

Land Reform from Below: Decentralised Land Reform in Southern Africa

Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies
Regional Workshop
Kopanong, Gauteng
South Africa
22-23 April 2008



BACKGROUND

- At regional level a number of SADC member states are undertaking land reform exercises of various kinds and on various scales.
- Evidence suggests that the centralised nature of land reform constrains the degree to which it meets the interests of poor local populations with diverse land needs.
- Current policy discourses suggest a move towards decentralising land reform in the southern African region.
- However some controversy exists around whether, and how, decentralisation can:
 - secure land access and recognise land rights of marginalised groups
 - promote more equitable participation in, and pro-poor outcomes from, land reform.

RATIONALE

- There remains disagreement about the merits (and meaning) of decentralisation
- Therefore a need to look at opportunities to exchange experiences and insights in the form of dialogue and debate.
- It is through understanding country experiences that one can get to understand better what problems currently exist in practice and policy
- And therefore what types of policy approach can work in the region.

DEFINITION

- A partnership with the *Austrian Development Agency* and the *Norwegian Centre for Human Rights* led to a regional programme entitled '**Land reform from below: Decentralised land reform in southern Africa**'.
- The programme has adopted a 'learning process' approach, involving systematic analysis and critical reflection, and focuses in particular on pro-poor, community-led approaches.

THEMATIC AREAS

- The central focus of the programme will look at two main strands of land reform in the context of decentralization:
 - Redistributive land reforms: that promote equitable access to land and ensure sustainable livelihoods.
 - Tenure reforms: that secure the land rights of the poor, to control the land they use and occupy, as well as devolving power over land administration and management to local democratic and indigenous institutions.

PARTNERSHIP

- The initiative is open to
 - Land and rural development non-governmental organisations in Southern Africa;
 - Rural social movements;
 - Academics, researchers and policy analysts and independent think tanks;
 - Government departments and related sectors;
 - Regional structures, like the SADC Land Reform Technical Support Facility.

ACTIVITIES & OUTPUTS

- Ensure experiential learning facilitated amongst land reform practitioners through:
 - Three *regional workshops* to share experiences and derive policy-relevant lessons from practice in countries in Southern Africa
 - *Networking* amongst key stakeholders and participant institutions.
- Produce a series of published outputs that will contribute to documentation & dissemination of land reform experience, lessons & practice:
 - Nine *policy briefs* on topical themes.
 - *Annual regional reviews* of progress with land reforms in Southern Africa, identifying lessons and best practices, providing country-by-country reviews and identifying cross-cutting issues.
 - A *workbook/manual* based on workshops, policy briefs & annual reviews at end of the programme.

This regional programme will conclude in October 2010.

WAY FORWARD

ACTIVITIES & OUTPUTS (1)

2008	2009	(OCT) 2010
WORKSHOP 1 (SA)	WORKSHOP 2 (?)	WORKSHOP 3 (?)
POLICY BRIEF_1	POLICY BRIEF_1	POLICY BRIEF_1
POLICY BRIEF_2	POLICY BRIEF_2	POLICY BRIEF_2
POLICY BRIEF_3	POLICY BRIEF_3	POLICY BRIEF_3
ANNUAL REVIEW	ANNUAL REVIEW	ANNUAL REVIEW
WORKBOOK/MANUAL		

WAY FORWARD (2)

- Concrete and practical ways of using opportunity to share information, to analyse and reflect on regional land reform decentralisation and to distill lessons for best practice.
 - How can PLAAS support a learning environment?
 - What are the gaps and other issues?
 - Are these appropriate tools, opportunities & methods for engagement?
- In what ways do you see yourself sharing lessons and learning from others via this platform?