

# UMHLABA Wethu 7



June 2009

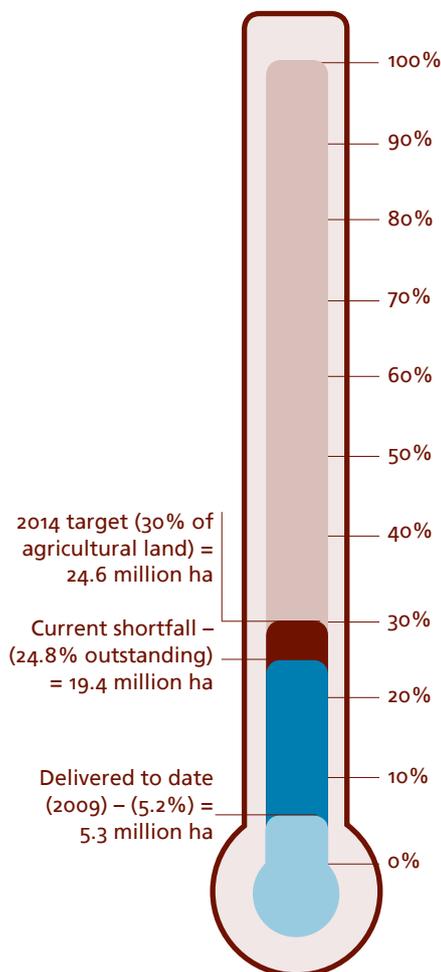
A PLAAS bulletin tracking land reform in South Africa



## IN THIS EDITION

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## LAND BAROMETER



Source: DLA, March 2009

In the last 15 years the Department of Land Affairs (DLA) has set out to achieve many things but, by its own admission, has been unsuccessful in meeting its objectives for land reform. Hence a few questions arise. Is land reform failing? With a new administration in place, is it possible to influence a new rural vision to transform the imbalances in the countryside with clearer and achievable alternatives for sustainable agrarian reform under the ambit of the ANC's renewed focus on rural development and agrarian reform? Does the shift in the institutional arrangements provide an opportunity to assess the possibilities for a new direction for land reform and agriculture?

Amidst the perplexity of where land reform is heading we have seen some positive shifts in the budget for land affairs towards greater support for land reform beneficiaries. To the contrary, however, former Minister Lulu Xingwana announced the DLA would begin to seize un[der]used land from land reform beneficiaries under the new 'Use it or lose it' policy. Following this announcement, we have indeed witnessed the first land reform farm seizure from none other than a woman land reform beneficiary from the

farm Yzerfontein in eastern Gauteng.

Does this suggest land reform is becoming undone at the seams? However small the gains made through land reform, will it be overturned by this gesture or will we see positive policy changes that would lead to appropriate land reform models, which could in turn demonstrate more pro-poor outcomes?

This edition of *Umhlaba Wethu* interprets agrarian reform in the ANC manifesto. We reflect on what the newly established land affairs and rural development and separate agriculture ministries determine for land reform and pro-poor agricultural development. The latest land reform and agriculture budgets are under scrutiny and an update on land reform implementation and policy developments is given.

PLAAS dedicates this edition of *Umhlaba Wethu* to the late women's rights activist, **Ms Rita Edwards**, a founding member of the New Women's Movement in Cape Town. We also bid farewell to the late **Prof. Hastings W.O. Okoth-Ogendo**, a leading land rights scholar from Kenya. *Hamba kahle*, colleagues.

*Karin Kleinbooi, Editor. PLAAS*

## Land reform summary (as at March 2009)

- By March 2009 a total of 5.2% of the targeted 30% of agricultural land, which amounts to 5.3 million ha, had been transferred through the various land reform programmes.
- Three million ha of land had been transferred through the redistribution and tenure reform programmes, combined.
- Land delivery through the restitution programme rose to 2.3 million ha.
- The above figures include state land.

Percentage of land delivered by programme



\* This pie chart includes state land. Source: DLA, March 2009

## RESTITUTION SUMMARY

- The Commission on the Restitution of Land Rights (CRLR) reported by 31st March 2009 that 75 031 land claims were settled out of the 79 696 claims that were lodged – this suggests that only 94% of the claims are settled.
- The number of outstanding claims, all of which are rural, now stands at 4 296.
- The table clearly indicates a sharp increase in the settlement of land claims, particularly in Limpopo and Mpumalanga.
- In KwaZulu Natal however, a relatively slow pace of settlement is noted where only 72 of the 1 736 claims have been settled and at 1 652 outstanding rural claims, this province faces the highest number of unsettled land claims.

### Rural claims outstanding as at 31 March 2009:

Province	Number of outstanding claims as at 31 March 2008	Total claims settled: 01 April 2008 – 31 March 2009	Dismissed claims: 01 April 2008 – 31 March 2009	Number of outstanding claims
Eastern Cape	555	33	0	522
Free State	97	15	54	28
Northern Cape	218	18	11	189
Gauteng	4	1	0	3
North West	215	20	0	195
KwaZulu-Natal	1 736	72	12	1 652
Limpopo	674	235	17	422
Mpumalanga	851	139	0	712
Western Cape	599	12	14	573
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 949</b>	<b>545</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>4 296</b>

Source CRLR, March 2009

## ANC ELECTION MANIFESTO IN RELATION TO RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND LAND REFORM

*The ANC manifesto portrays a new focus on agrarian reform and higher priority is now accorded to land agriculture and rural development. The strengths, weaknesses and suggested alternatives are discussed below.*

### Strengths

The higher priority now accorded to land, agriculture and rural development by the ANC, as well as the overall thrust of this section of the manifesto (emphasising greater levels of support for productive use of land by the rural poor and land reform beneficiaries) is very welcome. Rural and land issues have been shamefully neglected by government since 1994, with very small budget allocations the norm (around 1–2% of the overall budget), despite fine-sounding rhetoric at election time.

The new focus on agrarian reform, including the restructuring of value chains, is appropriate and much needed, given the complete neglect of these aspects in the

past. This indicates that the ruling party is aware of the need to reconfigure the wider economic environment within which land reform and rural development more generally takes place – an environment which has to date been inimical to successful agricultural production by small-scale producers. The emphasis on promoting co-operatives is interesting and could be very useful if implemented effectively.

The statement of intent to ‘review the appropriateness of the existing land redistribution programme’ is not new; government has been saying this since 2005, without any progress being made over the past four years. Such a review is indeed necessary, given the poor performance of the programme to date, and thus this statement is welcome. However, it is vague in the extreme – what new directions are envisaged? The lack of detail here is very disappointing.

Linking land and water reform more effectively is long overdue, and recognition

of this by the ANC is welcome. How this will be achieved is not at all clear, however. The disjointed manner in which separate government departments and programmes tend to operate at present will need to be addressed, and the manifesto is vague on just how better co-ordination and integration of government policies will be achieved in practice.

### Weaknesses

The manifesto is very weak on the huge problems facing farm workers and dwellers, including labour tenants. The manifesto is silent on their systemic insecurity and vulnerability and the inadequacy of current legislation and policy. A fundamentally different approach to this sector is needed, and the manifesto does not acknowledge this.

The manifesto is also completely silent on the huge challenges and problems facing the land restitution programme, including inadequate budgetary allocations, the need



for more realistic deadlines, effective ways of resolving claims on land used for high value sugar, forestry and fruit production, provision of adequate post-settlement support, addressing the problem of dysfunctional legal entities for holding land in common, and creating joint ventures that benefit claimants in an equitable and sustainable manner.

The key challenge of enhancing tenure security in communal areas is also ignored, and the statement that government will seek to strengthen its partnership with the institution of traditional leadership is worrying, given evidence that some chiefs continue to abuse their powers and to allocate land in a corrupt manner.

A key issue for land and agrarian reform and rural development is the creation of sufficient capacity in the state for the planning and implementation of programmes that will achieve real change on the ground. There is no acknowledgement of the current weakness and incapacity of the relevant departments in national and provincial government, and no mention of the urgent need to strengthen extension and support services to small-scale producers.

Also neglected is the emerging challenge of securing the environmental sustainability of farming systems, given the fossil fuel dependence of existing technologies and the threat of climate change. Research and appropriate policy frameworks to address this issue are urgently needed. The promotion of labour-intensive methods of farming, at different scales, could provide additional opportunities for producers in communal areas and land reform contexts, and government should be taking the lead here.

## Alternative directions

In my view, a range of alternative land and agrarian reform policies could be pursued, but the issue of which options are most appropriate should be opened up to public debate and inclusive policy formulation processes. Securing the active participation of potential beneficiaries, civil society organisations and elements of the private sector in such processes would strengthen the proposals and help ensure that they receive broad-based support.

**Specific options which could be explored include the following:**

- Creating a new Department of Agrarian Reform, with sufficient numbers of well-trained staff.
- Revitalising agricultural training colleges and linking them more closely to extension support services.
- Area-based planning for agrarian reform that integrates the different sub-programmes (redistribution, restitution, tenure reform, small-farm support, infrastructure development).
- Repeal of the Subdivision Act.
- Input subsidies for small-scale producers, with an emphasis on ecologically sustainable technologies and farming systems.
- Targeting farms with irrigation infrastructure for land redistribution.
- Strengthening legislation and support for the tenure rights of farm dwellers and workers.
- Developing detailed policies through support for innovative pilots, designed as learning processes.

*Prof. Ben Cousins, PLAAS*

## RURAL AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND LAND REFORM

The land shall be shared amongst those who work it!

The ANC is committed to a comprehensive and clear rural development strategy linked to land and agrarian reform, improvement of the conditions of farm workers and farm dwellers and build[ing] the potential for rural sustainable livelihoods.

The ANC government will:

- *Intensify the land reform programme* to ensure that more land is in the hands of the rural poor and will provide them with technical skills and financial resources to productively use the land to create sustainable livelihoods and decent work in rural areas.
- *Review the appropriateness of the existing land redistribution programme*, introduce measures aimed at speeding up the pace of land reform and redistribution and promote land ownership by South Africans.
- *Expand [the] agrarian reform programme*, which will focus on the systematic promotion of agricultural co-operatives

throughout the value chain, including agro-processing in the agricultural areas. Government will develop support measures to ensure more access to markets and finance by small farmers, including fencing and irrigation systems.

- *Ensure a much stronger link between land and agrarian reform* programmes and water resource allocation and ensure that the best quality of water resources reach all our people, especially the poor.
- *Strengthen [the] partnership between government and the institution of traditional leadership* to focus on rural development and fighting poverty.
- *Work together with the farming community to improve the living conditions of farm dwellers*, including the provision of subsidized houses and other basic services.

*ANC Manifesto, 2009*

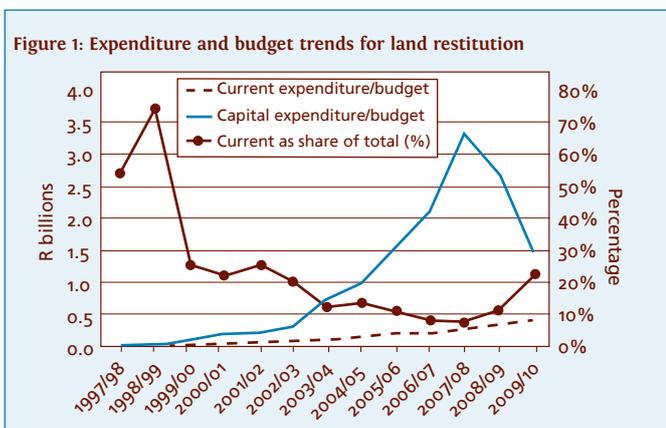
# LAND BUDGET UPDATE

Does the land and agriculture budget contribute to building a rural economy as envisioned by the Polokwane conference and will it move land reform forward? We discuss this year's budget's big stories for land reform and agriculture.

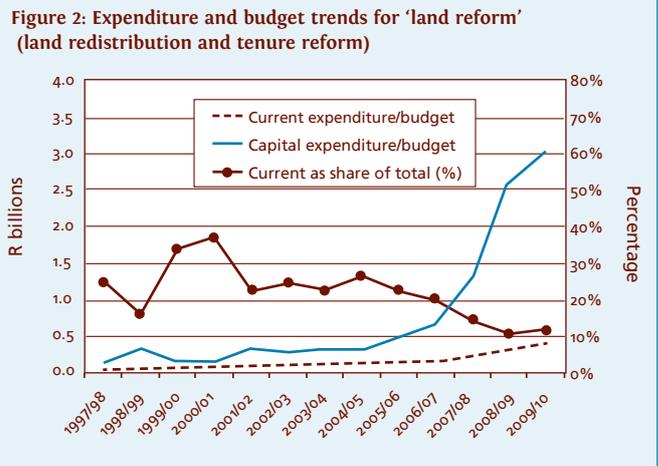
## 1. How much has been given and how does it differ from last year?

The overall budget for the Department of Land Affairs has declined between 2008/09 and 2009/10 by 8%, driven by a precipitous decline in the capital budget allocated for the land restitution programme (see Figure 1, blue line), which far outweighed the capital budget increase for 'land reform' (i.e. land redistribution and tenure reform; Figure 2, solid brown line). The reason for the decline in the restitution budget is obscure: on the one hand, in mid-2008, the Restitution Commission indicated that it would need to spend R18 billion in order to meet the deadline of 2011, which would be consistent with an increase in annual expenditure up to that date; on the other hand, the *Estimates of National Expenditure* released by the National Treasury in February, imply that the restitution programme has already begun its winding down phase, which would appear to explain the general downward trend in its budget line.

The other significant feature of the land reform budget is a sharp reversal of previous trends, whereby the capital budget (mainly for land, subsidies but also equipment) tended to grow far more rapidly than the current budget (operating budget, e.g. salaries). In comparison to last year's budget, current expenditure – which can be interpreted broadly as the state's capacity to effect land reform transfers – grew in both absolute terms and relative to the corresponding capital budget. For restitution, the current budget increased by 104% relative to the capital budget decline of 49% (thus the sharp rise of the solid brown line in Figure 1); while for the 'land reform' budget line, the figures are 53% and 16% respectively



Note: in this and the following figure, the blue line indicates trends in the capital spending and budgeting, the dotted line is the current expenditure and budgeting, and the solid brown series represents the share of total expenditure/budgets dedicated to current spending. All of the figures up through 2007/08 represent actual audited expenditure, while the figures for 2008/09 are the 'adjusted appropriation' (basically an initial estimate of actual expenditure for the just-concluded financial year), and 2009/10 is the appropriation for the new financial year.



(thus the moderate rise of the solid brown line in Figure 2). In respect of tenure reform, it is difficult to discern any distinct budget allocation in the *Estimates*, although it is possible that part of the increase in the current budget for land reform is to provide for the implementation of the stalled Communal Land Rights Act. However, indications are that government is *not* planning to implement the Act soon.

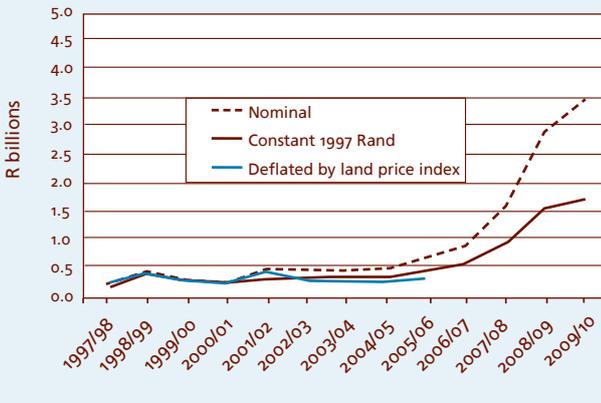
## 2. Is it enough?

The *Estimates* suggests that over the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) period an additional 2.2 million hectares will be transferred via the redistribution programme at a total cost of about R12.3 billion. While no comparable figures are provided for restitution in terms of hectares, assuming similar land costs, then the MTEF allocation would allow for the restoration of less than 1 million hectares, making a total of around 3 million hectares. Given the approximately 5.2 million hectares transferred to date, this means that over 17 million hectares would need to be delivered over the three years remaining between the end of this MTEF period and 2014, the target date for transferring a total of 30% of all commercial farmland. This is obviously a nonsensical target under the present circumstances. Having said that, we do not necessarily regard failure to achieve the arbitrary 30% as itself a key concern, in light of the increasingly obvious problems associated with 'chasing hectares'. However, it is worth noting the inconsistency between the DLA's stated intentions and the means at its disposal to pursue them.

Figure 3 adds some perspective on this question by adjusting for the declining 'buying power' of the Rand over time. In addition to the trend line in the total expenditure/budget, the figure includes a series that translates the total budget into 'constant 1997 Rand' by taking consumer price inflation into account (using the re-based historical cpi series recently released by Stats SA), and another series that takes prevailing farmland prices into account (taken from the Department of Agriculture's *Abstract of Agricultural Statistics*), which unfortunately are only available up through 2005. What



**Figure 3: Expenditure and budget trends for land reform, taking consumer and land price inflation into account**



the figure reveals is that, taking the general decline in the buying power of the Rand into account, the recent increases in the budget for land reform (i.e. mainly redistribution) are only about half as great as they are when not taking inflation into account. However, given that over the period 2000 to 2005 land prices increased more rapidly than consumer prices generally, the purchasing power of the land reform budget in terms of land was effectively static up to 2005. A similar picture can be drawn for restitution. Unfortunately, we are unable to state what has happened over the more recent past, but suspect that growth in farmland prices has slowed considerably in line with the general softening of the South African property market.

In his February budget speech, Minister Manuel made much of the fact that 'rural development and small farmer support' would receive a boost of R1.8 billion, presumably over the MTEF period. The significance of this was underlined when the Minister deviated from the script to ensure that this fact was acknowledged by Gwede Mantashe, presumably to signal that the allocation is a financial commitment in support of the rural development thrust of the ANC's election manifesto.

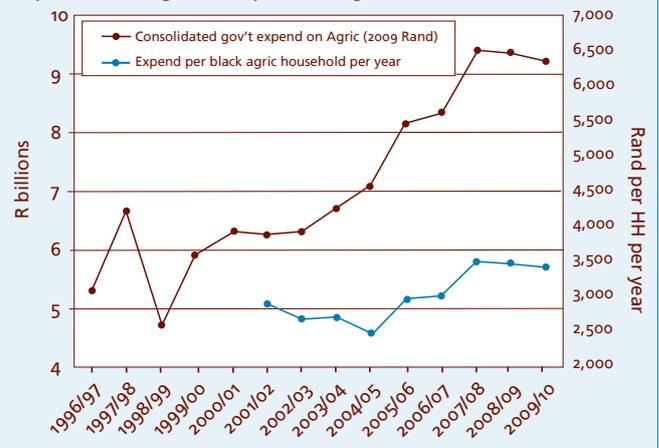
However, it is in fact very difficult to discern whether this is a significant increase, given that there is no 'rural development' line item in the budget. Elsewhere in the speech, specific mention was made of increased allocations to the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme, agricultural starter packs, and rural roads, thus presumably these comprise much of what was meant by 'rural development and small farmer support'. However, much of the actual support to small-scale farmers comes in the form of extension services, which are budgeted for through provincial budget processes over which the national Department of Agriculture has limited control. Having said that, the *Estimates* allude to an increase in the number of extension officers nationally, phased in over the next few years.

One way of seeking to understand to what extent spending on rural development will in fact increase is to use the statistical annex of the *Estimates*, where among other things the functional classification of the consolidate government budget is presented. It is 'consolidated' in the sense that it takes together expenditure (for

past years) and budgeting (for the current year) at both national and provincial level. One of the line items included in the consolidated budget is for 'agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting'. If we take the figures from this table, subtract from them the expenditure/budget figures for the Department of Land Affairs, and adjust for inflation (again using the cpi), we derive a useful picture of the government's overall financial commitment to the agricultural sector apart from land reform. Figure 4 portrays this trend, and also shows an estimate of the real average annual expenditure per 'black agricultural household', where the latter are estimated using the Labour Force Survey together with statistics from DLA on the number of land reform beneficiaries

Figure 4 shows two things. First, the real (i.e. inflation-adjusted) increase in spending on agriculture was immense from the late 1990s until 2007/08. And second, from that point spending on agriculture has been in decline, despite the impression conveyed in the budget speech and elsewhere that the financial commitment to agriculture was still rapidly growing. The discrepancy could be due to the fact that not all of agricultural spending goes to support smallholders and land reform beneficiaries (i.e. these figures would include funding for the Agricultural Research Council). However, it is still stark enough to raise questions as to what is reality and what is rhetoric.

**Figure 4: Total expenditure on agriculture and average expenditure on agriculture per 'black agricultural household'**



### 3. Is this budget moving land reform forward?

Finally, in another telling deviation from the script, Minister Manuel noted in his budget speech that the Land Bank's offerings did not appear to be suitable to land reform beneficiaries, and then admonished that 'Land is an asset, and it's an asset that needs to be worked by the poor'. The meaning was ambiguous, but seemed to suggest that land reform needed to show more tangible results in terms of poverty reduction and food production than it could demonstrate to date. Many would agree, but it can hardly be said that there is any consensus as to a good plan for the way forward. At this juncture, one is tempted to conclude that the key questions are ones of appropriate policy formulation, in comparison to which budgets are a secondary concern.

*Michael Aliber & Karin Kleinbooi, PLAAS*

## RESPONSES TO THE NEW CABINET

*In the few weeks following the announcement of the new Cabinet, rural development organisations and experts have used the public space to engage new leadership in a debate about the way forward for the South African rural areas.*

Commentary has in large degree focused on the meaning and implications of the Cabinet shuffle that has split the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Affairs, brought Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture under one roof and pulled Water away from Forestry, to be joined with Environment, which was in turn divorced from Tourism. The introduction of Rural Development partnered with Land Reform appears to echo a shift in thinking about land reform declared in the ANC's Polokwane conference resolution proposing key economic rationales for redistributive land reform.

A debate about the reshuffling of portfolios is not just about the shuffle, but also about locating the hinges and the knobs in the new institutional arrangement. The new President (Jacob Zuma) has named rural development as one of five key priorities for his tenure. It seems vital that we not only understand how the new administration conceives rural development, but also what it can mean in the South African context.

Commentators have lamented that splitting Land Reform from Agriculture suggests that the two will be misaligned, or rather will become even more so than what was evident before the split. There

is a risk that a separate department for rural development and land reform will become just another welfare department, leaving rural development stripped of its key catalysts: agriculture, fisheries and forestry. A key concern is that a conception of rural development that is not driven by the three main rural productive sectors will only perpetuate the economic dualism which keeps viable, large-scale commercial agriculture on one end of the economy and new, small-scale, under-resourced farms on the other.

Ironically, some celebratory comments about the Cabinet shuffle seem to advocate that same dualism proclaiming that commercial agriculture must be protected from the detrimental effects of land reform.

Keeping both critical and positive reflections in mind, it is sobering to consider that Land Affairs and Agriculture have been coupled under one Ministry for the past thirteen years without effective integration of policy rationales.

Engaging with policy processes entails more than researchers and actors in civil society talking to policy makers. A democratised debate about the meaning and the direction of rural development, where questions about economic, social and environmental imperatives are fleshed out can take place in the public arena.

*Obiozo Ukpabi, PLAAS*

## POLICY UPDATES

### **Expropriation Bill [B16 — 2008 (s75)]**

Public hearings on the Expropriation Bill were concluded at Parliament in June 2008. Following a strong lobby against the bill from organised agriculture it was formally withdrawn by the Minister of Public Works. The draft Bill is currently on hold and is still with the Department of Public Works. Further consultation with stakeholders is in the pipeline. It is envisaged that it will be reintroduced into Parliament in the third quarter of 2009.

### **Amendments to Act 126**

Parliament approved the new grants model, and the National Council of Provinces approved the amendments to the Provision of Land and Assistance Act (1993) to create an enabling environment for the land and agrarian reform programme. The grants model lowers the barriers to accessing grants by extending the value of the

grant to 100% of the value of the land to be purchased (from the previous limit of 95%). The amendments to the act make provision for establishing a trading entity to manage land acquired through the proactive land acquisition strategy.

### **Implementation Strategy and Regulations to Communal Land Rights Act**

Despite the controversy and litigation surrounding the Communal Land Rights Act (CLaRA) the DLA awaits parliamentary approval for the regulations to facilitate the implementation of CLaRA. The DLA is going ahead in developing an implementation strategy. The implementation plan will only be finalised and implemented once the new Parliament approves the Regulations. The likelihood is that this and the ongoing policy dilemmas of the Act will continue to be opposed by the applicant communities.



## NEW PUBLICATIONS

**Land Marked: Land Claims and Land Restitution in South Africa.** 2008. Cheryl Walker. Jacana Media. The author unpacks the realities of the institutional and other complexities and challenges of implementing the land restitution programme. She draws on her personal and lengthy involvement in the investigation of forced removals and her experience as Regional Land Claims Commissioner for KwaZulu-Natal from 1995 to 2000. The book renders a perceptive and subtle account of the programme of land restitution as a whole and highlights the limitations of restoration. Three in-depth case studies illustrate the diverse outcomes that have emerged from the programme. The concluding assessment of the success and failure of land restitution is robust, measured and persuasive.

**Contested Terrain: Land Reform and Civil Society in Contemporary Zimbabwe.** 2008. Sam Moyo, Kirk Helliker and Tendai Murisa. S&S Publishers. This book provides different insights into the contested character of civil society, alliances and peasantry and the dynamics of the land movement in the context of Zimbabwe's land reform. The book gives consideration to the deep problems confronting Zimbabwean society by looking at the divergent approaches and practices of various civil groupings, including war veterans and farm workers. It looks at the impact Zimbabwe has had on the contemporary understanding of civil society and agrarian change in Africa and beyond the continent.

**Journal of Peasant Studies, Vol. 36, Issue No. 1 Special Issue: Critical Perspectives in Agrarian Change and Peasant Studies.** 2009. Saturnino M. Borrás Jr. (ed). Routledge. This edition reflects on the significant and dynamic adaptation of agrarian transformations within and across countries during the past few decades compared to previous eras, provoking a variety of reactions from rural

poor communities worldwide. The global crises – financial, food, energy and environmental – have put the nexus between 'rural development' and 'development in general' back onto the centre stage of theoretical, policy and political agendas in the world today. Confronting these issues will require [re]engaging with critical theories, taking politics seriously, and utilising rigorous and appropriate research methodologies. These are the common messages and implications of the various contributions to this collection in the context of a scholarship that is critical in two senses: questioning prescriptions from mainstream perspectives, and interrogating popular conventions in radical thinking. Free download, <http://www.informaworld.com/jps>

**Another Countryside? Policy Options for Land and Agrarian Reform in South Africa.** 2009. Ruth Hall (ed.). PLAAS. This book argues that the redistribution of land in South Africa has been stymied for years, both by policy failures and by bureaucratic obstacles. It presents a compilation of papers that explores the limits of the current approach and proposes policy alternatives. It centres on three themes: how land is to be acquired (which land, and for whom), under what tenure arrangements it is to be held, and how production is to be supported.

### Another Countryside? Policy Options for Land and Agrarian Reform in South Africa

will be launched at the Book Lounge in Cape Town from 17.30 for 18.00 on Wednesday 24 June 2009.

RSVP to [booklounge@gmail.com](mailto:booklounge@gmail.com) or call 021 462 2425

## NEW APPOINTMENTS

### National Cabinet

Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform: **Mr Gugile Nkwinti**. Deputy Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform: **Dr Joe Phaahla** (*Mr T T (Thozi) Gwanya remains the Director-General for this department*)

Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries: **Ms Tina Joemat-Pettersson**. Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries: **Dr Pieter Mulder** (*Ms N J (Njabulo) Nduli is the new Director-General for this department*)

Minister in The Presidency (1): National Planning Commission — **Mr Trevor Manuel**. Minister in The Presidency (2): Performance Monitoring and Evaluation as well as Administration in the Presidency – **Mr Collins Chabane**

### National department

**Ms Sharmla Govender** has shifted from the Directorate: Redistribution Implementation Systems, Department of Land Affairs to **Chief Directorate: Policy and Legislation Development**, which is mandated to develop and review land reform policies and legislation.

### Regional

The Senior Programme Officer for Environment and Sustainable Development, **Mr Alex Banda** has been appointed in the interim as facilitator of the **SADC Land Reform Support Facility**. The Facility falls under the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Directorate of SADC. He replaces Mr Stephen Nanthambwe who has been the facilitator since late 2006 until the terms of his contract came to an end at the end of April 2009.

## GENERAL NEWS

### Rural Development Summit

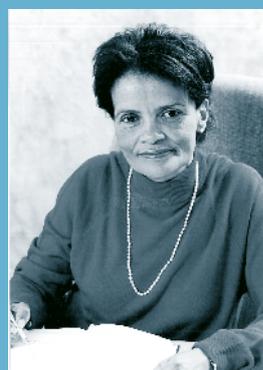
In February 2009 a **Rural Development Summit** was held by the Cape Winelands District Council and the Breede River-Winelands District land reform office in Robertson to discuss the implementation of the Winelands Area-based Land Reform Plan. Area-based land reform planning is an approach to ensure that land reform addresses the needs and demands of emerging farmers and landless people in the area within municipal IDPs and spatial development frameworks and is supported by government departments and private sector at an area level. One of the key concerns that surfaced during the summit was that the current budget of PLRO (WC) is not sufficient to acquire land, deliver grants and/or services; a capable co-ordination agency is not in operation at the lowest viable level (either local government level or DLA district level) for the roll-out and implementation of such a plan. Unless sufficient resources and capacity are awarded, the Area-based Land Reform Plan will not meet its ambitious targets.

### Regional workshop on gender and land rights

The second regional workshop in the Land Learning Programme, which was entitled **Decentralising Land, Dispossessing Women?: Recovering Gender Voices and Experiences of Decentralised Land Reform in Africa**, was held in Maputo, Mozambique from 4 to 7 May 2009. The workshop was a collaboration between PLAAS and Norwegian People's Aid to advance current debates on women's land rights in the context of decentralised land reform. The proceeds of this workshop (see <http://www.plaas.org.za/newsevents/dlrs2009/document.2009-03-26.0783913131/> for documents) were dedicated to the late **Prof. Hastings W.O. Okoth-Ogendo**, Africa's leading land rights scholar, who was also going to make a substantive contribution at this workshop. He passed away suddenly on the 24th of April 2009.

### Hamba Kahle to a phenomenal activist, women's leader and colleague

**Rita Edwards** passed away on the 20th of May 2009 after a brave battle with cancer. She was an exceptional activist for the rights of women and the poor and she played a leading role in the shaping of Grassroots, a community newspaper that voiced the community struggles against apartheid. She was also one of the founder members of the New Women's Movement a popular women's grassroots organisation located in the townships and peri-urban areas of Cape Town. In 1987 to 1999 she served as director of the Trust for Community Outreach and Education (TCOE) and joined Women on Farms Project (WFP) as director from 2000 to 2004. Here she played a pivotal role in establishing Sikhule Sonke a trade union of women farm workers, the first of its kind in South Africa. Rita spent her whole life a committed socialist and feminist and her legacy is embedded in the many movements that fought hard to put women in leadership and brought the poor into power. As strong-willed as she was, she was known as the activist with a gentle and caring approach. *Hamba Kahle, Rita.*



Ms Rita Edwards

PLAAS obtained information for *Umhlaba Wethu* from a wide range of sources, including statistical information from the Department of Land Affairs (DLA) and the Commission on Restitution of Land Rights (CRLR): <http://land.pwv.gov.za>. Views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of PLAAS.

#### SEND SUGGESTIONS AND COMMENTS ON THIS PUBLICATION TO:

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