingness to assist by many people hampered the research progress.

Ultimately, the researcher was obliged to approach one friend who once worked with the DALRRD but who had moved to a different government department for support and guidance. This connection proved to be valuable as the friend knew the director and called him requesting urgent help. This valued connection sped up the process as the researcher immediately received an email asking for

personal verification for research access that also included providing fingerprints. Taking fingerprints, however, also required countless emails and telephone calls. The municipalities were unwilling to assist without official clearance from their head office in Pretoria and neither would they provide confidential information (such as the contact details of the RECAP beneficiaries) without clearance from the main department in Pretoria.

The researcher then sent emails to the Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni Districts while waiting for the clearance certificate from the main branch in Pretoria. It is worth mentioning that the researcher provided the ethical clearance from CRERC at UNISA as proof that the information needed was purely for research purposes. However, repeated telephone interactions with the municipalities left the distinct impression that the workers were suspicious of the real motives of the researcher and were concerned that this was an investigation about any irregularities in the disbursement or the utilisation of the RECAP funds.

Finally, the DALRRD issued a clearance letter that the researcher could email to the municipalities. Even with all the documentation provided, the municipalities were still hesitant, and the researcher had to request the assistance of her friend again, who used his influence and contacts once more to petition for help. Consequently, the list was emailed although considerable time had elapsed by then.

An official from the municipality who worked on the RECAP programme had also been briefed about the study, and he was most helpful in facilitating access at the municipality, indicating that gatekeepers indeed function as bridges between the researchers. According to this key informant, the researcher had to earn the trust of participants who were willing to give their consent freely without any fear of being implicated in anything nefarious. Hence, two important gatekeepers were the friend mentioned above and this official. They connected the researcher with the key informants and facilitated the emailing of signed consent forms. In this regard, they printed hard copies of the consent forms to be signed by the participants and emailed signed versions back to the researcher. Secondly, they knew where the farms were located and who were actually RECAP beneficiaries.

4.5 DATA-GATHERING PROCEDURES AND INSTRUMENTS

Tracy (2019:3-4) illustrates that qualitative research is about immersing oneself in a scene and trying to make sense of it and gathering sufficient data to enable thick descriptions. For this study, the researcher listened attentively to the responses from the research participants and used prompts and probes to gather more information in a cumulative (inductive and iterative) way. Therefore, paying close attention to what was said, and listening to the recorded interviews and transcribing each one was the key to success.

McGrath, Palmgren and Liljedahl (2019:1002-1006) state that qualitative interviews should be viewed as conversational exchanges, thus have an informal character, with a goal to gain insights into a person's experiences, opinions, and motivations as opposed to facts or behaviours. In the case study areas, the semi-structured interviews were used and characterised by open-ended questions. These questions focused on broad areas of interest, together with sub-questions interconnected with the research topic. The researcher and her assistants used a list of semi-structured questions; however, some questions were added or skipped altogether if the participant was unable or unwilling to answer the questions, or if the previous question on the list included the answers to the next question, or if the participant raised a new concern that was not covered by the list of questions.

Farooq (2015:2-3) states that the major sources of data in qualitative research are field observations, document analyses, and interviews, which can be broadly classified as structured, semi-structured and unstructured. The researcher opted for semi-structured interviews where the interviewees were asked several "main" questions focusing on one or multiple closely related themes or topics. The questions were open-ended since Leavy (2017:19) states that open-ended questions allow for the interview to approximate a conversation. These main questions were then supported by a number of probes and prompts to extract rich, in-depth data. For example, under the theme of RECAP experience, the main question was about the different types of assistance that the interviewees received from the government. This was followed by sub-probes on topics, such as:

- Financial assistance.
- Training, and agricultural assistance.
- Mentorship.
- Equipment (seeds, fertilizer, herbicides).
- Water or irrigation.

Above all, what the researcher wanted to determine was *"what has been the most valuable assistance and why*"? It is worth mentioning that after each sub-question, the interviewees were asked about their views, strengths, and weaknesses.

The semi-structured interview guide comprised a set of questions designed to capture the most important aspects of the RECAP farm projects, such as its business plan, financing, securing of a mentor, farm infrastructure and operations, human resources, and value chains for future viability. The researcher posed open-ended questions, allowing for discussions with the participants rather than a straightforward question-and-answer format (Brown & Danaher 2019:76-90). Kennedy (2018) states that such semi-structured interviews are an ideal method for meeting the goals of a qualitative study intended to capture thick descriptions because it allows the researcher to gather insights into the personal histories and the important stories of people whose everyday work shapes the agricultural sector.

In this regard, Kee and Schrock (2020: 351-365) note that qualitative telephone interviewing has been shown to be a flexible and effective way of collecting qualitative data on practices and projects. They highlight that high-quality data are collected under the appropriate conditions, making it a productive mode of data collection compared to a face-to-face mode. Kilinc and Firat (2017:1461-1486) concur with this view and add that telephone interviews are ancillary to face-to- interviews.

The researcher employed two research assistants to assist in the telephonic interviews to address any language barriers. The languages spoken most at the

two study sites were siSwati and isiZulu, which are foreign languages to the researcher. Fearing that some participants may be unwilling to divulge certain information to a foreigner, the researcher trained two assistants. As a result, some of the individual interviews were conducted in siSwati and isiZulu because these were the participants' preferred languages.

Both research assistants were proficient in siSwati and isiZulu and had once worked as interviewers for Osmoz Consulting, a research company. The assistants were intelligent and skilled young men, one from the Mpumalanga Province and the other hailed from the KwaZulu-Natal but was residing in Johannesburg. They felt at ease when communicating with the interviewees and willingly attended weekly training sessions on how to go about the data collection process. During the training, they studied and familiarised themselves with the approved research proposal and the semi-structured interview schedule, as well as the ethical research conduct guidelines of UNISA.

The research assistants signed confidential agreements and agreed to the compensation amounts. The researcher and the two assistants worked together and checked each other's recordings and notes. Apart from conducting the interviews, the assistants transcribed the recorded interviews in siSwati or isiZulu and translated them into the English language.

Prior to the interviews, appointments were made with the participants. The interviews with the thirty participants and two municipal staff took between 15 to 30 minutes each. Each interview was audio-recorded carefully to avoid the omission of relevant information. Smart phones were used in recording the interviews.

Once the participants again gave their verbal agreement to be interviewed, the recording began. Recording was the best option as the interviewers could not take the notes down fast enough so as not to disrupt the flow of information. After the interview sessions, all the interviews were listened to and transcribed so as not to miss any important theme. Furthermore, secondary sources of data such as reports and pictorial evidence were also gathered and will be reported in the

research findings in the next chapter, as well as a full qualitative method audit trail is discussed in Chapter five.

4.5.1 The interview schedule

Each participant was asked questions about their personal farming histories, their experiences of the RECAP, the current farm productivity, and any post-settlement support they might have received. To understand the experience of the research participants fully, the researcher and the two assistants explored and discussed the demographic information of each participant. The themes that were explored are discussed below in greater detail:

4.5.1.1 Farming history

The interviewees were asked about their farming history to reconcile their past with their present circumstances. They were asked if they had owned land before being beneficiaries of the RECAP, what the farm size was and the year in which they had obtained the farm, and lastly, the main economic activities carried out on the farm. It is worth noting here that the farm sizes determine the quantity of productivity. The participants' responses to the above questions permitted the researcher and the two assistants to gather rich background information to facilitate the inputs in this area during the analysis phase.

4.5.1.2 RECAP experience

The interviewees were asked to speak about their experiences as beneficiaries of the RECAP, this time relating to issues such as farm sizes, the year they started working on their farms, and the various types of assistance they had received from the government. To extract more information from the farmers, the government assistance was further divided into various areas such as financial help, training, mentoring, provision of farm equipment, and allocation of resources. The participants were further asked about the most valuable assistance they received and why they considered it as such. Lastly, the participants were given an opportunity to express their views about relaunching the RECAP. The answers to

the above questions gave the researcher and assistants sufficient details to evaluate the success or failure of the RECAP.

4.5.1.3 Current farm productivity

As suggested above, the size of the farm influences the farm productivity. As a result, the interviewers were interested in finding out what types of crops the farmers produce and why, as well as where they sell and for how much. The interviewees were asked about the numbers of workers they employed on a full-time or seasonal basis. The backdrop to this question was the RECAP's goal to, among others, to transform Black, small-scale farmers into commercial farmers, and given the fact that these small-scale farmers needed experience to become commercial farmers, the interviewers inquired from the farmers if they had sought assistance from large commercial farms nearby.

4.5.1.4 Post-settlement support

The probe under post-settlement support was to assess the type and amount of support that the government contributed towards the success of the RECAP. To this end, the researcher and the assistants asked the interviewees whether they had received visits from state officials, how often these visits occurred and what they had gained from each visit. Secondly, the interviewers asked the research participants whether they felt that the RECAP was developing Black commercial farmers successfully and if they were facing any challenges on their farms.

Martinez-Garcia, Trescastro-López, Galiana-Sánchez and Pereyra-Zamora (2019:1414) state that in semi-structured interviews, the interviewer will ask important questions in the same way every time,, but is free to alter the sequence of the questions and to probe for more information. The participants were allowed to answer the questions in any way they chose. The interviewers used probes to obtain greater depth, mostly by restating what the interviewee had said and asking the person to elaborate on a response or to substantiate a statement. Where necessary, follow-up questions were also used to obtain more information from the participants. At all times, the researcher and the assistants protected the integrity

of the research by adhering to the professional ethics guidelines, which involved obtaining informed consent from every participant.

4.5.2 Data editing

As already mentioned, the interviews were conducted with Black farmers who were RECAP beneficiaries in the Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni districts. The first challenge was to transcribe all the taped interviews. The recordings in SiSwati and IsiZulu were translated into English by the research assistants, to complete the transcription process.

Every interview was transcribed verbatim with silences indicated as three dots. The data editing process meant that the transcribed audio interviews were read in preparation for coding. Creswell (2015:205) states that once the transcription is concluded, it should be read while listening to the recording and missing words or pauses added where appropriate.

The researcher read the corrected transcriptions several times. She underlined words and phrases that suggested underlying structures and identified preliminary codes. A list of codes was set up, with the relevant paragraphs marked in different colour pens to ease the data analysis process.

The researcher and the assistants audio-recorded the interviews in order not to disrupt the flow of information from the participants. The interactive nature, and allowing for unexpected topics to emerge, gave the researcher and her assistants rich data (Busetto, Wick & Gumbinger 2020:1-10).

4.6 DATA-ANALYSIS STRATEGIES

The researcher used the data processing software AtlasTi to code and classify the data before analysing it. Merriam and Grenier (2019:15) note that a qualitative data analysis requires that the stages of transcription and data collection run simultaneously. Following their advice, the researcher commenced the

transcription and first order analyses after the first interview, so that the emerging themes could inform the subsequent data gathering.

The researcher conducted an AtlasTi analysis of all the collated documents (transcribed interviews, and the documents obtained about the farms) from the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) and the initial themes, and codes were developed for a higher order analysis. Themes were classified into smaller groups under the main themes, which were linked to the all-inclusive structure that had been developed. Thereafter, related ideas were grouped together to help the analyst to focus on each subject. A full description of the themes is discussed in Chapter five.

4.6.1 Coding process

Malhotra *et al* (2017) explain that coding is a process that enables researchers to identify what they find meaningful and set the stage to draw conclusions and interpret the data to find their meaning. Coding also involves rendering the data collected in a format that is easier to manipulate and analyse to fulfil the goal of the research. In this regard, the coding process of the study was guided and framed by the research questions and objectives.

4.6.1.1 Initial codes

The researcher assigned codes to the preliminary data. These codes gave brief descriptions of the contents of the interviews, that is, the codes identified relevant and interesting information on the subject matter. This facilitated the process of organising the data into meaningful groups called themes.

4.6.1.2 Themes

Morgan and Nica (2020:1-11) state that themes are broader and active interpretations of the codes and data unlike codes. The researcher worked with her two assistants to review and refine the themes that were identified to check for contradictions and to see if the themes overlapped. Themes were labelled into

smaller groups under the main groups, which were linked to the all-inclusive structure that had been developed. Thereafter, related ideas were grouped together to help the researcher to focus on each theme. Finally, the researcher ensured that all the themes were adequately represented.

4.7 WAYS TO ENSURE VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Hulteen *et al* (2020:1717-1798) explain that reliability and validity are conceptualised as trustworthiness, rigour, and quality in a qualitative paradigm. For data validity and reliability, the researcher conducted follow-up interviews and supervision with some of the participants and the extension workers to ensure that the data collected were accurate and portrayed current farm situations.

The research assistants operated under strict supervision and quality control. This quality control system comprised daily data collection debriefing sessions to discuss challenges and the triangulation method to evaluate and improve the validity and reliability of the findings. The following steps were implemented.

4.7.1 Credibility

Haven and Van Grootel (2019:229-244) point out that credibility is seen as the most important aspect in establishing trustworthiness, because credibility essentially asks the researcher to link the research contents clearly to the lived realities of the research participants. The researcher and her assistants ensured that all the interviews were transcribed verbatim, and where needed, translated into English. The context of the two study sites were gleaned from the interviews and from all related documentation.

4.7.2 Dependability

Haven and Van Grootel (2019) describe dependability as essential for trustworthiness as it demonstrates that the research is valid and dependable due to its consistent and repeatable nature. In this regard, the researcher discloses the methodological steps taken in the study fully to enable an audit trail.

4.7.3 Conformability

Conformability has to do with the level of confidence placed in the research participants' narratives and words rather than depend on the potentially biased views of the researcher. Guzmán *et al* (2020:13-20) mention that conformability implies that the researcher verifies that participants' views shape the findings more than the researcher. In all instances, the researcher used direct quotations from participants' transcribed interviews to substantiate their views.

4.7.4 Transferability

Transferability in qualitative research is synonymous with generalisability. Amin *et al* (2020:1472-1482) indicate that transferability is established by providing evidence that the research would be applicable to the population. Although generalisability was not the aim of this study, the researcher juxtaposed the information from thirty interviews to come to conclusions about the reported evidence.

4.7.5 Authenticity

Johnson and Rasulova (2017:263-276) state that authenticity involves reflecting on how worthwhile the study is and thinking about its impact on members of the community being researched. In the next chapter, the researcher discusses the research results, foregrounding the impact of the RECAP on their lives.

4.8 RESEARCH ETHICS

The field research raised several ethical concerns considering the results of the study and considering its impact in the light of sharing the insights gained. Consequently, every participant involved in the study needed to be reassured about the confidentiality of the data. Therefore, the researcher did not use the names or any other information which could reveal the identity of those involved.

Research outcomes can only be credible if the research is conducted in an ethical and considerate manner (Husband 2020:206). Full ethical clearance was obtained from the University of South Africa's CRERC. Importantly, the ethical codes of the University were adhered to throughout the research.

4.8.1 Voluntary participation

The researcher gave clear detailed reports to the participants on how access to the research site was negotiated through the clearance certificate from the University of South Africa and a clearance document from the DALRRD (consent documents). In addition, the participants were informed about the study's objectives, and that participation was voluntary. All the participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time, and this option was communicated to them clearly. As indicated above, all the participants signed consent sheets (see Annexure 3), which were emailed to the researcher.

4.8.2 "No harm" and confidentiality

Ethical practice in research prescribes that no harm should be done to the participants. Participants can be harmed psychologically during the course of the research, when they are asked to reveal sensitive information that makes them feel uncomfortable (Navalta, Stone & Lyons 2019:1-8). This was a low-risk study that avoided sensitive topics. All the participants were reassured that all the information obtained from them would be kept confidential and not shared with other parties without their consent (Harriss, MacSween & Atkinson 2019:813-817).

In addition to the signed consent forms, all the participants were also prompted to give verbal permission at the start for the interviews to proceed, and that the conversation may be recorded. All the hard copies of the documentation related to the data collection were kept in a locked filing cabinet at the researcher's home. Electronic information was stored as password-protected files on a password-protected computer. Future use of the stored data would be subject to a further Research Ethics Review for approval if applicable. Hard copy documentation of the data obtained from the audio recordings and confidentiality agreements of the translators will be shredded five years after the degree has been conferred, and electronic copies of the data would be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer.

4.9 RESEARCH DELIBERATIONS: RESEARCHER'S REFLEXIVE ACCOUNT

The traditional qualitative methods of research seek to understand the current viewpoints of participants in relationship to specific areas of human life that concern them. Bozalek and Zembylas (2017:111-127) state that deliberation in qualitative research is about reflecting on one's own suppositions and the research. This approach gives the researcher the liberty to ensure the data collected confers the researcher's experiences, without it biasing the findings.

The researcher's interest in this topic stems from the fact that Black people in South Africa bear a burden of poverty, inequality, and unemployment, and that the ANC government in the democratic dispensation has been grappling with the ideal of transferring more land to Black people and creating successful Black commercial farmers in the process. However, although several reforms have been implemented towards achieving this goal, the rewards do not march the input.

At the beginning of the study, the researcher kept a research journal of current news events relating to land and agriculture for the purpose of accuracy and transparency throughout the research period. This journal was to help the researcher not to be judgemental but to listen to the participants actively.

4.9.1 A personal perspective

As a student in Development Studies, the question that spurred the researcher on to conduct this study was a need to understand the logic of Black people suffering under the yoke of poverty. Simply put, the question was “why are people still suffering even when the government is in favour of helping the Black majority?” From the onset, the researcher thought that the government was not interested in the suffering of the people, but during the course of the fieldwork it became apparent that this is a much more nuanced and complicated matter. The researcher is acquainted with a young Black agriculture graduate who hopes to own land and farm. Yet, for the past five years, he has been struggling to secure a piece of land for this purpose to no avail. Amid this poverty, the young man still managed to rear pigs in the backyard of his father’s house with no assistance.

It is extremely easy to assume that Black people are not interested in their livelihood by neglecting farming, which is a prime source of earning a sustainable living. However, because the desire to engage in farming exists, it became clear that there are other reasons influencing the hardship of Black people. There is a complicated part of the land reform and implementation process that needs understanding in order to answer all the research questions.

4.9.2 Encounters during the research exercise: A meditative comment

The greatest hindrance to the study was to obtain permission from the DALRRD to access the farmers’ database to retrieve information pertaining to the beneficiaries of the RECAP. There were a number of suspicions with regard to the information needed. The worst part of it all was that the researcher was a foreigner. Coupled with the lockdown restrictions and people working from home, the process of getting through from one person to the next was really tedious and email communications were laborious with referrals from one colleague to another in a circle that often led back to the starting point. This meant that some sections of the DALRRD had to be revisited several times prior to moving to the next level. This

challenged the researcher and forced her to look for an indigene to go to the department to facilitate the process of obtaining permission.

Once the clearance and database of beneficiaries was obtained from the department, the next barrier was to get hold of the farmers. For example, the names and contact numbers of the farmers were not up to date. This meant that the researcher had to gain access to them through extension workers from the municipalities collaborating with the farmers.

In analysing and interpreting the data, the researcher had to separate herself from the data in order not to influence the final outcome based on the comments from the farmers. Haven and Van Grootel (2019:229-244) advise that interpretation of data in qualitative research, which is interview-based must reflect the final product of the interpretation. The researcher guarded against the potential pitfall of being too sympathetic to the participants and misrepresenting the final outcome. While it is difficult to remove bias wholly in a qualitative research analysis, the effect of the researcher on the result can be less if the researcher is conscious from the onset of the study. In this study, the researcher's journal served the purpose of guarding against potential unfairness.

4.10 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher presented the research methodology as applied in the study. The processes highlighted included the sampling techniques, data collection, analysis, ethical considerations, and deliberations on the research process. A qualitative approach was chosen because the researcher needed to enhance her understanding of the participants' lived experiences of the RECAP's implemented policy, and this method helped to highlight similarities and differences in these experiences. The research findings and analyses are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Land reform has faced widespread grievances and concerns about the inadequate implementation of assistance for newly settled farmers. In this regard Ndinga-Kanga, Van der Merwe and Hartford (2020:22-41) note that cases of land restored because of restitution are often welcomed by beneficiaries, but with little actual improvement in their livelihoods, or with little success as was evident in the failed projects. The failure of such projects has typically been explained to be the result of unsatisfactory “post-settlement support” (Xaba 2022:338-356). Due to the spiralling in complaints, a Recapitalization and Development Programme (RECAP) was introduced in 2009 to assist the farmers who received inadequate support or no support at all.

This study sought to understand whether the emergent farmers were indeed recapitalisation beneficiaries. Furthermore, the study aimed to understand how and when the RECAP beneficiaries were notified and whether the participants owned any land.

In this chapter, the researcher presents the research findings as emerging from the thematic analysis of the transcribed telephonic interviews concurrently with document analysed. The findings are presented according to the themes and the various research objectives. The link between specific/secondary objectives and findings are extensively linked and explain in the final chapter. Firstly, the participants’ context is described in the form of a summary of the study sites. Secondly, the effectiveness of the RECAP’s support was evaluated in terms of scope, scale, and operations. To this end, themes were identified and grouped under the farming history, the RECAP experience, current farm productivity, and post-settlement support. Although the study was not primarily concerned with gender, the broader research touches on aspects of gender.

5.2 CONTEXT OF THE FINDINGS

The qualitative research approach followed enabled an empirical inquiry of the farmers in the two research sites in-depth, and as situated in their contexts. The researchers' choice of the research sites was to understand the real experiences of farmers.

Both study sites are located in farming areas. The absence of physical observations forestalls any comments on the surrounding environment. However, participants stated that about 93% of the farming areas were extremely fertile apart from some sandy areas. In the Gert Sibande district, the participants judged the soil to be highly suitable for agriculture. Ehlanzeni has a prominent agriculture sector with most of the soil being fertile. The rich soil fertility gives the Mpumalanga province an added advantage compared to other provinces in the country.

From the interviews, it emerged that eighteen of the thirty research participants engaged in mixed farming, ten research participants focused solely on cash crops cultivation and two focus on animal breeding. In this regard, Mpumalanga province played a key role in the country's position as a major exporter of fruits. The demographic section below briefly examines the profile of the participants.

5.3 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE

A total of thirty telephonic interviews were conducted in the Ehlanzeni and Gert Sibande District Municipalities. Every beneficiary was treated equitably with no gender preference shown. However, there were more men than women farmers in both districts. The ratio of men to women was 10:5 for Gert Sibande and 9:6 for Ehlanzeni, respectively, thus an overall ratio of 19 men to 11 women.

There is considerable disparity between the two districts in terms of the RECAP recipients' age groups. In Gert Sibande, eleven of the sixteen research participants were below the age of 51 years and five were 51 years or older. In Ehlanzeni, five of the research respondents were below the age of 51 years and the remaining

nine were aged 51 years or older. In other words, the findings note that the number of older people in Gert Sibande was less than those in Ehlanzeni. This implies that there was no specific age group, per district, that was mapped out to benefit from the RECAP. The age-selective nature was open to any people with a desire to do farming. Secondly, this could be interpreted that the younger people in Ehlanzeni migrated to the towns and cities, leaving older people behind. Furthermore, the results indicate that there were more productive and active people in Gert Sibande than Ehlanzeni who were involved in agriculture. However, it is argued that if given sufficient agricultural education, both the active and older people would be able to adopt to new technologies and practices, and be more productive given the resources they needed, as well as being more efficient with the resources according to their ability.

All the participants had some level of scholarly attainment, ranging from Grade 4 to a PhD degree. To break it down, two participants had educational qualifications below Grade 4, twelve participants attained Grade 4 to Grade 10, one attained Grade 11 and eight attained Grade 12. Seven participants had post-school qualifications amongst which two had national certificates, three of them earned diplomas, one had a tertiary certificate, and one had a PhD degree in Theology.

Furthermore, twenty participants acknowledged that they had received various forms of agricultural training. Specifically, the training covered topics such as mixed-crop and livestock farming, cattle breeding, business management, economic management, firebreaks and safety management, welding, and training for a community working programme (CWP). Wills, Van der Berg, Patel and Mpeta (2020) mention that the CWP is a new governmental idea to provide job security for unemployed people of working age. In this regard, the agricultural training of beneficiaries in this study can be classified as CWP. Ten participants indicated that they had not received any training from the RECAP directly. Only three participants had training from other land reforms programmes, and one responded that he received training from a White farmer when he worked for him.

Farming was the primary economic activity of all the participants, with twenty-five involved in it full time. Besides farming, five participants had other employment,

such as owning a security company, managing a funeral service, and undertaking firm, being a sub-contractor and running a mentorship company, and another participant was a Community Working Programmer (CWP). Some of the participants stated:

> *"I am running a security company. It helps in generating funds, which I invest in the farm"* (Participant 16).

> *"I do undertaker business. Part of the money I use for my family and the farm"* (Participant 24).

> *"I had contracts. Actually, the contracts are the one[s] that helped my farm. RECAP did not help that much because farming needs* [a] *constant sponsor"* (Participant 26).

The findings indicate that the primary activity of the participants was farming. A few had additional jobs where they earned an extra income to invest in their farms, such as a security company, business, and contractor. The argument is that the farmers with limited education refused to look beyond their farmland and therefore shut out any possibility of doing something, in addition to their farm work. Cousins, Borras, Sauer and Ye (2018:1-11) argue in their work on Black education and farming, that the apartheid government had imposed restrictions that prevented them from obtaining knowledge on farming. This forced small-scale animal farmers, for example, to endure the impact of land and resource grabs. The legacy of this was still visible, for some research participants in this study were compelled to secure other sources of income, wherein part of their profit is invested in their farm. This initiative gave them an added advantage over those who were solely dependent on the RECAP resources.

The number of people who resided per farm varied from two to family sizes of between four to twenty per farm of three houses or more. One participant highlighted that there were ten households on the farm where he resided with his family. The specific number of people per farm family was not mentioned. All participants lived in formal dwellings.

The research findings on the biodemographic information showed that apart from the fact that most of the participants who were beneficiaries had not received the kind of education necessary to run a modern farm, some had not even finished high school. In addition, their ages implied that the younger generations were excluded from the RECAP.

The discussion on the biodemographic details was an attempt to answer the first two research objectives. In the section below, the themes that emerged from the analysis were discussed.

5.4 THEMES INDENTIFIED FROM ANALYSIS

Besides the biodemographic information as suggested above, the narrations were analysed for emerging themes. To be regarded as a theme for the sake of the analysis, commonalities in the research participants' explanations and/or experiences were noted in the transcriptions. For example, the larger theme "farmers' challenges" consisted of subthemes related to:

- road maintenance
- inability to pay electricity bills.

Figure 5.1 illustrates the number of quotes for each theme. The largest theme was "discussions of the RECAP" with 85 references in the transcriptions. The theme "current farm productivity" came second with 50 references in the transcriptions. "Post settlement support" and "farming history" were the least debated themes with 39 and 33 references, respectively.

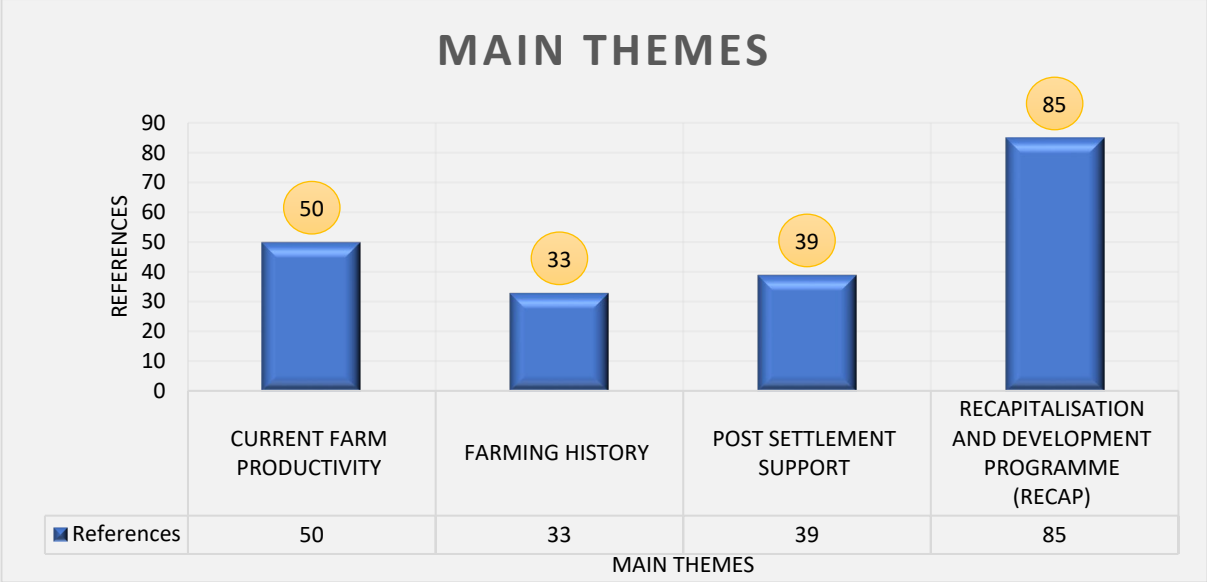

Figure 5.1 Main themes extracted from the analysis of the transcripts

Source: Author, based on interviews

Under each theme, subthemes were identified to give a holistic picture of each theme. The questions asked under each of the four themes highlight the attributes that are common to all the research participants, particularly, on the issue of the RECAP. Though there were omissions, the present farm conditions and the socio-economic status of the participants informed their answers. The various themes identified in Figure 5.1 are explored in greater detail in the sections that follow.

5.5 FARMING HISTORY

This theme clusters around the research participants' perceptions of their farming history, and its links to the primary research objective of this study. In this way, the researcher combined two principles of the interpretivist paradigm in exploring individual experiences through the interviews and using probes and follow-up questions to explore the objectives of the study fully. This theme is sub-divided into four subsections, namely: economic activities, farmland sizes, period of land ownership, and land owned prior to recapitalisation. Figure 5.2 depicts a breakdown of this theme.

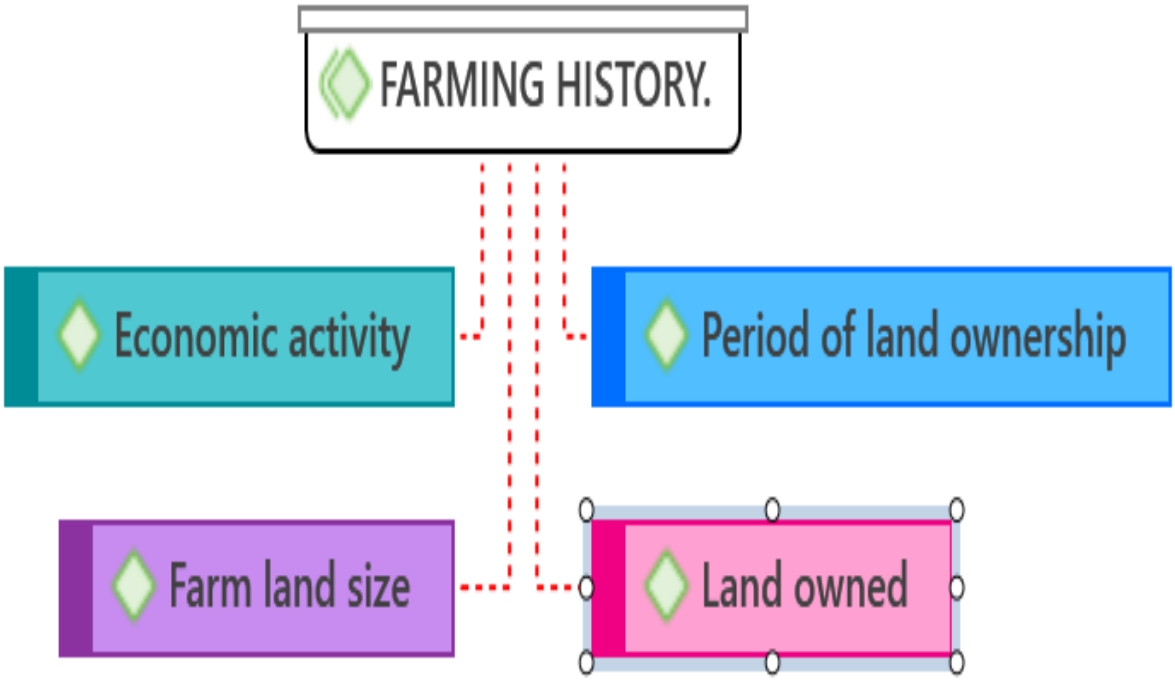

Figure 5.2: Subthemes in farming history

Source: Author, based on interviews

Generally, all the participants worked on a farm prior to becoming beneficiaries of any of the land reform programmes. Their primary economic activity was farming. Twenty respondents previously worked on farms owned by White farmers, where they gained experience and were, therefore, classified as farmers. Twenty-one participants had never owned land before the RECAP, and the farms they now worked on were government owned. Three respondents work on farms which they inherited and three work on community-owned farms. Three participants had worked on farms before from other land reform programmes.

As will be explained in greater detail below, the farm plot sizes ranged from 8.8 hectares to 1 700 hectares. However, some farmers, who owned land inherited from their fathers before the RECAP were introduced, had an advantage over those who did not have land and those who were working on White-owned farms. The RECAP gave them hope and assurances for success in farming as much-needed assistance was given to them. Despite the small plot sizes, they were able to practise small-scale, commercial farming, and the introduction of the RECAP

enabled them to widen their scope for farming. They diversified their farming activities, which enabled them to venture into mixed farming, which included growing crops, such as maize, wheat, vegetables, rearing poultry, pigs, and cattle.

The discussion on the farming history was an endeavour to answer the first research objective. The argument is that the current agricultural structure is still based on the old apartheid divisions, with White-owned big commercial farms dominating the landscape (Greenberg 2019:145). Twenty-one participants had never owned land despite this marginalisation: Black smallholder farmers out-produced White farmers from historical times. A far more simplistic way of dismissing the argument is seen in the promises made by the government to create an equal society in which the state's wealth would be distributed evenly among all citizens, and farmland returned to Blacks. However, Horst and Marion (2019:1-16) argue that the Blacks are not politically marginalised today, but that their control over land is still restricted economically. Therefore, the history of Black farmers still repeats itself in a subtle manner despite the fact that the country is under the rulership of the Blacks. This laudable initiative was not given all the chances for success since the government failed to clearly analyse the historical land ownership issues.

The government's action to buy the land from White farmers and lease rather than offer them to Blacks demotivated the Black population since land redistribution policies state that it is the responsibility of the government to provide land to the less privileged. At the same time, leasing farmland to Black farmers goes against the government's promise to distribute wealth evenly and create an equal society, considering the country has a recognisably advanced system of land policies (Francis & Webster 2019:788-802). The downside, also demonstrated here, is that beneficiaries waited for the government to act in terms of land. For instance, all the research participants in this study never extended the sizes of their plots after the RECAP, although a few mentioned plans to do so in future.

What was clear from the findings is that experience of Blacks selling off their land at give-away prices, compelled the government to own the lands and lease parcels to needy Black farmers. This speaks to the second research objective relating to

the kind of government policies and agricultural programmes that are best suitable for Black landowners.

5.5.1 Economic activity

The major economic activity of all the participants was farming, which includes crop and animal production, dairy farming, with only six respondents indicating no agricultural activity. All the beneficiaries stated that farming empowered them to provide food for their families, which would have been unaffordable otherwise. The participants engaged in different farming activities, with seven of them practising mixed farming. Five participants grew vegetable and five cultivated maize. Two owned pigs and two were poultry farmers. The breakdown of the economic activities reported (note that these were not mutually exclusive categories, and that all reported activities were considered) is given in Table 5.1.

TABLE 5.1: ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Economic activity	Frequency	%
General farming	6	20.0%
Mixed farming	7	23.3%
Piggery	2	6.6%
Poultry	2	6.6%
Vegetables	5	16.6%
Maize plantation	5	16.6%
Self-employed	2	6.6%
Employed (Working for an organization)	1	3.3%
No agricultural activity	6	20.0%
Total	30	As all economic activities were noted, the sum will be larger than 100%

Six participants explained that they engaged in mixed farming primarily for commercialisation, although surpluses are consumed at home. These crops for home consumption include surplus poultry, indigenous leafy vegetables, maize,

eggplant, and pumpkin, which take shorter periods to grow and have lower market values. Contrarily, livestock farming for sale requires a longer period before profits can be made, but the products have higher market values.

Amongst the respondents who reported their economic activities to be general farming, most produce several commodities on their farms for sale and for home consumption. These crops include spinach, herbs, chilli, and cabbage. Some of the participants' extracts from transcripts are presented below:

> *"I do livestock farming, such as cattle ranching and the rearing of sheep"* (Participant 28).

> *"I do cattle farming and Martin (A White farmer friend) helps me by selling the cattle. I use some of the profits to pay bills and other farm expenses"* (Participant 19).

> *"There was nothing we were doing, and life was difficult, and things were expensive. So, we applied for land, and they gave us resources and animals. We work, take some things, and go home, cook, and eat"* (Participant 1).

All the research participants were of the opinion that their economic activities encouraged them to have an active life in farming, and enabled them to be called farmers, although they were not considered pure commercial farmers. They explained that they were described as "home" and "family-type" farmers or small-scale commercial farmers. While many participants were engaged in farming activities solely, some participants were involved in non-agricultural activities to supplement their incomes from their farming activities. Farming also enabled them to be employed, and their livelihood was much better compared to when they were doing nothing.

Economic activity, especially in the agricultural sector, has long been of prime importance as a result of its contribution to the livelihood security of the rural poor

in particular, and that is why the farming activities of the participants are highly diversified, as illustrated above.

In discussing economic activities, most of the research participants made connections between their economic success and how knowledgeable they were about modern farming. All the research participants, for example, also expressed a desire to own farm machinery to ease their labour even though they had not acquired the required knowledge on how to operate these machines. Therefore, the types of knowledge acquired through experience was unskilled.

The RECAP's goal of creating a class of Black, commercial farmers, and increase economic growth is gradually falling into place, although substantial investment needs to be injected towards achieving this goal. Wily (2019:25-17) argues that despite decades of land reform, commercial land is still controlled by a small minority while the numbers of the landless swell rapidly, triggering rural poverty amidst extensive agreements pushing for land reforms.

5.5.2 Land owned prior to recapitalisation

Twenty-one of the participants stated that they did not own land. The nine who indicated that they had owned land before becoming RECAP beneficiaries fell into three equal groups, namely those who inherited their land, those who acquired land through the Department of Rural Development, and those who received the land via previous land reform programmes. Figure 5.3 illustrates land ownership prior to the recapitalisation.

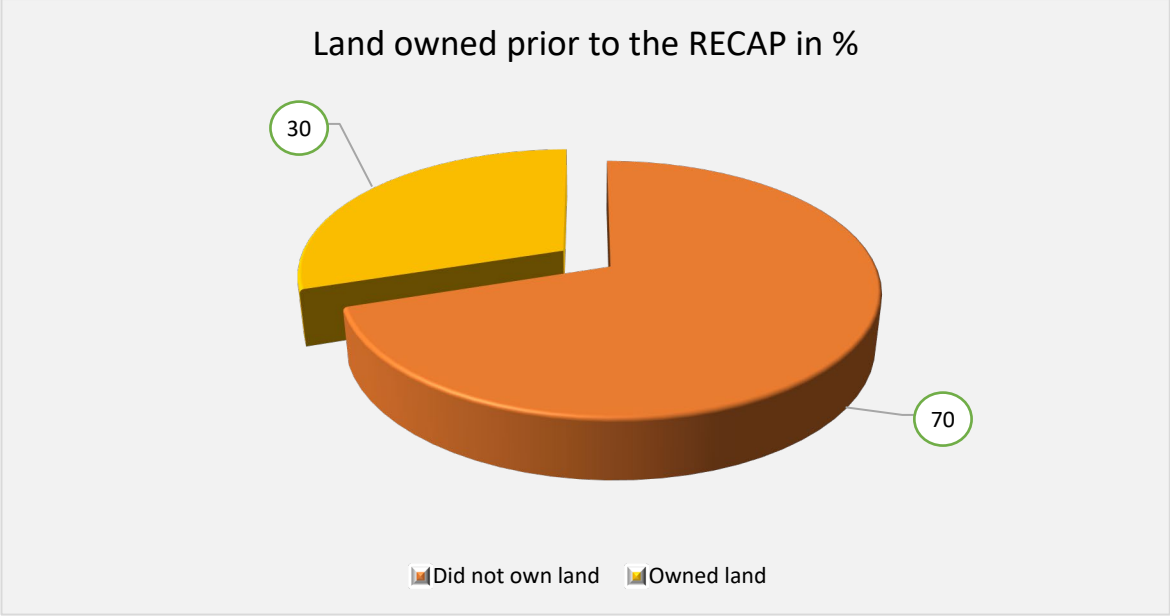

Figure 5.3: Land owned prior to the recapitalisation

Source: Author, based on interviews

The twenty-one participants who did not own land stated that the government owned most of the land. In this regard, the future remained bleak for them inasmuch, as they farm the land. These participants revealed that they felt exploited because, it was not clear if they would ultimately own the land leased to them. Participant six, for example, indicated that he did not have land, although he was a beneficiary of the RECAP programme. When the researcher probed further asking him how this was possible, he narrated his story as follows:

> *"I do not have land. I was working for someone else and realised that there's a vacant plot that nobody was working on. I asked the people close by who owns it, but nobody knew. In 2009, I decided to start working that plot as a farm. The land was out of shape ….and lots of things needed to be fixed. I did not have money. so, I applied for the RECAP. In 2013, I was informed that I'm a beneficiary. So, I do not have any legal papers on my name as I only signed the lease with the government on the land. Secondly, I'm not sure what will happen to us if someone comes in the future with some legal*

> *papers claiming to own the farm. We are just farming and waiting for the unknown"* (Participant 6).

The above story illustrates how this individual took advantage of available land and was assisted by the government through the RECAP. However, the lease agreement did not stipulate what will happen to the land after the twenty-year lease expired. The responses of some beneficiaries regarding land ownership before the RECAP are captured below:

> *"No, I never owned any land. We were so poor and could not afford the land"* (Participant 11).

> *"No, I have no land"* (Participant 16).

> *"No, I don't own any land; it is a lease"* (Participant 17).

Farmers' landownership prior to the RECAP described above shows that the people waited for the government to change the course of their lives.

The nine participants who indicated that they owned land prior to the RECAP mentioned that farming represented a livelihood strategy to them, as well as some sort of security subsistence inherited from their ancestors, parents, and the government. The thought of being able to cultivate all their foodstuffs and not purchase anything was captivating to them. The narrations reveal this:

> *"Yes, I used to visit the rural areas and my grandfather had land; he was a farmer and encourage[d] most of us his grandchildren to farm. So, when he passed on, I was extremely interested in continuing with farming"* (Participant 3).

> *"Yes, the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform gave us this land"* (Participant 13).

> *"Yes, I got the land through another land reform programme called SLAG, not the RECAP"* (Participant 19).

The participants who had land prior to the RECAP had either inherited it from their ancestors, parents and/or the government explained that they were given birth to on the land and therefore, it was their right to live, plant, and be buried on the land. This gave them a sense of belonging. Those who got land from the government participated in some projects.

In this study, it became evident that participants' backgrounds and their zeal for land ownership as suggested in some of the quotations above shaped the ways in which they treated and appreciated the land they presently owned. It has been argued that while participants cultivating the land on lease agreements mainly sought the means to secure their livelihoods, landowners farmed with eagerness and dedication. Israel and Wynberg (2019:404-417) show that beneficiaries tend to take advantage of the soil's appropriateness to farm grain and keep livestock to sustain their lives while providing food to the community at large. Inasmuch as some parts of the land were not farmable, the participants devised a strategy to use the land effectively to grow grass to feed their livestock (Baby *et al* 2020:53-65).

On a broader societal scale, notwithstanding, the precarity of the land ownership and lease agreements, there is still a cause for concern, as government efforts to modify land ownership and rights for the landless, tenants and labourers are not accomplishing the intended objectives, as suggested by Hull and Whittal (2019:97-113) and Gumata and Ndou (2019:503).

The discussion on access to land through lease agreements or by opportunity lies with the Constitutional arrangements, which ought to be designed according to the needs and resources available for governance. The argument is that in all instances, the process of land access and consensus negotiation was driven by a strong desire to have a secured livelihood. Consequently, the findings support the

theory of Lahiff (2020:43), who emphasises that access to land must fit people's needs to pursue livelihood strategies.

The government's incapacity to implement land reform according to the Constitutional requirements led to livelihood insecurity. Land access is a very narrow concept which only recognises the farmers' legal rights over the land they cultivate. Shackleton (2020:1-10) argues that communal land loss has major implications for the well-being and livelihoods of people in rural areas. Born, Sillane and Murray (2019:409-423) add that the limited access to land and control over resources in rural areas is due to historical factors that largely excluded Black farmers from the agricultural sector.

5.5.3 Farm plot sizes and year in which the participants commenced farming on the plot

The reported plot sizes ranged from 139 to 1 700 hectares. Ten participants indicated their plot sizes to be below 139 hectares, four had plot sizes of between 140 and 459 hectares, five had plot sizes from 460 to 600 hectares, seven had plot sizes of 700 to 1 066 hectares, two had plot sizes of 1 067 to 1 200 hectares, and two had plot sizes of 1 201 and 1 700 hectares.

The six participants who had already been working on government land before the RECAP never extended their farm sizes, thereafter, in order to maximise production costs, reduce expenditure on capital layout, and increase the production output. Some of them are quoted below:

> *"No, it is still the 8.8 hectares"* (Participant 6).

> *"No. The farm is still the same in size. It was never extended"* (Participant 7).

> *"No, we tried to apply to MEGA for assistance to increase our land and put cattle on it, but we did not succeed in doing that"* (Participant 24).

All of the research participants mentioned that their farm plot sizes were never extended and most battled to simply maintain the present sizes. The situation was aggravated by the insufficient financial resources that were given to them at the start of the RECAP. Some thought that it was the responsibility of the government to extend their farms. The logical explanation was that since the RECAP had given them land in the first place, it was their duty to expand the farm plot size. When asked about the year in which they started working on the farm, two respondents stated they were born on the land that they were farming, indicating the land had been inherited. For example, Participants 11 and 26 shared:

> *"Since I was born, and* [I] *grew up here"* (Participant 11).

> *"We grew up here with my grandparents"* (Participant 26).

Three respondents had access to the land from the early 1990s to 2000, before becoming beneficiaries of the RECAP. Two obtained land with the help of a commercial bank between 2001 and 2005. For example:

> *"It was in 2005: we were able to start farming chickens with the loan from Land Bank"* (Participant 7).

> *"The Department of Agriculture gave us the land"* (Participant 9).

> *"I'm not a beneficiary of the RECAP. I got the land from SLAG"* (Participant 29).

Fourteen respondents received land between 2005 and 2009, and the last nine obtained the land between 2010 and 2017. For example:

> *"We started working on the farm in 2005. We are rearing cattle"* (Participant 25).

> *"We were informed in 2013 and we started work in 2009. We are producing livestock. We are not planting much, but what we plant is used to feed the animals"* (Participant 29).

> *"I got the farm around 2014 to 2015. I'm not really sure. Currently I produce cabbage and portion 7 is for vegetables"* (Participant 30).

The year 2013 had the highest number of participants who started working on their farms as RECAP beneficiaries. However, the majority of the participants indicated that they did not start cultivating the farms the same year they were informed of their inclusion in the project. Obviously, all participants were working on a farm in order to qualify, and all the participants had some form of land agreement with the government, either written or verbal, which nonetheless did not guarantee ownership of the land.

In this study, it became evident that the farm plot sizes were typical of small-scale commercial farms. The researcher acknowledges that plot size is only part of the equation, with productivity determined by other factors. However, in agreement with Asibey *et al* (2020:35-65), the land allocated to the research participants is relatively insufficient for commercial use and is hence a problem if read in terms of the RECAP's objective to transform small-scale farms into commercial farms. Therefore, the farmers who were engaged in mixed farming were unable to utilise their land effectively because of its size, as they did not warrant specialised agricultural activities. Consequently, the farmers tended to focus on subsistence farming, thereby not fulfilling the intended objectives of the RECAP to transform them into commercial farmers.

The interviews revealed that some farmers had come to the heart-breaking conclusion that after having lived most of their lives as insecure and subjugated under the White regime, the same subjection, although in a different way, was still present.

5.5.4 The government's responsibility to extend the farm plot sizes

Three participants believed that it was the responsibility of the government to extend the plot sizes of their farms. When they were asked why they did not acquire more land for expansion from the RECAP, they explained:

> *"What happened is that we tried to apply for assistance, so that we could increase our land and put cattle on it, but we did not succeed. They kept saying, "We will consider it," but they never came back to us"* (Participant 3).

> *"Sometimes I don't know what is happening with the RECAP because they gave money to people without the knowledge of how to use it, and now that some of us want more land to expand, there's no money"* (Participant 12).

> *"The government does not intervene so that the mines can stop taking parts of my land. They already cut across part of the road, and they are not paying me for that part. The government is supposed to give me a different land area"* (Participant 28).

Whether misinformed or not, the concern about the government's neglect in their assumed responsibility towards the participants cannot be downplayed. This is clear from the narrations of those research participants who tried applying for assistance to expand their farms to no avail. It can be assumed that there are two possible explanations for this response from the government. Firstly, the lack of support can be due to the financial crisis. Secondly, the reason can be that the particular farmer did not show satisfactory progress to merit an extension. In this regard, one participant's negative experience with the intrusion of mines does show general neglect on the state's side to secure land rights.

The findings indicate that the farm plots allocated to the farmers fulfilled a dual function: a farm for agricultural purposes and a place of residence for farmers,

labourers, and their families. Thus, they could be described as spatially integrated sites where the land was used for both settlement and agricultural purposes. Given that the Constitution demands that the government should provide landed properties to the previously disadvantaged population to create an equal and just society for all, the participants are justified in requesting additional land from the government. Ngcukaitobi (2021) states that the government remains trapped discursively in the conception of agricultural production as the prime solution for food insecurity. At the same time, the agricultural sector is highly protected and regulated, with the price tag for total liberalisation assumedly regarded as too high (politically speaking), thereby leaving beneficiaries like the research participants in this study in a state of stagnation.

While some of the farmers understood that occasional mismanagement by the government failed to expedite land reform, Maka and Aliber (2019:37-45) and Von Solms and Van der Merwe (2020:844-856) argue that the government has a responsibility to provide farmland to the landless for the production of agricultural commodities and wildlife activities.

5.5.5 Fallowed farm plots prior to the RECAP

Twenty-one participants stated that prior to the RECAP, large parts of their farms were fallow because of a lack of resources and equipment. Hence, the RECAP empowered them by providing the necessary farming inputs.

> *"There is not enough water for irrigation, and we do not have the money to pay for boreholes or buy Jojo tanks"* (Participant 6).

> *"We could not work the farm, meaning all of the land, because we did not have finance to buy equipment to work all of the area"* (Participant 9).

> *"We used to lease farming contracts before the RECAP, now we can farm"* (Participant 29).

"The land we have is mostly rocky. We cannot plant most of it because the soil is not deep enough" (Participant 30).

From the findings outlined above, it becomes apparent that some participants were not farming their entire farm plots due to challenges with water and the soil quality. They are still waiting for farm equipment. The revelation that some of the farmers leased out their plots came as a surprise, because the researcher assumed that when land is a prime source of security and livelihood, and the battle to obtain land is so problematic, leasing out the farm would be the furthest from the farmers' minds. Upon probing this, the research participants explained that their actions were triggered by pressing financial needs.

Fairbanks (2022) argues that White commercial agriculture was built up through substantial state assistance in the form of land, credit, and financial assistance without leasing. This gave them a firm foundation for agricultural productivity. Marire (2022:1071-1082) adds that the government refuses to take responsibility for equipping Blacks with the necessary assistance before giving them land to farm. The retro-innovation theory, as articulated by Zagata, Sutherland, Hrabák and Lostak (2020:639-660) can help explain how these research participants were facing the opposing dilemmas of state subsidies being withdrawn and a need for increased financial support. The outcome was the breakdown of the agricultural system.

5.6 RECAPITALISATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (RECAP)

In this section, the researcher reports on the insight gained from the interviews centred on when the farmers were informed about being RECAP beneficiaries, what sort of support the government provided before and after the settlement, and the most valuable assistance they received from the government. Figure 5.4 shows the subthemes for the narrations about the RECAP.

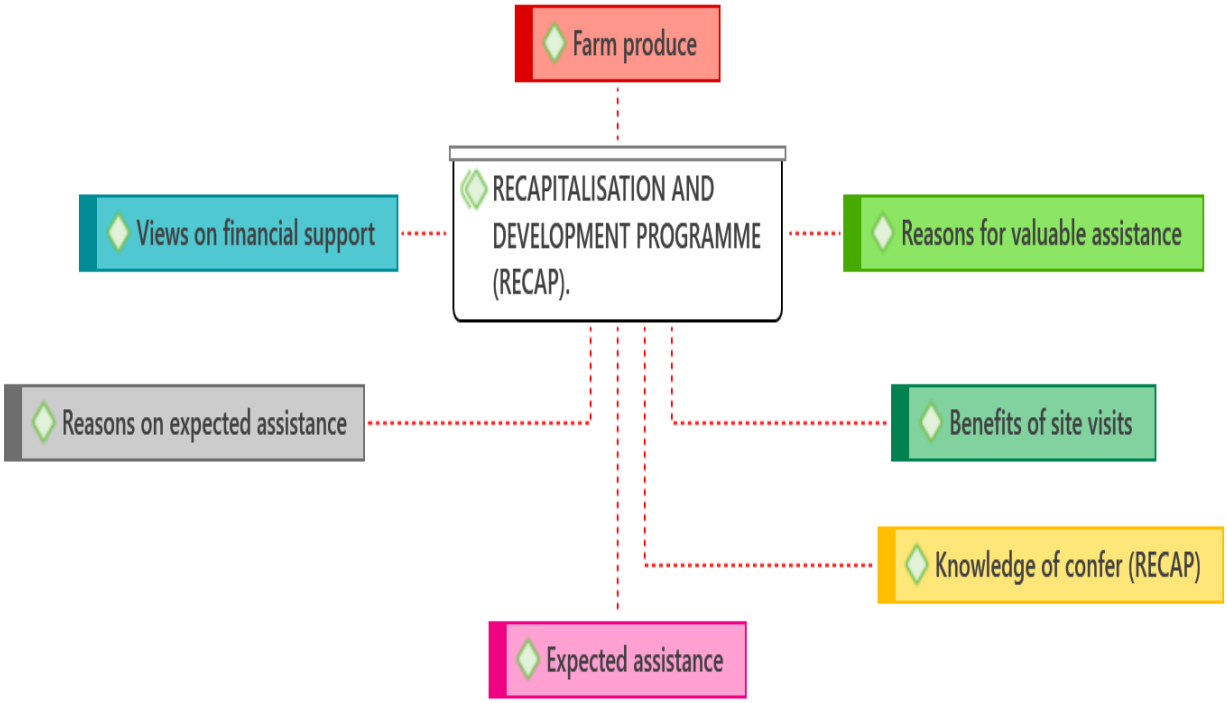

Figure 5.4: Subthemes of narrations about the recap

Source: Author, based on interviews

This theme is linked to the second and third research objectives of the study. Two subthemes emerged here. Firstly, the timing of confirmation of the RECAP beneficiary status and secondly, government assistance. The subtheme "government assistance" has further subthemes relating to agricultural training, mentorship, irrigation systems, farm animals, farm equipment and the most valuable assistance.

5.6.1 Time of confirmation of RECAP beneficiary status

As shown in Figure 5.5, nine of the participants indicated that they were notified of their RECAP beneficiary status in 2013, with a further ten being notified between 2014 and 2017, five between 2011 and 2012 and five between 2006 and 2010.

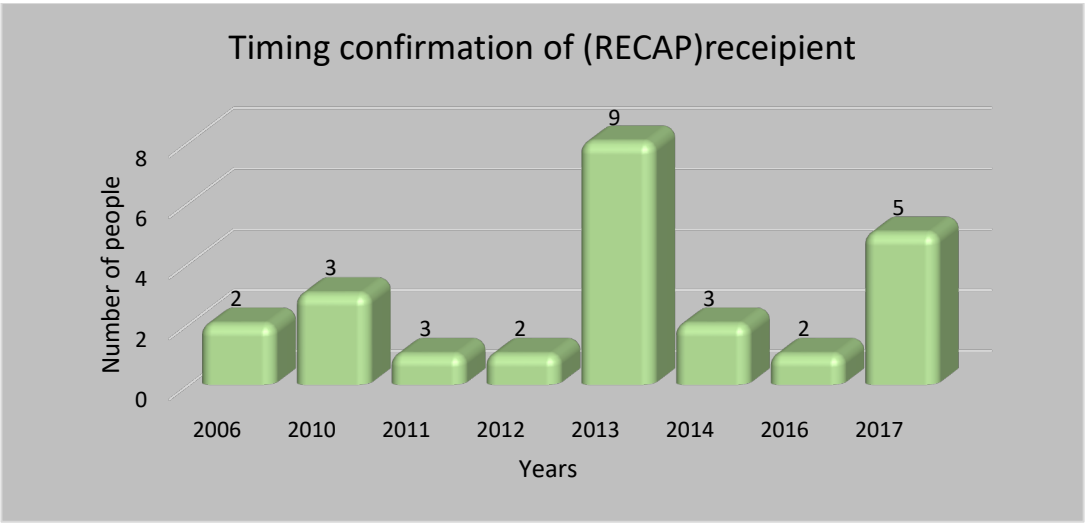

Figure 5.5: Timing confirmation of the recap recipient

Source: Author, based on interviews

It is important to mention that all the participants were already working on farms, either as private owners, beneficiaries of other land reform programmes, or trustworthy and dependable farmers and the RECAP farm owners. All the farmers were incorporated into the RECAP to empower them to continue with production.

5.6.2 Government assistance

The assistance provided by the government to the farmers was both in terms of cash and kind, in the form of finances, animals or equipment, amongst others. The aim of providing such assistance was to empower the farmers to become Black commercial farmers in their own right.

Amongst the diverse types of assistance acknowledged by the participants; farm infrastructure and/or equipment ranked top of the list. This was followed by financial assistance, training provision, the irrigation system and mentorship. Also mentioned were state site visits, farm animals, and farm vehicles. Three participants stated that they had not received any assistance from the government. The following texts express the claims of the participants:

> *"They gave us maize seeds which we were able to use. We also received an engine for the borehole. We have a huge*

pest problem on the farm. The government assistance with pesticides helped a lot to solve the problem" (Participant 4).

"I received seedlings from the government. I received them before and after I became a beneficiary of the RECAP" (Participant 13).

"They bought me equipment, built pig pens, offices, and tunnels to help with the water. The assistance was incredibly supportive" (Participant 27).

Farm infrastructure and equipment are farm structures, machinery, cultivating implements, and irrigation implements with which the government assisted the participants in order for them to succeed fully in their farming. This assistance received the highest numbers of acknowledgments. The much-needed equipment fulfilled a desire and gave them encouragement to pursue their aims in farming.

The findings on the various forms of government assistance tell us that the government hopes to achieve equity and increase productivity by merging agrarian and industrial schemes to boost growth. The data extracts demonstrate that land reform through the provision of farm equipment to participants serves the purpose of shrinking the inequity gap.

Besides tangible tools or resources, 22 participants highlighted that they also received financial assistance, with some stating that the Department of Agriculture had assisted them before they became beneficiaries of the RECAP. The financial assistance was offered to help purchase farm materials. Other sources of financial assistance came during the COVID-19 period as relief funds. The participants explained:

"We received 25%, which is R1 200 000 RECAP from the Department of Rural Development" (Participant 1).

> *"We received 25% from the Department of Rural Development; the monetary value of that was R1.2 million"* (Participant 2).

> *"Yes, in 2020 they helped us also with the presidential stimuli strategy. Oh, it was called a COVID-19 intervention. They funded us with something like R40 000. I managed to buy food for my cattle and other things. It was better"* (Participant 15).

The findings above demonstrate how much participants obtained from the RECAP in terms of financial assistance and how this assistance supported the participants in enhancing their livelihood security. The results in this thesis illustrate that the majority of beneficiaries received once-off financial support to assist them in their various farm projects. It is argued that this financial assistance permitted the participants to be financially independent to some extent, but because farming requires a constant financial input, in reality, it was insufficient. Having some money arguably empowered the farmers to be confident in managing their money. Tarekegne, Wesselink, Biemans and Mulder (2021:481-502), however point out that offering large amounts of money to farmers without proper money management skills tends to result in funds being mismanaged or misdirected into activities that were unrelated to agriculture.

The various types of government assistance are discussed further below as subthemes emerging from this theme.

5.6.2.1 Agricultural training

The government facilitated agricultural training to help farmers learn how to manage their farms and build skills regarding crop production and harvesting. Sixteen participants responded that they had been trained. The training included modules in different crop mechanisation, cattle breeding and animal production, farm management, firebreaks, and safety. Overall, the participants explained such

training as having a positive influence on the general farming performance, as shown in the following excerpts:

> *"What made us stronger was that they showed us how to do things and succeed. We are still on the farm because we followed the lessons from our training"* (Participant 1).

> *"Yes, I received the training in livestock, crops, and grains. I'm doing very well. Mixed farming gives me an extra advantage over those farming only cattle or grains"* (Participant 10).

> *"Yes, I gained more skills, and the training gave us a chance to voice our concerns by asking questions. You gain more information in the training by asking questions"* (Participant 14).

The findings indicate that most of the participants received agricultural training from the RECAP. The phrase "made us stronger" implies that the knowledge acquired from the training had the added benefit of building confidence. In this regard, Mkuhlani *et al* (2020:7-29) point out that agricultural training is not only about technical assistance, but also about the perception that the farmers are worthy of the investment. While efforts were made in training the participants to become sustainable farmers, the ability to make good judgements and take quick decisions on personal capacity building and enterpreneurism or the ability to start new businesses, are solely the responsibility of the individual.

Nine participants replied that they had received no training, and all of them expressed their dissatifaction with regard to the inadequate or no training they received from the RECAP. These nine participants admitted that they had had little knowledge of farming prior to the RECAP**;** therefore, they needed more time to adjust and learn, as stated below:

"In the beginning, we weren't trained. We received agricultural training later from the Department of Agriculture. We only received training and mentorship when we had the 25%, but when the 25% finished, the mentor also disappeared" (Participant 24).

"Not to lie, I never received any training through the RECAP. But Senzo, the CEO of AGRIDELIGHT, has helped me a lot. That young man was committed to seeing me succeed" (Participant 28).

"No, I did not receive any training from the RECAP. I was trained by the Afrikaners. What I do here is to help train others who are struggling" (Participant 29).

"No, I got no training. I worked with the Boers for 30 years. So, I have experience of farming" (Participant 30).

The participants who had no direct training from the RECAP, nevertheless, did receive some form of training at some point from other corporations such as AGRIDELIGHT, and individual White farmers, for whom they had worked. A fact that should not be disregarded is that all nine of these participants expressed a willingness to be trained.

5.6.2.2 Mentorship

Mentoring was provided to the beneficiaries by the government, aiming to empower farmers with little experience to gain more skills from experienced farmers. Twenty-one participants had mentors who ensured that their learning and training process yielded the intended outcome, which was to help them grow and have a broad understanding of farming. Some participants conveyed their relationships with their mentors:

"We are able to liaise with the local government officials, through the mentor, in the event that we encounter a problem" (Participant 6).

"Yes, we had a mentor for two years, but he eventually realised that my father knew farming quite well, so for two years he was there, but after two years he said: 'No you don't need me; you can continue on your own'" (Participant 10).

*"Yes, my mentor used to train me, and he was employed by the government" (*Participant 20).

"I find it extremely helpful that I have access to the government officials; it is motivating. I am able to lay out my concerns. Speaking to someone about your problems helps you reflect and you are able to find strength and solutions in that conversation because the official usually knows better than you" (Participant 22).

The mentorship programme allowed mentees to communicate their challenges to the DALRRD through their mentors, thus enabling them to elicit answers from the Department. However, the nine participants who never had mentors went through tough experiences. For six of the nine participants without mentors, their assigned mentors never showed up, and for the other three participants, their mentors met with them only once and were not helpful, for example:

"When the RECAP came with a mentor it was very difficult, because he was not helpful, and we cannot fight since the RECAP is the one giving us the money" (Participant 11).

"He never showed up on the farm, not once. But I lost R90 000 to the mentorship" (Participant 17).

> *"The RECAP is a good thing but the problem with a good thing is that when it is incorrectly administered, it yields poor results. The RECAP comes with a mentor, and for one to receive any assistance from the RECAP, you must have a mentor first. I had an unscrupulous mentor. Both of us needed to open an account, and the mentor will have to sign when I want to make a withdrawal. This was a problem. And another thing is that we were not given any course on financial management or business management, especially on how to implement a business plan. Some of us were fortunate because we did go to school but think of the people who never went to school. You find them being victimised by their mentors. Some of the mentors are shady. They're just in this for money and not there to help you to execute your business plan. When it comes to purchasing equipment, they will lead you to purchase from someone they know; it could be from one of their relatives. Take for instance they give you three to four months to utilise all funds they provided for you"* (Participant 21).

Considering the fact that White farmers are more experienced than Black farmers, one would think they would readily share their experiences. However, only one participant indicated that he had a White mentor, and this relationship was based on the fact that the participant's father worked for him for more than nine years. Another respondent intimated that some experienced White farmers are unwilling to mentor Black farmers:

> *"They* [White farmers] *are busy with their own stuff, while the Black mentors do not have the experience needed by their mentees. As a result, many farmers are not mentored or are given mentorship that is not suited to the crops they are farming. In this regard, many farmers had to fend for themselves"* (Participant 12).

Some participants who had mentors did not see them often, and they believed that the mentors were enriching themselves at their expense without doing the required job. Furthermore, misrepresentation and exploitation are some of the disadvantages that came along with the introduction of mentors. The participants mentioned different views about the mentorship they received, for example:

> *"The RECAP offered financial assistance to farmers on condition that a mentor is assigned and this assignment is the responsibilty of the farmer. However, the mentor never came to my farm to advise and guide me. Once the mentor received payment upfront, he disappeared with my money"* (Participant 8).

The participants emphasised the significance of having experienced mentors as they are seen as a support system and a link between the government and the community. Finally, the participants felt that it was their responsibility as farmers to also mentor young and up-coming farmers of their community, given the fact that others have shared their knowledge and experience with them.

Baudron *et al* (2019:1-13) argue that the government's training programme was meant to positively influence farm productivity and achieve one of the RECAP's objectives. Mentorship provides the knowledge needed for transformation and sustainable farming and information sharing. Such a transformative process was to be aided by strategic partners as stated in the RECAP's founding documents. From the RECAP's inception, the government have acknowledged the fact that mentors, especially White farmers, are the most educated and experienced people to take on the responsibility of mentorship (Qange & Mdoda 2019). Mentorship training of new farmers was about relationship building based on commitment from both the mentors and mentees.

5.6.2.3 Irrigation systems

Another commonly mentioned state support issue was the irrigation systems made available to many participants. Twenty-two of the respondents reported that they

had no problem with water, and from these, ten had direct access to irrigable water and eight had either a borehole, JoJo tanks, or a dam or river running through their farms. Participants who were assisted in one way or the other had this to say:

> *"What the government gave us was a JoJo tank and the others we found here on the farm, the irrigation system, and everything else"* (Participant 1).

> *"They helped us get the borehole. It has given us easy access to clean water"* (Participant 6).

> *"Rural Development helped us with the water before they built the infrastructure"* (Participant 7).

Eight participants, however, reported that they were facing water scarcity. This was mostly explained as being part of the drought that caused some of the dams to run out of water. One participant mentioned that she launched a complaint about her borehole not functioning properly to the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, and the Department promised to send someone to attend to the matter, but no one came to her assistance. As a result, she struggled with water and most of her crops did not grow well. Another participant indicated that the Department assisted with the borehole, but the project was unsuccessful; therefore, they abandoned it. A third participant shared that the Department sent someone to sink a borehole, but the worker did not dig deep enough, and the project failed as well. Participant 11 added that on his farm, there was insufficient water to supply the entire field:

> *"We have a very big problem with water here. There is not enough water for irrigation"* (Participant 11).

Following further probes about water issues, some of the participants acknowledged that farmers who mostly relied on rainfed crop cultivation were worried about climate change, for example:

> *"Climate change manifests itself in the form of drought and often, the dams dry up. As a result, the government assists farmers with borehole water for irrigation. This reduces the demand placed on the municipal supply for farming activities"* (Participant 3).

Climate change was narrated as having a differential effect on farmers according to race, for example, one participant said:

> *"White commercial farmers who previously ran some of the farms would ordinarily not have faced such problems with irrigation because they had the resources or access to financial services to invest in the farms and make them profitable. Some farmers found some irrigation systems on the farm, which had most likely been left behind by the previous* [white] *owner. Unfortunately, the Black farmers have neither the means to improve their water supply systems privately nor the resources to tackle climate change, which aggravates the challenges in farming. When the municipal authorities or government bodies fail to assist farmers, the outcome is that most of them abandon the farming projects"* (Participant 12).

Fanadzo and Ncube (2018:436-448) argue that water scarcity remains a major dilemma for food production and sustainable development, which had affected small-scale farmers whose agricultural production relied on rainfall for their livelihoods. It became apparent from the interviews that water scarcity in the study areas was severe. The research participants with access to irrigation schemes benefited from constant water supplies. Koech and Langat (2018:1771) posit that irrigation systems possibly increase water-use efficiency through modern techniques and practices that involve tillage and nutrient management in soils. The potential for improving water-use efficiency in smallholder irrigated agriculture is

therefore substantial, as smallholder farmers are particularly vulnerable to climate change.

5.6.2.4 Farm animals

All the participants who reported that they had farm animals were farmers involved in either mixed farming or animal breeding and livestock production. In terms of the sample, seventeen respondents owned farm animals, while thirteen were fully involved in cash crops production. The following participants shared that:

> *"We own cows"* (Participant 4).

> *"We received cattle twice. The first was outside of the RECAP. The second time was from the RECAP. It was 15 cattle and two bulls that we received"* (Participant 9).

> *"They* [the state via the RECAP] *bought us a cow; till today we are surviving on that" (*Participant 25).

Farm animals play a vital role as food sources (Van Zanten, Van Ittersum & De Boer, 2019:18-22). An advantage of conducting mixed farming is that the animal dung can be used as organic manure for crop cultivation, an alternative when the farmers fail to receive any or sufficient fertilisers. Those with experience can likewise use some of the farm animals to till the soil in case they do not have the necessary machinery or are unable to repair them. Such factors not only save money and time, but they improve the chances of success of the projects. Furthermore, mixed farming can give some security to the farmer in the sense that the animals could be spared in the face of a calamity that destroys the crops, and *vice versa*. Focusing on crop cultivation, on the other hand, implies a larger crop yield with greater chances of making the transition to commercial farming (Van Zanten *et al* 2019).

The interviews established that for the farmers in this study, although revenue obtained from farm animals were earned annually, at the individual farm level, cash can be generated regularly from direct sales of livestock products, such as milk, eggs, and manure. Abegunde, Sibanda and Obi (2020:195) state that integrated crop and livestock production requires more management practices, but often the inevitable outcome of high temperatures and low rainfall is forced diversification.

5.6.2.5 Farm equipment

All the participants acknowledged receipt of farm equipment in kind or cash. Twenty-six participants received farm equipment comprising tractors, farmhouses, farm vehicles (two respondents received bakkies), dams, seedlings, and fertiliser. Four participants reported that they did not get farm equipment but were instead offered finance, which they invested in their farms. Therefore, all the participants were assisted in one way or the other, for example:

> *"Farming was good because they gave us* [a] *tractor"* (Participant 8).

> *"I got seedlings and fertiliser"* (Participant 9).

> *"The equipment that the government gave us I can't remember the details of it, but I know the major one was a tractor. It was one tractor, and we bought some cattle handle* [handling] *equipment"* (Participant 22).

The use of farm equipment by the participants, especially agricultural machinery such as tractors, allowed the farmers to use their land to the maximum. The justification is that the farm machinery improved the usage of land. In other words, land that lay fallow before the coming of the RECAP could now be utilised effectively.

The different types of farm equipment facilitated the farming process at every stage, from tilling the soil to harvesting. Two of the participants who received cash but did not receive equipment registered their disappointment as follows:

> *"No, I did not get equipment or fertiliser. The RECAP asked for my business plan. Some of the trees I planted I bought out of my pocket"* (Participant 21).

> *"I did not receive any equipment as assistance"* (Participant 25).

The participants who did not receive direct equipment from the RECAP got financial assistance. The reasoning is that when particpants are choosing farming equipment, they select/buy machinery that is appropriate for the type of work being carried out on their farms. This is because every participant presented a different plan to the RECAP. As a result, assistance is provided according to the need of the type of farming; therefore, their choice of agricultural equipment should enhance their efficiency and production speed.

The participants' responses to government assistance reflected the extent to which their individual needs were met. Accordingly, those who were in need of heavy-duty machinery had a positive attitude as their needs were fulfilled, and *vice vera*. Generally, the majority were happy with the assistance, especially the finances, equipment, farm animals and seedlings because these assets increased their productivity, for example:

> *"It was good because they gave us a tractor. We were able to get the best results because we got a trophy in 2008 from the provincial authorities and [in] 2009 we got it too from the national authorities. With assistance, we built an office on the farm, a packhouse and tunnels" (*Participant 8).

> *"It helps with the farming process and to put the learning into to practice with the right equipment. We received more support and assistance"* (Participant 12).

The participants indicated that the farm equipment helped them to manage all the levels of their farming activities and increased production on their farms. Overall, conversations about the government's efforts in assisting them to improve their farms suggested that the respondents were satisfied. Nevertheless, the challenges faced by the RECAP beneficiaries with regard to government assistance included inadequate funds for expansion and the late arrival of resources, especially during the planting season. They complained that sometimes the seedlings would be damaged as a result of the late distribution:

> *"The finance wasn't good because it was little, compared to the needs of this farm. It was a small amount"* (Participant 1).

> *"The main problem was receiving the seeds late.They didn't arrive on time. Some seeds that arrived had expired, so when we tried to plant them they wouldn't grow… a lot of them…."* (Participant 3).

All the participants who received financial assistance from the government reported the finance was inadequate, with too little impact for significant sustainable farming. As a result, production on such farms was limited to the financial capacity that the participants had. This explains the persistent problems with land reform projects. The participants mentioned that timing is what makes the difference between a good yield and bad one.

Other participants shared their concerns about the infrastrature, notably the fencing they received from the government. They indicated that fences intended to discourage livestock theft and straying of the animals were inadequate:

> *"There was inadequate fencing; it didn't cover t*

he whole farm" (Participant 10).

"The fencing is too little I… not covering the whole area. There was no control over our cattle…. to camp them" (Participant 18).

The government's inconsistency with the implementation of the the RECAP policy is also a cause for concern. For instance, the failure to deliver support and services on time effected the production process and frustrated the farmers' abilities to function effectively. Captured below are their grievances about the multiple requests made to the government and the constant disappointments:

"Now we have a problem that we used the RECAP [funds] *to build chicken coops; but when you pay it goes 2-3 weeks without getting chickens. Just like now, we want chickens, and they tell us about bird flu. That breaks us because we have already paid the money, but we haven't received the chickens. And they give us chickens of inferior quality because the government doesn't have a hatchery. We asked for a hatchery here a long time ago, but still nothing"* (Participant 7).

"However, even if we speak to the officials about our problems on the farm, they do not have the authority to implement solutions and they are still required to get approval, and those processes take a long time. While we wait, things continue to get ruined. It's no fault of the officials but that of the government. The whole process is slow, and things fall apart while you are still working and waiting on them" (Participant 13).

"We do not get enough herbicides or pesticides, so we are not able to spray our entire plantation. The government doesn't provide everything for you 100%. The provision is

limited because there are many of us. So, you have to plant in phases" (Participant 18).

The participants expressed their frustration about government timing and the unpredictable nature of government supplies of agricultural implement. Equally important is the communication from the farmers to the respective state departments. This will require an efficient support system, such as different infrastructure and equipment to facilitate communication on time.

Although the participants faced several challenges with farm equipment, it was discovered that many of them did not have the necessary machinery for farming and, frequently, they were forced to hire resources, such as tractors and other machines for harvesting, from white farmers. Some of the farmers who had machines, did not have the finance to maintain them; and if they did, the required maintenance knowledge was often lacking. The participants were asked if they had requested assistance from large commercial farmers, and what kind of assistance this entailed. Their responses were:

"Yes I do. I was in need of a bull for my cattle as my bull died. My neighbour sold it to me for R3 500. I could not afford to buy it on the market because bulls are very expensive, as it ranged between R35 000-1 000 000. Yoh! It helps a lot. You cannot make progress with your cattle without a bull" (Participant 9).

"Your question is technical, but yes. I do hire some machines from commercial farmers. So, I can say that they are helping me" (Participant 11).

"Yes we did. They assisted us with harvester machines as we hired them. We don't have the finance to buy a harvester machine" (Participant 17).

In the face of such complications, the recipients with prior experience of farming or those acquainted with manual methods used in small-scale farming can, to some extent, save some of their produce compared to those who came on board with little knowledge or farming experience. The importance of training the recipients before handing them funds for farming projects cannot be overemphasised.

Olofsson (2020:37-59) argues that a combination of big commercial farmers and small-scale farmers is needed to enable an upwardly mobile class of farmers. The findings in this study on assistance from commercial farmers indicate that it is important to create a knowledge economy especially in the agricultural system as there is a knowledge gap between the big commercial farmers and small-scale Black farmers, In addition to perfecting their technical skills through added knowledge, the participants in this study received leadership and entrepreneurial knowledge that encourages development in agricultural diversification, to increase the livelihood potential in the long run for the participants and community at large.

5.6.2.6 The most valuable assistance

When asked what they regarded as the most valuable support received, eighteen respondents indicated that they valued the financial support which was used to buy farm equipment or to repair, fix, and renovate their homes. The next most often-mentioned assistance was the equipment that they got directly from the government. These included cattle, kraal and tractors, an irrigation system, seedlings, and grains.

Site visits were mentioned by twenty-one participants amongst the most valuable assistance received. This was explained as visits from government officials, some of whom gave valuable input to the farmers, while others evaluated silently. The purpose of the physical check-up on farms by officials was to assess the beneficiaries' performance and progress and thereby monitor the implementation of the RECAP. As can be seen from the quotations below, some research participants valued the visits, or the particular visitors. Others regarded the visits as some form of surveillance to see whether they were actually farming responsibly, or perhaps subletting illegally. The participants indicated:

"Yes, they only come when you call them. The visits we get nowadays are from some university graduates. They come to gain experience from us" (Participant 4).

"Yes, always. In 2020, they came to help us with the presidential stimuli strategy. It was called the COVID-19 intervention. They gave us R40 000. I managed to buy food for my cattle and other things" (Participant 8).

"Yes, they do come. When they come, they don't come to mentor or to bring something, they come to assess the place. Some form of check-up" (Participant 12).

"Yes, we do receive visits, but they don't come frequently, and when they do come, we do not gain anything because their knowledge about farming is very limited" (Participant 14).

"Yes, they come to assess, but when there are any damages, they don't assist you" (Participant 25).

"They were here recently, but you don't gain anything. They just come to assess the condition on the farm and also to see if you are still working the farm because people sub-lease their farms" (Participant 26).

"Since COVID-19, they've not been coming except for Nokulunga, who came recently. She comes sometimes to assist us with vegetable planting and teach us and correct our mistakes. She's a hard worker" (Participant 28).

> *"Yes, they do come to assess the farm. You know all these things are not actually ours. They come to see if everything is intact"* (Participant 29).

The participants indicated that state officials occasionally assess their farms, or when the participants call on them to do so. However, there was a feeling that some of the site visits were nothing more than monitoring because they were not the rightful owners of the farms. There was a constant fear that a bad report from a site visit would result in the farmer being evicted, as expressed in the following account:

> *"The hurtful realisation is that [despite] your hard work on the farm you might not be rewarded or be able to pass it on to your children as an inheritance…it is disheartening. "*

The participants further mentioned that although their visits to the farm were infrequent, the officials did not have much to offer them in terms of assistance. Raidimi and Kabiti (2019:520) argue the government must fulfil their capacity-building mandate. The findings revealed that site workers contributed to some extent to gains in knowledge, skills, and expertise. The services provided by site officials also created some degree of awareness on issues relating to agricultural challenges. However, Fanadzo and Ncube (2018:436-448) recommend that the government should re-train extension staff to acquire new skills and competencies related to climate change.

The low outreach of the site officers may be attributed to shortages of staff, a lack of resources and the poor use of government resources. Most participants indicated that they would rather ask for advice from big commercial farmers close by than wait on the state site workers.

The conversations also revealed disappointment about the support. In this regard, the most common theme was disappointment with the state support as the government had made empty promises because multiple requests for assistance

were met with rejection. The main frustration was with the government's inability to deliver the requested goods and services timeously, for example:

> *"They don't help you. Now that my tractor is broken, they lack the ability to help. They feed us with information, but they lack implementation"* (Participant 4).

> *"It's the empty promises they make. The government doesn't provide you (100%) with everything; their provision is limited because there are many of us"* (Participant 23).

Many participants are frustrated by the many failed promises of government, and some have attributed it to a lack of adequately trained extension staff. Training is probably one of the most important requirements for successful development and the management of small-scale farming schemes in rural areas. Antwi-Agyei and Stringer (2021:100304) argue that various farm projects have met with numerous setbacks, of which broken promises were the most disheartening. This was confirmed by the participants in the interviews, who explained that the disappointments were made even more bitter because a Black government had promised so much in terms of redress but had delivered so little. Mubecua and Mlambo (2021:55-77) aver hat the RECAP is direct reparation for the way land was stolen from Black people, but in practice, has quickly run into many new problems as the government was forced to make numerous promises to those who had received the restored land, but had no ideas on how to fulfil such promises.

Probing in the theme of assistance moved the conversations to the participants' expectations for further assistance from the RECAP. Almost all the participants suggested that they desired to obtain more financing, farm equipment, farm implements and irrigation systems. Figure 5.6 shows the responses about desired further assistance, namely that participants needed more infrastructure, resources, and equipment. The statements below support the claims:

"I wish to get more money so as to maintain the farms' needs" (Participant 2).

"I wish the RECAP can fund us again so that we can plant macadamia trees. We want to create jobs here because lots of people are sitting idle and they end up in crime" (Participant 5).

"There's one thing with which we are struggling. I wish we will have a harvester machine. This will greatly contribute to our progress" (Participant 15).

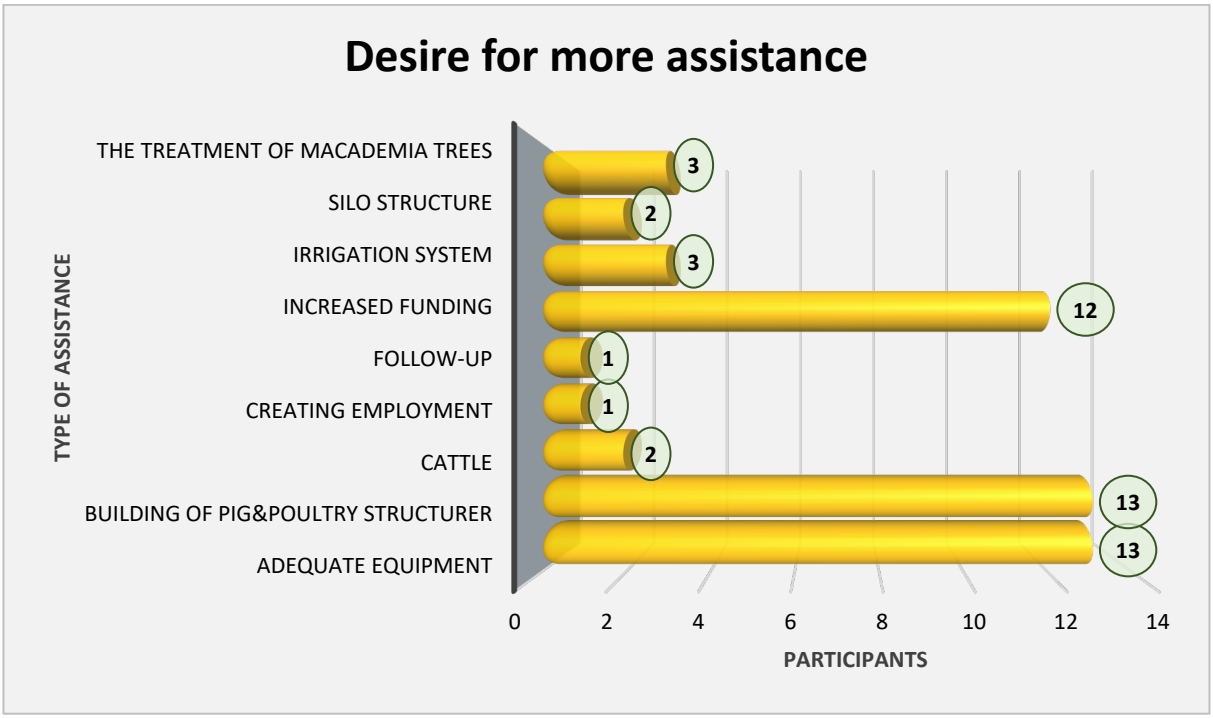

Figure 5.6: Desire for more assistance

Source: Author, based on interviews

Participant 5's observations about creating jobs for fellow Black people is a laudable goal and indeed, one of the objectives of the RECAP. However, this can only be achieved if more farmers adopt this mindset and if the government facilitates the process by supporting such initiatives.

Eager to expand their farms for increased production to meet market demands, many participants expressed a strong hope for additional assistance. For some, the quest to increase production is spurred by a desire for a better livelihood and security arising from the possible increase in profit margins. For example:

> *"I need a bull and an irrigation system to speed up my production"* (Participant 8).

> *"Oh! The harvester. It's a challenge since we have soya and maize. During the harvesting period, we don't face a lot of problems, but only with soya, the Whites come over to assist us with their harvester"* (Participant 10).

> *"If I can be assisted with two million rand to develop the farm, by buying planting equipment – tractors, and harvesters"* (Participant 15).

> *"Finance. Obviously, what we initially requested was not given. If they had given us, it would have fast-tracked the process. I mean after ten years we are still trying to get to where we want to be"* (Participant 16).

It should be noted that these desires for further assistance stem from the participants using the big, commercial farms as a point of comparison. While some needs of the farmers in this direction may not be contained in the business plan, constant evaluation and reassessment by the government can lead to the provision of extra aid to ensure that the objectives of the RECAP are achieved. Some of the participants stated that:

> *"There are two things I need. Harvesters and tractors. We are always hiring from the big farms. We want our own, so as to stop begging"* (Participant 22).

> *"I need equipment for grain plantation. I'm highly challenged by the big farms when it comes to maize and beans production. First, my equipment is pro-forestry, they are not for ploughing or farming. I don't have a planter and my spray is really bad, and harvesters are too expensive"* (Participant 24).

> *"What I need now is implements. Last time we received from the RECAP but there was a drought, and we had a loss while others were producing"* (Participant 25).

These expressed needs for modern farm equipment, implements and irrigation systems are to be expected and demonstrate the research participants' interest in increasing farm efficiency, reducing manual labour and maximising productivity. Kepe and Hall (2016:27) argue that the intention of the government to improve the well-being and livelihood of the Black farmers through land redistribution, was designed to give hope to the Blacks. However, the government assumed power at a time when financial shortages constrained the delivery on the promises made to the Black farmers (Kepe & Hall, 2016).

The reasons advanced by the participants for requiring more assistance is presented below as most of them believed that additional support from the government would enable them to be more effective. The reasons reflect past experiences of support that proved to be helpful, as well as the feeling that the full commitments made under the RECAP had not been delivered on, for example:

> *"Yes, we need more assistance because since they gave us the tractors, we were able to work and water the crops and protect the farm from fires"* (Participant 4).

> *"Yes, because we're supposed to get R19 million, but we received R 5 million, and the production of R800,000, and the money was used by the mentor, not us, as beneficial* [beneficiaries]*"* (Participant 8).

> *"Yes, because when you take the chickens out of their coops, the coops must remain empty for two to three weeks so they can be disinfected, clean*[ed] *and left to dry out properly. Now we are force*[d] *to put all the chickens together, in two to three groups, in one coop because we don't have coops, and they easily get diseases. When one is sick all the chickens become sick"* (Participant 23).

Akinola (2020a:215-232) argues that many farmers believed that the many land reform projects were an indication that the government had a reservoir of funds for agricultural purposes. Applying this to the participants for this study, one may argue that the beneficiaries reasoned that the government is able to grant further financial subsidies even in cases of mismanagement, especially as caps on financial support were removed and the government aid was directed more towards projects that stood a greater chance of success. The mismatch between expectations of limitless support and reality; hence, were major obstacles in the transformation of agriculture.

Additionally, participants 3, 14, and 16 indicated they would like to have harvesting machines that would help them to execute their jobs efficiently as well as storage facilities like a silo to be able to meet the market demand and generate more profit. Indeed, they hoped to adopt what was done by other farmers in terms of selling their produce, preparing for the market, or accessing the market, since they had all the facilities on their farms. For instance, in preparing the animals, they needed to make sure the meat met the standard requirements and was ready for the market and that all the health precautions re met. These participants mentioned that:

> *"There's one thing with which we are all struggling - a harvester machine that will contribute greatly to our farming progress"* (Participant 3).

> *"We also need a well-equipped silo where our produce can be secure and remain fresh"* (Participant 14).

> *"I want to have my own abattoir to produce and prepare the meat for the market"* (Participant 16).

From the interviews, it became clear that most research participants were unable to purchase farm machinery and that when they requested support from the Department of Agriculture, the response was that the department is waiting for the service provider. In all instances, farmers were kept in suspense, uncertain about what might happen next.

The participants further highlighted that there was an unclear money distribution mandate from the RECAP because they were told that they would be given 25% and were not told what the initial amount would be or what the equivalent figure of 25% was. They were also told that the rest of the money would be sent later in the year. These participants detailed that:

> *"Yes, we need more assistance because we do not meet the market demand because most of our products are not up to standard"* (Participant 10).

> "Yes, because we *don't have a silo and a harvesting machine, therefore, we suffer from price fluctuations because the timing for our good[s] to reach the market is when the prices are down. So, we don't make much profit, and the Whites are profiting"* (Participant 15).

> *"We don't know that the 25% was a cut from what amount; we don't know, we were just told, this is 25% that you have received. We don't know if we are still going to get the other percentage from that whole"* (Participant 23).

Figure 5.7 represents the RECAP funding model, as presented by the DRDLR (now DALRRD). It specifically outlined how the RECAP project would be financed. The RECAP's objectives clearly state how the funds would be allocated to the

farmers according to the business plans. The RECAP budget had to function in two dimensions: the capitalisation element and the development element. In all instances, at the implementation phase, the farmers were not informed of these two dimensions, and therefore, most of the funds they received were misallocated. All they were given was a once-off 25% payment with promises to receive more later. As a result, the developmental elements (mentoring, capacity building and infrastructural development) were actually missing or not implemented adequately.

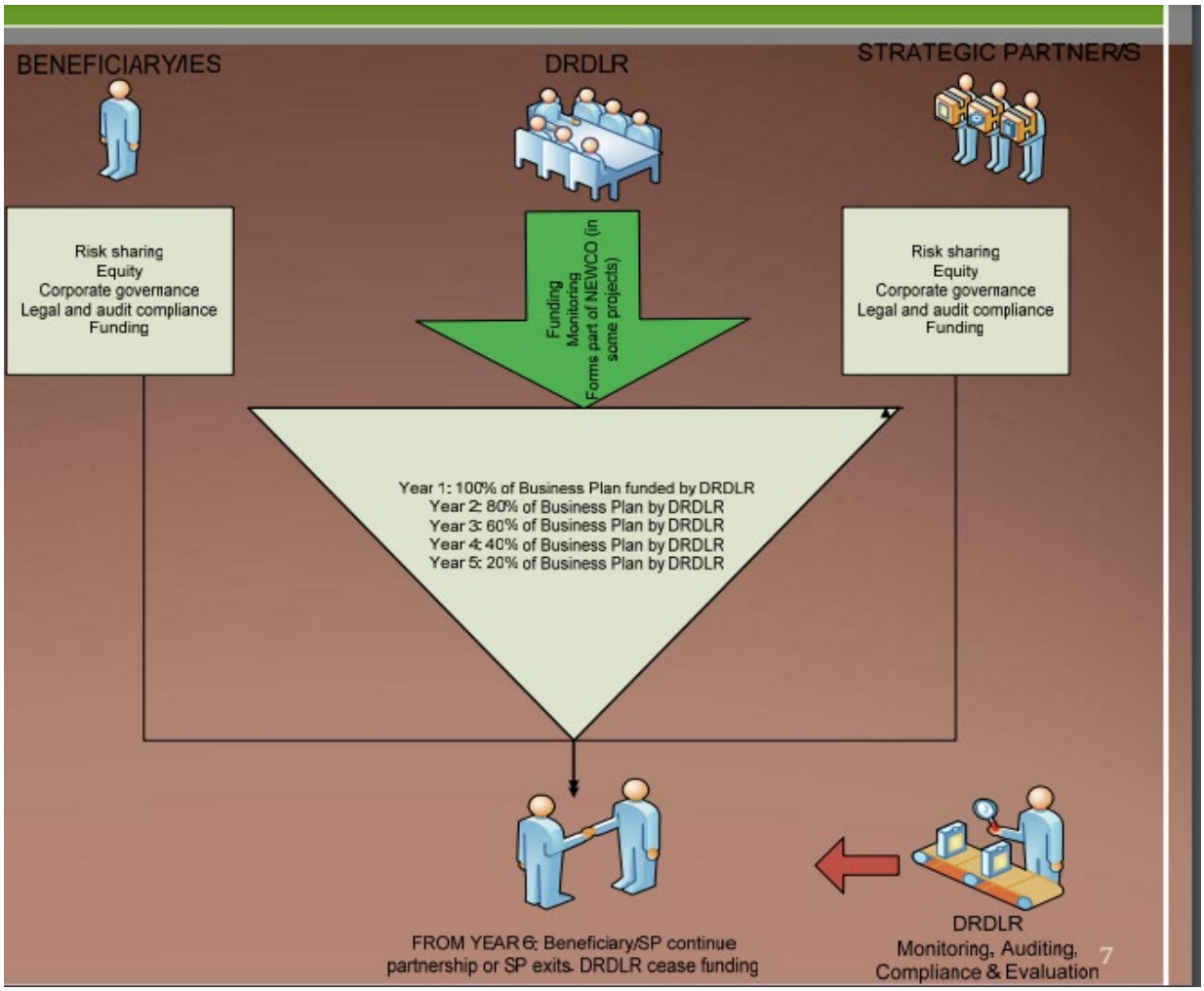

Figure 5.7: RADP (RECAP) funding model.

Source: DRDLR presentation 2011-2012.

As indicated in Figure 5.7, the farmers were entitled to 100% funding in their first year, according to their business plans, then 80%, 60%,40% and 20% for years two, three, four, and the final year, respectively. According to the participants, they were not aware of what the 25% they received represented and or if they would

receive the rest of the money. Consequently, miscommunication and inefficiency in the implementation process contributed to the current state of the farms.

It was interesting to discover that only two participants felt that the financial assistance received was sufficient to implement the work needed on the farms in line with their business plans. In both these cases, these farmers were aware of the amount of money assigned per beneficiary through reports from those who had received prior funding from the RECAP. As a result, their expectation was fixed on an amount. However, for the rest of the participants, dashed expectations were a constant concern, for example:

> *"The money was not enough; my farm is mostly forest and I realised I needed boreholes for cows to drink water"* (Participant 14).

> *"It was a small amount as we were expecting more. The money was finished before we could achieve what was on the business plan"* (Participant 18).

> *"What we needed to do was a lot. We needed tractors. The government refused to give us the initial budget we were presented with. They kept saying 'No' 'No'. We had to reduce the amount, and finally, they gave us one-third* [of the] *amount of what we requested. This amount was insufficient"* (Participant 20).

It was unrealistic for the farmers to expect specific sums of money simply based on the past experiences of other project recipients. The fact that they disregarded the contents of their business plans, which could require that they received less funding than previous beneficiaries, gives an indication of their mindsets. Furthermore, not understanding that a business plan is just a proposal, which the funder has a right to modify to fit their budget is another handicap. If these shortcomings had been addressed by the government prior to funding the beneficiaries, some challenges could have been averted.

The interviews revealed that the farmers received a once-off financial payment in contradiction to the RECAP's founding document, which outlined a five-year support cycle. It is unclear how the government expects Black farmers who are unstable financially to migrate from subsistence to commercial farming without sufficient financing. Moreover, the actual level of investment among the farmers is relatively low, and the majority of them do not have access to outside financial services due to the informal nature of their farming activities and the lack of guarantees.

5.7 CURRENT FARM PRODUCTIVITY

The discussions about current farm productivity focused on the production of various commodities on each participant's farm. One of the RECAP's objectives was to increase productivity on beneficiaries' farms. In this regard, the government supplied the farmers with the necessary equipment as discussed earlier in this chapter. Figure 5.8 illustrates the subthemes in this section.

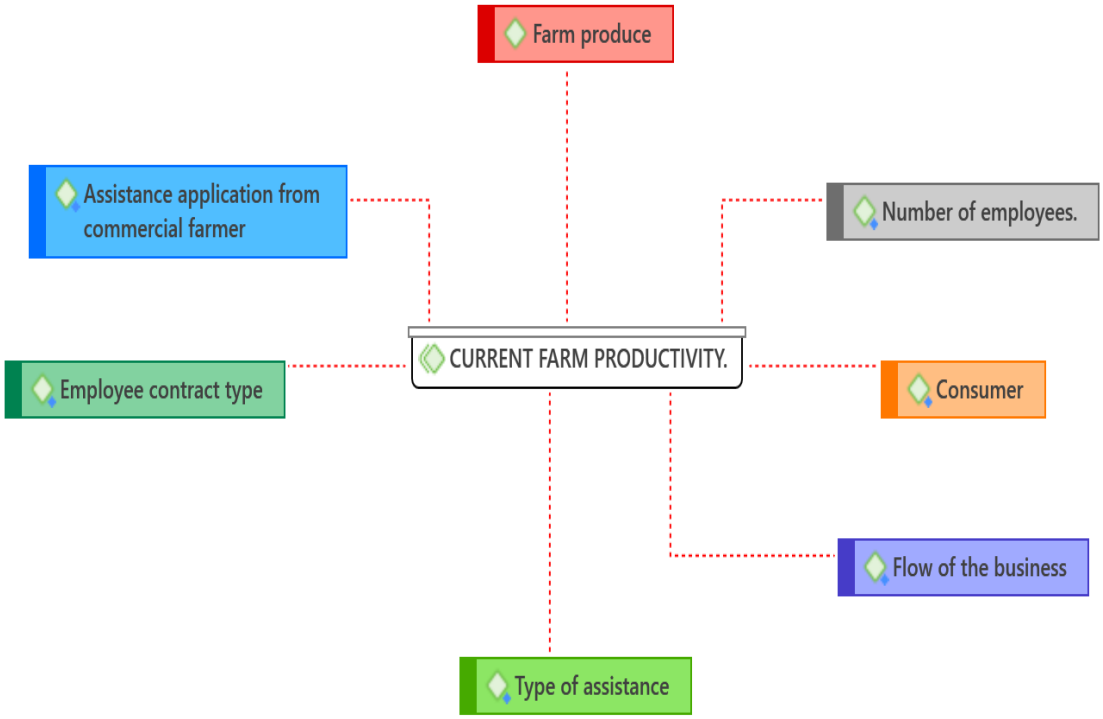

Figure 5.8: Subthemes in current farm productivity

Source: Author, based on interviews

Current farm productivity is linked to the third research objective of this study that sought to evaluate the role of the RECAP in enhancing the livelihood security of the beneficiaries and the community at large. The subthemes examined here include farm produce in current productivity, farm produce sold in current productivity, jobs created in current productivity and assistance from commercial farmers.

Farm productivity, in terms of economic evaluation, is the proportion of agricultural output to input (Baudron *et al* 2019:1-13). The participants were prompted to discuss their current productivity, and as the subthemes below show, there is a need for more resources and effort to obtain sustainable results, particularly, where climatic conditions make agriculture impossible, challenging, and unprofitable. Accordingly, the farms that faced fewer challenges realised some profitable growth but not sufficient so to meet the demands of the rural population.

5.7.1 Farm produce under current production

Nine participants stated that they were livestock farmers, which included rearing cattle, pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens. Six participants produced vegetables, such as kale, salad greens and root vegetables. Five participants grew mielies. Other agricultural products were gum trees (three participants), forest timber (two participants), seedlings (one participant) and macadamias (one participant). The farmers highlighted that they were grateful for the RECAP as the assistance received empowered them to achieve maximum productivity. However, their desire was to increase even more with additional implements.

The participants stated that their choice of crops and/or agricultural products were determined by the experience they had while working on their parents' farms or as labourers on White-owned farms. However, some ventured into unfamiliar agricultural commodities to achieve the maximum return on the available land, and to explore other options. As long as the agricultural practice was successful, the participants decided to choose expansion with the aid received from the government, for example:

> *"We produce livestock and cattle"* (Participant 2).
>
> *"We produce vegetables and sweet potatoes"* (Participant 14).
>
> *"We produce crops such as mielies and wheat"* (Participant 26).

The participants' farm produce ranged from livestock to various perishable crops, such as vegetables, sweet potatoes, mielies and wheat, among others. Their choice of farm produce was influenced by their past experiences in growing these crops. Samuel, Sylvia and Casadevall (2019:1656402) suggest that food production for food security is dependent on agricultural production. Sylvester (2020:277) adds that there has been a lack of direction in farm programmes to support the Black farmers in their quest to become commercial farmers.

A major setback observed was the complete absence and/or inadequate storage facilities for Black farmers' produce, especially perishable commodities. More often than not, Black farmers were forced to ask for help from White farmers to store their goods, and only if they were lucky enough to have sufficient space at reasonable prices. It was discovered that most of the government storage facilities were not functioning well due to the lack of proper maintenance. As a result of storage limitations, there was a certain stigma attached to crops produced by Black farmers, which consequently received less attention compared with those of their White counterparts. The participants reported that:

> *"We struggle a lot because we don't have places to keep our produce, especially fresh ones. Every harvest time, you find a place where thieves break in and steal. They steal the maize, gather them in one spot, and then a vehicle comes and carries them off"* (Participant 2).

> *"Sometime, because our vegetables are not that fresh, we sell at give-away prices unlike our competitors"* (Participant 4).

> *"We lack the financial resources to build good storage for our crops. So, it's a big challenge"* (Participant 15).

The lack of adequate storage facilities is a grave concern for the participants because farmers had to figure out what to do with their crops when the harvesting season was approaching. Myeni *et al* (2019:3003) argue that a lack of adequate storage, preservation or packaging facilities may result in food wastage. Furthermore, the lack of prescribed storage facilities for foodstuffs remains a barrier to the growth of the agriculture sector resulting in post-harvest losses (Kamara, Conteh, Rhodes & Cooke 2019:14045). Therefore, it is crucial for the government to encourage the sharing of storage facilities whereby small-scale farmers can connect with nearby commercial farmers to access their storage facilities at an affordable cost. This could also serve as a means of reconciliation between both farming camps.

5.7.2 Farm produce sold under current production

The participants indicated that their farm produce was both for sale and for home consumption. However, the primarily focus of growing was for the market. Accordingly, thirteen of the respondents relied on vegetable sales, followed by maize (four participants) and poultry sales (four participants), timber sales (three participants), cattle (two participants), grass (one participant) and macadamias (one participant).

All the participants mentioned that they had few or no problems with accessing the local market. Some sold their produce to companies that dealt with agricultural products, such as Agri Service Proprietary Limited (AFGRI), Spar, Chop Chop or sometimes to terminals in Nelspruit, Mhlaba Uyalingana KZN, broilers, or directly to people in the community. Farmers priced their produce based on the market prices at any specific time. However, those who sold at pay points or directly to

people offered lower prices or auctioned them, especially perishable foodstuffs. The prices ranged from R5 per pack of vegetables, to ±R1 500 for goats (depending on their sizes) and ±R7 000 for cows (depending on their sizes). Participants indicated that:

> *"We sell vegetables for R5 per pack and one packet of maize is R5 as well"* (Participant 25).

> *"We sell chickens for R60 each and R45 for stock prices"* (Participant 27).

> *"We sell cattle. The price of a goat starts from R1 200 upwards and a cow from R7 000 upwards, depending on their sizes"* (Participant 29).

All the participants indicated that they produced a variety of products from beef and poultry to maize, fruit, and vegetables and that all their crops were sold except for extras for home consumption and donations to the less privileged. The participants further mentioned that the price of each crop sold was in accordance with the market prices. It is argued that poultry, for example, is a vital source of income as its products fetch multiple sources of revenue to the participants. The farmers did not only rely on the sale of live chickens but also generated revenue from chickens, meat, and eggs. The crucial role of this farm produce sold was to ensure the supply of food to vulnerable communities through informal traders, creating inclusive sales structures for smaller scale farmers to access markets and generate revenue (Ngema, Sibanda & Musemwa, 2018:3307).

Although there was considerable satisfaction with the local market access, some participants expressed a desire to access the mega supply chains and to have free access to the big markets. In this regard, a few concerns were raised, since the farmers did not have a particular market to which they supplied their goods and, consequently, trade with whoever was in need of their products and offered the best prices.

"Yes, I do sell them, but I don't have a specific abattoir. Hence, I put them on auction" (Participant 19).

"We keep shopping around for the best price. We also do online bidding for the cattle" (Participant 20).

"I do sell at auctions. The challenge I have is the turnaround time, but I do sell them" (Participant 22).

The participants mentioned that they needed access to big markets, especially for their livestock. The procedures to enter big markets was the responsibility of the participants as they needed to know their own markets and research possible target markets independently as part of their business plans. Borsellino, Schimmenti and Bilali (2020:2193) argue that the economic value attached to farm produce is determined by the market prices, and that the quality of the product is also an important aspect of access to a market.

It was disclosed in some of the interviews that the research participants had serious concerns about farm-to-market infrastructure. One research participant explained that farmers were often ambushed and assaulted by robbers, who either wanted money or food to sell at give-away prices for survival. Poor farm-to-market roads also prevented the timely arrival of some perishable crops on the market. If at all, the crops got to the market having lost some freshness, the farmers were forced to sell them at lower prices. The participants disclosed that:

"Sometimes, too much rain damages the roads and makes movement difficult, especially during harvest times" (Participant 9).

"One of the challenges to access the market are the roads" (Participant 11).

"Another challenge is that the markets are far, and it is costly to deliver your products to the markets" (Participant 14).

Ndlovu and Masuku (2021a:50-63) argue that small-scale farmers face challenges in competing in the formal market because of high transportation costs. From the interviews, the researcher could deduce that product losses resulting from inadequate infrastructure, such as poor transportation and the lack of storage facilities forced the farmers to sell their produce to any offset in their surrounding area. The distance to the big markets and high costs of transportation coupled with the quality of the products and management skills means that many of the research participants in this study were excluded from most direct channels, such as supermarkets.

On a broader societal scale, inadequate transportation infrastructure, especially in the rural areas, is the reason for the upward trend in market prices. Fanadzo and Ncube (2018:436-448) further state that apart from the transport restrictions, small-scale farmers lack contract agreements that give them access to prospective buyers.

5.7.3 Job creation under current production

Seventeen respondents indicated that they had both temporary and permanently employed workers on their farms. Temporary or seasonal workers worked during the peak agricultural period (planting and harvesting seasons). Ten participants had permanently employed workers. However, the number of employees per farm varied from 2 to ± 600, depending on the farm size. Participants pointed out that the RECAP had empowered them to create jobs in the rural communities. The number of job openings correlated highly with the size of the farm. The following participants stated that:

> *"I have 45 full-time workers on my farm. They are not many, and that number is a reduced number because things are not going too well on the farm"* (Participant 13).

> *"Yes. We have eight full-time workers and four workers who come twice weekly. We also have temporary workers, and*

their numbers depend on how much work needs to be done. For example, summer is coming; there will be lots of work" (Participant 26).

"I have four full-time employees. At times, I hire 20 seasonal workers from different communities" (Participant 27).

The participants indicated that they had both full-time and seasonal workers on their farms. The agricultural sector remained one of the most resilient sectors in terms of job creation, although the total number of persons employed in commercial agriculture has dropped as a result of mechanisation. Farm work in the past was carried out by groups of individuals with exclusive collective rights to own, manage and use land and natural resources equally, and this enabled the indigenes who lived on the land to cultivate it, provide food for themselves and their families. The argument is that with increased mechanisation, farmers are able to produce more agricultural products, with the assistance of farm workers, for sale while the excess is consumed.

Figure 5.9 shows the percentage breakdown of the types of employees for the thirty respondents.

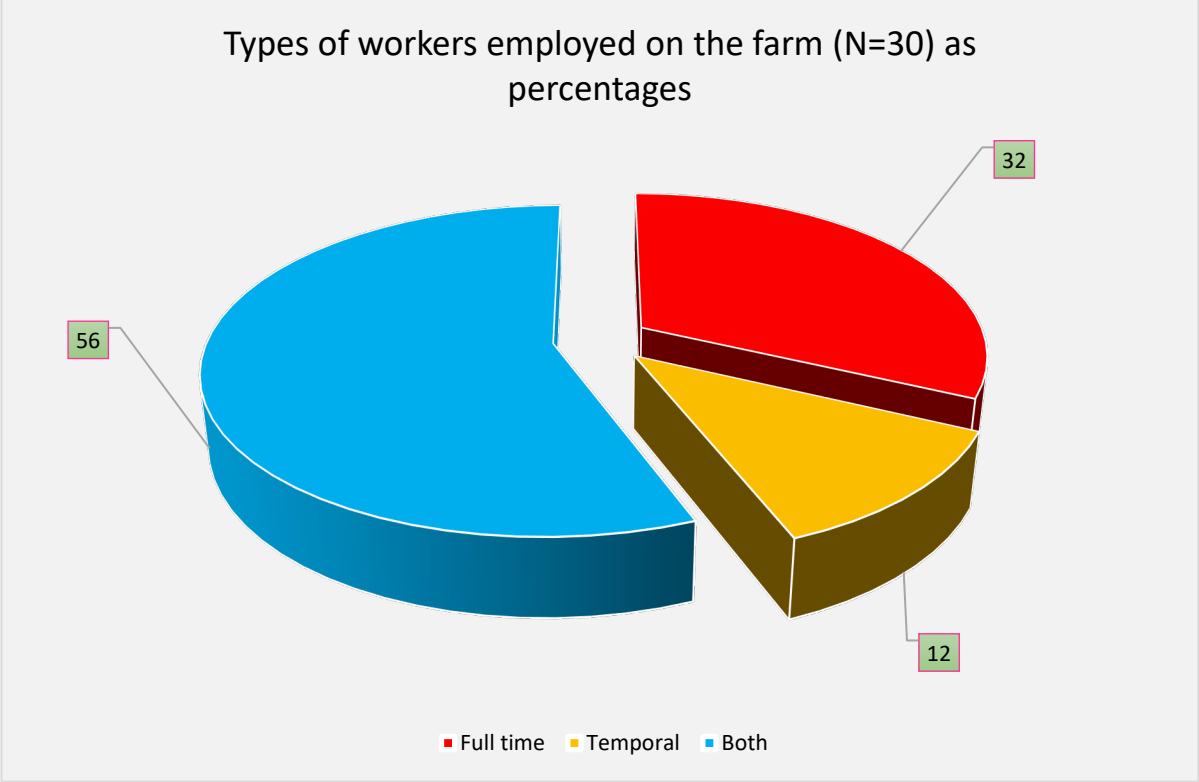

Figure 5.9: Types of workers employed on the farm

Source: Author, based on interviews

In this study, it became evident that some farmers employed some permanent workers and a few temporary workers. Some of the workers were migrants who were permitted to reside on the farms, kept cattle and did farm work, in exchange for their labour. Brandon and Sarkar (2019:73-109) argue that many farmers are poor, and that some of them are reluctant to release workers despite their limited financial capacity as their labour is much needed. In addition, farm workers do not require high levels of education. Marais (2020:352-379) argues that due to their low educational background, the government has enacted various land laws to protect farm workers from unfair forced labour.

Job creation is one of the vital objectives of the RECAP and agriculture remains an important and crucial employer, especially among the rural poor. The findings in the study also prove that one of the RECAP's objectives, to tackle unemployment, has failed, as most of the reformed farms are not creating the expected number of jobs, and most of the farm workers are migrating into urban areas in search of alternative job opportunities Novikova *et al* (2019:1-7), and

Spierenburg (2020:280-299) argue that a consequence of such economic migration is social unrest and high urban unemployment.

5.7.4 Assistance from commercial farmers for current production

The participants were asked if they had received assistance of any kind from large commercial farms. In this regard, sixteen participants revealed that they had benefited from the skills, inputs, and other services from commercial farmers, whereas fourteen suggested that they did not receive any assistance. The fact that some large commercial farmers were willing to assist indicates that they wanted to see Black farmers succeed. During the interviews, this subtheme was further explored by encouraging the participants to reveal what type of assistance they had received from these farmers and six participants noted that they got help with their irrigation system. It is worth noting that often the assistance came with a price tag. The participants stated that:

> *"Yes, I used to seek help from large commercial farmers especially with my irrigation system. They help repair the tubes and pumps for me"* (Participant 22).

> *"Yes I do. When we are about to plant, and during harvesting seasons. I asked for help with some equipment, and they came and assisted us and showed us how to use the machine"* (Participant 26).

> *"Yes, I do. The people who assisted me are Danny and Martin, the two Boers. They both have farms on which they grow cattle and maize. They asked me to use my farm as a grazing place for their cattle. They were to give me money, but I refused. I asked for cattle as payment. My dream is that one day I want to be a commercial farmer. So I received my payment in the form of cattle. By the time the RECAP came up with money they had promised, I already had ten cows that were pregnant, and 15 pigs. Thereafter, they gave me*

one bull and withdrew from my farm. So Danny and Martin were God-sent" (Participant 28).

The participants stated that they asked for help from commercial farmers, including tips on fixing their irrigation pumps, harvester machines and for the marketing of their produce. These different types of assistance also happened to coincide with the areas of agricultural expertise where the same respondents indicated a need for knowledge and skills. One participant mentioned that she offered her farm for grazing and was rewarded in kind with cattle. Beacham, Vickers and Monaghan (2019:277-283) argue that the limited technical knowledge of Black farmers regarding the maintenance of farm equipment and the lack of farm machinery, among others, are some of the challenges they faced. As a result, the farmers were obliged to seek help from nearby big farms with the available expertise. The findings also highlight a lack of education and experience on agricultural matters, as pointed out by Battersby and Haysom (2019:169).

Five participants shared that the assistance was in the form of fixing farm roads. Other types of assistance mentioned was help with setting up a nursery, transplanting crops, and leasing land. In addition, some mentioned help with pig, poultry, or vegetable farming and with conveyer belts. The participants said:

"I asked for assistance with irrigation pipes because they have proper systems. They are White farmers" (Participant 13).

"Yes, I did. I needed a bull for my cattle. A neighbour sold it to me" (Participant 14).

"Yes, I did. One of my friends, a White farmer, helps me to sell my cattle. They have the market. They sell and I use the money to pay off the bills and other expenses (Participant 18).

Small-scale farmers learn and practise different farming techniques from commercial farmers around their communities, when given the opportunity. Therefore, these farmers have the ability to sustain a food supply chain to the poor while growing an array of crops, both for their families and the local communities. Some of the participants were privileged to be around large commercial farms, with farmers who were willing to assist them whenever possible. Consequently, they benefited from the skills, equipment, and inputs available to them at a cost, depending on the assistance demanded. The participants ensured that the knowledge gained was used profitably as their desire was to become commercial farmers in future. The participants highlighted that:

> *"Yes. They help us to sell the cattle and at times show us the different places to sell" (Participant 25).*

> *"Yes, I receive help all the time from these Boers, even though agriculture did not want us to collaborate with the Boers. I did not see the need to end our friendship because they were there for me and working with me long before agriculture came"* (Participant 28).

> *"Yes. What we are doing here is that we have been receiving training from them on farming, how to handle cattle and treat them. We have been learning new ways. It's also more a thing of building relationships, and we can buy animals from them"* (Participant 30).

The participants indicated that they gained valuable information from the commercial farmers with market information being a crucial factor. Hamilton (2021:293-303) argues that farmers' knowledge has fallen behind the challenges imposed by technology and the search for sustainable alternatives and that the best solution lies in mentorship models of support. The findings, as discussed above, offer support for such a mentorship model.

Fourteen participants reported that help from White commercial farmers was not forthcoming, and they quoted reasons such as competitive jealousy, a perceived unwillingness from the commercial farms to offer assistance and bad experiences with state-appointed mentors that made the farmers suspicious about asking for outside help:

> *"I have tried to ask for help from a White farmer and, because of jealously, they were exceedingly difficult. Even when we have a fire, they will not come and assist me because I am a Black person. They stand and watch to see what the result will be. They are very jealous; even if they are able to help, they will not do it"* (Participant 5).

> *"It is a challenge. Some of the big farmers are not willing to cooperate; so, it is useless to ask for their help. We just manage the challenges ourselves and wait to see if the government send[s] help to us"* (Participant 19).

> *"No, I never asked because my mentor disappointed me and ran away with my money. So, I never ask for assistance"* (Participant 27).

These negative assumptions therefore hinder co-operation, and it would seem that the participants who had never requested assistance were unaware of how their neighbours benefited from mentorship and assistance from farms owned and managed by Whites. Rambauli, Antwi and Mudau (2021:13-29) argue that the main challenges observed by Black farmers is the limited state support in educating the farmers.

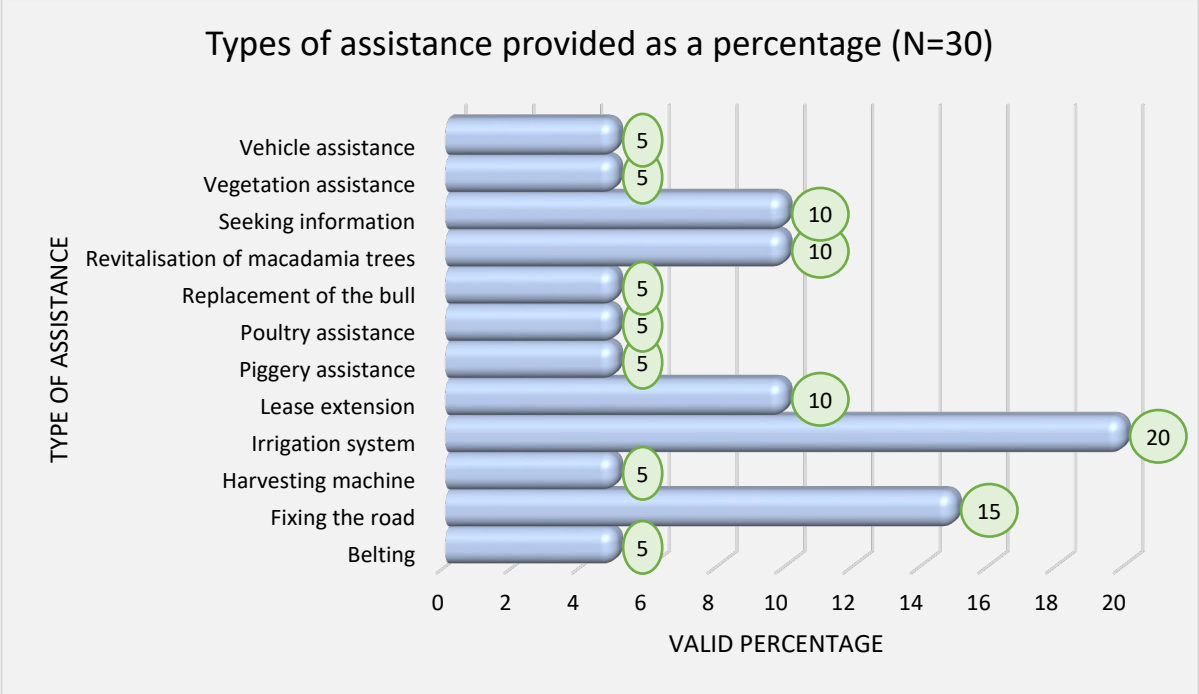

Figure 5.10: Assistance acknowledged

Source: Author, based on interviews

Despite the different types of assistance received from the government and from some commercial farmers, ten participants said that they allowed sections of their farm to lie fallow. Some of the reasons advanced by farmers regarding why the farms were fallow are:

> *"The financial assistance, for example, that I received was insufficient to boost the amount of work to be done on the farm. It was little compared to the needs on the farm. Some parts are fallow"* (Participant 16).

> *"The land we have is mostly rocky; we can't plant most of it. The soil is not deep enough so we just plant for feed, so there's no place that lies fallow. Where we can't plant, we just plough. The soil is not deep enough"* (Participant 20).

> *"Some parts are fallow, but some are ploughed. The 600 hectares are divided like this: 300 hectares are for grazing, 200 hectares are for timber and 100 hectares are arable,*

which is a land I am using to grow crops like maize and other foodstuffs" (Participant 21).

It is worth noting that one participant, who was involved in mixed farming, stated that some sections of her farm lay fallow intentionally as she allowed the land to recover and restore organic matter while retaining its fertility. This was profitable and helpful since she always rotated her crops. Nevertheless, the widespread use of letting farmland lie fallow was explained as chiefly being due to financial constraints. The researcher discovered from the interviews that the history of fallowing in the area was not based on crop rotation, but instead on dividing the small plot into subsections to allow some parts of the soil to replenish its nutrients and to save on fertilisers and irrigation costs.

Waisova (2019:75-99) claims that farmers' empowerment should take a "bottom-up" approach that would permit them to build and exploit their abilities and control their own affairs. The above reported results from the interviews show poor financial farm management skills and this spills over into land use patterns. In particular, financial constraints informed fallowing instead of sound agricultural practices.

5.8 POST SETTLEMENT SUPPORT

Post-settlement support focused on the outcomes of the RECAP farms, that is how the provisions were used, and how the maintenance of the infrastructure was supported. The purpose of this theme was to answer research objectives one, three and four as listed below:

- Examine who qualifies for RECAP in Gert Sibanda and Ehlanzeni critically and what kind of support is officially offered to those who qualify.
- Assess and evaluate the role of RECAP in enhancing the livelihood security of the beneficiaries and community as a whole.
- From the perspective of the beneficiaries, assess the RECAP's viability in developing black commercial farmers in Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni

The subthemes that emerged here were state visits, the development of Black commercial farmers, achievements regarding the RECAP, and farmers' challenges. The subtheme "farmers' challenges" had multiple sub-heading, such as: financial worries, safety and security concerns, soil and water quality, access to markets and market information, food production and competition with mines and poor infrastructure and access to production inputs.

Figure 5.11 illustrates the themes emerging from the analysis of responses to questions and probes about the issue of post-settlement support.

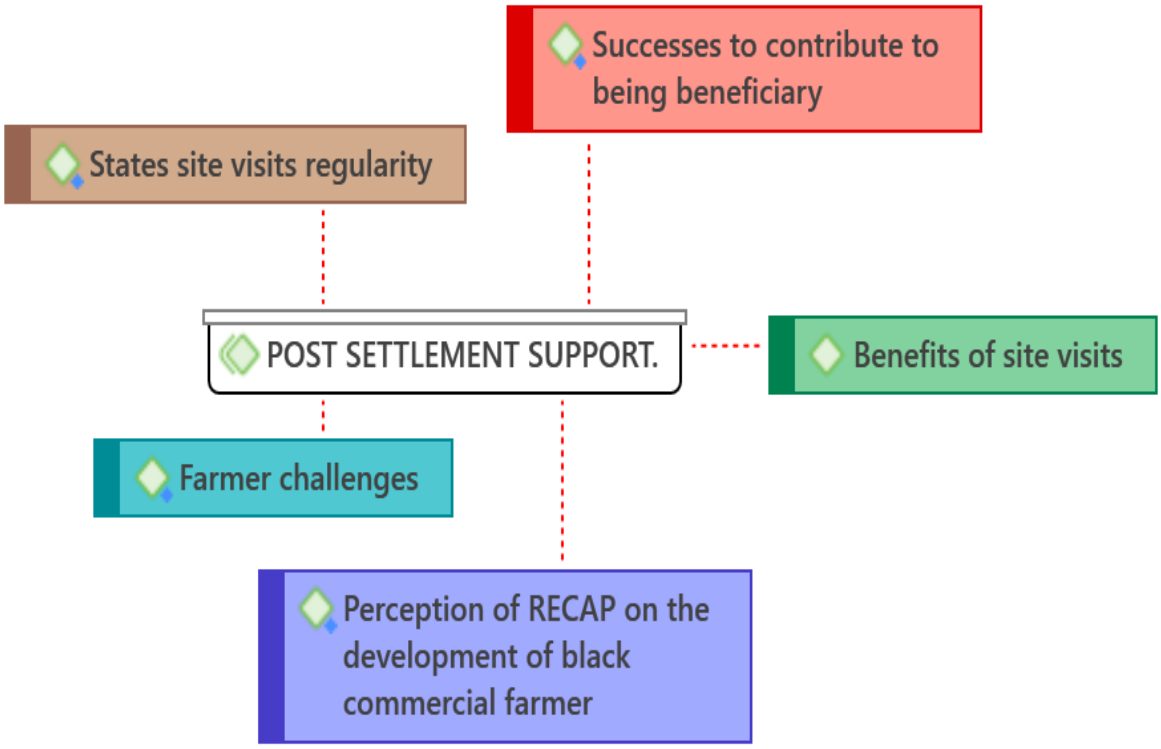

Figure 5.11: Subthemes in post-settlement support

Source: author, based on interviews

5.8.1 State visits

Official farm visits by extension workers from the DALRRD aim to assess, monitor,

and evaluate farm activities, in particular, to see how the provisions from DALRRD are used and whether the infrastructure is maintained. Such visits then become part of the compulsory evaluation of the farmers' progress, challenges, or concerns. Information collected from the participants showed that most of them received regular state visitors, while only a few were either not satisfied or had no visits from officials from the DALRRD.

Through the visitors, the participants were able to communicate their problems to the department. The participants' responses to how often they received state visitors were similar:

> *"Yes, they do come. On 13 August there was one from Agriculture"* (Participant 2).

> *"Yes, they come, and the last visit was last month"* (Participant 18).

Nevertheless, some participants had received only one visit and failed to give any possible explanation why. Others expressed their views as follow:

> *"No, they don't come. They don't come any longer"* (Participant 17).

> *"They do come, but it's here, now, and then"* (Participant 20).

> *"Yeah, they rarely come, but when they do visit, I gain something"* (Participant 21).

The participants expected state officials to visit them as often as possible and, especially during difficult times. Moreover, bearing in mind that these officials are extension workers from the DALRRD, some participants viewed the visit as their right, since it was part of the RECAP agreement. From the interviews, it seemed that most research participants regarded THE official visits as necessary for their success, to boost their confidence, help them set and monitor goals, and for

educational purposes or to discuss challenges. Two participants found the visits to discuss pig farming especially helpful:

> *"He encouraged us by explaining how to treat our pigs" (*Participant 4).

> *"We gained information about the pigs, when and how they must be injected. They assisted us with information about where to buy the medicine"* (Participant 7).

Secondly, the transfer of knowledge and skills was one of the benefits participants got from state officials' visits. Many of the farmers were open to learning diverse approaches to farming, and others had the opportunity to present some farming challenges:

> *"It opens our mind*[s], *and we were taught how to create small farming opportunities for the jobless"* (Participant 8).

> *"We learn*[ed] *a lot. How to conduct farming and also to talk about the challenges we are facing"* (Participant 10).

There were also a few participants who explained that the state visitors failed to assist them and that they did not benefit much from their visits. These participants' resentment comes from the fact that the state officials were aware of their specific problems and made promises to address them but failed to fulfil them. They expressed their unhappiness as follows:

> *"Yes, they come, but I gained nothing from that visit. They came here and made promises that they have not fulfilled. They saw the bad roads and promise*[d] *to fix them; still nothing has been done. They come just for the show. They do not help me with anything"* (Participant 5).

> *"Yes, they do. But even when they come, they don't assist much. For example, this farm burnt several times, and we have had no real assistance"* (Participant 13).

The findings above outline participants' perspectives on state visits. They indicated that state visitors did come, but not very often, and when they are around, they learn valuable information concerning their farming activities. A few of the participants were of the opinion that their visits were of no use since they did not gain anything from them. Manik, Refiswal and Salsabila (2018:1-6) argue that state inspectors must convey information about agricultural activities to the farmers, but the findings reveal that it seems that this was not done for the farmers at the study sites.

5.8.2 Development of Black commercial farmers

Some participants' replies to the question regarding whether the RECAP had developed Black commercial farmers, were in the affirmative. The main reason proffered was that the RECAP assisted the farmers with funding, equipment, and other resources, which had kept the farms sustainable. For example:

> *"Yes, the RECAP has helped a lot. We used to lease our farms, now we can farm on time because we have the equipment, products, and all that we need"* (Participant 17).

> *"Yes, I know that some Black farmers have been developed with the RECAP. It's true that we have different complaints and different demands; some wanted cows, some just equipment but it did help Black people in general. We wouldn't be where we are if it were not for the RECAP"* (Participant 22).

One respondent said that he was unsure about the RECAP's success in this regard, because he knows of only two Black farmers who are really successful as a result of their hard work and the RECAP's support. Another respondent indicated

that the farms were less productive compared to the when they were run by White farmers. Those who felt that the RECAP had not developed Black commercial farmers, raised the issue of underinvestment and the criteria for selecting the RECAP beneficiaries that, amongst others, contributed to the slow progress in transforming Black farmers into commercial farmers. Some participants expressed their views as follows:

> *"No. Most of the farms are not operating. No improvement"* (Participant 9).

> *"No. The RECAP has done little or nothing at all. Most of the farms are not operating at the same level at which they got them from the previous owners. Some of the farms are still lying fallow, totally because there is no money. I don't know the ones who got 100% of the RECAP, because initially there were discussions that it will go on for five years; there would be 1st year, 2nd year, 3rd year, 4th year and 5th year and then they will leave you. If I go around, it's a 'no' for me. And to be honest, I'm not speaking on my behalf, just in general, including the other farmers. I don't see any operation. We are trying with what they gave us because we still have those tractors and bailers, and it helps us, and we still have livestock, but it's a 'no' for black, commercial farmers"* (Participant 18).

> *"I'm sorry to say this, but it hasn't"* (Participant 21).

Twenty-seven respondents stated that the RECAP had advanced commercial Black farmers. A noteworthy point which emerges from these responses is that the participants have different understandings of commercial farming, and their evaluation criteria differ significantly. In this regard, the researcher noted that some participants regarded commercial farms as those with high production and sales. Despite the slow pace in converting Black farmers into commercial farmers, the

participants acknowledged the positive efforts made by the government towards achieving this goal, given the assistance they received from the RECAP package.

Rusenga (2022:125-150) argues that the RECAP has developed most Black farmers, although success is chiefly associated with the specific crops cultivated. Rakoena, Maake and Antwi (2022:169-176) conclude that successes were mainly seen for livestock farming. Despite not having a regular income from agriculture, a few participants mentioned that the RECAP has failed to develop Black farmers. This meant that although they failed to generate adequate income from sales, they still benefited from the RECAP finances and food produced on their land. While the focus was to supply the markets, the farmers often allocated food to themselves and their workers. The participants' narratives above reveal that their land was a source of empowerment and development from the RECAP since they could produce their own food, and the land acted as a platform to acquire valuable knowledge from their mentors and extension workers.

5.8.3 Achievements with regards to the RECAP

All the participants acknowledged achievements in one area or the other as a result of being a beneficiary of the RECAP. Twenty-eight respondents mentioned appreciation to the RECAP's management and were thankful for the financial assistance, farm equipment, and resources. One person stated the interesting observation that he does not regard the RECAP as a personal success, but rather as a communal success, since high school graduates are being trained as emerging farmers under his mentorship.

As far as agricultural production is concerned, the twenty-eight participants admitted recording an increase in their productivity. Such improvements were narrated in the interviews as implying "business growth" and seen as the most important indicator for success. The following four examples show how the RECAP is viewed in terms of ensuring stability and success:

> *"The RECAP has helped me a lot. I can now complete major farming activities on time…. and it's just the harvesting that*

is still a challenge. My work, what I put in, is way better now because of the RECAP. Now the rain has fallen, and my maize is blossoming and [it] *is so beautiful"* (Participant 17).

"I was able to turn around the conditions for our family. I employ my children. I have encouraged some of them to start farming. One of my children used to work as an electric engineer but he resigned to start farming. He has a big sugarcane farm. But it is also true that one cannot be fully satisfied" (Participant 19).

"Without the RECAP… just as I have said before… I wouldn't be [a] *farmer. My farm is self-sustainable currently because of the RECAP, though* [it] *is not doing extremely well, but it is sustainable. And I managed to hire people and give them something every month's end. And it was all because of RECAP.* [I] *am very grateful"* (Participant 22).

"We are secure now. We know that nothing can happen, that we can stand on our own. We are able to be more successful because now we can offer job opportunities to those in the surrounding area" (Participant 19).

Another major subtheme emerging from the conversations about the success of the RECAP mentioned by the participants was the ability to utilise and manage their money more effectively. For example:

"The RECAP has done a great thing for me. Land is the first part. Second is the capital we needed to be able to buy all that we needed. Any businessperson needs capital for a start-up. So that is what I am grateful for. And also, for learning how to use the capital wisely" (Participant 20).

Four participants explained how recapitalisation has helped them balance the management of the farms and the paying of generous wages or salaries to their employees. In particular, better wages for workers and job creation were mentioned, for example:

> *"The RECAP has given us the ability to pay workers; so, they don't work for free and that we can be well trained on handling money and work harder so that I can have more money and love my job. We can protect my money as well"* (Participant 15).

> *"As a beneficiary of the RECAP, you have to comply with everything. The best thing it did was to help me manage the money they gave me, and because of the RECAP, I am now a commercial farmer who employs 45 people. I am able to pay them well, and also to save some money"* (Participant 23).

> *"The RECAP, it has given us the ability to employ and pay workers, so they don't work for free. Some are made permanent so they can work indefinitely"* (Participant 5).

> *"So, with the land and resources I employ some few hands to help me. Now, they are working, and I pay them"* (Participant 20).

Similarly, food security was also one element that the beneficiaries cited as an indication of the RECAP's success. Most farmers stated that they and their families were food secure, while some were proud of the fact that they could provide food to the less privileged in the community, for example:

> *"I manage to provide food for the community, and it's being going well, and my farm is profitable"* (Participant 6).

> *"The community at large, benefits from the farm produce, as they do not have to travel to other places to get food"* (Participant 16).

> *"We never lacked food. We don't process it. We sell it still raw and have some for ourselves"* (Participant 24).

Some of the farmers indicated that the equipment and resources provided by the RECAP contributed to improving the quality of the food produced, and, hence, food security, for example:

> *"Our food production is improving because what we plant is sold quickly, and we have enough for ourselves and* [our] *children"* (Participant 12).

> *"With increase*[d] *food production, food security is guarantee*[d]. *I manage to provide for myself and 60 other families that I give to. These are the families that are in need. I got their contacts from the social workers"* (Participant 27).

> *"I supply food to people around us and the community as a whole who don't have food"* (Participant 30).

Some participants viewed their success in terms of being able to contribute to the South African economy and mentioned different contributions, such as hard work, for example:

> *"The RECAP's resources caused us to work harder, provide few jobs on the farm and to work on the quality of my produce so that I'm able to have a market"* (Participant 21).

> *"The RECAP has compelled me to grow my farm bit by bit. I can also become a commercial farmer some day and*

contribute to the wealth of South Africa and internationally" (Participant 23).

"There's a lot that the RECAP did for me to become a commercial farmer, and I can contribute to the wealth of South Africa by giving food to the poor, employ[ed] permanent workers, live well and not starve. I would also like to export my produce to other countries" (Participant 27).

Though many participants are limited in their expansion ability as a result of one setback or the other, the analysis of all thirty interviews showed that they all valued independence, hard work, and creativity on their farms which improved productivity and contributed meaningfully to the advancement of their communities and the country as a whole. For example:

"The RECAP has helped black people in general. I wouldn't be where I am, if not for the RECAP. I can farm on time" (Participant 2).

"I was able to turn around the condition of our family for the better. I employed my children and encouraged some to start farming" (Participant 7).

"The RECAP has helped a lot. I now have cows and am financially stable" (Participant 23).

"I succeeded in buying trucks and other farm equipment" (Participant 30).

The achievements registered by participants regarding the RECAP indicated that all farmers benefited in one way or another. Amongst its greatest achievements, as mentioned by the research participants, was access to land. In this regard, Bunce (2020:328) argues that the allocation of land to black farmers who could not provide for themselves is a major achievement. When it comes to land, the farmers

were of the opinion that access to land also gave them access to various economic resources, especially houses and the production of food, which guarantees a livelihood and food security for them and their families. It also ensures that they are self-sustainable and are able to take care of themselves with little help from others.

Koot, Hitchcock and Greessier (2019:341-355) suggest that land is one of the cornerstones of economic development and growth. The researcher deduces from the interviews that there is some evidence that land has contributed to rural economic growth. The knowledge and empowerment acquired from the farms through mentorship and assistance from the big commercial farms are some of the achievements of the RECAP that the participants listed. Maka and Aliber (2019:37-45) define mentorship as a structure and series of processes designed to create effective training and advice from a mentor to a mentee. The goal is to establish relationships, provide guidance regarding the desired behaviour changes of those involved, and evaluate the results for the participants.

5.8.4 Farmers' challenges

The participants mentioned a fixed range of common concerns, with a few indicating that they had not received any assistance. For example:

> *"I did not get any equipment or fertiliser. Some of the trees planted came from my own pocket"* (Participant 1).

> *"I did not receive any assistance"* (Participant 24).

Some of the challenges listed range from financial worries, safety and security, soil and water quality, access to the market and marketing information, competition with the mines, the COVID–19 pandemic and lockdowns, challenges with mentorship and training, and poor infrastructure. These day-to-day worries are discussed below.

5.8.4.1 Financial worries

Constant financial worries were mentioned by all of the participants as a major stumbling block to their advancement. In particular, they worried that a bad track record because of mismanaging the funds from the RECAP and their past problems in accessing more funds would mean financial ruin, for example:

> *"We are not able to pay workers on the exact date because we don't have money to pay them all at once"* (Participant 4).

> *"Food will finish because most of the farms are not operating, and Black farmers can't work because they lack capital, and it becomes a challenge in terms of food security"* (Participant 17).

Despite these financial challenges, all the research participants were willing to expand their farming activities if the government gave them more financial support. Ironically, a deeper analysis of individual interview transcripts revealed that those research participants who expressed the most urgent need for additional financial assistance also noted less enthusiasm for improving their agricultural practice. Although it is difficult to make specific deductions from this, it would seem that a culture of external dependency on financing can be debilitating. In fact, Beyers and Fay (2016:41-43) suggest that the pursuit of financial justice through policy deliberations in agriculture, tend to empower the elites and disempower farmers.

5.8.4.2 Safety and security

Safety and security were also a concern. Some research participants mentioned that there was a persistent struggle with crop theft on their farms, and that this had compelled them to pay for the services of private security guards, for instance:

> *"I have a security company. I employ a guard on my farm and pay him"* (Participant 3).

Two participants took the law into their own hands:

> *"I am a strong guy because I keep my farm safe. I live like an owl; I sleep during the day, and during the night, I watch over my farm. They steal at night. I have caught a few people stealing and I gave them the beating of their life before handing them over to the police"* (Participant 7).
> *"I do experience break-ins, and recently they have been stealing maize and chickens, but if you are caught stealing, I render punishment"* (Participant 5).

During the data collection process, all the participants also highlighted the need for safety and security on their farms. Their inability to protect themselves was blamed on the fact that they did not have weapons such as licenced guns, for example:

> *"I am unable to protect myself from the thieves because I don't have a gun. We cannot protect ourselves if there is someone who will come in and kill us or break in to steal the animals"* (Participant 23).

> *"They stole our irrigation system! So, right now I have a problem with water…. and already we do not have enough water on the farm…we need boreholes. You cannot run a farm without water. The resources I used from the RECAP were not enough to give us a sufficient water supply"* (Participant 27).

> *"Thief baba! Especially when you are a Black person, they take advantage of you because we are not cruel, and we don't execute punishment on them like the Afrikaners… we just hand them over to the police. Even when they are arrested, they get out in less than a week"* (Participant 29).

The crime in rural areas and farms, in particular, is centred on stock theft and farm attacks. The participants indicated that the robbers take advantage of the fact that they did not have weapons. Omotayo and Aremu (2020:1-16) state that there is scant information on rural safety and security and that the existing data are anecdotal.

5.8.4.3 Soil and water quality

Thirteen participants pointed out that they had serious challenges with the water supply and soil fertility. They mentioned that the sandy and rocky soil easily drains any rainwater away. For example:

> *"We don't have water. Our problem is that we don't have water. Our water supply runs out… we have a borehole up there… but when it is sunny the water dries out…. and we only have sand left. Our water pipes are also too short, as most of the longer pipes were stolen. We have asked the government several times to come and look at our water concern"* (Participant 27).

> *"The land is mostly sandy soil. Therefore, the water drains away too quickly…the soil does not retain moisture. Secondly, the soil is not deep enough…it is rocky… so we can't plant. Most parts of the farm have rocks. You need about 600 mm of soil to plant maize and 400 mm to plant soya. It's ideal for livestock farming"* (Participant 10).

> *"The soil isn't good, when you plant, you need to continue watering them so the soil can hold the water…. because without rain, nothing happens"* (Participant 17).

The majority of the participants had irrigation system challenges. The participants explained that the improvement of irrigation systems would imply an increase in general productivity, for example:

> *"We are struggling with water because in winter we go into a shutdown and wait for* [the] *rain. We have asked them several times about this issue"* (Participant 13).

> *"The challenge we are currently facing is water. As we speak,* [I] *am about to spend like R32 000 on a borehole, and now* [I] *am trying to raise the sustainable amount of R18 000 for connections with regards to water things. So, now I will be able to handle four hectares of garden, which I couldn't before because of water issues. I was using it to grow onions since onions don't require a lot of water. So now I've planted garlic; it needs water, but not that much. It's more like onions. That is my challenge. I've been writing [and] asking for help"* (Participant 21).

> *"I do have a challenge with water. They had promised to help me with that, but they've not yet responded to my request"* (Participant 27).

The final problem mentioned was the lack of insecticides and pesticides to control weeds, insect infestations, and diseases, for example:

> *"We never received pesticides"* (Participant 9).

> *"It's just that we are not given pesticides, and our irrigation system was not dealt with"* (Participant 18).

> *"The challenges with the farm pests are bad because we are not able to produce healthy crops"* (Participant 20).

The soil type and the availability of water are factors that influence the quality of crops grown and determine the quantity of food production. The farmers in this study voiced their concerns in relation to the soil and water. Water security for

farming purposes, whether for safe consumption or for farming has been intensely debated about by Enqvist and Ziervogel (2019:1-15), who found that water usage is a critical challenge for farmers and that the situation is compounded by climate change. The water crisis inevitably affects the soil texture and structure. The findings above show that sandy soil has little or no structure to support water draining.

5.8.4.4 Access to markets and market information

Some participants indicated that access to major markets is a serious problem. This is further compounded by the inadequate road infrastructure. Poor farm-to-market roads prevent some perishable products arriving at the set destinations on time, and if at all, the less-fresh produce fetch lower prices. For example:

> *"It is a challenge to get to the markets, especially when it's raining. The roads are bad"* (Participant 28).

> *"We don't have sufficient information about the market and the roads are muddy and bad, especially when it rains"* (Participant 29).

> *"It is a challenge because the markets are far away and [this] makes transport costly"* (Participant 30).

Therefore, a concerted effort ought to be made to link subsistence farmers to markets (Isaac 2021:8678-8690). This issue is further aggravated by the absence of suitable packing houses where fresh commodities are prepared for the market. Often, Black farmers are forced to petition White farmers to store their goods. These challenges arise from the fact that most government storage facilities are not functioning adequately due to the lack of proper maintenance. Some participants expressed their concerns as follows:

> *"We don't have access to the markets because the 'big guns' close us off"* (Participant 11).

> *"We don't have access to the markets… The problem we face is that the food we plant isn't enough to help us grow competitively, and most of the farms are not operating"* (Participant 18.)

> *"The problem we face the most is that the food we plant isn't enough to help us grow and access big retailer markets"* (Participant 21).

> *"It is a challenge to get to the markets with some of our fresh produce on time because of the storage. We do not have storage close to our farms, and at times we need to ask for assistance from big commercial farms to store our fresh crops"* (Participant 27).

In addition, the participants also mentioned that another constraint they encountered was poor information concerning markets, specifically details about all the potential markets or specific consumers on which they ought to focus. Therefore, they spent most of their time unnecessarily competing with big corporate farms, for example:

> *"We don't have access to the market. We don't have information about the market, and where we could possibly sell our produce"* (Participant 14).

> *"They don't have information about the market to sell our food. We have a problem; we fail to reach where we are supposed to reach"* (Participant 21).

There was one disconfirming case, where a participant reiterated that persistence pays off:

> *"It's not an issue. You struggle until they accept you in their system, and you have access to the market. With timber*

> *supplies, it is TKK and with cattle, it is BKB. I don't have any issue when it comes to that. It's only with onions, but* [I] *am also selling at Spar because they do not complicate matters… they just take your stuff if they are in a good condition. You don't need to be on a database"* (Participant 26).

Access to markets and information concerning the markets is vital to assist Black farmers in their transformation from small-scale to commercial farmers. Malatji (2021:49-59) argues that a lack of access to information about markets can limit farmers. Black small-scale farmers can grow their farms and improve their livelihoods, families, as well as their farm workers. Nevertheless, they continue to miss out on market information, data on market prices and demand, and supply chains.

5.8.4.5 Undermining food production

Some participants further highlighted that they faced serious challenges with insufficient food produced, which was more complex with the presence of a mining company close to their farms, given the competition over available land. A number of petitions had been issued to the government without success. For example, one of the participants stated that the mines were given preferences for land use and that this was threatening his farm, particularly concerning the quality and quantity of water. The dust from the mines also affected the pasture for cattle. Some quotations from this subtheme are:

> *"The government is not checking the laws and regulations to protect us from the mines, and our farms"* (Participant 7).

> *"The mines are destroying food production this side. We cannot farm well because the mines are on our farms. The pollution affects the crops and water. The government needs to do something"* (Participant 18).

> *"The food produced will be in danger…. sometimes because of the climate and crime. We cannot control the climate, but the crime can be controlled. The mines attract all sorts of criminals to the area"* (Participant 21).

The participants were not happy with the activities of mines on their allocated farms. Their narratives highlighted that the presence of mines on arable land limited crop production significantly. Shackleton (2020:104825) states that the loss of agricultural land to mining implies that farmers would lose the ability to derive land-based benefits, such as fresh vegetable, food, and livestock farming. Such deprivation can increase the vulnerability of local communities and have devastating effects on food prices. Although both agriculture and mines provide some benefits for the rural community, the advantages obtained from agricultural land far out-weight those from mining. Apart from land, air, and water pollution caused by mines, they destabilise the production of food in its entirety as agriculture sustains every aspect of life.

One research participant tried to explain that food security also extended to the food security for his livestock and said:

> *"I farm animals, and I do not grow grains, so I still need to buy food because I don't grow food"* (Participant 24).

Problems related to the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns were mentioned as having an effect on the quantity of food produced, for example:

> *"It was hard during the lockdown because of the restrictions and most people were not purchasing due to a lack of money. Many people were also out of work"* (Participant 11).

> *"It was a challenge since we were not going to the farm"* (Participant 15).

5.8.4.6 Poor infrastructure and inputs

A few of the participants indicated that poor infrastructure impeded their farming activities. One such challenge was fencing. Some of the participants experienced challenges when with regard to accessing agricultural inputs. They did not have access to good quality seeds on time. Lack of access to these inputs often resulted in poor seed cultivation and the delayed planting of crops. For instance, the participants revealed that:

> *"The fence was too small. There was no control for our cattle to camp them"* (Participant 3).

> *"There was a shortage with the fencing. It did not cover the whole farm. They stole some of my cattle"* (Participant 10).

> *"It was the late arrival of the seeds. Some of the seeds arrived when they were expired"* (Participant 13).

> *"The seeds that got here too old to plant and so they didn't do well"* (Participant 18).

> *"I did not get seeds. When they finally arrived, they were not enough for everyone as we were many"* (Participant 26).

Gwiriri *et al* (2021:226) mention that a lack of fencing contributes to uncontrolled livestock breeding and stock theft.

5.9 SUMMARY DISCUSSION FOR CHAPTER FIVE

In summary, the overall impression from the interviews was that the RECAP had improved the lives of beneficiaries substantially. The findings point to the fact that the RECAP had used its resources, such as financing, equipment and implements through the assistance of mentors, to assist beneficiaries. Currently, there has

been a marked increase in the farm produce of the farmers as compared to their previous economic activities when they were not landowners or beneficiaries. Some of the achievements that the farmers associated with the RECAP were stability in their finances, farm resources, availability of food for consumption, knowledge gained through mentorship and agricultural training, and farm jobs created. The post-settlement support made it possible for the Black farmers to achieve the status of small-scale commercial farmers.

The findings support the views of Bunce (2020:328) that access to land was a major achievement for the RECAP farmers. The interviewees in the study acknowledged the fact that without the RECAP, they would not have been in their present positions.

The findings also point to the fact that the needs of all the farmers were not the same. The value attached to the assistance received from the RECAP showed a mixed response. While some of the farmers needed more financial support, others required farm machinery. An unexpected finding was the claim by some research participants that they had not received any assistance from the RECAP. It is unthinkable because they were beneficiaries after all. The researcher deduces that not all the RECAP beneficiaries experienced the programme as supporting them fully.

5.10 CONCLUSION

The findings and discussion indicate that the RECAP empowered beneficiaries who were Black farmers to become independent farmers; however, the objective to transform Black farmers into commercial farmers is still a work in progress. All beneficiaries experienced a change in one way or the other on their farms, including getting finance incentives, agricultural training, expansion, and job creation. Although there were many challenges and setbacks in the course of farming, and many resources and equipment needed to be supplemented, all the beneficiaries acknowledged the success they had achieved as a result of the RECAP support.

Throughout the write up process, it was apparent that transformation of both the farmers and the agricultural sector will move slowly, thus, the persistent problem with the unsuccessful implementation of land reform projects. Nevertheless, the government is putting in more efforts to achieve its objectives in this regard. However, the slow success of this policy on the economy as a whole, has a considerable impact as resources and energy have to be focused more on the agricultural sector, since creating a class of Black, commercial farmers who will sustain the economy, is cumbersome.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION, CONSTRAINTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This research assessed the RECAP in Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni, South Africa. Using a qualitative orientation, the researcher assessed issues such as the kind of government policies suitable for Black landowners, the role of the RECAP, the problems with various land reform programmes and why they persisted, and the possibilities of developing Black commercial farmers through the RECAP. The findings have provided some insight into the RECAP from the perspective of those who benefited from it. The findings, as reported in Chapter 5, show that the RECAP has empowered some Black farmers to become independent small-scale farmers, however, its objective to transform Black farmers into commercial farmers is still a work in progress.

The literature review for this study characterised land as possessing spiritual, economic, and social values, such as giving the inhabitants a sense of purpose, belonging, and a means to livelihoods. However, the lack of a well-defined land reform scheme outlining the government's ambition to create a more equal society partly fuel the debates on land reform. The most important aspects of land reform are neglected to the detriment of most local farmers. Rural populations face a situation of uncertainty when land policies are turned into appeasement politics. Land laws before and during the apartheid period that disempowered Blacks have not been redressed yet.

Participants in this study used land to define their sense of autonomy, rootedness, and opportunity. These ranged from using land as a commodity, social space and as a spiritual inheritance. The participants used land as their primary occupation for agriculture, their main source of employment and for improving their livelihoods. For example, the farmers utilised their land for farming and encouraged more people (especially the youth) to get involved in agriculture. Providing food for their

household, families and community further helps to reduce poverty and increase livelihood security.

This chapter concludes the study by summarising the key research findings that have emerged in relation to the research aims and objectives, thereby discussing their value and their contribution. In this chapter, the researcher also reviews the limitations of the study and recommends opportunities for future research.

6.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The research findings highlighted four themes under which the research questions and results were discussed. The first research question focused on the farming history, with special attention given to the continuous problem of the unsuccessful implementation of land reform schemes. The farming history of the participants played a vital role in their current economic activity. Most continued with the same farming pattern they knew from the past to guide their choice of economic activities. Farming encouraged the participants to lead an active life. Furthermore, their ongoing economic activity was a prime contributor to their livelihood security, their families, and the community at large. Again, not only was farming defined as a means of alleviating poverty, but the participants were also contributing to the welfare of the rural poor, increasing economic growth through food production, and creating employment in the rural areas.

In addition, the participants' experience of land ownership prior to the RECAP influenced their commitment to achieve success on their farms. Where farms were inherited and/or owned before the RECAP, the participants were willing to put in their best efforts to attain success despite any challenges. Those with lease agreements also worked hard as a result of the RECAP assistance, but their keenness and dedication were mainly motivated by a need to secure their livelihood. This was directly related to their tendency to lease out portions of their farms. Therefore, ownership and access to land before and after the RECAP were found to influence the consequent activity at farms.

Moreover, it was established that the farm plot sizes largely determined the quantity and quality of productive growth, which was to be expected. However, the important point uncovered in the interviews was that the farmers tended to gravitate to subsistence farming because those who were involved in mixed farming were unable to utilise their land effectively because of its relatively small size.

It can be concluded that although the government considers land transfer from Whites to Blacks as an important agenda to redress the past, many misunderstandings and the inappropriate implementation of various land reform programmes and the RECAP, in particular, have led to the unsuccessful fulfilment of its land reform ambitions. Nevertheless, the analysis of the literature and research outcomes raised a critical question: What is the problem triggering the unsuccessful implementation of the various land reform policies? This question arises as a result of the important role that agriculture plays in sustaining the economy and diversifying the economic activities of a nation. This diversification of economic activities enhances the chances of success for participants who owned land as well as those on lease agreements. Consequently, the research illustrated the passion to succeed against all odds on the part of those who owned land prior to RECAP, and, likewise, the apprehension of those on lease agreements about the welfare of the land after the expiration of the lease.

The study found that government assistance through the RECAP influenced the outcome per participant's farm. The study interrogated the role of the government in the success or failure of land reform policies, and which agricultural policy is suitable for the RECAP beneficiaries. The key findings indicated that all the assistance provided by the government benefited all the participants in one way or another. Firstly, financial assistance played an important part. To the participants, financial support permitted them to be independent and empowered them to be in charge of vast amounts of money.

Furthermore, the participants appreciated assistance received in the form of agricultural training and mentorship. An irrigation system provided the potential for improving water use efficiency on the farms, whereas receiving farm animals and

equipment ensured that high-quality food was produced, time was saved land use was optimised. Nevertheless, all the participants who received these types of assistance expressed their desire for further help from the RECAP and the government. Their demand for financial support and farm equipment was noted. It can be argued that both the government and beneficiaries contributed to the partial success and failure of the RECAP project. The fact that the government did not specify who qualified to be RECAP beneficiaries or the kind of support for those who qualified, was a flaw in the implementation, because it gave rise to misplaced agricultural funding. The researcher concludes that many reforms failed because they enlisted unqualified recipients whose farming backgrounds did not justify the resources allocated to them.

In addition, most farm-dwellers are used to working on the farms as small-scale farmers. The interviews revealed that most of them were still stuck in the small-scale mode, and hardly considered expanding beyond this. Therefore, compelling them to become commercial farmers in a short time is unfair. Nevertheless, their willingness to be transformed is a positive finding.

The study evaluated the role of the RECAP in enhancing the livelihood security of the beneficiaries and their communities at large. It was found that the research participants currently produced a range of perishable crops such as vegetables, sweet potatoes, mealies, and wheat and livestock. This has a positive effect on the increase in food production, especially amongst the participants, their families, and the community.

Most of the farm produce was sold locally with surpluses consumed or given to the less privileged in the community. The livestock and crops were sold at the current market prices, except those that were not fresh. For those research participants who kept livestock, poultry was an extremely important source of extra income as the sale of meat and eggs generated revenue. This extra income was reinvested in the farms and or used to purchase basic necessities.

While the factors mentioned above were beneficial for the farmers, they were also found to influence job creation mostly. The majority of the participants had both

permanent and seasonal workers. This was influenced by the relatively low level of formal education needed for the work on these farms. Job creation as one of the RECAP's objectives, was met on the study site, although this cannot be generalised.

The interviews revealed that the participants sought the help of large commercial farmers for tasks like fixing farm equipment, the hiring of heavy machinery, especially a harvester machine, and for access to the market. The participants received valuable information from these commercial farmers relating to land use and market information, specifically about where to sell their cattle. Although the majority of the participants benefited from the assistance from commercial farms, a few participants never asked for help because of negative assumptions, such as jealously or the reluctance of big farmers to assist them.

The farmers' productivity based on their assets determined the level of livelihood security they achieved. RECAP resources were valuable not only to the farmers and their families, who had stable sources of food supplies and could afford basic livelihood necessities, but also to the communities at large. While the qualitative approach limits the generalisation of the livelihood security results, the findings form the basis for further research that can quantify the livelihood security of Black small-scale farmers.

The post-settlement support has been a subject greatly debated in the literature since it has been more than two decades since the start of its implementation. From this research, it can be concluded that the post-settlement support has improved the livelihood of Black farmers, but with some important setbacks. The final research question focused on the development of Black commercial farmers and the achievements of the RECAP. In this regard, the study revealed that the post-settlement support did develop Black small-scale commercial farmers, although the overall objective of the RECAP was to transform Black farmers into commercial farmers. As stated in the previous chapter, this transformation is still a work in progress.

Firstly, the participants acknowledged that the RECAP have supported commercial Black farmers through the different crops cultivated, and they were empowered to sustain themselves confidently by supporting their families and community at large with food supplies and employment. Secondly, participants have a more secured livelihood unlike before they received the RECAP.

The most important achievement registered by most of the RECAP beneficiaries was access to land, except for those who inherited land from their grandparents or acquired land through other reform programmes. For the participants, land represented a source of livelihood and belonging. The land was presented as a major means of empowerment as it allowed them to be active, employed their children, and ensured that they had a source of a stable food supply. In addition, they had a source of extra income through poultry farming to take care of their basic needs.

Despite these achievements by the RECAP, the participants faced several challenges, such as inadequate finance to sustain their farms' productivity and/ or to diversify their production. Safety and security concerns were also mentioned. Soil quality and water security were further challenges mentioned by the farmers. The quality of soil and the availability of water for farming were serious concerns. However, the government tried to assist the farmers with irrigation systems and water tanks. In addition, access to marketing information and infrastructure to the markets were other serious concerns.

Finally, the study suggested that the number of small-scale successful Black farmers increased as a result of various land reform policies and the RECAP. If the successful small-scale farmers are willing to go the extra mile to be transformed and invest hard work in their farms coupled with resources and support, they would become large-scale commercial farmers in the long run.

6.2.1 The most notable discoveries from the research

Although some of the findings and discussions are consistent with the current debate on the RECAP, significant new insights have emerged and add to the

theoretical and empirical base on land reform. Firstly, the introduction of land reform policies reveals that considerable land reallocation to Black farmers was also coupled with a reduction in overall agricultural productivity, although one of the main aims of land reform was to increase agricultural production. From its inception, the government focused on group redistribution instead of targeting individual farmers as a means of increasing productivity. In this study, it became evident that individual livelihood aspirations and security needs are still at the heart individual efforts, hence the group-orientation in the programme may be misplaced. Reading this observation in terms of the human security theory, the researcher sees support for a theoretical lens that puts the person at the “centre of analysis”. This enables a consideration of complex personhoods where all the farmers have unique backgrounds that affect how they approach earning a living. In this regard, the research participants mentioned their personal interests and how these determined how and what they farmed. In this regard, it becomes the duty of the government to implement measures to verify whether Black landowners who received reform grants were working in line with their assets to sustain the farms, and, therefore, improved their wellbeing and the security of their livelihoods.

Secondly, the findings suggest that the RECAP has increased the numbers of small-scale Black farmers, consequently improving the livelihood security of a small groups of individuals, while poverty and food insecurity are on the rise amongst the less privileged. In this study, the participants suggested that food insecurity loomed as some of the farms were unproductive with large sections in a few farms being fallowed. Britwum and Dakhli (2019:499) report that food security is a repeated shock to human security. Land is a justifiable source of subsistence health maintenance. Furthermore, the interconnection between land reform and productivity is an especially pressing issue, as farm-level crop productivity influences food security. The findings indicate that the size of the farm influences production. However, the participants (those who owned land and those on lease agreements) mentioned that they did not increase the size of their farms after becoming beneficiaries. Consequently, the number of resources devoted to agricultural production yielded fewer returns. The findings reveal that the conceptual understanding of human security is that agriculture should advance the natural rights of individuals. In other words, they want to enjoy the same liberty and

freedom as White farmers and measure up to them while disregarding the efforts invested in attaining that level, in relation to the land size, resources, implements and equipment.

Thirdly, the impact of government assistance has been analysed by looking at the resultant effects on the increase or decrease in the assistance received by beneficiaries. The findings show inconsistencies in government assistance, leaving some farmers vulnerable to crime, insects and pests, pollution from mines, water scarcity, and debilitating poverty.

Fourthly, although farmers face serious environmental challenges in terms of the poor soil quality, land is a source of sustainable livelihoods that allows the poor to have a measure of human security. Didarali and Gambiza (2019:2219) argue that the RECAP's goal to transform small farmers into commercial farmers ought to guarantee that the livelihoods of the poor will be sustained against deepening impoverishment.

Lastly, and the most important discovery from the research was the dependency mindset of the Black farmers. Given the fact that the government set out to redress past wrongs, most Blacks understood this to mean they were to wait for the government at every level of their farming career in order to make progress. However, the zeal and enthusiasm amongst the Black farmers regarding farming were missing.

6.3 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The review of literature and the study findings raised two challenging questions. Firstly, how is the RECAP different from other land reform programmes? Secondly, how can the RECAP be implemented successfully? The RECAP, unlike other land reform programmes, has clear objectives aimed at transforming Black farmers into commercial farmers. The reviewed literature provided the framework within which land reform can be acknowledged. However, there are many obstacles that need to be addressed by the government and Black farmers alike, for long-term and sustainable success.

In debating some of the policy implications and the obstacles to long-term sustainable achievement, Siyongwana and Shabalala (2019:367-380) mention that the lack of adequate funding and resources are major setbacks for the programme. Hall (2019:87-101) further highlights the importance of the RECAP to increase funding for post-settlement support programmes to attain success. Therefore, they conclude that policymakers can use this to advocate for increased funding.

In addition, Nhabangu *et al* (2021:91-100) argue that inadequate coordination and cooperation among government departments, stakeholders, and beneficiaries are other obstacles to the RECAP's success. This study emphasises the need for better coordination among all the stakeholders involved in the RECAP programme. As a result, policymakers need to develop policies that promote collaboration and ensure that all stakeholders are working towards the same goals.

The South African Government, DALRRD (2021) indicates that limited the participation of Black farmers, especially women and youths in the RECAP programme, and limited access to market information, insufficient technical expertise, and poor infrastructure, including the lack of basic amenities such as water and electricity, add to the pitfalls that need the attention of the government for the programme to be sustainable and provide sustainable livelihood security among the beneficiaries. Markowski-Lindsay *et al* (2020:59-69) link women, the youth and the RECAP programme and state that women and youth are the groups that need to be targeted for smallholders' farm support. This study identifies the need for increased support for smallholder farmers in the Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni regions, as the engagement of the youth and women in agriculture is a major issue for economic development and a sustainable food system. Policy and programme interventions, such as the RECAP, could contribute to revitalising rural women and youth, who often have limited resources and face unique challenges.

6.3.1 Post-settlement support

The findings of this study indicate that post-settlement support, especially government assistance through the RECAP, played a crucial role in the empowerment of Black farmers. It was found that this government assistance, especially access to finance, enabled the participants to be more independent than before. Furthermore, evidence from this study shows that most of the financial assistance was used to purchase farming equipment and implements, however, some of the finance was also used for basic household needs. The findings on post-settlement support, differed from other published works to a certain extent, that indicate that the post-settlement support has done little to empower Black farmers and has, instead, created a small class of elites who have benefited from the various land reform programmes.

The chief policy recommendation stemming from this is that financing is an important factor, and that the government would need to ensure sufficient funding for farmers. However, this would need to unfold in a context of financial accountability on the part of the government that should be clearly stated in an updated RECAP policy with checks and balances. Farmers cannot be left to struggle alone due to fallowing or lags in state support. Like civil servants who continue to receive salaries when on leave, farmers should continue receiving support during waiting periods between active seasons.

6.3.2 Policy implementation process

The demographic composition of the two study areas showed that that the people who are engaged in farming are forty years and older. Policy revisions should lay out plans to extend land provision to younger age cohorts. In this regard, the current RECAP objectives are too broad and, hence, difficult to measure against fixed timeframes that also consider sustainability for the future.

In addition, the different objectives of the RECAP and previous land reform programmes lead to confusion at the implementation level, creating more

bewilderment as the extension workers are unsure of which programme's objectives they need to implement. Theoretically, the aims, goals, and objectives of the RECAP are well stated. Nevertheless, there is a need for more capacity building within the various government institutions responsible for rural development and land affairs. The need for well-trained extension workers to assist the farmers in effectively implementing the programme is a call for concern and necessitates a more integrated approach to the implementation of the RECAP.

A couple of reasons advanced regarding why post-settlement reforms fail during the implementation phase are attributed to the fact that the programmes are narrowly envisaged to giving the people a sustainable livelihood, focusing primarily on the bureaucratic dimensions, with little attention given to the major aspects, such as finance, expertise, information and extension services, which has led to the failure of the land reform programmes at the implementation stage. Chitong (2022:722-739) states that emphasis should be placed on a broader conceptualisation of a post-settlement programme, to reconstruct the livelihood security of the rural poor.

Tshigomana (2021:35) mentions that post-settlement support has been chronically underfunded, which has limited the programmes' abilities to provide the necessary support to beneficiaries as the programmes' budgets have not kept pace with the increasing demand for land reform, resulting in a backlog of support requests and the delayed implementation of projects causing most programmes to fail during the implementation phase despite advances in the comprehension of the policy cycle. Solly *et al* (2020:1257) argue that this has resulted in low levels of productivity and sustainability of the land reform projects. Phasha and Moyo (2020) observe that this failed reform has been marked by little or no improvements in the livelihoods of the beneficiaries, since there are limited expertise and manpower to monitor and evaluate each project's success and sustainability.

Smidt and Jokonya (2022:558-584) further note that the lack of coordination and insufficient technical expertise has stalled the implementation processes of the land reform programmes, given that the lack of coordination has emanated in the

duplication of efforts, inefficient use of resources, and confusion among beneficiaries about the programmes' services.

The post-settlement programme requires expertise in agriculture, finance, and marketing information. However, the programme's technical staff have been under-resourced and poorly trained, limiting the programme's ability to provide high-quality support to beneficiaries. Tshigomana (2021:40) links technical expertise and the post-settlement programme and states that other stakeholders, such as DALRRD, municipalities, private investors, other government departments, and civil society groups were to provide developmental support to the communities to ensure the successful implementation of the programme. Despite advancement in the policy cycle, limited expertise has been attributed to the limited resources to build the necessary capacity of the implementing agencies. As a result, this limits the effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation system that is in place.

In debating the role of stakeholders and the expertise provided, Phasha and Moyo (2020) indicate that the majority of the extension officers did not have the requisite educational qualifications and knowledge to support the new farmers effectively. This is significant, given that extension services are extremely important for success in agriculture as they provide the knowledge and impart the technical skills that farmers need to be efficient and productive. Mahmood *et al* (2020:175-184) mention that poor policy guidelines and mechanisms have resulted in a lack of clear direction for stakeholders to engage, monitor, and participate fully in the effective implementation of the programme, notwithstanding advances in monitoring and evaluation methodology.

In terms of access to market and infrastructure, Chitonge (2022:722-739) observes that key infrastructure, such as roads, electricity, water, communication, public transport, health care facilities, are woefully inadequate. Limited access to markets and infrastructure hampers the effective implementation of the RECAP programme as many beneficiaries struggle to access information concerning the market and infrastructure, such as farm storage, which is inadequate, roads and irrigation systems, which are also problematic. This has limited the beneficiaries' abilities to make their land more productive and earn a sustainable livelihood from their farms.

Phasha and Moyo (2020) further state that the support provided by most programmes are mainly in the form of material and financial support. Little or no attention is given to marketing support, which is a prerequisite for successful farming. Greenberg (2019:143-148) argues that new farmers are failing to overcome the barriers to markets, which are controlled by White commercial farmers who have effective marketing strategies and resources for both the local and international markets. It is, therefore, important to address the issue of markets in post-settlement support.

6.3.3 Farming education

It was argued in the literature review that education is a determining factor for sustainable farm production. Undoubtedly, farming education cannot be attained under conditions that demand physical labour. It was found that Black farmers had been productive workers (labourers) in the past, unlike their White counterparts who were trained in farm and capital management as a prerequisite for successful farming. Notwithstanding, the failure to address the background of Black farmers regarding farming education and management abilities resulting in the collapse of any land reform programme, as farm success begins with a willingness to adapt to changes. Policy provisions should ensure that Black farmers are sufficiently trained and skilled to be productive on their farms and to be capable of creating economic opportunities on their farms for the rural poor.

It could be argued further that an individual's capacity to manage the multifaceted aspects of a farm project largely accounts for its success. Previously, Black farmers were not exposed to large amounts of money; therefore, giving substantial amounts of land and money to them without any education and training increases the likelihood of mismanagement.

Furthermore, policy provisions must render constant support in educating Black farmers on the various aspects of farming and how to manage farm-related challenges. The Department of Agriculture, the private sector, and White farmers should tackle this as a joint venture.

The educational task is not only confined to formal training. One important suggestion from this study is to consider the farming history of the Black farmers by informal coaching to change their mindsets away from normalising the notion that they cannot become successful commercial farmers. This study argued that Black small-scale farmers can become commercial farmers if they are willing to acquire sufficient agricultural knowledge from educators and from mentoring by successful commercial farmers. This would create jobs at the community level.

Equally influential is for any training or mentoring to be implemented in such a way that Black farmers are empowered to have a voice and to have increased decision-making autonomy in farming matters. The results of this study made it clear that the beneficiaries of the various land reform programmes are only at the receiving end without a participatory role because they lack adequate information on agriculture to transform their present environment and lives. A plan for consideration, would therefore be that the people-centred paradigms have yet to be fully explored in the transformation of Black farmers.

6.3.4 Farm productivity

Unquestionably, farm productivity on the RECAP farms has improved in comparison with the period before the RECAP. This is because the RECAP assisted Black farmers to boost production on their newly acquired farms. While there is improvement in the productivity of the farms, there is little change in terms of the crop quality. Part of the problem is the low quality of seeds provided to the farmers and the timing of such provisions. Nevertheless, co-operation between small scale farmers and big commercial farmers is inadequate. This relationship between the two camps is critical for successful agricultural production, as the big commercial farmers have the experience, skills, and money, which can be transferred to small scale farmers. It is imperative that policy makers formulate instruments that would assist both camps to sustain the quality and quantity of agricultural production. Despite the fact that there is no mechanism for effective monitoring and evaluation of such partnerships between the two camps, the proposed system is comparatively useful regarding the needs of the farmers.

Hence, the government should formalise procedures that will eliminate monopolies and result in farmers' success to improve livelihood security.

6.4 USEFULNESS OF THE FINDINGS TO EXTEND THE THEORY

The most challenging questions were to identify if the RECAP differed from other land reform programmes and how the RECAP could be implemented successfully on land owned by Black farmers. Waisova (2019:75-99) suggests that the human security theory stresses the importance of implementing efficient policies that ensure the survival, livelihoods, thriving and dignity of people. The RECAP is based on an acknowledgement that land issues still affect the human rights of the poor. This study established that for any meaningful empowerment to take place in the lives of farmers, landownership must be fully transferred to the farmers. In this regard, the way in which farmers gain access to land, exploit, manage and pass it on, are not only forms of empowerment but are relevant for valuing, defending, and fulfilling the rights of the poor.

The subtle difference between those who have access to land and those who are using it effectively is an improvement in the quality of their livelihoods. Ibrahim *et al* (2018:157-161) argue that inappropriate practices involving land and policy implementation compress land use patterns to include land for farming and settlement. Consequently, the pressure on the land produces human insecurity. In this study, the small plot sizes, the fallowing practices, and the competition with the mines, all created pressures that are beyond the individual farmers' power to address. A holistic understanding of human security is again stressed by this study.

The human security theory emphasises the importance of ensuring that individuals have access to the resources and opportunities necessary to live a secure and fulfilling life. This includes access to food, water, healthcare, education, and economic opportunities, among other aspects. In the context of land reform in South Africa, the post-settlement support programme aims to improve the livelihoods of land reform beneficiaries by providing them with the necessary resources, skills, and knowledge to make their land productive. In this way, the RECAP has contributed to the achievement of human security by improving access

to food, creating economic opportunities, and reducing poverty. The central tenets in this study with regard to Dassah (2018:137-145), shows that the people being empowered as individuals, are allowed to transform their land into effective and productive farms.

Additionally, the post-settlement support programme can be seen as an example of how governments can use policy interventions to promote human security to vulnerable populations, such as the rural poverty-stricken people who are land reform beneficiaries, to ensure that they have access to support and the resources necessary to live a secure and fulfilling life. Jarvis (2019:107-126) highlights that this is a form of empowerment since individual transformation was at the core of initial livelihood and security studies and the RECAP, therefore, this constitutes a source of security among the people considering that the RECAP has provided various forms of support, including access to technical assistance, finance, market access, infrastructure development, and capacity building, which have enabled beneficiaries to make their land productive

The theoretical tenets of human security complement the RECAP's goal to enhance the human security of Blacks through transformative initiatives, such as farming and cattle rearing to develop personal abilities. Cassotta *et al* (2016:71-91) and Devereux (2018:184) state that the view of the RECAP to the empowerment of Blacks is to create livelihood security among the Blacks, taking that into consideration, and to reduce issues of inequality, unemployment, illiteracy, and endemic poverty in Black communities.

This study has shown that the RECAP programme has had a positive impact on the livelihoods of beneficiaries. Similarly, a study by Chirisa *et al* (2019:283-286) found that beneficiaries who received post-settlement support had higher levels of productivity, income, and food security compared to those who did not receive support. Shabangu, Ngidi, Ojo and Babu (2021:91-100) further add that the RECAP programme has contributed to improving the economic and social well-being of beneficiaries and has helped to reduce poverty levels in rural areas. Cousins *et al* (2018:1060-1085) state that welfare policies are programmes geared towards assisting the poor, unemployed and the marginalised in society.

The RECAP programme has extended ‘the human security’ concept by facilitating the provision of water and sanitation facilities to beneficiaries through the construction of boreholes, water tanks, and pipelines. In some cases, the programme has also aided beneficiaries to install electricity in their homes and on their farms. Gjørv (2018:221-226) further explains that the central tenet of the human security theory focuses on human development and human rights, as seen in the lives of beneficiaries. Moreover, the programme has also contributed to the empowerment of women in rural areas. Women have been able to access land through the programme and have received support to make their land productive, thereby enhancing their economic status and reducing gender inequalities.

6.5 STUDY LIMITATIONS AND DELAYS

Numerous factors hampered the study from the onset, the first being choosing the most suitable theory that best analysed the objectives of the RECAP. Considering the fact that the RECAP was about Black farmers’ transformation, well-being, and their community at large, the challenge to the researcher was to link the most appropriate theory with the goals of the RECAP. After extensive reading, the researcher found that the human security theory, within its people-centred conceptualisation, fits the ideals of the RECAP with its emphasis on empowering Black people.

Another limitation was the complicated process for obtaining permission from the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD), and access at the municipal level. Despite the numerous emails sent with the supporting documents (student registration and the institutional ethical clearance certificate) to indicate the purpose of the research, there were delayed responses at every level. Often there was no communication at all. State regulations for lockdowns during the COVID-19 crisis exacerbated an already laborious task, as almost all employees were working from home.

Furthermore, securing appointments with the participants was increasingly onerous, as there were constant interruptions during the phone conversations and

when some participants realised that the calls were to recruit research participants, they would simply hang up. The researcher was often asked *"What is the interview for?*" When informed that it was for research purposes only, they appeared to be dissatisfied when they were informed that there was no monetary gain or other benefit attached to their participation.

The list of names and contact telephone numbers of the RECAP beneficiaries was in disarray, and the only way to recruit participants became referrals or snowball sampling.

In addition, the fact that the researcher is a foreigner, and the relatively low literacy level of the participants made the telephone interviews challenging. The researcher worked with interviewers who could translate the communications, but even this did not always help. For example, a question was asked in isiZulu ""*Uyini umsebenzi wakho wezomnotho oyinhloko?"* Translated into English as "*What is your primary economic activity"?* The participant responded: "*Uyazi abantu basephalamenda kuphela abavunyelwe ukusebenza kuze kufike ku-78 years. So angisebenzi manje"*. This was interpreted as "*You know only parliamentarians are allowed to work up to 78 years. So, I am not working now.".* In this example, the question had to be rephrased in order for the participants to understand it better.

Despite these delays and limitations, the researcher found that the interviews and their analysis contributed to a meaningful understanding of the RECAP as an attempt to transform Black farmers from small-scale to commercial farmers from the perspective of the beneficiaries.

6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Considering the essential role of agricultural education in the transformation of small-scale Black farmers to commercial farmers, it is imperative that extensive studies be done on the agricultural literacy level of beneficiaries of the various land reform programmes. Farmers' mindsets must be changed so they move from a victimised and survival mentality to an entrepreneurial mindset. Accordingly, it has been revealed in this research that skills and building their management capacity-

will help deconstruct small-scale farmers' mentalities. Therefore, there is a real need for farm management and effective production skills and training on a constant basis, and the training programmes should be tailored to the different agricultural activities undertaken by the farmers.

Similarly, Black farmers' capital demands did not match their financial capabilities, given the difficulties they had in accessing external support. This study has shown the impact of limited financial assistance. There is a need for constant financial support to the Black famers from both the government and the private sectors. The argument is that constant farm financing empowered the Black farmers and provided to their livelihood development, rural and economy development significantly. The researcher proposes that to acknowledge the results of the financial assistance for Black farmers, the focus should be on their financial management behaviour.

6.7 CONCLUSION

The key findings in this study indicate that the success of Black small-scale farmers is dependent on the farmers' backgrounds and education with regard to farming. It has been shown that the RECAP is not just another vacuous programme, but one oriented towards innovation, no matter how slow the process may be, and crucial factors minimised, there is an element of progress on the part of the government and Black farmers.

A significant limitation of the reviewed literature is the failure to address the issue of mental transformation, skills, and capacity building among Black farmers. Consequently, the persistent, unsuccessful implementation of the various land reform policies is attributable to past laws that relegated Black farmers to labourers without agricultural education. Therefore, many Black farmers are still stuck in the mindset of the past that cannot produce the expected agricultural results in the present era.

Furthermore, the slow implementation of land reform can be ascribed to the entitlement mentality on the part of the farmers and negligence on the part of the

government. God wants every human to be transformed by the renewing of our minds to suit the changing times (Romans 12:2). Injecting income into each new land reform programme without changing the mindsets of the farmers is as good as putting new wine into old wine skin. The result indicates that both the wine and the skin will be damaged. It is worth noting that when our minds are transformed as the circumstances around us are changing, we have control over every situation and dominate our physical surrounding.

The main research interest in this study was on the RECAP and Black farmers. Although the RECAP's priority was to support Black small-scale farmers with finance and equipment to aid their transformation into commercial farmers, government's assistance in cash, kind and equipment indeed empowered them to be independent, despite the challenges associated with farming, but the goal to transform them into commercial farmers is still in progress.

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ANNEXURE 1: ETHICAL CLEARANCE

UNISA university of south africa

COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

23 April 2021

Dear Mukong Vivian Nina

Decision:
Ethics Approval from 23 April 2021 to 23 April 2026

NHREC Registration # :
Rec-240816-052
CREC Reference # :
67141021_CREC_CHS_2021

Researcher(s): **Name: Mukong Vivian Nina**
Contact details: 67141021@mylife.unisa.ac.za
Supervisor(s): **Name: Prof G.E. du Plessis**
Contact details: Dplesge@unisa.ac.za

Title: An assessment of recapitalising a post-settlement support programme in south africa: the case of Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni, Mpumalanga

Purpose: PhD

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the Unisa College of Human Science Ethics Committee. Ethics approval is granted for five years.

The ***Low risk application*** *was* ***reviewed on the 23 April 2021*** by College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee, in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the College Ethics Review Committee.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the

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confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing, accompanied by a progress report.

5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data require additional ethics clearance.
7. No fieldwork activities may continue after the expiry date **(23 April 2026).** Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

*The reference number **67141021_CREC_CHS_2021** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Yours sincerely,

Signature : pp

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CHS Ethics Chairperson
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ANNEXURE 2: CONSENT SHEET

UNISA university of south africa

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, _____ (participant name), telephone number _____confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the interview.

I will receive a copy of this informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname…… (type/written)

Participant Signature……Date……

Researcher: I have explained this study to the best of my ability. I invited questions and gave answers. I believe that the participant fully understands what is involved in being in the study, any potential risks of the study and that he or she has freely chosen to be in the study.

Researcher's Name & Surname: Vivian Mukong……(type)

Researcher's signature…… Date……

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ANNEXURE 3: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

AN ASSESSMENT OF RECAPITALISING A POST-SETTLEMENT SUPPORT PROGRAMME IN SOUTH AFRICA: THE CASE OF GERT SIBANDE AND EHLANZENI MPUMALANGA

Questionnaire Number_____

Region _____name/code

District: _____ name/code

Interviewer: _____ Date of interview: _____

BIODEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

First I need to ask some questions about you for the purposes of analysis;

1. What is your age in years? _____
2. Gender_____
3. What is your highest level of education? _____
4. Have you ever received any agricultural training?

   4.1 What was that training?
5. What is your primary economic activity at the moment? (Probe works and owns the farm only; Other employment besides farming)
6. Besides yourself, how many other people live on this farm? _____

FARMING HISTORY

7. Before RECAP was introduced, did you own land as a beneficiary of any other land reform programme?

YES	NO
GO TO Question 7.1-7.3	Go to Question 8

7.1 IF **YES,** in what year was this? _____

7.2 IF **YES**, what was the size of that land? _____ 'Hectares'

7.3 IF **YES**, what did you mainly produce on that land? _____

8. What was your main economic activity before RECAP?

RECAP EXPERIENCE

9. What is the size of the farm land you own now? _____ 'Hectares'

10. When were you informed that you will be a beneficiary of RECAP? Year _____

11. When did you start work on this farm? Year _____

12. Please tell me about the assistance you have received from the government since you started here:

    12.1 Financial assistance (Ask details on type or assistance; views, strengths, weaknesses)

    12.2 Specific post-settlement support (Ask details on type or assistance; views, strengths, weaknesses)

    12.3 Training, agricultural assistance, mentorship or extension (Ask details on type of assistance; views, strengths, weaknesses)

    12.4 Equipment, seeds, fertilizer, herbicides or pesticides (Ask details on type of assistance; views, strengths, weaknesses)

    12.5 Water or irrigation (Ask details on type of assistance; views, strengths, weaknesses)

    12.6 Other (Ask details on type of assistance; views, strengths, weaknesses)

13 What has been the most valuable assistance you have received via RECAP?

_____

13.1 Why do you say so?

_____

14 What is the assistance you wish you could get, but have not yet received via RECAP?

_____

14.1 Why do you say so?

_____

CURRENT FARM PRODUCTIVITY

15 What do you mainly produce on this farm? _____

16 Do you sell your produce?

16.1 What do you sell?

16.2How much do you sell?

16.3Where do you sell it (or to whom do you sell)?

17 Do you have employees?

17.1Are they full-time workers or seasonal workers?

17.2How many workers do you have?

18 Have you recently (in the last 3 years) asked any of the nearby larger commercial farmers for assistance?

18.1Why or why not?

18.2What kind of assistance?

19 Does your land lie fallow currently? (Why or why not)

POST-SETTLEMENT SUPPORT

20 Do you receive visits from state officials to assess the conditions and productivity of your farm?

20.1When was the last visit?

20.2What did you gain from that visit?

21 Do you think that the RECAP has developed black commercial farmers in Gert Sibanda and Ehlanzeni? Why do you say so?

22 What is the main problem that you are currently facing as a farmer?

22.1Probe financial issues

22.2Probe safety and security concerns

22.3Probe perceptions of food security

22.4Probe issues of soil fertility and water

22.5Probe issues of access to markets

23 What are your main successes that you can attribute to being a beneficiary of RECAP?

23.1Probe financial security

23.2Probe perceptions of improved food security

23.3Probe issues of commercial success

We thank you for your time and contribution to this research

ANNEXURE 4: LETTER FROM EDITOR

CAROL JANSEN

LANGUAGE EDITING SERVICES

P.O. Box 428
BRONKHORSTSPRUIT
1020
24 June 2023

To whom it may concern

Certification of language editing done.

I hereby declare that I have edited the language, grammar, and structure of the article by
Vivian Nina Mukong entitled:
"An assessment of recapitalising a post-settlement support programme in South Africa: the case of Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni, Mpumalanga**."** for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Development Studies at the University of South Africa

I am an experienced language practitioner who has edited many theses and dissertations for Unisa, the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), and the University of Pretoria.

Carol Jansen
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