



**Gods of Big Things, Clumsy at Smalls Things:
Systematic, Structural & Ideological Misfits in
Smallholder Agricultural Dvt**

Blessing Karumbidza
Post-Doc Fellow
Public Management & Economics



Broad Project: Land, Agriculture and Rural Development

The policy basis for South African agricultural development

Social safety nets, grants and schemes – linkage with land, agriculture and development

Agriculture – a political economy of transition without transformation

Rural but not Agrarian – Understand rural dynamics

Agricultural extension – a development facilitation tactic

Indigenous knowledge, traditional crops and food heritage

Climate and agricultural resilience

Land grabs and food security

Policy colleges of land reform in South Africa

- The National Party government
- The World Bank
- The African National Congress
- Rural and land-related NGOs
- The White commercial agriculture sector
- The National African Farmers Union
- The former Department of Native Affairs
- The new Departments of Agriculture and Land Affairs
 - Minus the poorest and marginalised

The emerging agrarian questions made possible by the political economy of transition

- (i) what changes in broad agrarian structures are emerging? Are these new forms of agrarian capitalism or repeats of the past?
- (ii) what is the nature and extent of rural social differentiation – in terms of class, gender, ethnicity – following changes in land use and land property relations as well as organisations of production and exchange?
- (iii) Has land reform undermined local level and national food security? How and to what extent? What have been the socially differentiated impacts on livelihoods by class, gender, and ethnicity?
- (iv) To what extent have agrarian political struggles been provoked by the transition? What are the issues that unite or divide the rural poor, organised movements, and rural communities around the issue of land deals?

Emerging agrarian questions

(v) What are the various competing policy and political narratives and discourses around multiple crises of food, energy, climate, and development, and how have these shaped and been reshaped by the competing meanings of transition and its related politics?

(vi) How have competing frameworks and views on land property been deployed by various camps, around the contested meanings of 'marginal lands' (or 'idle', 'waste', 'unoccupied' lands) vs arable, productive, and other labels given to land?

Emerging questions

(vii) What are the emerging trends around dynamics of power, elites, and corruption; land as a source of patronage? How can we make sense of the politics of land and agrarian reform for the competing college of interests and the different contexts they present?

(viii) Have policy-induced displacement and dispossession occurred (ESTA)? How and to what extent and with what immediate and long-term outcomes and implications for rural livelihoods, including new rural refugees or internally displaced peoples (IDPs) from farm dweller legislation?

Emerging questions

(ix) Have global land policies of different overseas development agencies, namely, World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organisations (FAO), European Union (EU), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and so on, contributed to facilitating/encouraging or blocking/discouraging land reform?

(x) What are the dynamics of international politics of land demand in the broader context of energy, mining, forestry, and conservation; and the role of big capital and powerful interests?

(xi) How important is the transnational character of land reform? Why is it important? From whose point of view?

Emerging questions

(xii) How is land reform discursively justified and legitimized, and, in turn, challenged and opposed?

(xiii) What are the forms of response (which may include both resisting and welcoming reform and the new farmers), how is resistance organised, and how is accommodation shaped by the land owners? What models are emerging outside the state design and how are they negotiating acceptance? What can be considered the state of the best practice in new farmer support?

Emerging questions

- (xiv) What are some of the relevant emerging alternatives from key actors? Are some of the traditional policies such as land reform, and some of the more recent alternative visions such as ‘food sovereignty’ (and ‘land sovereignty’) relevant and useful in promoting and justifying the interest of the rural poor to access land? Do these allow us to take account of the under-utilised arable land already in black hands in the communal or tribal trust lands?
- (xv) Considering the continued expansion of corporate land acquisition on the African continent, what are the longer-term implications for the future of farming and the environment? Do such export of South African commercial farmers create breathing space for local land re-allocation?

The questions for our study

- (i) What are the various competing policy and political narratives and discourses around multiple crises of food, energy, climate, and development, and how have these shaped and been reshaped by the competing meanings of transition and its related politics?
- (ii) What are the emerging trends around dynamics of power, elites, and corruption; land as a source of patronage? How can we make sense of the politics of land and agrarian reform for the competing college of interests and the different contexts they present?
- (iii) How have competing frameworks and views on land property been deployed by various camps, around the contested meanings of 'marginal lands' (or 'idle', 'waste', 'unoccupied' lands) vs arable, productive, and other labels given to land?

Our questions

(iv) To what extent have agrarian political struggles been provoked by the transition? What are the issues that unite or divide the rural poor, organised movements, and rural communities around the issue of land deals?

(v) What are some of the relevant emerging alternatives from key actors? Are some of the traditional policies such as land reform, and some of the more recent alternative visions such as 'food sovereignty' (and 'land sovereignty') relevant and useful in promoting and justifying the interest of the rural poor to access land? Do these allow us to take account of the under-utilised arable land already in black hands in the communal or tribal trust lands?

Why is policy and who shaped it important?

policy refers to 'the authoritative allocation of values' – it is the operational statements of values, 'statements of prescriptive intent' (Kogan et al. 1975: 55).

Values do not float free of their social context.

According to Ball:

We need to ask whose values are validated in policy, and whose are not. Thus, authoritative allocation of values draws our attention to the centrality of power and control in the concept of policy (Ball, 1985:136).

policies cannot be divorced from interests, from conflict, from domination, or from justice – we therefore must interrogate the context, character and nature of policy making,

Policy

noting the advice of Catherine Odora-Hoopers (2012) that:

... discontinuities, omissions and exceptions (which) are typical of the policy process as policy making is in fact often far from the neat clinical-looking blueprint but a messy, unscientific and irrational process [adding that] ... democracy, and demands for democratic participation implies that a policy is only valid if, and when attained through the pre-requisite processes of consultation and consensus from the various interests in a given situation of conflict

At least what we can all agree and take as a point of departure is the fact that the processes used to arrive at the land and agrarian policy regimes in South Africa (pre and post 1994) and its action cocktail is far from being a consultative one based on consensus, more especially when poor people at the community level are factored in.

Unfortunately, in its option for a sunset approach to transition, some of the historic compromises by the ANC involve its complicity in ignoring the poorest of the poor and the marginalised

The discontents of the land reform programme

- Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) aims to transfer 3.5 million ha of land over 15 years out of the 32 million ha of SA's arable land
- By 2001 only 1 million ha had been transferred
- Less than 10 % of land has been transferred
- Lack of post-settlement support

The College of Interests led to

- A commitment to the upgrading of tenure rights
- Adherence to free-market policies
- Agricultural market liberalisation
- Introduction of a partial grant for land acquisition
- Context:
 - Lack of expertise and policy development for land within the ANC
 - Lack of prioritisation of the land question – a
 - Locked in peace through appeasement

THANK YOU

