



AN EVALUATION OF THE LAND REDISTRIBUTION FOR AGRICULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT (LRAD) PROGRAMME IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA:
LESSONS FROM THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

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By Nsununguli Mbongolwane

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Approval of the Thesis

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This thesis by Nsununguli Mbongolwane has been approved by the committee members below, who recommend it be accepted by the faculty of UNICAF University in Zambia in partial fulfilment of requirements for the degree of

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Abstract

AN EVALUATION OF THE LAND REDISTRIBUTION FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (LRAD) PROGRAMME IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA: LESSONS FROM THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

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Post-apartheid South Africa has engaged in comprehensive land redistribution; nevertheless, results in the Eastern Cape Province are inconsistent, as numerous programmes encounter issues of low productivity, insufficient sustainability, and ongoing marginalisation of vulnerable populations. This study examines the factors influencing these results using Ricardo's Theory of Economic Rent, emphasising the significance of land quality and location in determining productivity. A qualitative case study design was utilised, focusing on policymakers, farmers, and land specialists in six districts. Employing purposive sampling, 25 people were solicited, with 18 being interviewed until data saturation was achieved. Data were gathered using semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, and document analysis, then examined using thematic content analysis. The researcher concludes that although land fertility and market proximity significantly impacted success, as predicted by Ricardo, outcomes were also heavily reliant on institutional support, post-settlement services, and the capabilities of beneficiaries. Participants defined sustainability as the ongoing viability of livelihoods following the initial transfer, productivity as the efficient utilisation of land facilitated by resources and market access, and exclusion as both the absence of access and obstacles to involvement in decision-making and value chains. The study indicates that evaluating reform effectiveness exclusively by hectares transferred is insufficient; rather, land-use outcomes

should be valued. Policy recommendations encompass enhancing post-settlement assistance, ensuring tenure security, and establishing market connections. Theoretically, the study enhances Ricardo's rent paradigm by incorporating institutional and social factors into the examination of land reform dynamics.

Keywords: Land Redistribution, Ricardo's Theory of Rent, Eastern Cape, Agricultural Productivity, Sustainability, Exclusion, Institutional Support, South Africa.

Declaration

I, Nsununguli Mbongolwane, hereby declare that the present scientific document is my own original work that was developed for the purposes of partial submission for the Doctorate of Business Administration (DBA) at the UNICAF University in Zambia.

I also declare that all contents in this document are properly referenced and that the document has never been submitted to any University for examination purposes.



September 2025

Nsununguli Mbongolwane

Date

AI Acknowledgment

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Dedication

This thesis is a small token of my love, in the memories of my late daughter, Wendy Mbongolwane Dube, a bright scholar taken away by fate at only twenty-four years of age. Her brilliance, resolve, and deep love of learning continue to guide every step of my academic journey. Although she is no longer with us in person, her spirit remains a steady wellspring of strength, courage, and motivation. I also dedicate this work to my wife, who played a pivotal role in keeping me going with her unrelenting support, patience, and encouragement during the demanding process of completing this study. Her faith in education and my resilience got me through the darkest moments. Lastly, this project stands as a tribute to all those who have lost something, yet continue in their quest for knowledge, purpose, and transformation. Let Wendy's memory be remembered herein and let this work remind us that the cherished souls who have left do live on through the impact we make, the dreams we continue to chase, and the futures we are building in their memories.

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List of Abbreviations

LAG	LAG- Land Acquisition Grant
LRAD	LRAD-Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development
SLAG	SLAG-Settlement/Land Acquisition Grant
LAG	LAG- Land Acquisition Grant
ANC	African National Congress
ARC	Agricultural Research Council
BBBEE	Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment
CAQDAS	Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CED	Community Economic Development
CPF	Community Policing Forum
COGTA	Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
DALRRD	Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
DBSA	Development Bank of Southern Africa
DFI	Development Finance Institution
DRDAR	Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform (Eastern Cape)
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
ECSECC	Eastern Cape Socio-Economic Consultative Council
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IGR	Intergovernmental Relations
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LRAD	Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development

MEC	Member of the Executive Council
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NDP	National Development Plan (South Africa)
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ORTDM	OR Tambo District Municipality
PACC	Provincial Agrarian Coordination Council
PDO	Project Development Objective
PESTEL	Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal Analysis
PLRO	Provincial Land Reform Observatory
PM&E	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
POE	Portfolio of Evidence
PPP	Public–Private Partnership
PRDP	Provincial Rural Development Plan
QLFS	Quarterly Labour Force Survey
QMS	Quality Management System
RBV	Resource-Based View
REC	Research Ethics Committee
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SA	South Africa
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SARS	South African Revenue Service
SDF	Skills Development Facilitator
SEDA	Small Enterprise Development Agency
SEFA	Small Enterprise Finance Agency
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority

SMME	Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprise
SOR	Statement of Results
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICAF	Unicaf University
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WTO	World Trade Organization
CE	Capability Enhancement
CRA	Capability Rent Advantage
EC	Eastern Cape
LAA	Land Administration Agency
LED	Local Economic Development
RQ	Research Question
TIA	Theory-Informed Analysis
VRIN	Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, Non-substitutable (RBV construct)
DER	Differential Economic Rent
ER	Endowment Rent
CR	Capability Rent
IR	Institutional Rent

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter establishes a framework for reviewing the persistent productivity barriers to the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) programme in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. However, even after its three decades of implementation, the programme has produced only tenuous sustainable agricultural outcomes, and literature has yielded piecemeal, monolithic theory solutions, conceptually unsynchronized.

This chapter fills the gap by developing an integrated analysis system by synthesising traditional land rent theory with Resource-Based View (RBV) and smallholder productivity theories in an interdisciplinary context, which has never been applied in a South African land reform evaluation in this regard. It explains that the LRAD productivity problem is structural, spatial, capability, and institutional in nature with the aim of indicating that misalignment of land endowments, beneficiary capacities, governance systems, and market access creates a systemic failure rather than a functional failure. It then gives a well-defined problem statement containing four linked sections to develop an overall research objective and question.

In addition, the independent variables like legislative frameworks, land-use drivers, and beneficiary capabilities and dependent variable like sustainable and equitable agricultural productivity of the study are also delineated in the chapter with specific theoretical contexts, while the latter are theoretically grounded. The comparative cases of Zimbabwe, Namibia and Kenya are then described to show how redistribution without a structural, capacity and value chain integration process inevitably reduces productivity. The chapter argues for the qualitative interpretivist

analysis as well, suggesting a multi-faceted investigation into the Eastern Cape history of Bantustan systems and dual tenure arrangements and the history of social memory if a nuanced interpretation of the case will allow for the case to develop and be brought to life beyond quantitative measures.

Overall the chapter gives a description of the extent and boundaries, and structure of the study to construct a comprehensive roadmap, which sets the stage for theoretical development and empirical inquiry, as well as the application findings in later chapters.

1.2 Background to the Study

Despite the implementation of the South African Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) programme over the past three decades, the productivity performance of the programme has remained unsatisfactory and inadequately explained, especially in structurally constrained provinces like the Eastern Cape. Although the literature has highlighted the slow pace of implementation, institutional challenges, and beneficiary constraints, it has not offered an integrated theory for the performance differences in agricultural productivity among redistributed landholdings. The gap is therefore more conceptual than empirical since the literature is fragmented along separate lines of argumentation, which are rarely integrated.

In the classical theory of land rent, especially under the differential rent theory as advanced by David Ricardo, the main driver of productivity in agriculture is the inherent quality of the land, including its fertility, climate, and location. Although these remain important considerations, they do not comprehensively address the issue of the newly distributed lands' productivity under capital scarcity. This is as opposed to the RBV model and the smallholder productivity model, which focus on the capacity of the beneficiaries, the

resources available, and the level of technology used. These theories acknowledge the role of land as a determinant of agricultural productivity but fail to adequately account for the role of location and climate while focusing more on the capabilities of the beneficiaries than the spatial and climate factors. Moreover, these theories are rarely applied in the context of land reform policies. Thus, the factors affecting agricultural productivity in the South African land reform programme are separately discussed in the literature, whereas the interaction among these factors is rarely considered. Currently, there is no clear theory that explains the interaction of the factors affecting agricultural productivity in the context of the South African land reform programme.

This study aims to fill this theoretical and practical void by designing its research questions to align with these theoretical omissions. Thus, the study will examine the role played by the legislative and institutional framework on sustainable land use and productivity, thereby filling the theoretical omission related to governance integration within classical rent theory and capability theory. The study will also examine how biophysical, market, institutional, and human factors collectively influence land use decisions and productivity, thereby operationalising an integrated analytical framework to examine land use decisions and productivity. Thirdly, the study seeks to examine behavioural, governance, and capacity risks to sustainable land use decisions, thereby conceptualising these factors as mechanisms for dissipation of rent rather than operational failures. Finally the study aims to develop an integrated framework to address sustainable and equitable land redistribution, thereby directly addressing the theoretical omission related to a unifying framework within classical land theory. In aggregate, this study reframes LRAD performance not simply as a function of land transfer or beneficiary capacity but rather as a problem of systemic alignment to coordinate three interrelated modes of value creation to address land use decisions and productivity. In synthesising classical land theory, Resource-Based View theory, and smallholder productivity

theory, this study fills a critical theoretical and practical void to develop a more comprehensive theory to explain agricultural performance within land reform in South Africa.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) programme, a strategic policy initiative aimed at increasing land access and stimulating agricultural productivity, has failed to achieve sustainable or equitable business and livelihood outcomes in the Eastern Cape. The challenge associated with the allocation of land is a lack of alignment between the land redistribution, the abilities of the people who receive the land, the institutions available, and the market framework. This brings about underutilisation of the land after it has been redistributed, poor productivity, as well as a minimal sense of livelihood improvement among the people who receive the land. To present the problem systematically, the statement is organised into four interrelated subsections aligned with the research objectives and research questions.

1.3.1 Structural and Legislative Misalignment

The institutional structure within the LRAD system remains inefficient, characterised by fragmented mandates, limited interdepartmental coordination, and weak monitoring mechanisms, which collectively constrain effective implementation and beneficiary support. There is confusion in their mandate, lack of supervision, as well as planning. This causes confusion in the lines of accountability (Mtero, 2017). The continued reliance on the willing-buyer, willing-seller model prioritises transactional compliance but fails to strategically allocate land according to productive potential or long-term development needs (Ricardo, 1817/2004). These misalignments weaken the state's capacity to provide effective post-settlement support. This section links research objective 1 and addresses research question 1, which addresses how legislative and institutional frameworks shape LRAD outcomes.

1.3.2 Uneven Land Endowments and Spatial Constraints

Agro-ecological variation across the Eastern Cape significantly affects productive potential. Former homeland areas, where most LRAD beneficiaries receive land, are characterised by degraded soils, limited water resources, and inadequate infrastructure (DRDLR, 2019). Ricardo's differential rent theory demonstrates that such disparities naturally influence productivity, cost structures, and economic returns (Ricardo, 1817). Yet LRAD does not systematically match beneficiaries to high-potential land or integrate location into its redistribution logic. Consequently, fertile land often remains underutilised while low-potential parcels are allocated to inexperienced farmers. This section links research objective 2 and addresses research question 2 on how land quality, location, and market access shape productivity under LRAD.

1.3.3 Capability Deficits and Behavioural Constraints Among Beneficiaries

The recipients of LRAD, who are most likely to comprise the young generation, women, and one-generation farmers, may not have the capabilities, resources, and managerial skills to convert the land resource allocated to them into a productive resource (Statistics SA, 2022). The Resource-Based View argues that productivity depends on VRIN attributes, which comprise resources, finances, and knowledge structures (Barney, 1991). Small Scale productivity theories further highlight how labour allocation, risk behaviour, indigenous ecological knowledge, and supervision practices shape day-to-day land use (Lipton, 2009; Altieri, 2004). In the absence of such resources, the beneficiaries resort to low-input approaches as they avoid risk. The effect is that production remains at the subsistent level. This section addresses research objective 3 and answers research question 3, which addresses which capability, behaviour, and risk governs land use.

1.3.4 Weak Institutional Support, Poor Market Integration, and Value-Chain Failure

LRAD implementation is further hindered by inadequate extension services, poor infrastructure, limited access to inputs, credit constraints, and weak market linkages (Kloppers & Pienaar, 2014). Comparative evidence shows that land reform programmes thrive only where institutional capacity, tenure security, and market access are firmly established (Scoones et al., 2019; Melber, 2021; Njeru & Mwangi, 2020). In the Eastern Cape, beneficiaries remain disconnected from value chains, face high transaction costs, and have limited access to processing and marketing opportunities. Such restrictions hamper productivity and prevent the optimal use of redistributed land. This section links to research objective 4 and addresses research question 4 that looks at what kind of an integrated framework can support successful, sustainable land redistribution.

1.3.5 Overarching Problem Statement

Taken together, these structural, spatial, capability-based, and institutional constraints lead to the following overarching problem statement:

Despite policy intent, LRAD in the Eastern Cape has not achieved sustainable agricultural productivity or equitable livelihood outcomes because land endowments, beneficiary capabilities, institutional systems, and market structures are misaligned. This misalignment prevents beneficiaries from transforming land access into viable agricultural enterprises and long-term rural development which are the core objectives of land reform. Such a systemic lack of alignment represents a major deficiency in the strategic execution and business model used in land reform, requiring a realignment of resources, capabilities, and institutional support to create a viable agricultural business.

1.4 Purpose, Aim, Objectives, and Research Questions

1.4.1 Research Gap

Though there is broad-based policy debate on land reform, limited scholarship interrogates how land endowments, institutional structures, and beneficiary capabilities combine to influence LRAD outcomes at provincial level. Much of the research on the subject has been political and macro-economic and has not included such aspects as micro capability dynamics, spatial variation, and institutional co-ordination (Barney, 1991; Ricardo, 1817; Lipton, 2009). This study fills this gap by using a qualitative case study of the Eastern Cape.

1.4.2 Research Purpose

The purpose of the current study is to analyse the factors influencing agricultural productivity under LRAD in Eastern Cape with a view to developing an integrated framework that enhances the effectiveness of land redistribution as an instrument for rural economic transformation.

1.4.3 Research Aim

The aim of the study is to examine how endowment, capability and institutional factors interact in determining agricultural productivity in LRAD projects of the Eastern Cape.

1.4.4 Research Objectives

The following research objectives were formulated for the current study:

- To analyse the impact of legislative and institutional framework on sustainable land use and agriculture productivity under the LRAD programme.
- To assess the influence of biophysical, market, institutional and human drivers on land use decision-making, productivity, and other technical outcomes among LRAD beneficiaries.

- To evaluate the capacity, behavioural, and governance-related risks that undermine sustainable land use among LRAD beneficiaries in the Eastern Cape Province.
- To develop an integrated model for sustainable and equitable land redistribution in South Africa.

1.4.5 Research Questions

The research questions for the current study have been formulated as follows:

- **RQ1:** How do legislative and institutional frameworks influence sustainable land use and agricultural productivity under LRAD?
- **RQ2:** How do biophysical, market, institutional, and human drivers of land use shape LRAD outcomes?
- **RQ3:** What capability, behavioural, and governance risks constrain sustainable land use under LRAD?
- **RQ4:** What integrated framework can support successful and sustainable land redistribution for agriculture in South Africa, with reference to the Eastern Cape?

1.5 Definition and Identification of Research Variables

The research variables used in this study are conceptually grounded in three theoretical pillars: Ricardo's Theory of Land Rent, the Resource-Based View (RBV), and Small-Scale Productivity theories. These theories collectively explain the determinants of productive land use from structural, organisational, and behavioural perspectives.

Ricardo's (1817/2004) theory explains the extrinsic determinants or variables, namely, soil fertility, climate, water access, spatial location, and market proximity, which shape differential productivity and rent potential. The RBV (Barney, 1991) explains the intrinsic determinants or variables, namely, skills, financial capital, managerial competence, technology

adoption, and organisational capacity that allow actors to convert land potential into output. Small Scale productivity theories (Lipton, 2009; Altieri, 2004) add a behavioural dimension, highlighting how labour mobilisation, indigenous ecological knowledge, supervision practices, and risk strategies influence day-to-day production.

By combining these perspectives, this study interprets LRAD outcomes as the product of multi-layered research variables whose interaction determines whether redistributed land becomes productive, underutilised, or abandoned.

1.5.1 Independent Research Variables

The following independent research variables were identified for the current study:

1.5.1.1 Legislative and Institutional Frameworks

This variable refers to the laws, policies, administrative systems, and intergovernmental coordination structures that regulate land redistribution. It includes:

- policy clarity and coherence,
- bureaucratic capacity,
- intergovernmental alignment,
- oversight systems, and
- post-settlement support instruments.

The RBV views institutional capability as an organisational resource which influences how well new beneficiaries utilise the land that is redistributed.

1.5.1.2 Land-Use Drivers (Biophysical, Market, and Resource Conditions)

These drivers include:

- soil fertility, water availability, and climate (Ricardian endowments).
- proximity to markets, roads, and infrastructure.
- access to inputs, finance, and technology; and
- local agro-ecological conditions.

Such factors influence the level and sustainability of the viability of agricultural production (Albertus & Popescu, 2020). From a RBV perspective, it is argued that the capability to effectively leverage such determinants by such actors as the institutions and their beneficiaries confers a competitive advantage.

1.5.1.3 Beneficiary Capabilities and Behavioural Factors

This variable captures the internal capacity of LRAD farmers, including:

- skills, training, and knowledge (RBV).
- managerial competence and organisational capacity.
- household labour dynamics and supervision efficiencies (smallholder theory).
- indigenous ecological knowledge.
- risk behaviour and diversification strategies.

These capabilities shape how land is used and whether productivity potential is realised or suppressed (Altieri, 2004; Lipton, 2009).

1.5.2 Dependent Research Variables

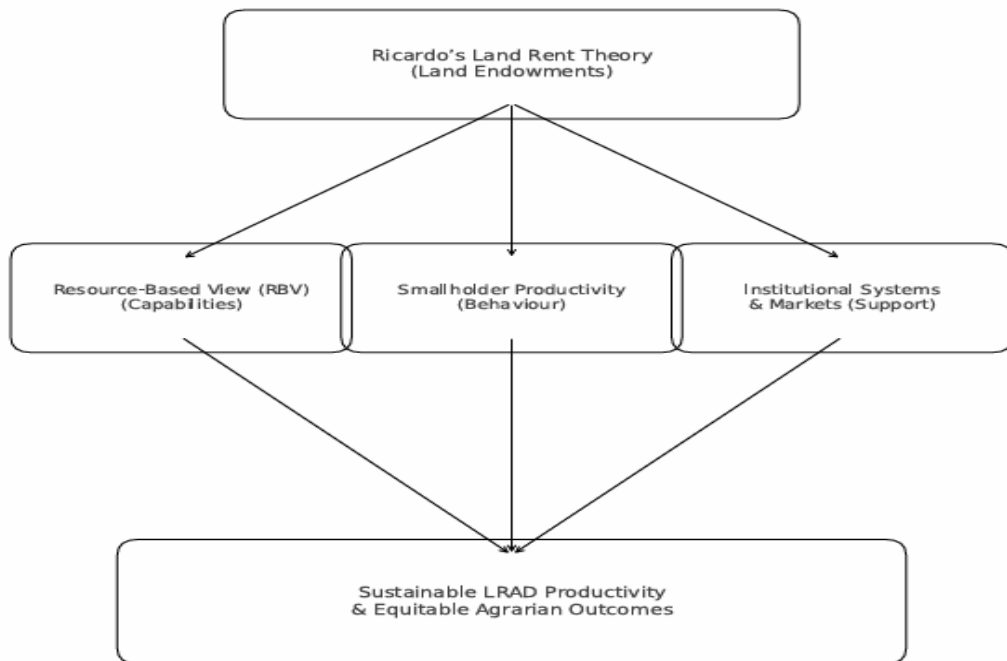
1.5.2.1 LRAD Outcomes: Sustainable and Equitable Agricultural Productivity

The dependent variable is defined as the degree to which LRAD projects achieve:

- sustained agricultural output,
- improvements in land utilisation,
- enhanced beneficiary livelihoods,
- equity in access and participation,
- ecological sustainability, and long-term viability of redistributed farms.

RBV interprets positive outcomes as evidence of successful mobilisation of complementary capabilities; Ricardian theory interprets them as effective utilisation of land endowments; smallholder theory interprets them as productive household-level practices.

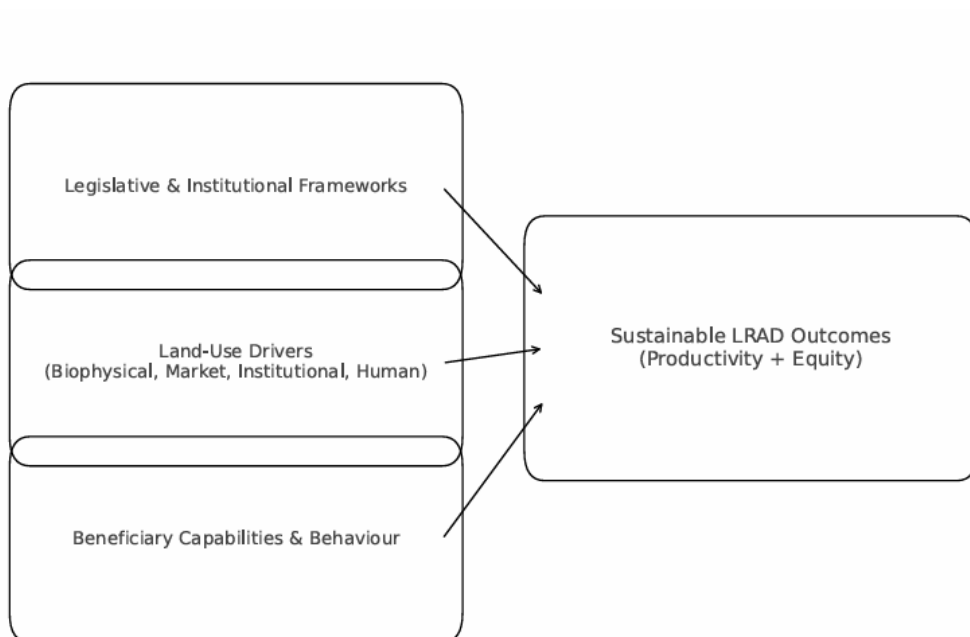
Figure 1.1
Theoretical Linkages Diagram



Source: Author, 2024

Figure 1.2
Structure of Variables (IV–DV Model)

Independent Research Variables (IVs) Dependent Research Variable (DV)



Source: Author, 2024

Table 1.1*Summary of Variables and Theoretical Foundations*

Variable	Description	Theoretical Basis	Expected Influence
Legislative & Institutional Frameworks	Laws, policies, administrative capacity, intergovernmental coordination	RBV (institutional capability as resource)	Enables/limits implementation quality and support systems
Land-Use Drivers	Soil fertility, location, markets, water, inputs, infrastructure	Ricardo (land endowments), RBV	Shape productive potential and cost structures
Beneficiary Capabilities & Behaviour	Skills, labour, knowledge, risk preferences, organisation	RBV; Small Scale Productivity Theories	Determine utilisation of land and adaptive responses
LRAD Outcomes (DV)	Productivity, land utilisation, sustainability, equity	All three theories combined	Result from alignment of endowments, capabilities, and institutions

Source: Author, 2024

1.6 Comparative Lessons from Other Countries

There are instructive lessons from land redistribution policies in sub-Saharan Africa on the enabling contexts needed for such a sustainable land reform. Lessons from Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Kenya illustrate that the issue with redistribution of land is that it does not result in greater productivity on its own. This depends on institutions, markets, the capacity of beneficiaries, as well as the allocation of land and agricultural growth linkage (Moyo & Chambati, 2013; Werner & Odendaal, 2010; Boone, 2012).

1.6.1 Zimbabwe's Fast-Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP)

Zimbabwe's Fast-Track Land Reform Programme transferred over seven million hectares to approximately 160 000 individuals, changing the face of land ownership in the nation. However, initial outcomes were undermined by the programme's inadequate planning, inadequate funding, and failing input markets. More recent literature suggests an element of partial recovery as medium-scale farmers have been able to regenerate capital, upgrade farm

assets, and connect the value chain. The Zimbabwean example shows that mere redistributive justice does not lead to success without good institutions and capacity building.

1.6.2 *Namibia's Market-Led Redistribution*

Namibia was stuck with a "willing buyer, willing seller" approach, which maintained stability but moved at a snail's pace. Less than 30% of the planned land was redistributed by 2020. Soaring land prices, tight budgets, and loose links between land transfer and agricultural support services contributed to low productivity. The message is loud and clear: there are definite limitations to market-based redistribution without regulation, thus emphasising the need for coordinated post-settlement support.

1.6.3 *Kenya's Decentralised Tenure and Community Land Reforms*

The initial settlement schemes in Kenya began with the support for small-scale farmers for growth, although later they were displaced by elite groups and land fragmentation (Boone, 2012; Kanyinga, 2019). The contemporary modifications, as seen by the Community Land Act in 2016, have improved tenure security and ensured that governance was brought closer to the people through the involvement of the county (Njeru & Mwangi, 2020). The Kenyan example shows that security of land rights, working in combination with the involvement of the community, lies at the heart of effective reform.

1.6.4 *Emerging Comparative Lessons for South Africa*

Across the three countries, several themes consistently emerge:

- Redistribution without institutional support undermines productivity (Scoones et al., 2019).
- Market-based models alone are slow and inequitable (Melber, 2021).
- Tenure security and decentralised governance enhance sustainability (Njeru & Mwangi, 2020).

- Capability development and value-chain integration drive long-term success (Scoones & Mavedzenge, 2020).

1.6.5 Implications for LRAD in the Eastern Cape

These lessons from other countries indicate that South Africa must shift from a land-transfer model to a capability-driven, institutionally supported, market-integrated agrarian transformation strategy. The comparative evidence strengthens the rationale for this study's integrated theoretical framework—Ricardo's rent theory, the Resource-Based View, and smallholder productivity theories—to explain LRAD's performance in the Eastern Cape.

1.7 Nature and Significance of the Study

1.7.1 Methodological Rationale and Design

The research methodology is qualitative and interpretive, which diverges from the dominant quantitative approach commonly used in land reform studies that rely on outcome indicators for land redistribution and agricultural production (Aliber & Cousins, 2013; Hall, 2010). Although land reform outcome indicators are important for tracking trends, they often obscure the underlying socio-institutional dynamics necessary for understanding land reform outcomes (Hall, 2009). The methodology is designed to provide insights into three aspects that are not possible with a quantitative approach: the subjective experience of land reform beneficiaries, the institutional interface between government, traditional leadership, and civil society, and the development process of capabilities, including skills and social capital (Binswanger-Mkhize, 2014; Chimhowu, 2019). The methodology does not rely on any quantitative measures, statistical models, or econometric analyses.

1.7.2 Case Study Justification: The Eastern Cape

The Eastern Cape is an important case for a qualitative approach because the history and legacy of the Transkei and Ciskei Bantustan systems, landholding patterns, and governance arrangements create a situation where land reform is deeply embedded in social memory (Beinart & Bundy, 1987). In this context, a quantitative approach does not provide significant insights (Hendricks & Ntsebeza, 1999). The research aims to provide insights into the role of social memory, expressed historically, in shaping the land reform expectations of land reform beneficiaries and the interface between traditional leadership and civil governance arrangements, which provide important variables for understanding land reform outcomes.

1.7.3 Sampling Strategy

As is consistent with an interpretive paradigm, a purposive sampling strategy was employed which fits with the research questions and is based upon “information-rich” participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Sample Composition: The study consists of 25 key information providers, who belong to two categories:

- Eighteen (18) information providers from different administrative provinces in the Eastern Cape, who can provide “grounded” insights based upon individuals who are closely involved in the implementation process.
- Seven (7) information providers from different national think tanks who specialize in land economics and agricultural economics.

Sample Size and Recruitment: The sampling size was based upon data saturation, where no new information would be gathered by recruiting more participants (Guest et al., 2006).

Ethical and Reflexive Considerations: Since the researcher is a policy analyst, reflexivity was maintained during data collection to avoid any preconceived notions and to ensure that unbiased information was collected.

1.7.4 Significance of the Study

The study has substantial theoretical, practical, policy and methodological implications. Land redistribution is central to South Africa's transformation agenda, yet the continuing underachievement of many LRAD schemes in the Eastern Cape reflects a deeper knowledge gap with respect to the conditions under which redistributed land can generate sustained agricultural productivity. By filling this gap, the paper makes a practical and substantive contribution to scholarship, practice, and public policy.

1.7.4.1 Theoretical Significance

- It builds toward a multi-theoretical study, combining Ricardo's Theory of Rent with the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Small-Scale Productivity Theories. All these explanatory theoretical perspectives explain LRAD findings using complementary analytical approaches:
- In Ricardo's Theory of Rent, productive potential can be understood by the relationship between land quality, location, and agro-ecological characteristics.
- In Resource-Based View internal capabilities, that is, skills, organisational capacity, financial resources are explained in terms of how they support and limit the transfer of land potential to agricultural productivity.
- Small Scale Productivity Theories illuminate household-level behaviours such as labour allocation, risk strategies, and indigenous knowledge.

By embedding these factors, the presented study adds to the broader picture of LRAD outcomes far beyond the extent to which current studies considered structural, capability-

related, and behavioural determinants separately, and by adding these to a holistic explanation of LRAD performance.

1.7.4.2 Contribution to Management and Agricultural Economics

The study helps to connect the dots in fragmented realms by combining strategic management concepts-especially Resource-Based View and mobilisation of capabilities-with agricultural economics. It repositions land reform not merely as an instrument to redress political grievances but as a strategic resource governance challenge, one that needs coordinated capability development, institutional alignment, and value-chain integration. A contribution of this interdisciplinary paper aims at responding to recent literature criticising existing methodologies for being too simplistic regarding land reform dynamics and necessitating more complex models.

1.7.4.3 Policy Significance

The study developed a practical, evidence-based framework that is able to support improved LRAD implementation. It offers guidance for:

- matching beneficiaries of land redistribution with appropriate mechanisms for productive potential,
- designing post-settlement support systems,
- developing farmer capabilities and organisational capacity,
- integrating beneficiaries into agri-value chains, and
- strengthening intergovernmental coordination and institutional performance.

These insights are directly relevant to policymakers, programme implementers, and development planners seeking to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of land-reform interventions.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is defined by its geographical limits, population and unit of analysis, conceptual scope, methodological factors, and timelines. These limits are in place to maintain reach, cohesion, and relevance to the qualitative aim of the study.

1.8.1 Geographical Scope

The study is confined to the Eastern Cape province of South Africa, a region characterised by dual land-tenure systems, structural underdevelopment, and a significant concentration of LRAD beneficiary farms. The province serves as an appropriate setting due to its persistent land reform challenges and the variability of productivity outcomes across redistributed farms.

1.8.2 Population and Unit of Analysis

The study focuses on:

- LRAD beneficiary farmers. This includes both individually and cooperatively owned projects,
- Government officials from the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD),
- Agricultural extension officers, and
- Representatives of supporting institutions (experts/think tanks) (e.g., agricultural colleges/universities, municipalities, NGOs, commodity groups).

The unit of analysis is the LRAD redistributed farm and its associated institutional and capability environment.

1.8.3 Conceptual Scope

The study looks at agricultural performance from three theoretical frameworks:

- Endowment factors (Ricardian land rent theory),
- Capabilities and competencies (Resource-Based View), and
- Socio-economic behaviour factors (Small Scale Productivity Theories).

The study is confined to exploring the impact of these three domains on farm-level productivity and sustainability under LRAD. Broader land reform concepts like restitution, tenure reform, or urban/peri-urban land dynamics are beyond the scope of this research.

1.8.4 Methodological Scope

The current study is a qualitative, interpretive study that relied on:

- Semi-structured interviews,
- Document analysis, and
- Contextual insights from field engagement.

The study did not include quantitative assessments of yield, financial performance, or comparative modelling. Instead, it prioritises understanding participants lived experiences, perceptions, institutional interactions, and capability-related challenges.

1.8.5 Time Scope

The study focuses on the LRAD projects from 2001 to date. It focuses mostly on the changing institutional landscape and their modern performance relative to the reconfigured farms. Prior land policies before 1994 are mentioned just to situate existing problems, not as core evidence.

1.8.6 Theoretical Scope

While the study integrates Ricardo's Theory of Economic Rent, RBV, and Small-Scale Productivity Theories, it does not engage in exhaustive theory testing. Instead, the theoretical framework is used as a diagnostic and interpretive tool for understanding productivity outcomes within LRAD farms.

1.8.7 Practical Scope

The findings are intended to inform:

- Government departments involved in land reform and agricultural development,
- Extension and advisory services,
- Academic, training, and development institutions,
- LRAD beneficiaries, and
- Policy actors seeking to strengthen post-settlement support.

The study does not prescribe national economic planning models or evaluate the entire land reform programme but rather focuses on improving farm-level performance and support systems in the Eastern Cape.

1.9 Theoretical and Literature Background: Overview

The study derives from three theoretically positioned perspectives to examine the determinants of land use and redistribution in the Eastern Cape. Ricardo's Theory of Rent (1817/2004; Sihlobo, 2023) has given us a classical economic view of how land variability related to soil fertility, spatial position, and distance to markets may lead to different productive capacities of distinct types of land parcels. The Resource-Based View (RBV) builds on this analysis and applies it to organisations and humans, stating that productivity is not only a function of rawness and quality, but also of the internal resources like skill sets and knowledge,

managerial capacity, and financial capital that enable the individuals who are recipients of land to make continuous outputs as a result of the endowments by taking up and utilising their endowments (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993; Grant, 2016).

Smallholder Productivity Theories add a behavioural and structural component by illustrating how household-level labour relations, indigenous knowledge, risk-taking patterns, liquidity constraints, and day-to-day decision-making interplay in shaping land use (Schultz, 1964; Lipton, 2009; Hazell, Poulton, & Wiggins, 2010; Barrett, 2008). Considered as a whole, a few of these theories suggest that the current land-use impacts are influenced by the equilibrium of external endowment elements, internal capability resources, and smallholder farmer actions. Extending from these views of the past, this review addresses a hybrid paradigm in theory by exploring firstly the Ricardian rent theory by providing evidence of the influence of land quality and location on productivity, secondly the Resource-Based View where capability-based differences in performance are important; and thirdly theories of small-scale productivity which accentuate labour organisation, risk management, and household decision-making processes. Each of these frameworks can, when taken together, help us understand how the outcomes of similar parcels of land under LRAD differ dramatically or why access to land does not necessarily put us in a position to use it in a productive or sustainable capacity.

1.10 Methodology Overview

A qualitative, interpretivist research design was adopted because the research questions require the exploration of lived experiences, institutional dynamics, and subjective interpretations rather than statistical generalisation (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). A case study approach (Yin, 2018) enables a detailed examination of LRAD implementation across the Eastern Cape's diverse agro-ecological and institutional contexts.

1.10.1 Data Collection

The generation of the primary data was done through conducting semi-structured interviews with:

- LRAD beneficiaries.
- The government officials from the province, districts, and municipality.
- Specialists in land reform, agricultural economics, and rural development.

Purposive sampling allowed only people who had direct knowledge of the processes involved in LRAD to participate in this study. The interviews were conducted until saturation of themes was achieved (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006).

1.10.2 Data Analysis

Data was analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), supported by NVivo for coding, pattern recognition, and integrating empirical patterns with the theoretical framework.

Trustworthiness was ensured through the following (Lincoln & Guba, 1985):

- triangulation across participant categories,
- member checking where feasible,
- transparent documentation of analytic steps, and
- rich contextual description to enable transferability.

Full methodological details are expanded in Chapter 3.

1.11 Delimitations of the Study

The delimitations of the study included geographical, programme, participant, theoretical, methodical, and temporal delimitations.

1.11.1 Geographical Delimitation

The study is confined to the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. Other provinces with LRAD projects, such as Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal, or the Free State, are excluded to allow for an in-depth and contextually grounded examination of a single province where productivity challenges remain pronounced.

1.11.2 Programme Delimitation

This study is based only on Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) projects. Other key land reform pillars like restitution, tenure reform, Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS), or other post-settlement support programs are not included. This is to provide coherence at the conceptual level, by considering one redistribution mechanism.

1.11.3 Participant Delimitation

Participants are limited to:

- LRAD beneficiary farmers either as individuals or group projects,
- Government officials from DALRRD,
- Agricultural extension officers, and
- Representatives/Experts of support institutions (colleges/universities, municipalities, commodity groups, NGOs).

Private commercial farmers, restitution claimants, and traditional authorities not directly involved in LRAD projects are excluded.

1.11.4 Theoretical Delimitation

The study uses three theoretical lenses:

- Ricardian Theory of Economic Rent (endowment factors),
- Resource-Based View (capabilities), and
- Small Scale Productivity Theories (production determinants).

Broader theoretical frameworks such as Institutional Theory, Tenure Systems Theory, Sustainable Livelihoods Approach, or Development Economics models are not incorporated to avoid conceptual dilution.

1.11.5 Methodological Delimitation

The research adopts a qualitative, interpretive design. No quantitative measurements, statistical modelling, yield benchmarking, or econometric analysis are undertaken. This design was adopted to prioritise depth of insight and contextual understanding rather than numerical generalisation.

1.11.6 Temporal Delimitation

The study focuses on LRAD projects implemented from 2001 to the present. Earlier land-reform initiatives predating LRAD, as well as more recent policy developments emerging after 2019, are included only when they provide essential historical or contextual insight. They do not form part of the primary empirical focus of the study.

These delimitations were chosen to align the inquiry with the study's purpose: to develop a rich, theoretically informed, and context-specific understanding of productivity dynamics within LRAD projects in the Eastern Cape.

1.12 Outline of the Study

A clear outline of the remaining chapters is as follows:

Chapter 2: Literature Review.

This chapter presents the relevant research in relation to the problem statement, research questions, and objectives. It focuses on key bodies of scholarship that examine the relationship between land access and poverty reduction, arguing that land access alone does not assure effective use or economic well-being. The chapter also identifies agrarian approaches and the parameters essential for the sustainability of agricultural production, which are essential to this study.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

The chapter presents a detailed description of the methodology utilised for answering the research questions and the study objectives. The methodological approach presented here is used to further gain an understanding of land use drivers and the land-redistribution process. It does, therefore, define its research philosophy, data-collection procedures (population, sampling strategy, and sample size), as well as data analysis methods.

Chapter 4: Findings, Analysis, and Discussion

In this chapter, the data analysis and research findings are described and reported. The chapter is divided into the following two sections. The features of the sample used to produce the results are first detailed, including respondents' age, gender, and educational background. These features serve to contextualise and establish the character and credibility of the knowledge produced by the participants. Second, the chapter provides a detailed analysis of the results, drawing upon the relevant literature and primary evidence to explain the themes that emerged from the findings.

Chapter 5: Conclusions, Recommendations, and Contributions

This chapter presented the conclusions and recommendations derived from the study's empirical and theoretical findings. It offered policy and management recommendations that represent the culmination of the scientific inquiry. The chapter summarised the key conclusions in relation to the study's objectives and research questions and provided detailed policy and managerial recommendations concerning the drivers of the land redistribution process. It also outlined the study's contribution to knowledge, as reflected in both the theoretical perspectives and the data analysis undertaken.

1.13 Conclusion

Chapter 1 provided background, context, problem statement, comparative insights, research gaps, aims, objectives, research questions, theoretical orientation, variables, and methodological overview. The next chapter deepens the conceptual foundations by critically reviewing relevant literature and developing the integrated theoretical framework for the study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction: Reframing Land Reform

Land redistribution, therefore, is not a policy option but a constitutional imperative, integrated into the transformative agenda of the 1996 Constitution. Section 25 places land reform, which entails restitution, redistribution, and tenure reform, in the realm of public interest, thus dismissing a strict proprietary interpretation of the property clause. The Constitutional Court has clearly held that the object of Section 25 is not to entrench historical advantages but to reconcile property protection with social transformation. The Court has underscored the fact that the interpretation of the clause must serve the advancement of equality, dignity, and redress, not the maintenance of the existing distribution of wealth (*First National Bank v South African Revenue Service*, 2002; Klug, 2010; Ntsebeza, 2007). In this context, land redistribution is not just a legally permissible option but a normatively required one, part of a larger agenda of social transformation, including the restructuring of racialized agrarian and urban landscapes (Kotzé & Pienaar, 2021; Nhamo et al., 2022).

The central axis of contemporary debates, therefore, remains not the question of the legality of redistribution, but the economic rationality of the same, along with the circumstances in which it may operate. The arguments of opponents of redistributive land reform are based on the premise that large-scale land redistribution may negatively affect the incentives to invest through the erosion of the security of property rights, as well as the uncertainty associated with the same. In such a context, the redistributive land reform may negatively impact the level of capital formation, as well as the land market as a whole (Besley, 1995; Griffin, Khan, & Ickowitz, 2002). This line of argument, based on the neoclassical theory of property rights, assumes that the erosion of the strength of individual, alienable, and exclusive rights to land would negatively impact the level of economic productivity. However,

the research on the redistributive land reform and the role of smallholder agriculture has pointed to a more nuanced outcome. Smallholder agriculture may positively impact the level of economic efficiency through the optimal utilization of the inverse relationship between the size of the farm and land productivity in contexts where land is abundant, as well as labor scarce (Lipton, 2009; Rampa, Gadanakis, & Rose, 2020; Sen, 1962). The empirical evidence on the impact of land reform on the level of agricultural output in China, Pakistan, and other developing economies has pointed to the increased level of land productivity even in the context of the erosion of the strength of ownership rights to land, as well as the incompleteness of the land market (Beg, 2021; Chari, Liu, Wang, & Wang, 2017; Zhou, 2025).

However, these productivity benefits are not the automatic results of the policy of redistribution per se, but are contingent on the availability of a conducive environment, both at the institutional, infrastructural, and governance levels. Empirical research on the performance of the redistributed farms in South Africa has shown that the performance of the farms is closely correlated with access to physical infrastructure, technical, and financial support, as well as the ability to access remunerative markets. Farms that are part of a well-functioning value chain, supported by a coherent state policy, are much more likely to attain commercially viable levels of production and, therefore, have a greater probability of attaining high levels of net farm income (Dorward, Hazell, & Poulton, 2009; Gandidzanwa, Verschoor, & Sacolo, 2021). Similar results have been obtained from the experience of Vietnam and other transition economies, where it has been shown that insecurity of tenure, lack of clarity, and the incidence of corruption in the administration of land have resulted in lower investment, lower participation, and greater inequality, even when the formal policy environment has been designed to support the development of the land market (Nguyen, Cai, & Zhang, 2025; Luo, 2018). In the case of South Africa, the failure to integrate the governance of land, water, and the environment has repeatedly resulted in maladaptive outcomes, where poverty has been

perpetuated, and food and water insecurity have been exacerbated, rather than alleviated (Nhamo et al., 2022). Similarly, the literature on climate-smart and sustainable land reform has emphasized the importance of not ignoring the cross-sectoral linkages, including the capability of the beneficiaries, lest the redistributive policies become ecologically and economically vulnerable (Rampa et al., 2020).

Grounded in this literature base, the current study offers the following theoretical perspective: while the constitutionality of land redistribution in South Africa can be seen as non-negotiable, its economic viability can be seen as dependent upon systemic alignment in several interdependent areas. Productivity sustainability does not come from the transfer of land; rather, it comes from the mutually supportive interaction of four structural areas:

Firstly, the endowment and spatial viability of the land in question: this involves the agro-ecological suitability of the land as well as the availability of water and access to infrastructure and markets. Research in the area of climate smart approaches to land reform and nexus planning has shown that the redistribution of poorly serviced and possibly marginal lands can have the effect of reproducing vulnerability and hence undermine the achievement of food security and rural development (Nhamo et al., 2022; Rampa et al., 2020).

Secondly, the security of tenure that can support investment: while this does not have to be in the form of alienable freehold, there has to be the possibility for the development of predictable and enforceable claims to the land in the future. Research in the areas of China and Pakistan has shown that reforms that clarify and secure the right of use and lease can stimulate significant reallocative efficiency and increase productivity and the activity of land rentals (Beg, 2021; Chari, Liu, Wang, & Wang, 2017; Zhang et al., 2021).

The third condition is that of beneficiary capability, which covers human capital, availability of financial resources, and organisational capability. All studies carried out on South Africa's land reform beneficiaries have shown that land reform is hindered by a lack of

human capital, lack of access to affordable finance, and forms of collective organisation. These hinder farm performance, even when land and security of tenure are available (Gandidzanwa, Verschoor, & Sacolo, 2021). Nexus-based analytical frameworks also highlight that knowledge and capability building are critical prerequisites to transforming redistributed land into resilient and climate-responsive farming systems (Nhamo et al., 2022).

The fourth condition is that of institutional scaffolding, which ensures that land reform beneficiaries are linked to functioning markets. Studies carried out on systemic competitiveness in the European cereal system have shown that systemic competitiveness is hindered by a lack of alignment between factor endowments, trade policy, and investment in infrastructures. This creates structural vulnerabilities and regional productivity gaps (Istudor et al., 2025). Studies carried out in South Africa have shown that market access, price structures of inputs and outputs, and support service provision play a critical role in determining the success or failure of land reform projects (Dorward, Hazell, & Poulton, 2009; Gandidzanwa, Verschoor, & Sacolo, 2021). Land system governance literature also asserts that a fair and sustainable land policy must address systemic issues and take an integrative approach to land policy and must also incorporate diagnostic and adaptive capacities. It must not be seen as a one-off policy event (Garrett et al., 2025).

The literature offers robust support for each of these domains when considered in isolation. The studies on the governance of land and water resources emphasize the value of ecological and spatial suitability. The studies on property rights and land markets emphasize the value of tenure and exchange rights. The evaluative studies on the performance of redistributed farms emphasize the value of capability and support service access. The system studies emphasize the value of integrated and adaptive institutional architecture (Beg, 2021; Chari et al., 2017; Garrett et al., 2025; Gandidzanwa et al., 2021; Nhamo et al., 2022; Rampa et al., 2020). What the literature has not adequately emphasized is that these domains must

work in concert with one another in order for redistribution to deliver sustained productivity improvements. In fact, misalignment in any one of these domains can act like a structural chokepoint that can limit performance even with favorable conditions in the other domains. For example, favorable conditions in one or more of the other domains cannot compensate for unfavorable conditions in the tenure, market access, or water and support service access domains (Garrett et al., 2025; Nhamo et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2021). The comparative studies on the governance of land consolidation arrangements indicate that the sustainability of the redistributive approach depends on the ability to align the mechanisms of redistribution, institutional arrangements, and conflict resolution systems with the broader institutional environment. This is because poorly sequenced and partial reforms can undermine state capacity and incentives and thus limit the sustainability of even otherwise promising reforms (Zhang et al., 2021).

In the context of the above, the present study reconceptualizes land reform as neither an inherently efficiency-reducing ideological project nor a technically straightforward matter of property titling. Instead, it treats land redistribution as a performance problem within the larger land, water, market, and institutional systems. The constitutionality of land redistribution and the associated need for redistribution and restitution as tools of social justice and transformation are treated as the normative basis for the process. Economic viability is neither defined by any specific pattern of land tenure nor by the pattern of land tenure arrangements. Economic viability is rather defined by the institutional congruence of the four domains identified above within a larger framework of sustainable and just land system governance (Garrett et al., 2025; Nhamo et al., 2022; Rampa et al., 2020). The focus of the discussion is no longer on whether land redistribution should take place but rather on the much more important question of how it can be done so that the imperatives of redistribution and associated issues of redress are accomplished.

2.2 Historical Context: Land, Race, and Structural Inequality

2.2.1 Colonial Period and Land Dispossession

The “land question” in South Africa represents a longstanding structural dimension of socio-economic and political inequality whose origins can be traced to the establishment of the Dutch refreshment station at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652 and the subsequent consolidation of settler colonial rule (Daniels, 1989; Dlamini, 2014; Pheko, 2024). From the mid-seventeenth century onward, colonial expansion and the institutionalisation of private land ownership transformed previously fluid systems of land access into a racialised agrarian order in which European settlers increasingly monopolised the most fertile and strategically located land. Prior to colonial settlement, territories inhabited by Khoisan-speaking peoples, including the Khoikhoi pastoralists and the San hunter-gatherers, were characterised by relatively unobstructed customary systems of land use and access. These communal land systems were incompatible with the commercial and territorial interests of the Dutch East India Company, popularly known by its formal name in Dutch, the *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC). Through legal and administrative strategies, the VOC progressively converted these territories into *terra nullius*, thereby denying the sovereignty and land rights of indigenous populations and legitimising the transfer of land to settler ownership (Cloete, 2010; Evans et al., 2018; Kloppers & Pienaar, 2014).

The VOC and its officials implemented this dispossessory strategy not only ideologically but also institutionally through the creation of new forms of property rights. Land in restricted areas surrounding Cape Town was initially allocated as relatively well-defined freehold farms to *vrijburgers* (free burghers), with the colonial state enforcing boundaries and ownership claims. As settler demand for grazing land expanded and the capacity of Khoisan communities to mount coordinated resistance declined due to military defeat, demographic

collapse, and social dislocation, the company introduced a less formalised loan-farm system. This system enabled the VOC to exercise effective control over extensive interior territories while minimising administrative costs. Violence and territorial enforcement were increasingly outsourced to settler farmers, who relied on private policing and commando raids to coerce both land and labour from dispossessed indigenous communities. This institutional arrangement accelerated the spatial expansion of settler agriculture and intensified processes of dispossession, whereby Khoisan populations were progressively expelled from strategic watered pastures and incorporated into systems of coerced or semi-coerced labour on settler farms (Cloete, 2010; Kloppers & Pienaar, 2014; Mazalu, 2014; Ross, 1981).

As colonial settlement expanded beyond the Cape Peninsula, the scale and intensity of dispossession also increased. On the western and northern frontiers, European settlers employed a combination of military superiority, colonial legal innovation, and strategic control of water resources to displace Khoisan communities from ecologically valuable grazing areas. Indigenous responses ranged from armed resistance to negotiated coexistence with settlers. By the late eighteenth century, however, the cumulative effects of colonial warfare, epidemic disease, livestock loss, and the destruction of pastoral economies had effectively dismantled independent Khoisan polities south of the Gariep River, leaving many communities landless and dependent on mission stations or incorporated as labourers within colonial agricultural systems.

The imposition of British rule following the decline of Dutch authority did not interrupt these processes but rather reconfigured and extended them further east. The eastern frontier became the site of a prolonged series of frontier wars between colonial forces and Xhosa polities between the late eighteenth and late nineteenth centuries. These conflicts, commonly referred to as the Xhosa Wars, involved systematic military campaigns in which British forces deployed strategies such as the destruction of African food resources to weaken resistance

(Dlamini, 2014; Evans et al., 2018). Following each military defeat, substantial tracts of African land were annexed by colonial authorities and converted into alienable private property. African communities were simultaneously incorporated into a subordinated labour system on settler farms and within emerging colonial towns.

At the same time, Afrikaner Voortrekker expansion into the interior intensified processes of conquest, treaty making, and territorial annexation. Encounters with African polities such as the Ndebele under Mzilikazi, the Zulu kingdom, the BaTswana, and the Basotho produced a series of conflicts and negotiated settlements that ultimately facilitated the transfer of African land to European settlers (Nkosi, 2020; Xaba, 2021). Through these combined processes of colonial warfare, legal restructuring, and territorial consolidation, settler expansion gradually transformed the agrarian landscape of southern Africa.

By the closing decades of the nineteenth century, the Dutch and British settler expansion projects had produced a highly racialised agrarian structure in which the majority of African societies were expelled from, or marginalised within, the most agriculturally productive and strategically valuable territories. Scholars of South African agrarian history argue that the scale and institutional sophistication of land dispossession in South Africa was unparalleled elsewhere on the African continent. Dispossession was achieved not only through warfare but also through an elaborate legal and administrative framework that redefined indigenous territories as surveyed, alienable private property largely reserved for white ownership (Mudau, 2021; Xaba, 2021; Daniels, 1989). These developments culminated in the twentieth century with legislative measures such as the Natives Land Act of 1913, which formalised African landlessness and entrenched a dualistic land ownership system that continues to shape contemporary debates on land reform, restitution, and historical redress.

2.2.2 Legislative Codification: 1913 to Apartheid

The 1913 Natives Land Act limited the African majority who made over four-fifths of the population, to 7% of the land area, extended to 13% under the 1936 Native Trust and Land Act (Kloppers & Pienaar, 2014). These areas reserved for African communities became what was called the Bantustans. These Bantustans were crowded, degraded, and poorly resourced, while white commercial farmers received exclusive access to fertile land, infrastructure, and state support (Berry, 2018). Between 1960 and the early 1980s, 3.5 million people were forcibly removed to homelands and resettlement camps, mainly to areas characterized by degradation and poor public services (Kgatla, 2014; Ntuli, 2019; Platzky & Walker, 1984, as cited in Ntuli, 2019). The second largest group of forced removals was to the Group Areas, which affected urban and rural areas, resulting in crises in the areas of housing, transport, and the economy as a whole (Baldwin, 1975; Kgatla, 2014). The Bantustan system locked the Black majority into poor areas, which resulted in what is believed to have been the largest case of forced removals in the world (Baldwin, 1975; Abel, 2019; Ntuli, 2019). Recent studies on the impact of forced removals from childhood to the homelands on education, earnings, and employment in adulthood have shed light on the impact of the “place effects” of the Bantustan poverty (Carrillo, Charris, & Iglesias, 2023). Further studies have pointed to the sustained spatial segregation in urban and rural areas and the sustained socio-economic deprivation in the homelands even beyond 1994 (King & McCusker, 2007; Lochmann, 2017; Morifi & Mahlatsi, 2021)..

Apartheid legislation, notably the **Group Areas Act**, **Black Administration Act**, and Betterment schemes intensified forced removals, urban rezoning, and relocation of Black populations into unserved areas (Mudau, 2021).

Table 2.1*Legislative Instruments Governing Land, 1913–1994*

Legislative Instrument	Year	Purpose and Effect
Natives Land Act 27	1913	Crystallised limited Black land ownership; institutionalised racial discrimination
Native Trust and Land Act 18	1936	Forbade mentoring contracts for Black farmers; created South African Development Trust
Group Areas Act 41	1950	Forcibly removed Black, Coloured, Indian people from "white" areas
Group Areas Act 36	1966	Consolidated race-based occupation laws
Abolition of Racially Based Land Measures Act 108	1991	Repealed segregation legislation
Restitution of Land Rights Act 22	1994	Provided mechanism for land claims
Constitution of RSA, Section 25	1996	Codified measures to end racial segregation
White Paper on Land Policy	1997	Operationalised restitution, redistribution, tenure reform

Source: Researcher's compilation

2.2.3 Post-Apartheid Continuities

In the early 1990s, white South Africans who now made one-tenth of the population owned 86% of commercial farming land, while Black South Africans were confined to former Bantustans or homelands characterised by inadequate services and impoverished economic opportunities (Berry, 2018). Despite the Constitution's promise of "fair access and restitution," centuries of dispossession remain obstinately entrenched (Kloppers & Pienaar, 2014).

Table 2.2
Individual Land Ownership of Farms by Race, South Africa

Race	Hectares	% of Total
Whites	26,663,144	71.9%
Blacks	1,314,873	3.5%
Coloureds	5,371,383	14.5%
Indians	2,031,790	5.5%
Others	1,271,562	3.4%
Co-owned	425,537	1.1%
Total	37,078,289	100%

Source: South African Institute of Race Relations, 2018

Black South Africans who constitute 81% of the population own approximately 4% of registered agricultural land. Whites who constitute 8% of the population, own 72% (DRDLR, 2019; BBC News, 2019). This persistence demonstrates how little redistribution has altered ownership patterns (Aliber & Cousins, 2013; NPC, 2020). The current study argues that this disparity represents the primary structural mechanism through which Black South Africans are excluded from meaningful economic participation. As documented in parliament, land represents a basic factor of production in economics (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2020). As such, a population that does not have access to land does not have the opportunity to develop capital. The current study argues that this systematic exclusion from land ownership represents a cycle that continues to deny Black South Africans the opportunity to participate in agrarian entrepreneurship, to accumulate wealth, and to secure intergenerational economic mobility. The researcher argues that the failure to address land reform directly contributes to the current racial gap in economic wealth.

2.3 Land Reform Policy in South Africa: 1994–Present

2.3.1 The Three Pillars of Land Reform

The institutional structure of the land reform policy framework has been typically characterised as a tri-partite model of restitution, tenure reform, and redistribution, a model that has become canonical in policy and academic literature (Cliffe, 2000; DLA, 1997; Hall, 2004; Muswaka, 2019). Restitution captures the corrective justice dimension of the policy framework, underpinned by the requirements of Section 25 of the Constitution, which calls for redress for racially based dispossession after 19 June 1913, mainly through the restoration of land or the provision of just compensation (DLA, 1997; Klug, 2000; Xaba, 2022). The normative underpinnings of the policy are those of constitutional redress, aiming to symbolically and materially address the historical injustice created by the 1913 Natives' Land Act and subsequent apartheid legislation (Chitonge, 2022; Cousins, 2017; Hall, 2004).

Tenure reform, by contrast, aims to address the historically insecure, often extralegal, tenure arrangements that have characterised the Bantustan and communal areas, where rights were mediated through customary authority and administrative fiat, rather than through property instruments (Cousins, 2017; Muswaka, 2019; Sato, 2021). Tenure reform seeks to convert insecure, socially embedded rights into legally cognisable rights, mainly for labour tenants, farm dwellers, and residents of communal areas, whose insecure land rights are a legacy of “decentralised despotism” and bifurcated states (Cliffe, 2000; Cousins, 2017; Murray, 1997; Sato, 2021). Tenure reform, therefore, is a policy dimension that is focused on the present, reconfiguring the existing relations of landholding, whereas restitution is focused on the past, reconfiguring historical injustice.

Redistribution forms the transformative pillar with the mandate to reorganize the racially skewed pattern of ownership of productive assets and agrarian capital beyond

individualized claim-based remediation (Hall, 2004; Lahiff, 2007; Xaba, 2022). It is a policy-led instead of a claims-led initiative with the aim of enhancing the availability of land for agriculture and urban areas to the previously disadvantaged Black South Africans, with the stated objective of changing the rural political economy and reducing poverty instead of merely changing land ownership titles (Cliffe, 2000; Cousins, 2017; Hall & Mtero, 2021; Muswaka, 2019).

Among the three pillars of the land reform program, the redistributive component has the greatest potential to deliver the most significant macroeconomic impact, given the explicit mandate to reorganize the agrarian and property structures on which the dualistic South African economy rests (Cousins, 2017; Hall, 2004; Hall & Mtero, 2021; Nhamo et al., 2022). It has the mandate to transcend the mere rectification of historical injustices to include the deracialization and restructurization of high-value land, water, and associated high-value assets in agriculture (Hall, 2004; Mtero et al., 2023; Nhamo et al., 2022). In theory, the redistributive program is judged not on the volume of land redistributed but on the capacity to drive livelihood transformations, reduce rural poverty, and deliver inclusive agrarian growth (Aliber & Cousins, 2012, as cited in Chitonge, 2022; Akinola, 2018; Cousins, 2017; Hall, 2004).

However, the economic and developmental value of such redistribution is not automatically secured through its moral and constitutional legitimacy; rather, its value rests upon the integrity of the redistributive theory and the mechanisms through which such redistributive theory is operationalized (Hall, 2004; Hull et al., 2019; Nhamo et al., 2022). The initiative of the 'Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development' (LRAD) can be cited as the paradigmatic example in this regard, as this was operationalized within the willing buyer-willing seller paradigm and effectively secured the embedment of the additive productive logic in which the combination of 'land and grant capital' was assumed to produce 'productivity' (Barney, 1991; Cliffe, 2000; Cousins, 2017; DLA, 1997). In this transactional understanding

of redistribution, the process of redistribution is reduced to the singular act of redistribution itself.

Policy explanations for the continued gap between land transfer and livelihoods transformation tend to focus on the absence of adequate support services and funding for post-settlement activities, inadequate extension services, and a lack of coordination between land and agricultural departments and fiscal constraints (Chitonge, 2022; Cliffe, 2000; Cousins, 2017; Hall, 2004; Kloppers, 2014). A more theoretically challenging perspective, akin to that required for DBA-level theorization, suggests that the real problem lies not in the implementation but in the theoretical framework: LRAD fails to sufficiently specify the structural conditions required to facilitate the transition from land access to sustainable productivity and inclusive accumulation (Hall, 2004; Hull et al., 2019; Nhamo et al., 2022).

From a system and resource perspective, sustainable livelihoods transformation is a function of the alignment of multiple and mutually dependent domains, not just land transfer (Barney, 1991; Coase, 1937; Cousins, 2017; Deininger, 2003; North, 1990; Sen, 1981). First, the land endowment factor—its physical attributes, location, and agro-ecological potential—establishes the ceiling on possible productivity and rental rates, as per the Ricardian Land Rent Theory (Deininger, 2003; Ricardo, 1817/2004). Second, tenure security affects the investment environment and the incentive structure for on-farm and complementary investments; insecure and politically risky tenure tends to lower risk-adjusted returns and increase the discount rate on long-run capital formation (Deininger, 2003; Muswaka, 2019; North, 1990; Sato, 2021).

Thirdly, there are beneficiary capability factors that include human capital, managerial skills, entrepreneurial skills, and social and financial networking, which are the Resource-Based View (RBV) of the firm and its key components (Barney, 1991; Hull et al., 2019; Mtero et al., 2023; Sen, 1981). Finally, there are institutional scaffolding factors that include the structure of support programs provided by the state, the market infrastructure, input and output

markets, credit systems, and governance systems, which are the structural environment in which production decisions are taken and transaction costs are incurred (Coase, 1937; Hall, 2004; Hall & Mtero, 2021; Nhamo et al., 2022; North, 1990).

The misfit between these factors in the LRAD and subsequent redistribution modalities is evidenced to result in underperformance rather than randomness in outcomes. Land allocated to high-potential beneficiaries with low capability and institutional support tends to be underutilized and in need of frequent recapitalization (Chitonge, 2022; Hall, 2004; Kloppers, 2014; Mtero et al., 2023). On the other hand, beneficiaries with high capability but in an environment with low institutional support are likely to encounter high transaction costs, which negatively affect profitability (Hall & Mtero, 2021; Mtero et al., 2023; Nhamo et al., 2022). Finally, there are cases in which tenure support is not complemented with credit support and extension services, and credit support without appropriate technical support tends to result in heightened production risk and debt (Deininger, 2003; Hall, 2004; Nhamo et al., 2022). The outcomes in redistribution are differentiated in a systematic manner and not in an idiosyncratic manner, which relates to the performance of the beneficiaries (Aliber & Cousins, 2012, cited in Chitonge, 2022; Hull et al., 2019; Mtero et al., 2023).

From the researcher's perspective, therefore, the relevant analytical question is not how normatively justified it is, because its constitutional legitimacy is not in doubt (Abdullateef, 2024; Klug, 2000; Xaba, 2022), the question is under what conditions it can deliver returns on investment and socio-economic transformative outcomes. The viability of the redistribution pillar, therefore, should be evaluated on the basis of the internal consistency of its theoretical assumptions and its capacity to leverage complementarities between land, tenure, capabilities, and institutions, rather than on distributive outcomes alone (Cousins, 2017; Hall, 2004; Hull et al., 2019; Sen, 1981).

If we apply a linear event-based approach to understanding land reform, wherein a straightforward transfer of land titles is assumed to automatically yield productivity outcomes, then it is clear that the viability of the redistribution pillar is low, as exemplified by its failure to address issues of underutilisation, elite capture, and poverty reduction outcomes (Chitonge, 2022; Cousins, 2017; Hall, 2004; Mtero et al., 2023; Nhamo et al., 2022). If, on the contrary, we conceptualise it as an intervention into a dynamic productive system requiring productivity alignment between the four domains, then it is possible to argue that it is conditionally viable, contingent on state and stakeholders' capacity to achieve such alignment.

An integrated framework that synthesizes Ricardian Land Rent Theory (heterogeneous land quality and location), Resource-Based Theory (heterogeneous capabilities and strategic resources), and transaction costs and institutional economics (Coase and North) offers a rich conceptual framework for analyzing differentiated trajectories in South African land reform (Barney, 1991; Coase, 1937; Hall, 2004; North, 1990; Ricardo, 1817/2004; Sen, 1981). This framework reflects the political economy imperative that land reform occurs in a contested environment of power relations, class relations, and market structures and thus that elite capture, financialization, and deracialized but unstructured agrarian capital are not exogenous but rather endogenous risks in the absence of strong theoretical and institutional support (Hall, 2004; Hall & Mtero, 2021; Mtero et al., 2023; Xaba, 2022).

In conclusion, the conceptualization offers a new vision of the redistribution pillar in South African land reform as a complex, multidomain transformation process that is dependent on sound theoretical and institutional support rather than on its moral case and transfer metrics.

2.3.2 The Settlement/Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG) and Transition to LRAD

The institutional framework for South Africa's land reform is structured into three main pillars, each closely related to the other: restitution, tenure reform, and redistribution. Restitution is the corrective justice component, which focuses on the dispossession arising from

the 1913 Natives Land Act, where restoration or compensation is the main aim, with its normative foundation being constitutional redress. Tenure reform is the component that addresses the inherent insecurity in customary or communal landholding, especially in the former Bantustan areas, aiming to ensure legally recognized and enforceable rights to land for individuals or groups whose tenure arrangements have been historically marginalized and administratively ambiguous. While restitution is corrective, focusing on the past, and tenure reform is contemporary, focusing on the present, redistribution is the transformative component.

The component of the South African land reform program with the greatest potential to impact the economy is the redistribution component. This component's mandate is not limited to corrective justice but extends to the reconfiguration of racially skewed patterns of productive asset ownership. It is policy-driven rather than claims-driven, focusing on expanding access to commercial agricultural land for historically excluded or marginalized Black South Africans. Therefore, the redistributive component carries the burden of the South African land reform program, and its achievement is gauged not by the amount of land transferred but by its transformative potential to change the rural political economy, thereby engendering livelihood transformation. As Hall (2009) observes, land reform in South Africa has been trapped within a "narrative of numbers"—a technocratic discourse centred on administrative milestones such as hectares allocated and beneficiaries settled—rather than evaluated against substantive developmental outcomes. This audit culture, she argues, has permitted the persistence of a flawed policy orthodoxy that equates transactional efficiency with transformative success.

Nevertheless, the enabling potential of redistribution is not contingent on its moral justification but on the logical consistency of its underlying theory of redistribution. The operationalization of redistribution via the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) initiative illustrates that there has always been an underlying disconnect between asset

transfer and livelihood transformation. The policy explanations offered for this disconnect centre on issues of implementation, post-settlement support, or funding constraints. Thornhill and Matshego (2011), for instance, argue that "effective administration is instrumental towards the achievement of land redistribution goals and objectives of Government," locating the problem in administrative incapacity, poor inter-governmental coordination, and resource constraints. From this perspective, the solution lies in strengthening implementing institutions, improving coordination, and ensuring adequate budget allocation. Research on LRAD administration in the Eastern Cape has identified precisely such institutional deficits. Mtyhila (2017), examining land reform implementation in OR Tambo District, found fragmented coordination between national and provincial departments resulting in delayed post-settlement support, with beneficiaries waiting three to five years after land transfer to receive extension services. Nqeno (2015) documented critical shortages of agricultural extension personnel in Amathole District, with ratios of one extension officer to approximately 850 farming households in former homeland areas—far below the national target of 1:400.

However, an alternative view is offered in this chapter. It is argued that the challenge of redistribution, as operationalized under the LRAD initiative, is not an issue of implementation but of underlying theory. This position aligns with what Bernstein (2010) identifies as the need to move beyond "the persistence of poverty" narratives toward structural analyses of how agrarian change is produced and constrained. Cousins and Scoones (2010) similarly contend that land reform outcomes in South Africa are determined less by soil chemistry or administrative efficiency than by the political economy of post-settlement support and the structural conditions under which beneficiaries must operate. The implicit additive production theory underlying the LRAD initiative was that land + grant capital = productivity. This formulation, as Lahiff (2008) demonstrates in his analysis of land reform in the Eastern Cape, animates the entire programme architecture despite appearing nowhere in policy

documents as an explicit theoretical statement. Beneficiaries receive land and a capital grant; thereafter, productivity is expected to follow. Extension is added as an afterthought; mentorship is pilot-project philanthropy; market access is assumed rather than constructed; institutional coordination is delegated to multiple departments with overlapping mandates and no accountable lead agent.

The underlying theory of redistribution was transactional in nature: redistribution was to be operationalized as an event. However, what was not theorized was how the underlying structures to translate land access into sustainable productivity were to be established. These underlying structures included the viability of land endowment, the credibility of tenure security, the distribution of beneficiary capability, and the institutional scaffolding that underpins sustainable production. As Li (2014) argues in her comparative analysis of agrarian transformation, the "will to improve" that animates development interventions often founders on the failure to theorize the conditions under which beneficiaries can actually operationalize the assets they receive. Scoones et al. (2019), drawing on extensive longitudinal research in Zimbabwe, demonstrate conclusively that productivity is not a property of land transfer but an emergent property of land-plus-institutional-scaffolding. Beneficiaries who accessed integrated support packages achieved significant productivity gains, while those lacking such scaffolding remained trapped in low-productivity equilibria. The land transfer was identical; the institutional environment varied.

The underlying theory offered in this chapter is that redistribution is not merely an event but an intervention in the production system. Sustainable livelihood transformation is not an outcome of land redistribution per se but of the alignment of interdependent domains. Land endowment defines the biophysical upper bound of productivity. Tenure security defines the investment climate. Beneficiary capability defines the capacity to mobilize land and capital. Finally, institutional scaffolding defines the structural context in which production decisions

are made. This systemic perspective finds support in the work of Dorward, Hazell, and Poulton (2009), who argue that smallholder agricultural development requires coherent access to credit, extension services, infrastructure, and market integration—what they term "the institutional matrix" of agricultural development. Without such systemic alignment, they contend, productivity gains remain elusive regardless of land quality or farmer capability.

The experience with LRAD in the Eastern Cape shows that misalignment between these domains leads to predictable underperformance. Land identified as high potential but assigned to beneficiaries without adequate capability or institutional support remains underutilized. The Amathole District evidence demonstrates that policy design flaws are compounded by implementation failures: fragmented coordination, inadequate budgets, underperforming mentors, and exclusion of farmers from business planning. Beneficiaries with capability but operating in a fragmented institutional environment experience transaction cost that undermine productivity. The case of Tembi Xamesi, awarded the 1,165-hectare Riversdale farm near Tylden in 2010, powerfully illustrates this point. Despite investing R5 million of personal resources and achieving significant production, farming 160 Dohne Merino ewes, 80 commercial Bonsmora cows, and 130 crossbred female goats, Xamesi remains constrained by the absence of title, obliged to pay the state more than R130,000 annual rental on a farm acquired via the Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy. As he himself notes, the contrast between his family's titled land in the communal areas near Illenge, where they still plant maize, and the leased PLAS farm underscores the tenure insecurity that constrains investment on redistributed land.

Tenure security without access to finance constrains investment; access to finance without support in extension services increases production risk. The Gwatyu farms case illustrates how land reform cannot be isolated from broader developmental deficits: communities need not only land but also basic services, health facilities, electrification, roads,

and coordinated government support. Following a Parliamentary oversight visit in January 2022, interventions were disrupted by community activism, requiring the Department to broaden its response and ultimately leading to an agreement that the Chris Hani District Municipality should take the lead because of its proximity and familiarity with the situation. This case demonstrates how institutional fragmentation and lack of basic infrastructure continue to undermine land reform outcomes. As Kepe and Hall (2018) argue, land reform in South Africa has been systematically undermined by the failure to locate redistribution within a broader developmental state framework capable of delivering integrated support across multiple domains.

Redistribution outcomes are systematically differentiated rather than randomly distributed. This observation aligns with what Lipton (2009) identifies as the conditional nature of smallholder efficiency: the inverse relationship between farm size and productivity operates only when smallholders have access to functioning input markets, extension advice, credit, and reliable output markets. Where these institutional conditions are absent, as they are across much of the Eastern Cape, smallholder productivity collapses to subsistence levels regardless of land quality or farmer capability. The UNISA study examining post-settlement support in the Amathole District confirms this pattern, finding that most land reform beneficiaries do not utilise land to its full potential, typically linked to inadequate post-settlement support, insufficient budget allocation, lack of beneficiary commitment, farmers not being fully involved in business plan formulation, and underperforming implementing agencies and mentors. The study found that policy recycling occurs without considering lessons learned from earlier programmes, and there is non-adherence to some of the 7C policy implementation protocols.

This chapter argues that the viability of the redistribution pillar is dependent upon the consistency of the theoretical assumptions that underpin it. Thus, redistribution cannot be

judged in terms of distributive measures alone but needs to be evaluated in terms of an approach that is capable of providing an explanation for the interplay between land, tenure, capabilities, and institutions in relation to the creation of realized productivity. The theoretical issue is not that of providing support for the viability of redistribution in terms of its intrinsic merits, since its constitutional validity is already established, but in terms of providing an explanation for the structural conditions that are necessary for the creation of economic returns from redistribution. As Hall (2015) notes in her comprehensive review of land reform scholarship, the debate has been framed in binary terms—redistribution either undermines growth or promotes inclusive development—without specifying the structural mechanisms that determine which outcome prevails. This study responds directly to that lacuna.

By providing an analysis of redistribution in terms of an integrated productivity-alignment approach, this chapter recasts the issue in terms of its conceptual rather than implementation-based viability. Thus, redistribution is judged to be non-viable in terms of the linear assumption that is made between the transfer of land and productivity creation. Conversely, it is judged to be viable in terms of the ability of the system to align the beneficiary of such transfer in terms of sustained participation in agricultural markets. This position resonates with the conditional efficiency literature, which demonstrates that smallholder and redistributed agriculture can be productive under appropriate institutional conditions (Lipton, 2009; Sen, 1962), while insisting that these conditions are not optional supplements but constitutive determinants of productivity. The balance of this chapter will elaborate this approach in detail in relation to the creation of an integrated approach to the analysis of differentiated land reform outcomes in South Africa's rural political economy, using elements of Ricardian land rent theory, the Resource-Based View, and small-scale productivity analysis

2.3.3 LRAD as Market-Led Reform

LRAD, which is still in place, like SLAG, operates on the willing seller willing buyer principle. The state purchases land on the open market and allocates it to qualified beneficiaries. This model was heavily influenced by World Bank policy thinking, which posited that market led reform was the most cost-effective redistribution mechanism. The Bank's market assisted approach advocated for land transactions to occur voluntarily between buyers and sellers, with the state facilitating rather than directing the process. However, critics observed that this framework strongly promoted the removal of all obstacles to market functioning while failing to secure people's rights to land and food. The Bank's own policy research reportedly conceded the failure of market-based programmes it backed in countries such as Colombia and South Africa, yet critics noted that it deflected responsibility and avoided self-critical analysis for these outcomes.

As noted by Wegerif and Guereña (2020), the initial post-apartheid land reform framework established by the Reconstruction and Development Programme was not originally shaped by neoliberal principles; however, the absence of a broader economic restructuring strategy ultimately led to its replacement by the more market oriented Settlement Land Acquisition Grant and later the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development programme. This policy trajectory reflects the deployment of market-based approaches within global development debates, wherein the country's land reform experience was used to illustrate market-based approaches while drawing contrasts with Zimbabwe's more radical path. Research confirms that the willing seller willing buyer principle has been widely seen as one of the major reasons for the slow pace of land reform.

The persistence of the market led model has attracted sustained scholarly critique, with evidence from the Eastern Cape proving particularly instructive. Hall and Kepe (2017), in their three-year study of land reform projects in the Sarah Baartman district of the Eastern Cape,

argue that years of shifting policies have created a contorted reform governed by state officials, consultants and agribusiness strategic partners concerned with surveillance and control of beneficiaries in projects. Their research found that most of the black people involved have to settle for precarious tenure on unsubdivided commercial farms now owned by the state. Crucially, none of the beneficiaries in the 11 projects studied had any documented rights to their land, and in two cases the leases were held by strategic partners rather than the intended beneficiaries. Hall argues that this can hardly be called redistribution, as the state is effectively creating a population of squatters on state land without secure tenure.

The willing seller willing buyer principle effectively vests control over the pace and scale of land reform in the hands of existing landowners, who can simply refuse to sell or demand inflated prices. Research on land reform in the province documented that most land transferred in the Eastern Cape has been of marginal agricultural quality and that post settlement support to beneficiaries has been almost entirely lacking. Xaba (2020), examining restitution projects in Macleantown and Salem in the Eastern Cape, found that these projects have failed to function, leading to failure to improve the livelihoods of beneficiaries. He argues that the capabilities and agency of beneficiaries remain constrained in that restitution has not provided any hopes to reduce poverty and recreate the good past as beneficiaries expect. This characterisation frames the problem as one of execution rather than questioning whether a market linked model was appropriate for a historically disadvantaged population systematically excluded from land ownership and capital accumulation.

The empirical record from the Eastern Cape provides substantial grounds for this critique. Mtyhila (2017), examining land reform implementation in OR Tambo District, found fragmented coordination between the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform and the provincial Department of Agriculture resulting in delayed post settlement support, with beneficiaries waiting three to five years after land transfer to receive extension services, input

supplies, or access to credit facilities. Crucially, his research documented that 72 per cent of LRAD beneficiaries in the district reported no contact with extension officers in the twelve months following land acquisition. This finding directly challenges the assumption that market-based transfer alone can generate productive outcomes. Nqeno (2015), in an evaluation of LRAD projects in the Amathole District Municipality, found that institutional fragmentation between national, provincial, and local government spheres created significant implementation bottlenecks, with budget allocations for post settlement support consistently delayed and funds arriving after planting seasons had passed, rendering production planning impossible. The provincial Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform suffered from critical shortages of agricultural extension personnel, with a ratio of one extension officer to approximately 850 farming households in former homeland areas, far below the national target of one to four hundred. Mfuywa, Alers and Khumalo (2024), in their study of post settlement support in the Amathole District, confirm that most land reform beneficiaries do not utilise land to its full potential, typically linked to the government's inadequate post settlement support. Their research revealed inadequate budget allocation for farmer support, lack of beneficiary commitment, farmers not being fully involved in the formulation of the business plan, and underperforming implementing agencies and mentors.

Provincial reports confirm that the ratio of extension officers to farming households in communal areas of the Eastern Cape remains critically inadequate, with some districts operating at ratios exceeding one to twelve hundred. Kativhu, Nomabandla and Zibongiwe (2023), assessing socio economic conditions in rural municipalities of the Eastern Cape, found that despite 28 years of implementing rural development policies and strategies, socio economic conditions are still unsatisfactory, evidenced by low-income levels, high unemployment, and limited livelihood activities.

Matiwane (2019), analysing land reform governance in the Eastern Cape, concluded that the absence of a coherent, integrated service delivery model between the national Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development and its provincial counterparts systematically undermined LRAD outcomes. His research documented that inter-governmental coordination mechanisms existed on paper but functioned sporadically in practice, with no clear accountability for post settlement support outcomes assigned to any single department. This institutional fragmentation, he argues, is not an implementation failure but a design feature of a system that conceptualises redistribution as transaction rather than transformation.

Recent evidence from the Gwatyu farms in the Eastern Cape illustrates persistent challenges. These farms, located in the former Transkei homelands on high potential land, were leased to emerging black farmers, but all leases have since expired. Following a Parliamentary oversight visit in January 2022, interventions were disrupted by community activism, requiring the Department to broaden its response to address basic service deficiencies including health facilities, electrification, and roads. An agreement was reached that the Chris Hani District Municipality should take the lead because of its proximity and familiarity with the situation, but the case demonstrates how institutional fragmentation and lack of basic infrastructure continue to undermine land reform outcomes. The experience of Tembi Xamesi, awarded the 1,165-hectare Riversdale farm near Tylden in the Eastern Cape in 2010, powerfully illustrates the gap between land transfer and productive sustainability. Xamesi received R3 million from the state's Recapitalisation and Development Programme in 2012 but estimates that he has personally invested an additional R5 million in a farm that does not belong to him. To make matters worse, Xamesi is obliged to pay the state a rental of more than R130,000 a year because Riversdale was acquired for R7 million via the Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy programme. Despite these financial constraints, Xamesi has made significant progress,

currently farming 160 Dohne Merino ewes, 80 commercial Bonsmara cows, 30 crossbred beef cows, and 130 crossbred female goats, supported by four hectares of oats and 50 hectares of lucerne under irrigation. However, the lack of title has been a serious hindrance to further development. Xamesi grew up in the communal areas near Illenge, where his family had title to 50 hectares and still plant maize while contract ploughing in the area. The contrast between the family's titled land and the leased PLAS farm underscores the tenure insecurity that constrains investment on redistributed land.

The Mtero, Gumede and Ramantsima (2019) study for the Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies, based on intensive fieldwork in seven selected sites across five provinces including the Eastern Cape, reveals the skewed distribution of resources in land redistribution in favour of well-off beneficiaries. This is attributable to policy biases which prioritise commercial success as an overriding goal in land reform. Well off beneficiaries, including urban based business individuals, taxi or transport operators, former state bureaucrats and local politicians with access to material resources, knowledge and information, often qualify as beneficiaries. Hall and Kepe (2017) found similar patterns in the Sarah Baartman district, where strategic partnerships have become a mechanism for public funds to be channelled into private enterprises, with some involving white South African owned or multinational companies that are essentially farming state subsidies. They argue that the state is not challenging the supremacy of private property but rather becoming a significant player in the land market.

A recent study examining post settlement support in the Amathole District Municipality found that most land reform beneficiaries do not utilise land to its full potential, typically linked to the government's inadequate post settlement support. The research, which included interviews with government representatives from DALRRD and the Eastern Cape Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform, revealed multiple systemic failures. The results

show inadequate budget allocation for farmer support, lack of beneficiary commitment, farmers not being fully involved in the formulation of the business plan, and underperforming implementing agencies and mentors. Attempts to help as many farmers as possible with limited resources have had little effect. Additionally, there are issues with information access in the agricultural sector, including limited access to data on market trends and production, as well as a lack of cooperation between DRDAR and DALRRD. The study found that policy recycling occurs without considering the lessons learned from earlier policies or programmes, and there is non adherence to some of the 7C policy implementation protocols . The study concluded that there is a need for an integrated farmer support package to align policy with practice, leveraging from private sector funding, an inclusive policy review process, and a review of the modes of delivery.

The researcher argues that this evidence from the Eastern Cape fundamentally reframes the problem. If the state is acquiring land that, as research has documented, is often of marginal agricultural quality, and beneficiaries are receiving inadequate post settlement support, then the issue is not market failure in the narrow sense of price distortion but a deeper conceptual failure in how redistribution is theorised. The implicit additive production theory underlying LRAD, that land plus grant capital equals productivity, cannot account for the quality of land acquired, the capability of beneficiaries, or the institutional scaffolding required for sustainable production. Hebinck and Lent (2007), in their longitudinal study of livelihoods in the Eastern Cape, demonstrate that agrarian change is not determined by land transfer alone but by the complex interplay of social relations, institutional arrangements, and household strategies. Their research shows that successful farmers in the province are those who can mobilise resources across multiple domains including access to credit, extension advice, market linkages, and social networks, not merely those who receive land.

Drawing on historical analysis, the researcher notes that in 1919, the South African government gazetted 28 farms totalling more than 7.64 million hectares offered for lease for five years with an option to buy at any time during the lease period, with lessees paying nothing in the first year and fixed fees thereafter. This demonstrates the considerable effort the then government was prepared to make to enable entry into commercial farming for white people who lacked the capital to purchase farms. This stands in stark contrast to the failure by successive administrations to create a path for aspiring black farmers. As participants at the Parliamentary public hearings in Tsolo in the Eastern Cape argued, the willing buyer willing seller principle failed because of the unwillingness of those who own the land to share it with the historically dispossessed, and because government assumed it would work without some force. One farmers association chairperson stated that land is the economy and that was why it was taken violently by the settlers, and the argument that they would voluntarily give it back was fallacious and a waste of time.

The historical comparison reveals that market-based mechanisms are not natural or inevitable but politically constructed. The state that actively enabled white entry into commercial farming through subsidised leases and purchase options has, under the willing seller willing buyer principle, adopted a passive stance toward black farmers, acquiring land on market terms and then failing to provide the support necessary for success.

The researcher contends that this evidence demonstrates the fundamental inadequacy of the market led framework. The problem is not merely that willing seller willing buyer is slow or expensive, but that it embodies a conception of redistribution as transaction rather than transformation. Land reform is treated as an event, the transfer of ownership or leasehold, rather than an intervention in a complex production system requiring sustained institutional scaffolding. As the Amathole District study concludes, there is a need for an integrated farmer support package to align policy with practice, leveraging private sector funding, an inclusive

policy review process, and a review of the modes of delivery. The researcher contends that this prescription, while sensible, remains within an institutionalist paradigm that treats the problem as one of implementation rather than conceptualisation. What is required is not merely better institutions, but a fundamental rethinking of what redistribution means. Redistribution is not an event but a process; not a transfer but a transformation; not a market transaction but a developmental intervention. The integrated productivity alignment framework advanced in this study provides the theoretical resources for such rethinking, specifying the conditions under which land transfer can generate sustainable productivity and demonstrating that these conditions were absent from LRAD's design. The market led model, by contrast, assumes that productivity will spontaneously emerge from transfer, an assumption that three decades of evidence from the Eastern Cape have decisively refuted.

2.3.4 LRAD Performance: Empirical Record

Table 2.3

Land Transfers under South African Land Reform, 1994–2006

Programme	Hectares Redistributed	% of Total
Redistribution	1,477,956	43.8%
Restitution	1,007,247	29.9%
State Land Disposal	761,524	22.6%
Tenure Reform	126,519	3.7%
Total	3,373,246	100%

Source: Department of Land Affairs, 2007

The government target of redistributing 30% of agricultural land or 22 million hectares by 2014 was not met. Only 3.7 million hectares had been transferred by 2014 (Berry, 2018). Current estimates place redistribution at 10–14%, far below the constitutional target.

2.3.5 Structural Critique of LRAD

The analysis presented in this study is purpose-built to challenge the status quo of implementation deficits that dominate the conventional understanding of the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) programme. Conventional understandings of the programme's implementation and evaluation highlight implementation deficits, bureaucratic delays, inadequate monitoring and evaluation, and lack of post-settlement support and financing as key contributory factors to its underperformance (Antwi & Oladele, 2013; Bailey, 2007; Hall, 2015; Kau, 2011; Netshipale et al., 2020; Prinsloo, 2009). These understandings are not only empirically accurate but also lack depth. They demonstrate how the programme underperforms but fail to demonstrate how it is structurally underperforming. There is ample evidence of inadequate infrastructural support, lack of skills training, and financing challenges in various LRAD projects. However, these challenges are seen as gaps in a program that is otherwise sound (Antwi & Oladele, 2013; Netshipale, 2021).

At the heart of the LRAD model is the implicit, though powerful, production model: the assumption that land allocation, coupled with grant support, will naturally lead to productivity increases and livelihood improvements. The model's instruments are therefore tailored to deliver on this model: the farmer will receive land, a grant, and thereafter propel themselves into commercial viability (Hall, 2015; Kau, 2011; Prinsloo, 2009; Wegerif, 2004). Extension support is seen as a supplementary measure, mentorship support is project-based, market integration is assumed to automatically follow from the ownership of a 'commercial' farm, and interdepartmental support is fragmented across land, agriculture, and rural departments with poor alignment of incentives (Bailey, 2007; Chatikobo, 2004; Kau, 2011; Sekgetle, 2004). What we have therefore is a model based on an additive theory of change: $\text{land} + \text{grant} = \text{productivity}$, with support services playing a peripheral role.

From a theoretical perspective grounded in the field of development economics and agrarian political economy, such an additive model is impossible to defend. Decades of research have consistently proven the additive model to be false: productivity outcomes are the result of the interaction of assets, institutions, and capabilities, not the additive outcome of the allocation of assets (Dorward, Hazell, & Poulton, 2009; Lipton, 2009; Netshipale, 2021; Schut et al., 2016; Sen, 1962). While land allocation may lead to increased productivity through the establishment of secure land rights, the nature of the investment behavior of the farmer is heavily influenced by their expectations of market integration, the stability of the institutional environment, and their capabilities to manage complexity (Besley, 1995; Deininger, 2003). Comparative land reform experiences globally have consistently proven the additive model to be false: asset allocation without institutional support leads to minimal productivity outcomes (Dorward et al., 2009; Keswell & Carter, 2014; Scoones et al., 2019).

Empirical research on land reform farms in South Africa also provides support for such a critical view. The literature suggests that the role of livelihood contributions and the intensity of land use is significantly mediated by natural capital, physical capital, and socioeconomic class, with capital-endowed households benefiting much more from LRAD and similar models than capital-poor households (Netshipale, 2020, 2021). LRAD's evaluation of the program also consistently identifies issues of poor project design, lack of startup capital, group dynamics, and support, yet continues to view these as implementation problems to be addressed within an otherwise viable design (Antwi & Oladele, 2013; Bailey, 2007; Kau, 2011; Prinsloo, 2009; Sekgetle, 2004). The current study's view is that LRAD's conceptual architecture fails to take into account the mediating role of capability and institutions; hence, the observed results are not accidental but are structurally encoded.

The first major conceptual omission relates to beneficiary capability. In other words, capability in terms of technological, managerial, and financial knowledge, as well as

organizational and social network capabilities, is not considered a primary and measurable structural variable in the LRAD approach (Bailey, 2007; Kau, 2011; Prinsloo, 2009). It is simply taken for granted that capability is present or can be marginally enhanced through infrequent and irregular training interventions, in spite of overwhelming evidence of “few skills training” and “poor savings and financial constraints” among land beneficiaries (Antwi & Oladele, 2013, p. 126).

Contrary to this approach, the Resource-Based View and dynamic capabilities literature is clear that superior performance benefits derive from possession of valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable resources, particularly human and organizational ones, and not merely physical ones (Barney, 1991; Teece, 2014). In cases where land beneficiaries lack experience and capability in farming and land management, land is not a productive and beneficial resource, particularly if debt is involved and/or when land is used in a group project context (Antwi & Oladele, 2013; Netshipale, 2020; Prinsloo, 2009; Wegerif, 2004). In other words, capability formation is not considered a core and foundational element of land conversion and land-based interventions, and as a result, it is largely ignored in the LRAD approach.

The second omission is related to the institutional scaffolding of LRAD’s production model. LRAD fails to include extension services, credit services, markets, and logistics as integral components of its production model and instead treats them as additional supports that may or may not be forthcoming (Bailey, 2007; Chatikobo, 2004; Kau, 2011; Sekgetle, 2004). As a matter of fact, institutional economics is quite clear on the impact of transaction costs, contractual arrangements, and markets on production outcomes (North, 1990; Schut et al., 2016).

Indeed, as the empirical record on LRAD and other land reform farms indicates, limited infrastructure and access to markets and credit services have a detrimental impact on productivity and livelihood outcomes, regardless of successful land reform outcomes (Antwi

& Oladele, 2013; Keswell & Carter, 2014; Netshipale, 2020, 2021; Prinsloo, 2009). A similar pattern is noted in other agrarian settings where productivity constraints are essentially institutional and economic in nature and not technological (Dorward et al., 2009; Mizik, 2022; Schut et al., 2016). LRAD's treatment of institutional scaffolding as an additional support essentially creates a self-fragility into its production model because success is predicated on exogenous factors that LRAD neither controls nor actively fosters.

The research argues that the differential productivity outcomes noted across LRAD projects are not an indication of an imperfectly implemented production model but an indication of a design-induced pattern of outcomes. Where LRAD projects benefit from the presence of farming experience and social capital and/or access to markets and credit services, some success is noted regardless of institutional fragmentation (Netshipale, 2020, 2021; Prinsloo, 2009). Where LRAD projects do not benefit from such advantages and also experience limited institutional scaffolding, project underutilization and failure to contribute to income generation and outright failure are noted (Antwi & Oladele, 2013; Bailey, 2007; Kau, 2011; Wegerif, 2004). This view is reinforced by research evidence on the land reform farms' contributions to livelihoods, which have been minimal overall, with better-performing outcomes evident in the case of the capital-endowed and better-resourced land reform beneficiaries (Netshipale, 2020, 2021). The variance in outcomes thus indicates a systematic bias in the LRAD model in favor of the well-endowed, while offering nothing more than the mere ownership of land to the poor. The implication of the poor performance of the land reform model, therefore, is not administrative or bureaucratic inefficiency, but a systemic mismatch between the additive production model of the LRAD and the agrarian reality.

The argument advanced in the foregoing paragraphs implies a shift in the evaluative criteria of the LRAD model from the question of sufficient implementation to the question of conceptual sufficiency as a model of agrarian production. While the former is important, the

latter is more critical because the incremental improvements in the administrative systems, monitoring mechanisms, or the speed of the grant disbursement systems, no matter how important, cannot compensate for a flawed model of agrarian production, which overestimates the capacity of asset transfer to drive production while ignoring the complexity of the alignment of land endowment, tenure security, beneficiary capability, and institutional support systems (Dorward et al., 2009; Netshipale, 2020; North, 1990; Sen, 1981).

The argument advanced in the foregoing paragraphs is based on the view that land redistribution programs such as the LRAD model need to be evaluated not only on their capacity to deliver on the land redistribution outcomes, but also on the conceptual sufficiency of the production architecture. The view is reinforced by the evidence of poor performance, which should not be interpreted as a failure of implementation, but as a consequence of a flawed model of agrarian production, which pays too much attention to the redistributive outcomes while paying too little attention to the production architecture (Antwi & Oladele, 2013; Hall, 2015; Netshipale, 2021; Prinsloo, 2009; Scoones et al., 2019).

The body of literature on LRAD and land reform in South Africa has increasingly interrogated the five interrelated dimensions of the programme's design logic, instead of the implementation deficit explanation.

Firstly, the implementation deficit explanation has been challenged on the grounds that it confuses symptoms with causes. In the literature on the subject, the focus has been on administrative delays, support, and coordination, while the underlying design assumptions have received scant attention. In effect, the administrative and support problems are the results of a flawed programme architecture.

Secondly, the additive production logic of the LRAD programme has been problematized on the grounds that it assumes a direct relationship between land provided to the farmer and the grant provided to support the farmer. However, the literature has shown

evidence of once-off grants, minimal support, and the rapid expectation of commercial viability, despite the lack of systemic support and volatile markets

Thirdly, the absence of a focus on capability is emphasized. LRAD lacks a focus on the structural embedding of capability formation in terms of technical skills formation, managerial skills formation, and organizational capacity formation within its design. Empirical research points to a lack of skills formation and a focus on those who already have capital, farming experience, and social networks/

Fourthly, the critique of the weak institutional scaffolding emphasizes that LRAD focuses on extension services, credit services, infrastructure formation, and market formation as additional components of its design and not as integral components of its production model. Research points to a focus on the weak infrastructure formation and access to credit and markets as a major factor undermining the production use of redistributed land.

Lastly, it is argued that there is a systemic mismatch between outcomes and that LRAD's poor outcomes are not random but a result of its design. Limited livelihood outcomes and a wide range of variability in outcomes across projects and a clear differentiation by class and capital endowments suggest that outcomes are a result of a predictable relationship between outcomes and the conceptual architecture of LRAD.

Table 2.4*Criticisms of the market-based approach*

Challenge	Consequence
Grants insufficient relative to land prices	Beneficiaries cannot afford viable farms
Landowners refuse to sell or demand inflated prices	Supply constrained; prices escalate
Weak municipal involvement	Local planning and support absent
Confusion over departmental mandates	Fragmented, unaccountable delivery
Beneficiary skill deficits	Land underutilised or abandoned
Environmental shocks (drought)	Weak projects fail
Beneficiary reluctance to relocate	Productive land in distant areas remains with white owners

Source: Wegerif, 2004; Wegerif & Guereña, 2020

If the weaknesses in LRAD lie in the processes of implementation, then the solutions lie in providing more resources, better management, and stronger institutions that are responsible for implementing it. The South African government's position was very clear in this regard. The official narratives that describe weaknesses in LRAD always point to problems in implementing it rather than in the actual design of the program. In a presentation made in August 2024 to Parliament by officials in the Department of Land Reform and Rural Development, they provided Parliament with an update on the development of land redistribution mechanisms. They highlighted the formula used in the LRAD program, which resulted in the confiscation of farms due to the inability of the beneficiaries to repay their loans when they added their personal contributions and those provided by the state (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2024). By recognizing weaknesses in the implementation of LRAD, it is natural that solutions offered would be in terms of additional resources, management, and institutions that need improvement. This is because these are areas that need improvement. In fact, some experts have already pointed out that management is instrumental in attaining land

redistribution objectives and those of the South African government (Thornhill & Matshego, 2011). This viewpoint would support officials in their viewpoint that solutions lie in providing more resources and in improving management and institutions.

Studies done on the implementation of LRAD in the Eastern Cape Province identified weaknesses in institutions. A study done by Mtyhila (2017) looked into the execution of land reform in the OR Tambo District. The study identified that there was a lack of cohesive coordination between the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform and the Department of Agriculture in the province. This resulted in beneficiaries waiting for three to five years before they accessed support services after receiving their land. In addition, 72% of those who benefited from the funds provided by LRAD in the OR Tambo District had no contact with extension officers in the year following their acquisition of land.

Furthermore, Nqeno (2015) undertook a study of the implementation of LRAD initiatives in the Amathole District Municipality and identified the fragmentation of government at national, provincial, and local spheres as a major impediment to the successful implementation of the program. Nqeno (2015) also identified delays in the release of funds for post-settlement support services, whereby the funds were received after the planting season, thus affecting planning for production. The Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform at the provincial level was also identified as having critical shortages of agricultural extension staff, with a ratio of one extension officer to 850 farming households in the former homeland areas, compared to the national norm of 1:400 (Nqeno, 2015). Matiwane (2019) undertook an analysis of the governance of the land reform program in the Eastern Cape Province. The study found that the lack of a comprehensive and integrated approach to the delivery of services by the national Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development and its provincial departments of rural development and agrarian reform systematically undermined the successful implementation of the LRAD program. The study

identified the existence of inter-government coordination mechanisms but noted that these were not operational. No single department was identified as being responsible for the successful implementation of the post-settlement support program (Matiwane, 2019).

It is evident from the above information that the implementation of the LRAD program was seriously undermined by the shortcomings of the government departments involved. Provincial government reports indicate the extension-officer-to-farming-household ratio in the communal areas of the Eastern Cape Province remains critically inadequate, with some districts having ratios of 1:1,200 or more (Eastern Cape Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform, 2020).

If the failure of LRAD is understood as conceptual and not merely operational, then the program calls for reconstruction at the theoretical level. This paper is in line with the assumption that, even in the absence of new theories, there is a need for the integration of existing theories.

2.4 Theoretical Framework: Critical Appropriation and Synthesis

2.4.1 Overview: From Fragmentation to Integration

Land reform scholarship remains compartmentalised. Three theoretical traditions dominate, yet each is deployed in isolation, producing partial explanations that cannot account for the full range of observed outcomes.

Table 2.5*Theoretical Traditions in Land Reform Scholarship*

Tradition	What It Illuminates	What It Obscures
Ricardian land rent theory	Land heterogeneity; differential productive potential	Human agency; institutional context; social construction of land quality
Resource-Based View	Capability as mechanism for realising potential	Origins of capability; role of the state; structural constraint
Small-scale productivity theories	Household labour strategies; indigenous knowledge	Institutional conditions for efficiency; pathways to commercialisation

Source: Author's synthesis of theories

This study does not invent new theory. It systematically integrates existing theoretical traditions into a coherent analytical framework capable of explaining the systematically differentiated performance of LRAD farms. In the following sections the researcher will critique each of the theoretical traditions that dominate land reform scholarship.

2.4.2 Ricardo's Land Rent Theory: Necessary but Insufficient

2.4.2.1 Introduction to the Theory of Land Rent

David Ricardo's (1817) theory of rent, a cornerstone of classical political economy, continues to shape modern land reform policy. Formulated in the early nineteenth century, his ideas on land, value, and distribution provide an essential lens for critiquing contemporary programmes. By understanding the Ricardian framework, we can better analyse how programmes like South Africa's LRAD define land's economic role and, consequently, design their interventions to address the legacy of dispossession. Ricardo's theory rests on several interconnected propositions. According to Ricardo (1817) land heterogeneity matters. Biophysical and spatial characteristics set upper bounds on productive potential leading to the conclusion that more fertile and more accessible land has higher rent and less fertile and inaccessible land commands less rent. In the Eastern Cape, commercial farms in the Amathole

Basin or Sundays River Valley possess inherently higher potential. Conversely, land in the degraded districts of O R Tambo and Alfred Nzou "low potential" not because of inherent biophysical inferiority alone, but because of systematic historical disinvestment through the absence of irrigation, soil conservation programmes, agricultural research, and market access (Aliber & Cousins, 2013; Hebinck & Lent, 2007).

The Ricardian proposition of treating land quality as natural category is therefore rejected by this study which subscribes to contemporary agrarian political economy that has since demonstrated that land productivity is socially constructed, thus produced through infrastructure investment, irrigation systems, extension services, and racialised access to credit and state support (Bernstein, 2010; Li, 2014). The "high-potential" land of the Amathole Basin was therefore made productive through decades of apartheid-era investment systematically denied to Black farmers. Also rejected by this study is the assumption by Ricardo that superior land will be utilised thus discounting completely the theory of human agency, institutional constraint, or capability deficit. A beneficiary on fertile land but lacking working capital, technical knowledge, or market access will not realise that land's Ricardian potential. The land will remain underutilised not because of its biophysical characteristics but because of institutional failures and capability deficits that Ricardo's framework cannot apprehend (Cousins & Scoones, 2010; Mtero, 2017). Most LRAD farms operate far below their biophysically possible productivity, demonstrating that the effective constraints are institutional and capability-related, not natural. Ricardo's framework therefore directs attention to the wrong variable.

Ricardo proposes that rent is purely natural surplus. This study strongly rejects this and aligns with (Harvey, 1982) who posits that rent operates as a social relationship, mirroring class power and property rights. In the Eastern Cape, for example low economic rent attached to

redistributed land reflects a history of systematic disinvestment in Black agricultural areas, not poor soil alone.

This study recognises the foundational layer presented by Ricardian traditions and repositions Ricardian theory to be foundational layer in a multi-tiered framework, necessarily requiring supplementation by theories of capability, institution, and household strategy.

2.4.2.2 The Prioritisation of "High-Potential" Land Without Attention to the Reproduction of Its Potential

A Ricardian lens directs policy attention toward the redistribution of "high-potential" land—the fertile soils of the Amathole Basin, the irrigable plains of the Sundays River Valley, the well-watered grasslands of the Midlands. This appears unobjectionable. A question can be asked thus, why redistribute marginal land when high-potential land is available? The error however lies in treating "high potential" as a static property of the land itself rather than as a produced condition requiring ongoing investment. The commercial farms of the Eastern Cape did not emerge from the soil spontaneously. They were produced through decades of state investment in irrigation schemes, drainage systems, soil conservation programmes, research stations, extension services, and transport infrastructure. They were maintained through continuous capital expenditure, technical support, and market integration.

When such land is redistributed to beneficiaries who lack access to the institutional scaffolding that produced and maintains its potential, that potential is not preserved, it decays. Irrigation systems fall into disrepair without technical support. Soil health suffers when the necessary inputs are scarce. Delivering products to customers is a complex undertaking, particularly given the frequent shipping delays and the current state of disarray within the supply chain. The land's "potential" wasn't a natural resource; instead, it depended on a constant flow of services that required ongoing investment. When that investment ceases, the potential ceases with it.

The Ricardian lens obscures this entirely. It directs policymakers to redistribute high-potential land while blinding them to the fact that such land's potential must be reproduced for new beneficiaries through the same kinds of investment that originally produced it. LRAD assumed that grant capital would substitute for this historical investment. It does not. Grant capital is a one-time transfer; the reproduction of land potential requires ongoing, institutionalised support.

2.4.2.3 The Assumption That Transfers Equals Productivity

There is no theory of human agency, institutional constraint or capability deficit. The assumption is that once transferred land will be productive regardless of circumstances. It is this assumption, incorporated into LRAD, which led to the post-transfer vacuum. The implied production function of Land + Grant Capital = Productivity led to an assumption that the critical event was transfer. Land is granted to beneficiaries, and then capital. After that, productivity is assumed to follow. Extension is an afterthought. Mentorship is an afterthought. Market access is assumed, not constructed. There is no theory of what happens after transfer because, from a Ricardian perspective, it is assumed to be unnecessary. The evidence is now overwhelming. Beneficiaries placed on high-potential land without working capital, technical knowledge, and access to markets do not realise that land's potential. They cannot. The capability and institutional conditions required to realise that land's potential are not secondary to land allocation. They are primary. A framework that treats them as secondary is not just incomplete. It is actively misleading. It diverts attention away from the determinants of productivity and towards a fetishistic focus on land.

2.4.2.4 The Treatment of Land Quality Assessments as Technically Neutral

A Ricardian lens presents land quality assessment as a neutral technical exercise. Soils are tested, rainfall measured, agro-ecological zones mapped, distance to markets calculated.

The resulting classification high, medium, or low potential appears as objective fact, available to guide rational policy choice.

This appearance of neutrality is the most insidious operation of Ricardian ideology. Land quality assessments in South Africa are not neutral technical exercises. They are historically and politically loaded documents that encode the effects of systematic racialised investment and disinvestment as if they were natural facts.

The "high-potential" classification of the Amathole Basin records the cumulative effect of irrigation infrastructure built for white farmers, research stations serving white commercial agriculture, extension advice delivered through racially segregated institutions, and credit facilities from which black farmers were statutorily excluded. The "low-potential" classification of former homeland areas records the cumulative effect of systematic disinvestment, the absence of infrastructure, the denial of extension services, and the destruction of black commercial farming through the 1913 Natives Land Act and its successors.

To treat these classifications as neutral descriptions of natural endowment is to transform historically produced inequality into ostensibly natural variation. It is to explain the present distribution of agricultural potential in terms that render its historical production invisible and therefore politically irremediable. The Ricardian lens does not merely omit this history; it systematically obscures it, coding the outcomes of racialised policy as if they were the products of nature.

2.4.2.5 The Neglect of "Marginal" Land Through Misplaced Efficiency Calculations

The corollary of focusing on high-potential land is the neglect of land classified as marginal. A Ricardian lens suggests rational allocation: scarce public resources should be directed toward areas where returns are highest. Investing in marginal land appears inefficient

when high-potential land remains to be redistributed. The calculation of efficiency, in theory, is flawed, and its practical application is quite damaging.

It assumes that "marginal" is a fixed property of land rather than a condition produced by historical disinvestment and potentially remediable through renewed investment. The former homelands of the Eastern Cape are not marginal because their soils are inherently incapable of supporting productive agriculture. They are marginal because they were systematically denied the infrastructure, extension services, credit facilities, and market integration that produced the "high potential" of commercial farming areas.

More fundamentally, the efficiency calculation ignores the constitutional mandate. Section 25(5) does not require the state to redistribute only land that meets some threshold of productive potential. It requires the state to foster conditions enabling equitable access—a mandate that encompasses the millions of South Africans whose historical dispossession deposited them in precisely those areas now classified as marginal. To neglect these areas on efficiency grounds is to compound historical dispossession with contemporary abandonment.

The practical consequences are visible across the Eastern Cape. Former homeland areas remain systematically undercapitalised; their populations trapped in low-productivity subsistence agriculture while policy attention focuses on redistributing the high-potential land from which their ancestors were expelled. The constitutional promise of equitable access remains unfulfilled not despite this spatial pattern but because of it.

2.4.2.6 LRAD Error as Ricardian Misdiagnosis

This error is embedded in LRAD through the assumption that land transfer plus grant capital is sufficient, because land's potential is understood as a natural endowment rather than a produced condition requiring ongoing investment. In this sense LRAD assumption equates

to the Ricardian proposition that $\text{Land} + \text{Capital} = \text{Productivity}$. This study will challenge and disprove this as an empirical falsity.

The LRAD programme's design treated land characteristics as the primary determinant of productive outcomes. Beneficiaries were selected, farms acquired, grants disbursed and then the state's attention moved to the next project, the next transfer, the next statistical achievement for the "narrative of numbers." (Hall, 2009) The post-transfer vacuum was not an implementation oversight but a logical consequence of a Ricardian framework that had no place for capability formation, institutional support, or the reproduction of land potential through ongoing investment.

The stark and unavoidable implication was that Ricardo's framework, when unreflectively applied to land reform policy, systematically misdiagnoses the problem and therefore prescribes ineffective remedies. It directs attention to land characteristics rather than to the institutional and capability deficits that are the actual binding constraints on productivity. It treats the effects of historical investment and disinvestment as if they were natural facts, rendering that history invisible and therefore politically irremediable. It assumes that transfer is the decisive moment, obscuring the fact that what happens after transfer determines whether constitutional purposes are achieved.

Building on Ricardo's foundation, this study redefines land quality as historically produced through ongoing investment and reproduction, moving beyond the notion of a fixed natural endowment. This study will synthesise Ricardian insights with the Resource-Based View's focus on capability, small-scale productivity theories' attention to household strategy, and comparative institutional evidence on the necessity of scaffolding, to provide the analytical architecture for a constitutionally adequate approach to land reform. This study does not reject Ricardo's contribution in toto as land heterogeneity matters, and biophysical and spatial

characteristics set real constraints on what is possible. This study insists that these constraints operate within a social, historical, and institutional context that Ricardo's framework renders invisible, and that effective policy must address what Ricardo's lens obscures.

2.4.3 Resource-Based View: *Capability as Mechanism*

2.4.3.1 Defining RBV: From Firm-Level Rents to Land Reform Analysis

The Resource-Based View (RBV) (Barney, 1991), originating in strategic management, conceptualises land as a productive asset whose value depends on the capabilities of its users. Ricardian rent theory, from classical political economy, treats land as a factor of production whose return is determined by differential fertility and the margin of cultivation. Small-scale productivity theory, rooted in agricultural economics, posits an inverse relationship between farm size and land productivity. This critique examines the adequacy of RBV for understanding land redistribution reform, drawing interconnections with Ricardo and small-scale productivity theory to reveal both strengths and limitations when applied to contexts of historical dispossession and structural transformation.

The Resource-Based View of the firm, as discussed by Barney (1991), Wernerfelt (1984), and Peteraf (1993), has its roots in the same economic rationale as the theory of differential rent. Just as Ricardo identified the source of differential rents as residing in the heterogeneity of land, with its varying fertility, location, and natural endowments, RBV locates the source of sustainable competitive advantage as residing in the heterogeneity of organisational resources.

This lineage of thought is not coincidental; it is foundational to the understanding of the value and limitation of the RBV approach to land reform analysis. As the theory goes, firms attain competitive advantage through resources that are Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, and Non-substitutable—the VRIN criteria. This leads to the generation of Ricardian rents, where the value of the resource is a function of its relative scarcity and higher productivity.

Makadok's (2001) extension of the theory is very relevant to the purposes of the current study. He identifies two different routes by which firms can generate economic rents:

Resource-picking: This occurs when managers utilize their superior access to information and analysis to beat the resource market by acquiring resources whose future value is systematically underestimated by other market actors. This route occurs before the resource is acquired by the firm and is thus consistent with the Ricardian approach to resource acquisition.

Capability-building: This occurs when managers utilize their organizational capabilities to develop organizational systems that enhance the productivity of the acquired resource. This route occurs after the resource is acquired by the firm and thus generates economic value through the organizational construction of capabilities that cannot be purchased, only built.

This distinction is very important to the purposed of land reform analysis under LRAD, as a policy intervention, utilized a resource-picking approach by selecting the target group, acquiring land, and providing grants. LRAD, however, systematically failed to utilize a capability-building approach. LRAD had no theory of how to enhance the productivity of the resource after acquisition because the Ricardian approach only looks to the moment of acquisition and not to the process of post-settlement development. The Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993) therefore explains how potential is realised through sustained competitive advantage arising from **Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, and Non-substitutable (VRIN)** capabilities. Applied to LRAD, beneficiary failure stems less from poor land than from the absence of VRIN capabilities required to transform land into productive enterprise.

These VRIN capabilities are not spontaneously generated (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993). They require institutional investment which was precisely the investment that LRAD

failed to provide. The programme assumed that grant capital would substitute for capability deficits. Capital without competence produced waste, not productivity (Barney, 1991)

Table 2.6

Applicability of VRIN

Capability	Why VRIN?	Eastern Cape Manifestation
Managerial competence	Rare among first-generation beneficiaries; inimitable through short courses; non-substitutable	Planning production, managing cash flow, complying with regulatory requirements, accessing credit
Technical agricultural knowledge	Valuable (directly increases yields); developed through experience, not instruction	Precision in irrigation scheduling, pest identification, soil fertility management, livestock health
Relational networks	Built over time through repeated interaction and reputation	Trust-based relationships with input suppliers, off-takers, extension officers, other farmers
Organisational capacity	Embedded in group structures; cannot be purchased	Cooperative governance, labour management, collective decision-making
Adaptive capacity	Developed through experience in specific agro-ecological contexts	Response to climate variability, pest outbreaks, market fluctuations

Source: Authors' compilations from theoretical framework and literature analysis.

This study does not endorse uncritical application of RBV. This study is cognisant of three limitations that are particularly salient, each requiring not merely acknowledgement but theoretical remediation within the integrated framework.

The Tautology Problem. Priem and Butler (2001) argue that RBV risks circularity where firms perform well because they have valuable resources; resources are valuable because they enable performance. Applied to LRAD, this becomes beneficiaries succeed because they are capable; we know they are capable because they succeed. This is not explanation; it is post-hoc rationalisation. This study escapes tautology by specifying VRIN resources *ex ante* and measuring them independently of outcomes.

2.4.3.2 Beneficiary Capability: A Multi-Dimensional Framework for Analysing VRIN Resource Endowments

The framework below translates Barney's (1991) theoretical construct of VRIN resources, namely, Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, and Non-substitutable, into observable, measurable indicators applicable to land reform beneficiaries in the Eastern Cape. Each dimension represents a distinct category of resources that, when present in combination, theoretically enables beneficiaries to transform land access into sustainable productive enterprise.

Table 2.7:
Barney's theoretical construct of VRIN translated

Capability Dimension	Operational Indicators	VRIN Justification	Empirical Relevance to Eastern Cape LRAD
Human Capital	Formal agricultural qualifications Years of farming experience Participation in training programmes Demonstrated technical knowledge	Rare among first-generation beneficiaries; inimitable through short courses; developed through experience not instruction	Mtyhila (2017) found 72% of OR Tambo beneficiaries had no extension contact post-transfer; technical knowledge deficits constrain productivity regardless of land quality
Physical Capital	Access to mechanisation (tractors, implements) Irrigation infrastructure Storage facilities (silos, cold storage) Livestock holdings	Valuable (directly increases productive capacity); requires significant prior capital accumulation; non-substitutable for commercial-scale production	Nqeno (2015) documented critical shortages: beneficiaries wait 3-5 years for mechanisation support; without it, high-potential land remains underutilised
Financial Capital	Access to credit (formal and informal) Production loan history Working capital adequacy Savings and asset base	Enables input purchase and labour hiring; rare in former homeland areas due to historical exclusion; non-substitutable for operational continuity	Mtero, Gumede & Ramantsima (2019) found well-off beneficiaries with prior capital access dominate successful projects; poorest beneficiaries lack credit history and collateral
Social Capital	Cooperative membership Mentorship relationships	Built through repeated interaction over time; inimitable through policy intervention	Hall & Kepe (2017) found strategic partnerships advantage those with existing networks;

Capability Dimension	Operational Indicators	VRIN Justification	Empirical Relevance to Eastern Cape LRAD
	Supplier networks Buyer/off-taker networks	alone; enables market access and input security	beneficiaries without connections remain excluded from value chains
Organisational Capital	Formal business registration Record-keeping practices Labour management capacity Business planning capability	Distinguishes subsistence from commercial orientation; enables accountability and investment readiness; rare among first-generation beneficiaries	

This approach shifts the Resource-Based View from explaining past outcomes to predicting future ones. The key question becomes: Do land reform beneficiaries with specific pre-identified capabilities perform better than those without, when land quality and institutional factors are held constant? This study hypothesises that they will, but crucially, only where institutional support allows them to use those capabilities effectively.

Under-theorisation of the state is a weakness of RBV where there is lack of theory of how public institutions actively produce capabilities. The assumption that VRIN capabilities are spontaneously generated constitutes under theorisation of the state since VRIN require state institutions to be sustained and institutionalised. Whereas the RBV theory downplays the role of the state, Barney, (1991) posits that the state is an active, constitutive force shaping every dimension of the land reform process. George (2015) argues that strategic management research has concentrated on firms' internal operations, leaving the state's influence on firms comparatively under-examined. Extending this, George, Urwin and Amayo (2017) demonstrate how states actively shape firm-level resource access and competitive advantage.

Neglect of structural constraint. The third weakness of RBV is the neglect of structural constraints that shape and constrain beneficiary agency. RBV focuses on internal

resources, not external constraints. The monopolistic input markets, predatory buyers, dysfunctional local government, and spatial legacies of apartheid all militate to impact internal processes of beneficiary farmers.

This study repositions RBV as necessary but insufficient in the land reform debate, requiring supplementation by structural and institutional analysis. It is important to analyse how state action shapes the value of land for beneficiaries by influencing the following variables, property rights, infrastructure, regulating markets, contract enforcement, extension support for beneficiaries.

2.4.4 Small-Scale Productivity Theories: Behavioural Mechanisms and Institutional Contingency

Introduction

Small-scale productivity theories (Chayanov, 1966; Sen, 1962) demonstrate that small farms can achieve land productivity equal to or exceeding large commercial operations through intensive labour application, superior local knowledge, and flexible household labour allocation. This has led to the dominant paradigm which has been the Inverse Relationship (IR) hypothesis. It says that smaller farms achieve higher output per unit of land than their larger counterparts. This hypothesis has provided powerful intellectual justification for land redistribution programmes worldwide, suggesting that agrarian reform can simultaneously advance efficiency and equity.

Berry and Cline (1979) acknowledged a crucial limitation of the Small-Scale Productivity Theories in that very little evidence is presented on advances in productivity over time. The Inverse Relationship between farm size and productivity (Chayanov, 1966; Sen, 1962) is a static relationship, capturing productivity at a point but unable to address whether smallholders can sustain productivity growth. Small-scale productivity theory also suffers from

measurement problems by conflating yields with efficiency, relying solely on static analysis neglecting dynamic trajectories, neglect of scale-technology interactions; and attributing outcomes to size rather than institutions. There are regional specificity problems and structural neglect which impacts on the evaluation of small-scale productivity theories. In the Eastern Cape, there is evidence that illustrates each limitation while pointing toward more adequate analytical approaches (Eastern Cape Rural Development and Agrarian Reform, 2024).

In the Eastern Cape, LRAD beneficiaries successfully cultivate diverse crops, manage livestock, and sustain household food security on modest landholdings. Their success is attributable to mechanisms smallholder theory identifies: intimate knowledge of local agro-ecological conditions, ability to mobilise family labour, and diversified risk management (Hebinck & Lent, 2007).

This study however is critical of the universalisation of the inverse relationship. The inverse relationship is not automatic for every small holder farmer or region in the Eastern Cape. It operates only when smallholders have access to functioning input markets, extension advice, credit, and reliable output markets (Hazell et al., 2007). Where these institutional conditions are absent, smallholder productivity collapses to subsistence levels regardless of land quality or farmer capability.

The productivity of small holder farmers should be seen as an interim goal in the land reform process to enable beneficiaries, where they choose, to become viable commercial farmers. It was not the end goal to remain at lower levels of productivity. In this study, beneficiaries in smallholder productivity situations will be seen as transitioning to surplus production.

There is evidence that some small-scale farmers pursue *hybrid* strategies: maintaining household food production while gradually commercialising surplus. Evidence from the

Eastern Cape also suggests beneficiaries pursue *hybrid* strategies: maintaining household food production while gradually commercialising surplus. This study argues that Small-scale productivity theories specify behavioural and household-level mechanisms that operate effectively only within enabling institutional environments. The repositioning of small-scale falls within the same environmental factors that affect RBV theories leading to theorisation of the state.

2.4.4.1 Implications of Small-Scale Productivity Theories on Land Reform

The established inverse relationship between farm size and productivity has historically offered an unassailable academic rationale for land reform policies that stretches back nearly a century (Berry & Cline, 1979; Feder, 1985; Lipton, 2012). Nevertheless, the inverse relationship (IR) appears to be more conditional and theoretically debatable than its proponents are willing to concede. The selection of indicators, static methodology, lack of consideration of technological changes, institutional blind spots, regional specificity problems, and structural blind spots contribute to the applicability of the inverse relationship to specific policy environments such as contemporary South Africa.

The evidence from the Eastern Cape Province helps to illuminate each of these problems while offering better methodological directions. The agricultural landscape of the Eastern Cape Province, with its 91% of farmers accounting for 29% of income generated, challenges some of the assumptions of the inverse relationship. The LRAD study reveals the fallacy of the assumption of immediate viability without adequate resources. Research on maize farms reveals the complex and often debated relationship between the size of a farm and how productive it is. The study on restitution reveals the institutional blind spots. The development strategies highlight the multiplicity of barriers and the need for coordinated intervention.

This study differs from previous scholarship in several fundamental ways: the use of multidimensional productivity indicators, dynamic methodology, modelling of scale-technology interaction, institutional disaggregation, contextualization, structural mediation analysis, and the adoption of various theoretical perspectives. The study does not reject the validity of smallholder productivity theories but aims to transcend them by shifting from general support for smallholder land reform to specific and nuanced strategies that take into account the complexity of land reform.

2.4.5 Comparative Evidence: The Necessity of Institutional Scaffolding

The common limitation across Ricardian, RBV, and smallholder traditions is that each under-theorises the institutional conditions under which their respective mechanisms operate. All the three theoretical traditions treat institutions as background or treat the state as an afterthought, a neutral backdrop, or a market-distorting obstacle. By so doing they fail to explain the developmental trajectories of countries like Zimbabwe, Venezuela, Nigeria, and Brazil.

In the countries of Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Venezuela and Brazil, the state is not a passive arena but the central actor, arbiter, and often the primary obstacle to economic transformation. Below is a critical examination of how Ricardo's comparative advantage, the Resource-Based View (RBV), and small-scale productivity theories fall short when confronted with the empirical realities of these four cases.

Table 2.8*International Comparative evidence*

Case	Finding
Zimbabwe (Scoones et al., 2019)	Beneficiaries with integrated support packages achieved significant productivity gains; those lacking such scaffolding remained trapped in low-productivity equilibria. Land transfer was identical; institutional environment varied.
Venezuela (Cameron, 2018; Hausmann et al., 2021)	Land expropriation without post-settlement support, technical training, or governance protections led to productivity collapse, food insecurity, and elite capture.
Nigeria (Sertoglu, Ugural, & Bekun, 2017)	Integrated Agricultural Model: simultaneous investment in extension, rural electrification, primary health care, cooperative development, and agro-processing produced synergistic effects absent in siloed approaches.
Brazil & Colombia (Mustaphi et al., 2019)	Market-led reforms failed to achieve scale, equity, or rural transformation. High transaction costs, landowner price inflation, and absence of post-transfer support undermined outcomes.

Source: Authors' compilations from theoretical framework and literature analysis.

These international cases provide stark international comparative evidence that the state is the missing variable. In these cases, Ricardo's theory fails to account for the state's power to build or destroy a nation's productive base, as evidenced by Venezuela's 80% economic contraction or Zimbabwe's agricultural collapse during sanctions when the country could not provide adequate support to the resettled farmers. Looking at these international comparisons, the RBV, depending on the behaviours of the state, led to dissipation competitive advantage, either through Nigeria's corruption-eroded institutions or Zimbabwe's captured state enterprises. The theories of small-scale productivity, while accurately describing micro-level behaviour, miss the macro-level state failures that trap millions in inefficient scales of production, forcing citizens into informal survival strategies.

Institution scaffolding

Institutional scaffolding is the structured, sustained provision of complementary inputs, capability formation mechanisms, and market linkages that facilitate the translation of land transfer into productivity growth.

Table 2.9

Institution scaffolding summarised

Component	Function
Extension and technical support	Coherent, resourced, consistently available advisory services
Credit and finance	Production loans, working capital, investment finance
Infrastructure	Irrigation, storage, transport, market facilities
Value-chain coordination	Reliable input supply, off-take agreements, quality assurance
Tenure security	Credible, enforceable property rights incentivising investment

Source: Authors' compilations from theoretical framework and literature analysis.

The South African land reform debate has not adequately theorised the point of institutional scaffolding. Post-settlement support is consistently discussed as an implementation problem—insufficient funding, weak coordination, capacity constraints. This framing treats institutional deficits as contingent failures that better management could remedy.

This study argues that LRAD's institutional deficits were not implementation failures but design features. The programme was conceived without an institutional theory of productivity; it assumed that land and grant capital would spontaneously generate productive outcomes. International experience demonstrates this assumption as empirically false.

2.4.6 Synthesis: The Integrated Framework

This study is guided by a central proposition, that, no single theoretical tradition is adequate. Each illuminate one dimension of the productivity question while remaining silent on others. This study proposes an integrated, multi-layered framework in which each theory

addresses the blind spots of the others, and all are embedded within an institutional analysis that the constituent traditions neglect.

Table 2.10

The Integrated Theoretical Framework

Domain	Theoretical Foundation	Core Proposition	Condition for Productivity
Land endowment	Ricardian rent theory (critically appropriated)	Land is heterogeneous; fertility, location, water access set upper bound on productive potential. This potential is socially produced, not naturally given.	Land with inherent productive potential, recognising that "potential" is historically constructed through prior investment.
Beneficiary capability	Resource-Based View (institutionally embedded)	Land alone is inert; productivity requires VRIN resources (skills, capital, technology, networks). These are not spontaneously generated but require institutional investment.	Beneficiaries possess or are enabled to develop VRIN-calibre capabilities. Capability deficits are not individual failures but institutional failures.
Household strategy	Small-scale productivity theories (institutionally contingent)	Labour allocation, risk management, indigenous knowledge mediate translation of land and capability into realised productivity. The inverse relationship is conditional, not universal.	Household strategies oriented toward productive, adaptive land use, enabled by institutional environments that reward rather than penalise intensification.
Institutional scaffolding	New institutional economics; comparative political economy	Coherent, adequately resourced institutions providing tenure security, extension, credit, infrastructure, market access are not optional supplements but constitutive conditions.	Institutions that systematically enable capability formation, reduce transaction costs, stabilise expectations, connect production to markets.

Source: Authors' compilations from theoretical framework and literature analysis.

This study synthesises the four theoretical domains that, taken in alignment, lead to sustainable land productivity. The failure of the LRAD programme in the Eastern Cape is attributable not to the absence of any single condition but to the systemic disjuncture between them. This misalignment manifests across multiple dimensions: Land is allocated without

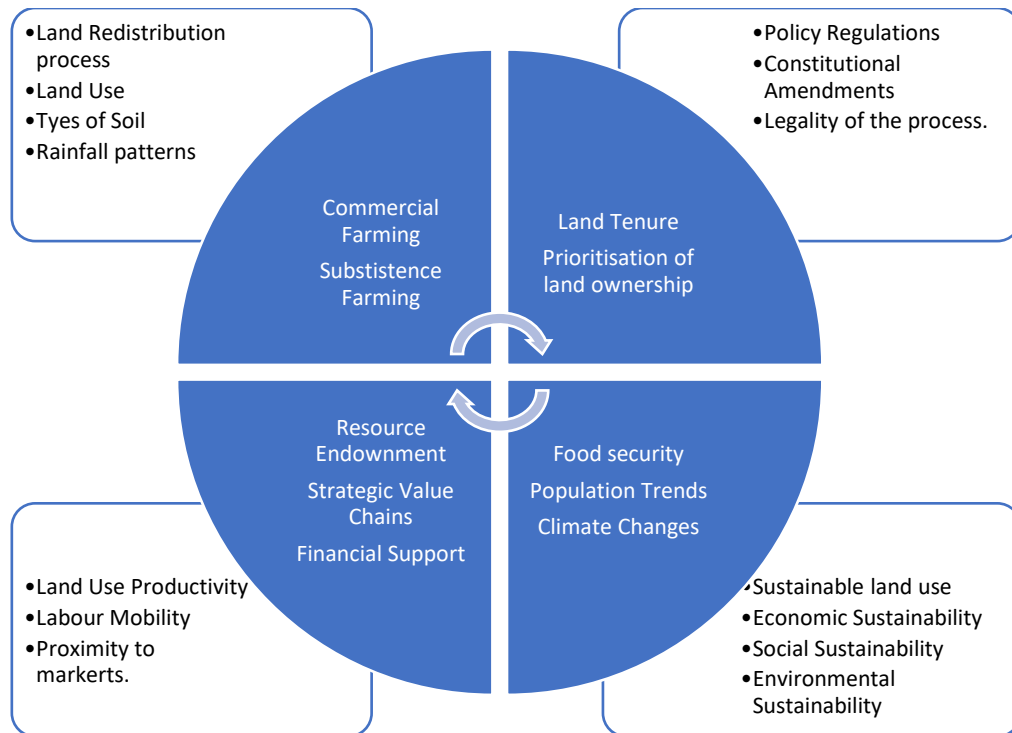
regard to its productive potential; capable beneficiaries exist but are left unsupported while incapable beneficiaries are selected and subsequently abandoned; the institutions responsible for implementation are fragmented, under-resourced; and unaccountable and in response to these conditions, households behave rationally by retreating into low-risk, low-return subsistence strategies. LRAD failure is therefore not a series of discrete implementation problems but an emergent property of a fundamentally misaligned system.

2.5 Conceptual Framework: Operationalising the Model

2.5.1 From Theoretical Architecture to Empirical Investigation

The integrated theoretical framework establishes that sustainable land productivity is an emergent property of alignment between four domains. This section translates that theoretical architecture into an operational conceptual model capable of guiding empirical investigation. This framework synthesises Ricardo's concern with land endowment, the Resource-Based View's focus on human capability, theories of institutional functionality, and small-scale productivity theories' insights into household decision-making. Taken together, they provide a comprehensive lens for understanding why interventions succeed or fail. However, a theoretical framework, no matter how robust, remains an abstract architecture. To guide empirical investigation, that architecture must be translated into an operational conceptual model, a tool that specifies not only *what* should be studied but *how* the relationships between these domains can be observed, measured, and analysed. This section undertakes that translation.

The conceptual model operationalises the four theoretical domains as interconnected variables whose alignment or disjuncture can be empirically assessed. Sustainable land productivity which is the outcome variable is a function of the best fit between these domains described in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1*Conceptual Framework*

Source: Authors' compilations from theoretical framework and literature analysis.

2.5.2 Domain One: Land Endowment as Baseline Determinant

2.5.2.1 Conceptual Definition

Land endowment refers to the biophysical and spatial characteristics of transferred land that establish its inherent productive potential. Following Ricardo's (1817/2004) foundational insight that land is heterogeneous—that variations in fertility, location, and climate produce differential productivity and therefore differential rent—this domain encompasses soil fertility, water availability, agro-ecological zone, topography, and proximity to markets, input suppliers, and transport infrastructure. The spatial economics tradition, from Von Thünen's (1966) model of agricultural location to Alonso's (1964) urban land use theory, reinforces the centrality of location: distance from markets determines transport costs, which in turn shape what can be profitably produced and at what intensity. Land endowment is therefore not a singular attribute

but a composite of multiple characteristics that together determine the range of productive possibilities available to any farm, regardless of who owns it or how it is managed.

2.5.2.2 Critical Appropriation

This study rejects the treatment of land endowment as a purely natural category. While Ricardo presented fertility as intrinsic and static, a gift of nature whose differential distribution explained rent differentials, contemporary agrarian political economy demonstrates that land productivity is socially constructed. Land quality in the Eastern Cape is historically produced through patterns of racialised public investment and systematic disinvestment. The "high-potential" land of the Amathole Basin and Sundays River Valley was not naturally productive; it was made productive through decades of apartheid-era investment in irrigation schemes, drainage systems, soil conservation programmes, research stations, extension services, and transport infrastructure, all systematically and deliberately directed toward white commercial farmers while denied to black farming communities. The "low-potential" classification of former homeland areas such as O R Tambo records not the judgment of nature but the cumulative effect of colonial and apartheid policies that confined the majority population to marginal lands, then systematically withheld the infrastructure, services, and capital that might have made those lands productive.

The concept of "high-potential land" is therefore treated in this study as an empirical descriptor of current productive capacity, not a natural fact. It captures real differentials in productivity-relevant characteristics, soil chemistry does matter, rainfall patterns are not socially constructed, while insisting that these differentials are always already mediated by history, politics, and investment. To treat land quality as natural is to render invisible the processes that produced it and to foreclose questions about whether and how those processes might be reproduced for new beneficiaries.

2.5.2.3 Operational Indicators

Land endowment is operationalised through six observable indicators, each selected for its demonstrated relationship to agricultural productivity and its relevance to the Eastern Cape context.

Soil quality classification captures the productive capacity of the land itself, typically categorised as high, medium, or low potential based on factors such as depth, texture, organic matter content, and nutrient status. In the Eastern Cape, soil quality varies dramatically from the fertile alluvial soils of the Sundays River Valley to the shallow, leached soils of former homeland areas and this variation set real constraints on what can be grown and at what yield.

Water access encompasses both natural rainfall reliability and the presence of irrigation infrastructure. In a province characterised by variable rainfall and periodic drought, irrigation is often the difference between reliable production and catastrophic failure. Yet irrigation infrastructure is concentrated in former commercial farming areas; former homelands remain almost entirely rain-fed, their populations exposed to climatic risk that their historical counterparts were systematically protected from.

Agro-ecological zone classifies areas according to their climatic and ecological characteristics—temperature regimes, rainfall patterns, growing seasons, and natural vegetation. The Eastern Cape spans multiple zones, from the moist, temperate grasslands of the interior to the semi-arid scrub of the Great Karoo, each supporting different production systems and imposing different constraints.

Distance to nearest market town measures spatial access to output markets. Transport costs are not trivial; they determine farm-gate prices, the viability of perishable production, and the ability to respond to market signals. Beneficiaries located 80 kilometres from the nearest

town on collapsing roads face entirely different economic calculations than those located 10 kilometres from active markets.

Distance to nearest all-weather road captures physical access to transport infrastructure. Many LRAD farms in the Eastern Cape are accessible only via dirt tracks that become impassable during rains, isolating beneficiaries precisely when they most need to move produce to market. This indicator operationalises the spatial legacy of apartheid infrastructure investment, which concentrated all-weather roads in commercial farming areas while leaving homeland areas systematically disconnected.

Prior land use records the recent history of the land, commercial farming, communal grazing, abandoned, or under restitution claim. This indicator captures both the physical legacy of previous management (soil degradation, infrastructure condition, fencing) and the social and institutional context into which beneficiaries are inserted. Land previously farmed commercially comes with infrastructure, cleared fields, and established productive potential; land previously used for communal grazing requires clearance, fencing, and investment before production can begin.

2.5.2.4 Causal Role of Land Endowments

Land endowment sets the upper bound on achievable productivity. Farms on degraded soils with no irrigation, remote locations, and no prior investment in infrastructure cannot achieve the same output per hectare as farms on fertile, irrigated, well-located land that has been maintained in commercial production—regardless of beneficiary capability or institutional support. This is the Ricardian truth that any serious analysis must accommodate: land is not homogeneous, and its characteristics matter.

However, this upper bound is rarely approached; most LRAD farms operate far below their biophysical potential, demonstrating that other domains are the binding constraints. The question is not whether land quality matters because it does. The question is why land of demonstrable productive potential yields so little when transferred to LRAD beneficiaries. The answer lies not in the land itself but in the capabilities, beneficiaries bring to it, the household strategies through which they deploy those capabilities, and the institutional scaffolding that enables or fails to enable the translation of potential into productivity.

Land endowment thus functions as the foundational layer in this study's multi-domain framework. It establishes what is biophysically possible. But it does not determine what is actually achieved. That determination requires analysis of the three additional domains developed below: beneficiary capability, household strategy, and institutional scaffolding. The framework as a whole insists that productivity is an emergent property of their alignment—and that LRAD failure is attributable not to poor land alone but to the systemic disjuncture between land endowment and the other conditions necessary for its productive realisation.

2.5.3 Domain Two: Tenure Security as Motivational and Investment Enabler

2.5.3.1 Conceptual Definition

Tenure security refers to the perceived and actual likelihood that a beneficiary's rights to land will be upheld by authorities and not arbitrarily revoked (Besley, 1995; Feder & Feeny, 1991). It encompasses three interrelated dimensions: the duration of rights (how long the beneficiary can expect to occupy and use the land), the transferability of rights (whether the land can be sold, leased, or used as collateral), and the enforceability of rights (the extent to which legal and administrative systems will protect the beneficiary against eviction or expropriation).

The concept is both objective and subjective. Objectively, tenure security is a function of the legal form of landholding—freehold, leasehold, permit-to-occupy, communal allocation—and the protections each form affords. Subjectively, it is a function of beneficiaries' perceptions: do they believe their rights will be respected? Do they fear eviction? Have they witnessed other beneficiaries losing land? These perceptions matter independently of formal legal protections because they shape behaviour. A beneficiary who fears eviction will not invest in land improvement, regardless of what the law says on paper.

2.5.3.2 Conceptual Distinction: Tenure Security as Behavioural Mediator

Tenure security is distinct from land endowment and institutional scaffolding, though it interacts with both. It is treated as a separate variable in this study because it functions as a behavioural mediator: insecure tenure suppresses investment and risk-taking even when land quality is high, capabilities are present, and other institutional supports exist.

This mediating role is grounded in elementary economic logic. Investment in land, like clearing fields, building fencing, installing irrigation, planting perennial crops, constructing storage facilities typically yields returns only over extended periods. Such investment is rational only if the investor expects to remain in possession long enough to recoup the costs and capture the returns. Where tenure is insecure, where eviction is possible, where rights may not be renewed, the expected returns to investment are discounted by the probability of loss. At the extreme, where tenure is wholly uncertain, the rational response is zero investment, what economists call the "hold-up problem" applied to land.

Critically, this is not irrational behaviour. It is a rational adaptation to an uncertain environment. The beneficiary who withholds labour and capital from land they may not retain is not displaying a deficit of entrepreneurial spirit; they are displaying a correct assessment of the incentive structure they face. The pathology is not in the beneficiary but in the tenure regime.

This insight has profound implications for policy evaluation. When LRAD farms fail to achieve productivity, the dominant discourse diagnoses capability deficits, insufficient grants, or poor extension. These may all be present. But where tenure is insecure, even capable, well-capitalised, well-supported beneficiaries will rationally disinvest. They will farm for the short term, extract rather than invest, and abandon land rather than improve it. The failure is not in them; it is in the institutional environment that makes long-term commitment irrational.

2.5.3.3 Operational Indicators

To render the concept of tenure security empirically tractable, this study operationalises it through four observable indicators, each capturing a distinct dimension of security and each carrying specific implications for beneficiary behaviour and productivity outcomes. This multidimensional approach is consistent with property rights theory, which conceptualises tenure not as a binary condition but as a bundle of rights with varying degrees of completeness, transferability, duration, and enforceability (Schlager & Ostrom, 1992; Besley, 1995).

The first indicator, **form of tenure**, records the legal category under which land is held. In the South African land reform context, these categories form a hierarchy of security with profoundly different incentive effects (Cousins, 2016; Pienaar, 2014). At the apex stands freehold ownership: transferable, heritable, and usable as collateral. Freehold represents the most complete bundle of property rights and aligns beneficiary interests with long-term investment because returns to improvement accrue fully to the owner and may be realised through sale or bequest (Besley, 1995; De Soto, 2000). At the opposite end lies the permit-to-occupy (PTO), an administrative permission revocable at official discretion, offering limited transferability and minimal protection (Pienaar, 2014). Between these poles fall leasehold—typically 30-year leases under LRAD and the Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS)—and communal allocation, where rights derive from membership in a traditional community and are administered by traditional authorities under customary law (Cousins, 2016).

Each tenure form carries distinct implications for investment incentives. These differences are foundational rather than marginal. Empirical evidence demonstrates that stronger, more secure property rights correlate positively with fixed investment and land-improving expenditure (Feder & Onchan, 1987; Place & Migot-Adholla, 1998). Freehold owners, secure in their possession and able to capture the full returns to improvement, have strong incentives to invest. Permit holders facing potential revocation rationally refrain. Leasehold occupies an intermediate position: a 30-year lease provides stronger incentives than a short-term arrangement but weaker incentives than freehold, particularly where renewal is discretionary (Cousins, 2016). The distribution of tenure forms across LRAD beneficiaries is therefore a structural determinant of productivity outcomes, shaping the possibility of long-term investment prior to the influence of capability, market access, or institutional support.

The second indicator, **duration of rights**, captures the temporal dimension of tenure security. For leasehold arrangements, this includes both the initial term—typically 30 years under LRAD and PLAS—and the perceived likelihood of renewal (Department of Rural Development and Land Reform [DRDLR], 2001). Agricultural investments such as irrigation systems, perennial crops, and soil conservation structures have extended payback periods; investment viability therefore depends on the alignment between asset lifespan and tenure duration (Besley, 1995). Even a 30-year lease may fail to generate security where renewal is uncertain. Institutional economics emphasises that actors respond not to nominal duration but to expected duration—formal term length discounted by the perceived probability of termination (North, 1990). Where administrative processes are opaque and discretion unchecked, beneficiaries rationally shorten their planning horizons.

The third indicator, **perceived security**, captures the subjective dimension mediating between formal legal arrangements and actual behaviour. Perception-based measures are widely recognised in property rights scholarship as critical determinants of investment

decisions (Besley, 1995; Place & Migot-Adholla, 1998). Beneficiaries assess the likelihood of continued occupation, inheritance by descendants, and protection from state reclamation. These perceptions are shaped by lived experience: observed evictions, administrative disputes, or political rhetoric surrounding land expropriation (Cousins, 2016). Crucially, perceived security may diverge from formal legal status. Individuals holding legally robust rights may fear expropriation in a volatile policy environment, while those under less formal arrangements may feel secure due to local administrative stability. This study therefore treats perceived security as an independent variable because behavioural responses are shaped by subjective expectations rather than formal doctrine alone. A beneficiary who anticipates eviction will rationally disinvest irrespective of the nominal strength of the title deed.

The fourth indicator, **collateral acceptability**, measures whether financial institutions recognise the land right as valid security for loans. This dimension captures the economic interface between tenure security and credit markets. The ability to pledge land as collateral is central to capital formation and agricultural intensification (De Soto, 2000; Besley, 1995). Where tenure forms—such as state leasehold or PTO arrangements—are not accepted by commercial banks, beneficiaries are effectively excluded from formal credit systems (Cousins, 2016; Lahiff, 2007). Without access to working capital, production loans, or long-term investment finance, beneficiaries cannot leverage their primary asset to expand operations, purchase inputs, or manage risk.

This exclusion constitutes a structural barrier to accumulation. Credit constraints inhibit input purchase, seasonal consumption smoothing, technological upgrading, and responsiveness to market opportunities (Stiglitz & Weiss, 1981). Beneficiaries are thus confined to low-level equilibrium traps not because of incapacity but because institutional credit systems discount their land as non-collateralizable due to insecure tenure. The paradox is stark: land redistributed

to remedy historical dispossession cannot serve as an engine of capital formation because the tenure regime fails to generate bankable security.

Collectively, these four indicators provide a comprehensive operationalisation of tenure security. Form of tenure establishes the legal baseline (Schlager & Ostrom, 1992); duration of rights introduces the temporal dimension (North, 1990); perceived security captures the behavioural mediation between law and action (Besley, 1995); and collateral acceptability integrates tenure into the broader financial architecture (De Soto, 2000). Each indicator is observable and measurable; each carries distinct incentive effects; and each can be empirically linked to productivity outcomes. In the Eastern Cape context, systematic weaknesses across all four dimensions illuminate tenure insecurity not as an incidental administrative flaw, but as a structural constraint embedded within the design and implementation of LRAD.

2.5.3.4 Causal Role of Tenure Security

In sum, the multidimensional operationalisation of tenure security outlined above reveals its pivotal role within the productivity alignment framework. By shaping the incentives that govern beneficiary behaviour, the structure and security of land rights directly mediate the translation of land access into sustainable agricultural investment and long-term growth. Addressing tenure insecurity, therefore, is not a peripheral concern but a central prerequisite for realising the developmental objectives of land reform.

Secure tenure constitutes a foundational precondition for productive agricultural investment. Classical and contemporary scholarship converge in recognising that the security of property rights shapes investment horizons and capital formation (Ricardo, 1817/2001; Besley, 1995; De Soto, 2000). Within agrarian political economy, tenure security reduces uncertainty, lowers the effective discount rate applied to future returns, and increases the likelihood that farmers will undertake asset-specific, long-term investments. Empirical evidence from development economics demonstrates that secure land rights are positively

associated with soil conservation, irrigation investment, and farm infrastructure improvement (Feder & Onchan, 1987; Place & Migot-Adholla, 1998). Secure tenure further enhances access to formal credit by rendering land collateralizable within recognised property regimes (Besley, 1995; De Soto, 2000). Conversely, tenure insecurity generates rational disinvestment. Where beneficiaries cannot credibly expect to retain land, labour and capital are withheld, extraction substitutes for improvement, and short-term optimisation prevails (Place & Migot-Adholla, 1998). Disinvestment under insecure tenure is therefore economically coherent adaptation to institutional risk rather than behavioural deficiency.

In the Eastern Cape, the predominance of conditional state leases and ambiguous communal tenure arrangements constitutes a structural disincentive to productivity enhancement under the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) programme (Department of Rural Development and Land Reform [DRDLR], 2001). The majority of beneficiaries do not hold freehold title, but 30-year lease agreements issued by the state. Although such duration appears sufficient in formal terms to incentivise long-term investment, the empirical operation of the lease system materially attenuates its incentive effects.

First, administrative delay and bureaucratic obstruction undermine the credibility of tenure rights. Studies of post-transfer land reform administration in South Africa document procedural barriers in lease registration, renewal, and approval of improvements (Hall, 2009; Sikhakhane, 2025). Reported instances in which lessees were denied permission for minor farm enhancements illustrate a bureaucratic orientation toward control rather than enablement. Second, uncertainty of renewal erodes the effective time horizon of beneficiaries. Where renewal is discretionary rather than automatic, and where threats of termination or eviction are observed, the nominal 30-year lease term is discounted by the perceived probability of premature loss (Hall, 2009; Pienaar, 2014).

Third, leasehold land is generally excluded from commercial collateral regimes. South African financial institutions seldom accept state leasehold as bankable security, constraining beneficiaries' access to working capital and investment finance (Lahiff, 2007; Cousins, 2016). This exclusion entrenches dependence on state grants and informal credit, both structurally inadequate for commercial agricultural development. Fourth, tenure under state lease remains politically contingent. Rights mediated through administrative discretion are vulnerable to policy shifts, leadership changes, and bureaucratic arbitrariness, reinforcing perceptions of instability (Cousins, 2016; Pienaar, 2014).

The behavioural consequences are theoretically predictable. Institutional economics posits that insecure property rights shorten planning horizons and discourage fixed capital formation (Besley, 1995). Beneficiaries therefore rationally prioritise liquidity, movable assets, and reversible strategies over sunk-cost improvements. Such behaviour reflects structural incentive distortion rather than beneficiary incapacity.

The constitutional implications are significant. Section 25(5) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa obliges the state to foster conditions enabling equitable access to land. Jurisprudence and scholarly interpretation emphasise that equitable access encompasses both transfer and substantive security of tenure (Pienaar, 2014; Hall, 2009). A tenure regime that suppresses investment incentives, excludes beneficiaries from credit markets, and subjects' occupancy to administrative discretion cannot be reconciled with an enabling constitutional mandate. Formal transfer without bankable, enforceable, and secure rights amounts to nominal redistribution without structural empowerment.

Accordingly, this study conceptualises tenure security as an analytically distinct domain within the integrated productivity alignment framework. Its effects cannot be reduced to land endowment (Ricardo, 1817/2001) nor to capability endowment as theorised within the Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991). Rather, tenure security functions as a behavioural

mediator shaping whether land quality and beneficiary capabilities are converted into sustained productivity. Even where agro-ecological potential is high and human capability present, insecure tenure induces rational disinvestment. By treating tenure as an administrative technicality rather than a structural determinant of investment behaviour, LRAD embedded a systemic constraint that materially limited its developmental and constitutional efficacy.

2.5.4 Domain 3: Beneficiary Capability

A central proposition of this study is that land redistribution cannot be analytically reduced to the transfer of a physical asset. Land, irrespective of its biophysical potential, does not automatically translate into productive output. The conversion of land endowment into realised productivity is mediated by what this study conceptualises as beneficiary capability. Domain 3 therefore occupies a pivotal position within the Integrated Productivity Alignment Framework. It represents the engine through which potential is activated, value is created, and livelihoods are transformed.

Conceptually, beneficiary capability refers to the stock of strategically valuable resources that beneficiaries possess or are able to mobilise in pursuit of agricultural production. Drawing on the Resource Based View, these resources may be described as VRIN calibre, meaning valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (Barney, 1991). They encompass technical skills, experiential knowledge, managerial competence, financial literacy, relational networks, technological access, and organisational routines. In this formulation, productivity is not primarily a function of land quality but of the capacity to organise, combine, and deploy resources effectively. Teece (2014) further refines this insight by distinguishing between ordinary capabilities that enable routine operations and dynamic capabilities that allow adaptation to changing market and environmental conditions. Both dimensions are essential in agricultural settings characterised by market volatility, climatic uncertainty, and price fluctuation (Teece, 2014).

This study critically appropriates the Resource Based View rather than adopting it without qualification. Traditional formulations treat capabilities as largely internal to the firm and developed through competitive processes within market environments (Barney, 1991). Such an assumption is analytically insufficient in the context of redistributive agrarian reform. LRAD beneficiaries are not emergent firms operating in fully functioning markets; they are historically excluded actors inserted into uneven institutional landscapes. Their capabilities are not simply firm internal phenomena but are shaped by access to agricultural colleges, extension systems, credit markets, cooperative structures, and mentorship networks. Capability is therefore socially and institutionally embedded rather than individually generated. This interpretation aligns with institutional economics, which recognises that institutional environments shape productive performance (North, 1990).

Operationally, beneficiary capability in this study is disaggregated into five interrelated dimensions: human capital, physical capital, financial capital, social capital, and organisational capital. Human capital refers to formal agricultural qualifications, years of farming experience, and participation in structured training programmes. Technical competence in irrigation scheduling, soil fertility management, livestock health, and financial planning directly influences yield and cost efficiency. Experience reduces error rates, improves risk management, and enhances adaptive capacity. Empirical research in agricultural development consistently demonstrates that human capital accumulation is strongly correlated with productivity improvements (Lipton, 2009; Schultz, 1964).

Physical capital includes access to mechanisation, irrigation infrastructure, storage facilities, and productive livestock. Mechanisation influences labour productivity and timeliness of operations. Irrigation mitigates climatic risk. Storage reduces post-harvest losses and stabilises market timing. These productive assets expand operational capacity but require

complementary knowledge and maintenance capability to function effectively (Dorward, Hazell, & Poulton, 2009).

Financial capital encompasses access to credit, production loan histories, and adequacy of working capital. Agricultural production is cash flow intensive, with input expenditures preceding revenue realisation. Without liquidity, even technically competent farmers are constrained in purchasing seed, fertiliser, feed, or fuel. Secure and affordable credit enhances investment incentives and production continuity (Besley, 1995). In redistributive contexts, the absence of accessible finance has been shown to suppress productivity regardless of land quality (Dorward et al., 2009).

Social capital refers to cooperative membership, mentorship arrangements, trust-based supplier relationships, and access to reliable buyers. Agricultural markets are relational and information intensive. Embedded networks reduce transaction costs, facilitate information exchange, and enhance market access (North, 1990). In smallholder and redistributed farming contexts, relational capital frequently substitutes for formal institutional depth (Scoones et al., 2019).

Organisational capital includes formal business registration, record keeping systems, labour management practices, and governance routines. These organisational capabilities enable regulatory compliance, improve financial accountability, and enhance operational efficiency. Organisational competence strengthens the capacity to engage with formal markets and credit systems, thereby influencing enterprise sustainability (Teece, 2014).

The causal role of beneficiary capability within the integrated framework is foundational. It constitutes the mechanism through which land endowment is converted into realised productivity. Land of high fertility allocated to beneficiaries lacking managerial competence, liquidity, or network access remains underutilised. Conversely, capable beneficiaries may partially compensate for moderate land constraints through improved

management and risk mitigation. Capability therefore moderates and amplifies the effects of land quality and tenure security.

Importantly, the framework posits that capability deficits are not merely individual shortcomings but structural outcomes of historical exclusion and institutional fragmentation. Apartheid era spatial engineering systematically restricted access to agricultural education, credit markets, and commercial farming networks, thereby constraining intergenerational capability accumulation (Lipton, 2009). Where redistribution programmes fail to incorporate systematic capability formation through sustained training, mentorship, and financial integration, underperformance should be anticipated rather than treated as anomalous. Differential outcomes among LRAD beneficiaries reflect variations in capability endowment interacting with institutional context.

Within the logic of this study, beneficiary capability is neither a peripheral variable nor a residual explanation. It is the core engine of productive conversion. Redistribution without capability formation results in asset holding without value creation. Sustainable livelihood transformation requires that redistributed land be embedded within a capability enhancing ecosystem supported by institutional coherence. Domain 3 therefore anchors the transition from distributive justice to economic performance by linking asset transfer to productivity through the mediating power of human, financial, organisational, and relational resources.

2.5.5 Domain 4: Institutional Scaffolding

If beneficiary capability constitutes the engine of productive conversion, institutional scaffolding constitutes the structural environment within which that engine operates. This study defines institutional scaffolding as the structured and sustained provision of complementary inputs, capability formation mechanisms, and market linkages that enable the translation of land transfer into sustained productivity growth. Redistribution does not occur in an institutional vacuum. It unfolds within regulatory, financial, infrastructural, and administrative

systems that shape incentives, reduce or amplify transaction costs, and determine whether productive potential is realised.

The conceptual roots of institutional scaffolding lie within institutional economics and development theory. North (1990) demonstrates that institutions structure economic performance by reducing uncertainty and stabilising expectations. Dorward, Hazell, and Poulton (2009) similarly argue that agricultural productivity in developing economies depends on coordinated institutional arrangements that link input provision, finance, extension, and output markets. Empirical analyses of agrarian reform further confirm that land transfer alone does not generate sustained production unless embedded within coherent institutional systems (Scoones et al., 2019).

This study advances a critical appropriation of this literature. Institutional scaffolding is not treated as a supplementary support package added after land allocation. Rather, it is conceptualised as a constitutive condition of productive success. Where redistribution programmes treat extension, finance, and market integration as secondary or discretionary, they implicitly assume that land and capital are sufficient to induce production. The LRAD programme reflects this assumption. Post settlement support was frequently fragmented across departments, subject to budgetary volatility, and lacking a clear coordinating authority. This study therefore contends that the absence of coherent institutional scaffolding in LRAD was not a marginal oversight but a structural feature of its design logic.

Institutional scaffolding within this framework is analytically disaggregated into five interrelated functions: extension and technical support, credit and finance, infrastructure, value chain coordination, and intergovernmental coordination.

Extension and technical support encompass the provision of agronomic, veterinary, and managerial advice, as well as the transfer of appropriate technology. Effective extension services facilitate skill acquisition, problem solving, and adaptive management. Operational

indicators include the frequency of extension contact, the ratio of extension officers to farmers, and the quality and relevance of advice provided. Empirical research consistently links robust extension systems to productivity gains in smallholder agriculture (Dorward et al., 2009; Schultz, 1964). In their absence, knowledge gaps persist and production risks increase.

Credit and finance refer to access to production loans, working capital, and investment finance under conditions appropriate to agricultural cycles. Operational indicators include the availability of agricultural credit, interest rates, collateral requirements, and loan approval rates. Besley (1995) demonstrates that secure property rights can stimulate investment, but investment capacity also depends on accessible financial systems. Where collateral requirements are prohibitive or loan approval processes are opaque, beneficiaries remain liquidity constrained, suppressing productive potential.

Infrastructure includes irrigation systems, storage facilities, transport networks, and market infrastructure. These facilities reduce production costs, mitigate climatic risk, and enable participation in formal markets. Poor road quality increases transport costs and post-harvest losses. Inadequate storage undermines price timing strategies. Infrastructure deficits thus directly constrain profitability and scale. Development literature repeatedly identifies infrastructure as a binding constraint in agrarian transformation (Dorward et al., 2009).

Value chain coordination refers to reliable input supply, predictable off take arrangements, quality assurance systems, and price stabilisation mechanisms. Operational indicators include the existence of off take agreements, reliability of input delivery, levels of price volatility, and rates of post-harvest loss. Agricultural production is embedded within market chains. Without predictable buyers and input suppliers, beneficiaries face heightened uncertainty and elevated transaction costs. North (1990) emphasises that coordination failures within markets can suppress otherwise viable production.

Intergovernmental coordination concerns the alignment of mandates, resource flows, and accountability mechanisms across national, provincial, and local government spheres. Operational indicators include clarity of lead agency responsibility, timing of budget flows, existence of service delivery agreements, and effectiveness of monitoring systems. Fragmented governance structures create administrative delays, policy incoherence, and duplication of responsibilities. In land reform contexts, such fragmentation undermines continuity of support and weakens institutional credibility (Hall, 2015).

The causal role of institutional scaffolding within the integrated framework is decisive. It determines whether land endowment and beneficiary capability translate into sustained productivity. High quality land combined with capable beneficiaries may still yield suboptimal outcomes if extension services are irregular, credit inaccessible, or markets unstable. Conversely, strong institutional scaffolding can partially compensate for moderate land constraints by enhancing capability formation and reducing risk. Institutional coherence therefore interacts with and amplifies other domains within the framework.

This study posits that the fragmentation or absence of institutional scaffolding constitutes the most powerful structural explanation for LRAD's systematic underperformance. Productivity shortfalls are not random or solely attributable to individual beneficiary deficits. They reflect a misalignment between asset transfer and institutional environment. Where extension contact is sporadic, credit systems inaccessible, infrastructure deteriorating, and interdepartmental coordination weak, underperformance becomes structurally predictable.

Institutional scaffolding thus anchors the transition from distributive intervention to productive system. Redistribution without institutional coherence results in asset reallocation without structural transformation. Sustainable livelihood change requires that land transfer be embedded within an integrated institutional ecosystem capable of supporting capability formation, stabilising markets, and enabling long term investment. Within this study's

alignment framework, institutional scaffolding is not peripheral. It is constitutive. Its presence enables productivity growth. Its absence explains stagnation

2.5.6 Domain 5: Household Strategy

While land endowment establishes productive potential, beneficiary capability enables productive conversion, and institutional scaffolding structures the environment of production, the actual deployment of these elements occurs at the level of the household. Domain 5 therefore captures the behavioural interface within the Integrated Productivity Alignment Framework. It refers to the patterns of labour allocation, risk management, livelihood diversification, and production decision making through which beneficiaries operationalise land and capability in everyday practice. In agrarian contexts, households are not passive recipients of policy inputs; they are strategic actors who respond to incentives, constraints, and expectations in rational and patterned ways (Chayanov, 1966; Sen, 1962; Lipton, 2009).

Conceptually, household strategy is grounded in classical and contemporary agrarian political economy. Chayanov (1966) emphasised that peasant households organise production according to a balance between labour effort and consumption needs rather than profit maximisation alone. Sen (1962) demonstrated that small farms can achieve high land productivity through intensive labour deployment when factor endowments favour labour over capital. Lipton (2009) extended this analysis by showing that smallholder behaviour reflects rational responses to risk, market imperfections, and institutional environments. These theoretical foundations underscore that production decisions at the household level are structured by opportunity sets and constraint sets, rather than by abstract efficiency assumptions.

This study adopts a critical appropriation of the household strategy literature. It rejects both the romanticisation of smallholder behaviour and the pathologisation of subsistence-oriented production. Romantic accounts often portray low input, ecologically embedded

farming as inherently virtuous, overlooking questions of income growth and asset accumulation. Conversely, some policy narratives interpret limited commercialisation as evidence of inefficiency or lack of entrepreneurial spirit. Both positions are analytically insufficient. Household strategies are rational adaptations to structural conditions. Where market volatility is high, credit inaccessible, extension sporadic, and tenure uncertain, retreat into low input and low output subsistence production is not evidence of failure. It is a rational strategy to minimise exposure to risk and preserve household reproduction under uncertainty (Lipton, 2009).

Operationally, household strategy within this framework is disaggregated into five interrelated behavioural dimensions: labour allocation, risk management, technology adoption, market orientation, and indigenous knowledge deployment.

Labour allocation refers to the availability of household labour, reliance on hired labour, supervision capacity, and gender division of work. In labour abundant households, family labour can substitute for capital, increasing land productivity through intensive cultivation. However, labour deployment is shaped by competing livelihood activities, including off farm employment and social reproduction responsibilities. The allocation of labour therefore reflects strategic trade-offs between income generation, risk mitigation, and time constraints (Chayanov, 1966).

Risk management encompasses crop diversification, livelihood diversification, informal insurance mechanisms, and responses to climatic or market shocks. Diversification reduces exposure to single commodity price fluctuations or production failures. Households operating in high-risk environments often adopt conservative production portfolios to stabilise consumption, even if such strategies reduce potential surplus. Sen (1962) and Lipton (2009) demonstrate that risk avoidance behaviour is consistent with rational utility maximisation under uncertainty.

Technology adoption includes the use of improved seed varieties, fertiliser, irrigation, and mechanisation. Adoption decisions are influenced by perceived risk, liquidity constraints, and institutional support. Where extension advice is inconsistent or credit unavailable, beneficiaries may rationally avoid adopting yield enhancing technologies that increase exposure to financial loss. Schultz (1964) argues that farmers are efficient within the limits of their knowledge and resource constraints. Technology rejection in this context is therefore not irrational but precautionary.

Market orientation refers to the proportion of output marketed, the diversity of marketing channels, and responsiveness to price signals. High market participation may indicate confidence in institutional reliability and stable demand. Conversely, limited market engagement may reflect uncertainty regarding buyer reliability, transport costs, or price volatility. Market orientation thus signals the degree to which households perceive the institutional environment as supportive of commercial production.

Indigenous knowledge deployment encompasses local ecological knowledge, seed saving practices, soil management traditions, and adaptive farming techniques rooted in historical experience. Such knowledge systems often compensate for limited formal extension support and contribute to resilience under marginal conditions (Scoones et al., 2019). However, reliance on indigenous systems may also reflect constrained access to modern inputs rather than preference.

Within the Integrated Productivity Alignment Framework, household strategy performs a crucial causal function. It is the behavioural mechanism through which land endowment and beneficiary capability are activated or deactivated in practice. The same land quality and capability profile may yield divergent outcomes depending on labour allocation choices, risk tolerance, and market engagement strategies. Where institutional scaffolding is coherent and reliable, households are more likely to adopt productivity enhancing strategies and increase

market participation. Where scaffolding is fragmented and risk high, households rationally shift toward conservative, subsistence-oriented strategies.

This domain is particularly significant in interpreting LRAD outcomes. Observed patterns of partial commercialisation, mixed livelihood portfolios, or low input farming should not be interpreted as evidence of conceptual weakness at the household level. Rather, they reflect adaptive responses to structural misalignment among land endowment, capability formation, and institutional support. Household behaviour therefore becomes an empirical indicator of systemic conditions. When beneficiaries retreat into low-risk strategies, it signals deficiencies in surrounding institutional and financial ecosystems.

In this study's argument, household strategy completes the systemic chain linking redistribution to livelihood transformation. Redistribution provides access to land. Capability enables productive potential. Institutional scaffolding structures opportunity. Household strategy translates these conditions into observable production outcomes. Sustainable productivity emerges only when household incentives are aligned with supportive institutional environments. In the absence of such alignment, rational adaptation produces low input equilibria that constrain transformation. Domain 5 thus reinforces the central proposition of this chapter: productivity is an emergent property of systemic coherence rather than an automatic outcome of asset transfer.

2.5.7 Domain 6: Sustainable Productivity

Domain 6 represents the dependent variable of the Integrated Productivity Alignment Framework. It is the outcome that the preceding domains collectively seek to explain. However, within the logic of this study, sustainable productivity is not conceptualised as the simple aggregation of land endowment, tenure security, beneficiary capability, institutional scaffolding, and household strategy. It is understood as an emergent property of alignment

among these domains. Productivity is therefore systemic rather than additive. It arises from the coherence of interacting structures rather than from the presence of isolated inputs.

Conceptually, sustainable productivity refers to economic viability that is maintained over time while preserving ecological integrity and enabling social reproduction. It incorporates three interdependent dimensions. The first is economic performance, measured in terms of output, income, and profitability. The second is ecological stewardship, reflected in the maintenance or improvement of soil quality, water resources, and biodiversity. The third is social continuity, expressed through stable household livelihoods, intergenerational asset accumulation, and employment generation. Pretty (2008) argues that sustainable agriculture must integrate productivity with environmental management and social resilience. Tilman et al. (2011) similarly emphasise that long term agricultural performance depends upon balancing yield improvement with ecological sustainability. Within this framework, sustainability is not merely an environmental concept but an integrated socio-economic condition.

The framework distinguishes analytically among three related but distinct forms of productivity. Potential productivity refers to the maximum output that could be achieved under optimal management given the biophysical characteristics of land endowment. It reflects agro ecological capacity and spatial viability. Realised productivity refers to the actual output achieved under prevailing conditions of capability, institutional support, and household strategy. The gap between potential and realised productivity signals binding constraints. Sustainable productivity, by contrast, refers to realised productivity that can be maintained or improved over time without degrading the resource base or undermining household viability. It incorporates temporal continuity and resilience.

This distinction is analytically significant for evaluating land reform outcomes. A redistributed farm may achieve short term yield gains through intensive input use while degrading soil fertility, thereby compromising long term performance. Alternatively, a farm

may maintain low but stable output that preserves ecological conditions yet fails to generate sufficient income for livelihood transformation. Sustainable productivity requires a balance among output, profitability, environmental integrity, and household stability. It therefore captures transformation in both economic and structural terms.

Operationally, sustainable productivity is measured through a set of multidimensional indicators. Yield per hectare provides a primary measure of land use intensity and technical efficiency. Livestock productivity indicators such as calving rates, milk yield, and off take rates reflect herd management effectiveness and reproductive performance. Gross farm income and profitability, defined as revenue minus production costs, indicate economic viability. Asset accumulation over time signals capital formation and enterprise consolidation. Soil quality trends, including nutrient balance and erosion indicators, capture ecological sustainability. Contribution to household food security reflects social reproduction capacity. Employment generation indicates broader rural economic integration.

These indicators collectively provide a comprehensive assessment of performance. They move beyond narrow output measures to incorporate financial resilience, environmental stability, and social continuity. Sustainable productivity in this study is therefore treated as a composite construct rather than a single metric.

The causal logic underpinning Domain 6 is central to the argument of this chapter. Sustainable productivity does not result automatically from land transfer or grant capital allocation. Nor does it arise solely from capability or institutional support considered independently. It emerges when land endowment provides viable potential, tenure security incentivises long term investment, beneficiary capability enables effective resource mobilisation, institutional scaffolding reduces transaction costs and stabilises markets, and household strategy aligns production decisions with supportive structures. When these domains

reinforce one another, productivity becomes self-sustaining. When they are misaligned, performance deteriorates or stagnates.

This systemic interpretation aligns with ecological and institutional perspectives that emphasise interdependence and feedback effects within production systems (North, 1990; Pretty, 2008). It also supports the central proposition of this study that LRAD outcomes cannot be understood through single variable explanations. Underperformance is not merely a reflection of poor soils, insufficient grants, or individual capability deficits. It is the predictable consequence of misalignment across domains. Likewise, instances of relative success reflect localised coherence among enabling conditions.

By positioning sustainable productivity as an emergent outcome rather than a mechanical result, this study reframes the evaluation of redistribution. The dependent variable is not hectares transferred or beneficiaries settled. It is the capacity of redistributed enterprises to generate stable, profitable, and ecologically sound production over time. Domain 6 therefore anchors the empirical analysis that follows. It provides the benchmark against which the explanatory power of the integrated framework is assessed.

In summary, sustainable productivity represents the culmination of the redistribution process when conceptual architecture, institutional coherence, and behavioural adaptation converge. It is the measure of whether redistribution has achieved structural transformation rather than symbolic transfer. The remainder of this chapter and the empirical analysis that follows examine how alignment or misalignment among the preceding domains shapes this dependent outcome.

2.5.8 Causal Pathways: Interaction Effects

The Integrated Productivity Alignment Framework advanced in this study rejects linear causality. Productivity outcomes are not determined by the additive presence of discrete

variables such as land size, grant capital, or training exposure. Rather, they are shaped by interaction effects among domains. The explanatory logic is systemic. Each domain conditions and moderates the effects of the others. Sustainable productivity emerges from coherence among land endowment, tenure security, beneficiary capability, institutional scaffolding, and household strategy. Misalignment generates predictable constraints.

This interactional approach draws on institutional economics and systems theory, both of which emphasise interdependence and feedback loops rather than isolated causality (North, 1990). Development economics further demonstrates that productive transformation depends upon complementary investments rather than singular interventions (Dorward, Hazell, & Poulton, 2009). In agrarian contexts, land, labour, capital, knowledge, and institutions function as co determinants rather than substitutes (Lipton, 2009). The following causal pathways articulate how this interaction effects operate within the LRAD context.

2.5.8.1 Land and Capability Interaction

The first pathway concerns the interaction between land endowment and beneficiary capability. Ricardian theory establishes that land differs in fertility, location, and agro ecological potential, thereby setting an upper bound on productivity (Ricardo, 1817). However, the realisation of this potential depends upon the capacity to manage land effectively. High potential land combined with high beneficiary capability is predicted to yield productivity levels exceeding what either factor could achieve independently. Skilled management enhances input efficiency, reduces loss, and optimises timing of operations.

Where land potential is moderate or constrained, high capability may partially compensate through improved management, diversification, and adaptive techniques. Conversely, high potential land allocated to beneficiaries lacking technical and organisational

competence results in unrealised potential. Under such conditions, differential rent is effectively forgone because the mediating capability is absent. This interaction explains why similar agro-ecological zones may exhibit divergent productivity outcomes under LRAD.

2.5.8.2 Capability and Institutional Scaffolding Interaction

The second pathway addresses the interaction between beneficiary capability and institutional scaffolding. Capability in isolation does not guarantee performance. Even highly competent beneficiaries require functioning credit systems, extension services, and market access to convert skills into output (Dorward et al., 2009). When strong institutional scaffolding coincides with high capability, productive potential is activated and amplified. Capable farmers can leverage credit, integrate into value chains, and adopt technology more effectively.

Where capability is high but institutional scaffolding is weak or fragmented, that capability becomes underutilised. Skilled farmers may lack access to working capital, face unreliable buyers, or encounter logistical barriers that suppress output. In contrast, low capability combined with strong institutional scaffolding creates conditions for capability formation over time. Structured mentorship, reliable extension, and coordinated support can enable skill accumulation and managerial competence. However, when both capability and institutional support are weak, deficits compound. Under such circumstances, stagnation or decline is structurally predictable.

2.5.8.3 Tenure Security and Investment Interaction

The third pathway focuses on the interaction between tenure security and institutional scaffolding in shaping investment behaviour. Property rights literature demonstrates that secure tenure increases incentives for long term investment (Besley, 1995). However, tenure security

alone does not generate capital formation. Investment requires complementary institutional conditions such as accessible finance, infrastructure, and technical guidance.

Secure tenure combined with strong institutional scaffolding incentivises durable investment in irrigation, soil conservation, and fixed assets. The expectation of stable rights, coupled with accessible credit and extension support, encourages forward planning. Secure tenure combined with weak institutional scaffolding constrains investment because beneficiaries lack the financial and technical means to operationalise long term strategies. Conversely, insecure tenure suppresses investment even when institutional support is available. Uncertainty regarding rights reduces willingness to commit resources to land improvement. This interaction highlights the interdependence between legal security and economic infrastructure.

2.5.8.4 Household Strategy and Institutional Environment Interaction

The fourth pathway concerns the interaction between household strategy and the institutional environment. Household decision making reflects rational responses to opportunity structures and constraints (Chayanov, 1966; Sen, 1962). When productive strategies such as commercial cropping, technology adoption, and labour intensification coincide with an enabling institutional environment, these strategies are reinforced and expanded. Reliable markets and accessible finance encourage further investment.

Where productive strategies are pursued within disabling environments characterised by credit scarcity, volatile prices, or administrative delays, such strategies may be abandoned due to elevated risk. Subsistence oriented strategies may gradually transition toward commercialisation when institutional conditions improve and risk is reduced. Conversely, subsistence strategies within disabling environments tend to become entrenched, producing

low productivity equilibria. This pathway demonstrates that behaviour is shaped by institutional signals rather than inherent predispositions.

2.5.8.5 Systemic Alignment

The final pathway synthesises the preceding interactions into a systemic proposition. Sustainable productivity is achieved when all domains are aligned and mutually reinforcing. Land endowment provides viable potential. Tenure security supports investment. Capability enables effective management. Institutional scaffolding reduces transaction costs and stabilises markets. Household strategies respond positively to these enabling conditions. Under such alignment, productivity becomes self-reinforcing and resilient over time (Pretty, 2008).

When any single domain is misaligned, productivity is constrained. For example, strong capability without market access limits scale. Secure tenure without finance restricts investment. High quality land without skills remains underutilised. When multiple domains are misaligned simultaneously, systemic failure occurs. Productivity may collapse toward subsistence levels regardless of isolated strengths. This interactional model explains the patterned underperformance observed within LRAD projects. It demonstrates that failure is not accidental but structurally produced by incoherence among enabling conditions.

In sum, the causal pathways articulated above reinforce the central DBA proposition of this study. Redistribution outcomes cannot be explained through single factor analysis. They are the product of interacting domains whose alignment or misalignment determines the trajectory of productivity. The empirical chapters that follow examine these interaction effects within the Eastern Cape, testing whether observed patterns of LRAD performance correspond to the systemic logic advanced here.

2.5.9 Foundational Assumptions of the Conceptual Model

Assumption 1: Land Possesses Differential Agro-ecological and Spatial Potential (Ricardian Assumption)

Land redistributed through LRAD and PLAS is heterogeneous in intrinsic productive potential: soil fertility, rainfall, water availability, topography, climate, market proximity.

Suppositions flowing from the assumption:

- **Matching:** If biophysical and spatial attributes are accurately assessed and matched with suitable enterprise models, likelihood of sustained productivity increases significantly.
- **Mismatch:** If land quality is misclassified, ignored, or mismatched with beneficiary skills, productive potential is undermined from the outset (Lahiff, 2008).

Assumption 2: Beneficiaries Possess, or Can Acquire, VRIN Capabilities Necessary for Productivity (RBV Assumption)

Agricultural productivity depends on beneficiaries' ability to mobilise complementary VRIN resources: farming skills, financial literacy, capital, mechanisation access, social capital.

Suppositions flowing from the assumption:

- **Capability Development:** A coherent, effective capability-enhancement ecosystem (training, mentoring, cooperative support, value-chain integration) is a necessary condition for beneficiaries to develop VRIN capabilities.
- **Capability Deficit:** If beneficiaries lack critical VRIN capabilities and the institutional ecosystem for developing them is fragmented or dysfunctional, productivity stagnates even on high-potential land (Kepe & Hall, 2018).

Assumption 3: Small-Scale Behaviour and Household Strategies Align with Productivity-Oriented Land Use (Small-Scale Productivity Assumption)

Beneficiaries will utilise land in ways consistent with productivity-enhancing, rational household production strategies.

Suppositions flowing from the assumption:

- **Responsive Behaviour:** Beneficiary households behave in economically rational and environmentally adaptive ways given sufficient support, market access, technology, and secure tenure.
- **Subsistence Tipping Point:** In the face of high liquidity constraints, market volatility, or inadequate extension services, beneficiaries shift to subsistence production, limiting commercial viability (Dercon, 2002).

Assumption 4: Institutions Provide Coherent, Predictable, and Sufficient Support for Post-Settlement Production (Institutional Assumption)

Land reform occurs within an enabling, predictable, well-coordinated institutional framework (DALRRD, local government, extension services).

Suppositions flowing from the assumption:

- **Institutional Enabler:** Where institutions function cohesively to reduce transaction costs, ensure tenure security, provide timely grants and credit, and deliver effective extension, they scaffold capable beneficiaries to realise productive potential.
- **Institutional Constraint:** If institutional support is characterised by fragmentation, unpredictability, bureaucratic delay, and poor coordination, these weaknesses become the primary binding constraint (Hall et al., 2015).

Synthesis: The model's predictive power and operational viability are contingent on the **simultaneous alignment** of all four domains. Failure of any supposition weakens the entire model.

2.5.10 Research Questions: From Theoretical Framework to Empirical Investigation

2.5.10.1 Introduction: The Necessity of Empirical Specification

The integrated theoretical framework developed in this chapter establishes that sustainable land productivity is not the additive outcome of discrete factors but an emergent property of alignment across four analytically distinct domains: land endowment, beneficiary capability, household strategy, and institutional scaffolding. However, as Shiba et al. (2025) observe in their comprehensive review of three decades of land reform scholarship, that the existing literature on South African land reform reveals significant gaps. Theoretically, most studies adopt a descriptive approach, focusing on policy intent or isolated program components, without integrating frameworks that link land reform outcomes to broader socio-economic transformation. This study addresses precisely this gap by translating theoretical integration into empirically testable propositions.

The necessity of such empirical specification is underscored by the scholarly consensus that land reform evaluation has been hampered by methodological fragmentation. Bailey (2007), in one of the earliest qualitative assessments of LRAD, noted that the current programme-specific information has been unreliable in providing insight into the impact of land reform projects that have been implemented, leading to policy debates conducted without comprehensive monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Two decades later, Shiba et al. (2025) confirm that the many evaluations emphasize administrative indicators such as claims settled, neglecting outcome quality, gender equity, and tenure security. This study's

research questions are deliberately constructed to move beyond administrative metrics toward the structural determinants of differentiated outcomes.

The research questions that follow evolve from those preliminary research questions presented in Chapter 1 (Section 1.4) which represent the initial scoping questions that guided the literature review. Following the development of the integrated theoretical framework in this chapter (Chapter 2), research questions have now been refined into the five final research questions to operationalise each theoretical dimension, translating abstract concepts into observable phenomena and testable propositions. Collectively, they move the analysis from diagnosis of individual factors to examination of the systemic interactions that produce the systematically differentiated LRAD outcomes documented across the Eastern Cape's heterogeneous agro-ecological and institutional landscapes.

2.5.10.2 The Ricardian Foundation – Land Endowment and Tenure Security as Baseline Conditions

RQ1: In what way do differences in land endowment and tenure security shape the baseline conditions for productive potential on all LRAD farms in the EC?

This first research question operationalizes the Ricardian aspect of the framework by recognizing the heterogeneity of land and the fact that the biophysical and spatial attributes of land impose hard limits on what is productively possible. The research question does not fall into the Ricardian fallacy of assuming that good land will be productively utilized. Rather, it does not assume that land matters. Land does matter however and the question needed to be asked is what the variation in land quality and tenure arrangements on LRAD farms reveal about the baseline conditions in which all other determinants operate.

The importance of land quality as a determinant of reform outcomes is a matter of some scholarly debate. The evidence suggests that tenure security may be a more important factor than scale or land quality. Gidi (2023) found that in a sample of smallholder farms in the EC: “Fully owned small-sized farms achieved higher agricultural production than rented large-sized farms.” The author concludes: “Full land ownership impacts agricultural productivity more than rented land.” This suggests that tenure security may be more important than land size or quality. However, a review of three decades of land redistribution in South Africa by Frontiers (2023), suggests that bureaucratic delays and elite capture have been persistent problems. The review also suggests that even when land is redistributed, productivity outcomes are uneven.

An evaluation of the empirical focus reveals two dimensions. First, it will evaluate the extent of the distribution of the quality of the land held by the LRAD farm sample, as measured through soil quality classification, the presence or absence of water resources, agro-ecological zones, proximity to markets and roads, and prior land use. This will evaluate the extent to which LRAD beneficiaries have been endowed with land of actual or potential productivity as opposed to land classified as of ‘low potential’ due to prior disinvestment rather than actual capacity, distinguished by Hebinck et al (2011) as the necessary starting point for the spatial logic of the legacy of the apartheid regime. Second, it will evaluate the tenure conditions on the farms, as measured through the type of tenure, the length of time over which the tenure is held, security of tenure, and the acceptability of the land as collateral. This will evaluate the extent to which the incentives for LRAD beneficiaries to invest or disinvest on the land will be positive or negative, such as the extent to which the security of freehold tenure will incentivize long-term investment or the extent to which insecure leasehold or permit tenure will engender disinvestment. Gidi’s (2023) finding that

17% of the surveyed farmers “did not utilise the land they own because of a lack of funds, water availability and farming equipment” thus reinforces the point that even held land requires complementary endowments, thereby linking RQ1 directly to the subsequent questions.

The present study contributes to this body of scholarship by refusing to assume that land quality and tenure are either determinative or irrelevant. It assumes instead that good land endowment and tenure create necessary, though insufficient, conditions for productivity: they define an upper bound, though this bound is rarely reached. The real question is not whether land and tenure matter, but why, even across farms with similar endowments and tenure, productivity outcomes are so different. This is the question to which the other research questions are addressed.

2.5.10.3 The RBV Contribution – Capability as the Mechanism of Productive Conversion

RQ2: How do inter-beneficiary variations in VRIN capabilities explain differential land-use outcomes on farms with comparable land endowments?

The second research question operationalises the Resource-Based View dimension of the framework, recognising that land alone is inert and that productivity requires VRIN-calibre capabilities to transform potential into realised output. Where RQ1 establishes the baseline conditions within which production occurs, RQ2 asks what beneficiaries bring to those conditions—the skills, knowledge, capital, networks, and organisational capacity that determine whether land's potential is activated or remains dormant.

The scholarly debate. The capability question has generated substantial debate in the land reform literature. Critics of market-based approaches, such as those examined in the

Limpopo LRAD study, argue that "market-assisted versus administratively managed models yielded markedly different outcomes in speed, cost, and socio-economic impact," with grant-based and co-payment approaches "frequently underestimating structural inequalities and the necessity of robust post-transfer support". The implication is that capability deficits are not individual failures but systemic outcomes of inadequate institutional investment.

Conversely, quasi-experimental studies have found positive impacts of LRAD participation. A rigorous evaluation using non-parametric matching techniques estimated treatment effects of the program that peak at approximately 275 Rand per capita monthly consumption," translating to "a discounted gain in monthly per capita consumption of about 50% after three years of exposure to the program. This suggests that, under certain conditions, land transfer combined with grant support can generate significant livelihood improvements. The question is what explains the variation, why some beneficiaries achieve such gains while others fail.

The empirical focus is on the capability profiles of LRAD beneficiaries, operationalised through human capital (formal qualifications, farming experience, training participation), physical capital (access to mechanisation, irrigation, storage), financial capital (credit access, loan history, working capital), social capital (cooperative membership, mentorship relationships, supplier and buyer networks), and organisational capital (business registration, record-keeping, labour management). By measuring these capabilities *ex ante*—before examining outcomes—the study escapes the tautology that has plagued some RBV applications, where capability is inferred from success and then used to explain it.

The analytical strategy exploits variation in land endowment. By comparing beneficiaries on farms with comparable land quality and tenure security, the study isolates the effect of capability differentials on productivity outcomes. The framework predicts that

capability matters—but its effects are conditional on the institutional environment within which it is deployed.

The current study's thrust. This study's distinctive contribution lies in its insistence that capability analysis must be embedded within an understanding of the institutional conditions that produce—or fail to produce—capability in the first place. The question is not simply which beneficiaries are capable, but why the state has failed to build capability at scale, particularly among the poorest aspirant farmers.

2.5.10.4 The Institutional Scaffolding Dimension – Enabling Conditions for Productive Conversion

RQ3: How do institutional scaffolding deficits—in extension, credit, infrastructure, and value-chain integration—constrain or enable the translation of land and capability into sustained productivity?

The third research question operationalises the institutional scaffolding dimension of the framework, recognising that neither land endowment nor beneficiary capability is sufficient in the absence of coherent, adequately resourced institutional support. Post-settlement support is not an optional supplement to land reform; it is a constitutive condition of its success.

The centrality of institutional support is one of the most consistent findings in the land reform literature. The comprehensive review by Shiba et al. (2025) concludes that weak institutional capacity, poor coordination, and inadequate post-settlement support further constrain progress across all three pillars of land reform. The Frontiers (2023) review similarly identifies under-resourced post-settlement support as a persistent challenge,

alongside institutional capacity gaps that continue to limit the transformative potential of land reform.

The Eastern Cape context exemplifies these deficits. Research on massive maize production schemes in the former homelands found that despite ambitious state interventions, costs are high, and very little surplus is available for redistribution to the beneficiaries, with the corporate food regime constraining accumulation from below. Even where production occurs, weak value-chain integration prevents translation of output into sustainable income.

The empirical focus is on the availability, adequacy, and coherence of post-settlement support across LRAD projects, operationalised through extension and technical support like frequency of contact, officer-to-farmer ratios, quality of advice; credit and finance like availability of agricultural credit, interest rates, collateral requirements, loan approval rates; infrastructure like irrigation availability, storage facilities, road quality, market infrastructure; value-chain coordination like off-take agreements, input supply reliability, price stability; and intergovernmental coordination like clarity of lead agent, budget flow timing, service delivery agreements.

The question asks how variation in these institutional scaffolding components affects the translation of land and capability into sustained productivity. The framework predicts that institutional deficits are not randomly distributed but systematically patterned, reflecting the spatial logic of apartheid investment and post-apartheid abandonment—a pattern documented in the Eastern Cape by Hebinck and colleagues.

This study's contribution is to demonstrate that institutional scaffolding is not merely a list of support services to be added to existing programmes, but a constitutive condition whose absence renders land transfer constitutionally deficient. The state cannot claim to have

discharged its Section 25(5) obligation to foster enabling conditions when institutional scaffolding is absent, fragmented, or corrupt.

2.5.10.5 The Small-Scale Productivity Dimension – Household Strategy as Behavioural Interface

RQ4: How do household-level labour allocation, risk management, and indigenous knowledge strategies mediate the relationship between land access and realised productivity?

The fourth research question operationalises the small-scale productivity dimension of the framework, recognising that the same land endowment and capability set can produce vastly different outcomes depending on how households allocate labour, manage risk, and deploy indigenous knowledge. Where the preceding questions examine structural conditions, land, capability, institutions, and this question examines agency: the strategic choices households make within the opportunity structures those conditions define.

The smallholder productivity literature has long debated the relative efficiency of small-scale farming. The inverse farm-size–productivity relationship, first documented by Sen (1962) and elaborated by Berry and Cline (1979), suggests that small farms can achieve higher output per hectare through intensive labour application. However, as Hebinck and colleagues (2011) demonstrate in the Eastern Cape context, this relationship is conditional on institutional support. Where such support is absent, smallholders may be locked into low-productivity subsistence equilibria.

Critically, emerging evidence challenges the narrative of complete failure. A study of land use in the Eastern Cape found that "analysis of crop and livestock production data suggests that although land may not be used to full capacity in many of the households, the

majority of them are using the land they have to produce different crops and livestock products for home consumption and sale". This finding is contrary to media reports that there is no production taking place on the overwhelming majority of land reform projects and in communal areas of former homelands. Moreover, "land reform beneficiary households on an average produce more crops and livestock than the non-beneficiary households", suggesting that redistribution does generate productive gains, even if below potential.

The empirical focus is on household strategies as they adapt to varying land, capability, and institutional conditions, operationalised through labour allocation, that is household labour availability, reliance on hired labour, supervision capacity, gender division of farm work; risk management, like crop diversification, livelihood diversification, insurance mechanisms, and response to shocks; technology adoption like use of improved seed, fertiliser, irrigation, mechanisation; market orientation like proportion of output marketed, marketing channels, price responsiveness; and indigenous knowledge like application of local ecological knowledge, seed saving, and soil management practices.

Crucially, this question does not treat household strategies as fixed attributes of beneficiaries but as adaptive responses to the environments they inhabit. A household that pursues intensive commercial production on high-potential land with strong institutional support is making different strategic choices than a household that retreats into low-input subsistence on marginal land with no support. Both are rational adaptations to the incentive structures they face.

This study's distinctive contribution lies in its rejection of both romanticisation and pathologisation of smallholder behaviour. It insists that observed land-use patterns are rational adaptations to constraint sets, and that improving institutional scaffolding can shift household strategies toward more productive configurations. The question is not whether

beneficiaries are behaving rationally, but whether the institutional environment rewards productive risk-taking or punishes it.

2.5.10.6 The Systemic Alignment Dimension – Interaction Effects and Differentiated Outcomes

RQ5: How do the interactions among these dimensions—their alignment or misalignment—produce the systematically differentiated LRAD outcomes observed across the Eastern Cape's heterogeneous agro-ecological and institutional landscapes?

The fifth research question operationalizes this framework's central theoretical proposition that productivity is produced by systemic alignment in all four domains rather than by additive effects of individual domains. RQ1 to RQ4 examine individual domains and their direct effects, whereas RQ5 examines interactions between domains: how they combine, complement, or counteract one another to produce the systematically differentiated effects that we have identified in the EC.

The literature increasingly acknowledges the importance of interaction effects, including in cases where this is not necessarily theorized in such terms. A review in *Frontiers* (2023) identifies islands of success in which participatory governance, beneficiary selection, post-settlement coordination, and digital land information systems have been shown to increase productivity. Success is non-random: it is found in places with multiple enabling conditions. By contrast, failure is concentrated in places with multiple disabling conditions: land that is marginal in terms of quality, beneficiaries who lack capacity, institutional absence, and rational household disengagement.

The constitutional dimension of land policy in South Africa adds an additional layer of urgency to this debate. Shiba et al. (2025) assert that the most fundamental policy priority is establishing a unified national framework that guarantees secure land tenure through the

issuance of title deeds, complemented by integrated post-settlement support and transparent beneficiary selection.

The empirical focus will be on the interaction effects, or the way the effect of any particular domain varies as a function of the state of the other domains. The framework proposes five different pathways for the investigation:

- The land-capability interaction will investigate the extent to which the combination of high-potential land and high capability generates productivity levels higher than the sum of the predictions of the individual factors, and the extent to which the combination of high-potential land and low capability generates Ricardian rents that go unrealized—a finding consistent with the RBV’s critique of the LRAD’s flawed design.
- The capability-institution interaction will investigate the extent to which capability is mobilized and amplified when institutional scaffolding is present, and the extent to which capability is drained when institutional scaffolding is weak—a finding consistent with the post-settlement support proposition of the capability approach.
- The tenure-investment interaction will investigate the extent to which tenure security and institutional scaffolding stimulate long-run investments, and the extent to which tenure insecurity depresses investments even when institutional scaffolding is present—a finding directly relevant to the present-day leasehold-based redistribution model.
- The strategy-institution interaction will investigate the extent to which strategies for productivity can be sustained when the institutional environment supports them, and the extent to which the institutional environment forces the abandonment of such strategies—a finding illustrating the behaviourist side of the institutional failure proposition.
- The systemic alignment pathway will directly test the core proposition: the extent to which the alignment of all the domains generates sustainable productivity, and the extent to which

the misalignment of multiple domains generates systemic failure, such that productivity collapses to subsistence levels regardless of the performance of the other domains.

The basic assumption of the current study is that the failure of the LRAD process in the EC is not caused by the absence of any one condition, but by the disjuncture between the conditions as a whole: land allocation is undertaken without reference to potential, capable beneficiaries are not sufficiently assisted, the institutional landscape is fragmented and inadequately resourced, and households are behaving rationally in withdrawing into low-risk, low-return subsistence strategies as a direct result of the overall misalignment of the system.

By focusing on interactions rather than individual variables, RQ5 offers an empirical test of this assertion. If the framework is valid, field patterns will correspond to the framework's predictions: alignment will lead to success, misalignment will lead to failure, and partial alignment will lead to intermediate outcomes. This is not a prediction that success requires perfect conditions; it is a prediction that the structure of outcomes corresponds to the structure of alignment.

2.5.10.7 Conclusion: From Research Questions to Empirical Investigation

These five research questions are not sequential hypotheses to be tested in isolation. They are analytically distinct dimensions of a unified empirical investigation into the structural determinants of differentiated LRAD outcomes. Each question operationalises a specific theoretical tradition within the integrated framework; together, they constitute a comprehensive research design capable of examining both the individual contributions of each domain and the systemic interactions among them.

Where existing scholarship has remained compartmentalised, Ricardian analyses focusing on land, RBV studies on capability, smallholder research on household behaviour, institutional analyses on post-settlement support, this study insists that these are not

alternatives but complements. Each explains one dimension of the productivity question; each is silent on others. Their integration into a unified analytical framework, and their operationalisation through the five research questions specified above, constitutes the study's original contribution.

The empirical investigation proceeds through comparative case analysis across LRAD farms in the Eastern Cape, selected to capture variation across all four domains. Farms with different land endowments, different beneficiary capability profiles, different institutional environments, and different household strategies are compared to isolate the effects of each domain and their interactions. Qualitative and quantitative methods are combined: structured surveys to measure capability and strategy indicators, semi-structured interviews to understand household decision-making and institutional engagement, document analysis to assess institutional scaffolding, and productivity data to measure outcomes.

The guiding proposition is that LRAD outcomes are not random but systematically patterned by the alignment or misalignment of land endowment, beneficiary capability, household strategy, and institutional scaffolding. Farms where these domains align should achieve sustainable productivity; farms where they misalign should fail. The programme's design, which assumed that land transfer alone was sufficient, precluded alignment from the start. The empirical investigation tests this proposition, examining whether the patterns predicted by the framework correspond to the patterns observed in the field.

If the framework is correct, the implications are profound. LRAD's failure is not a series of discrete implementation problems remediable through better management or more resources. It is a systemic failure rooted in a fundamentally inadequate theoretical conception of what land redistribution requires. The research questions derived from the integrated

framework provide the analytical tools to demonstrate this—and, critically, to specify what a constitutionally adequate approach to land reform would require.

2.6 Comparative and International Evidence

2.6.1 Zimbabwe's Fast Track Land Reform Programme

Zimbabwe's contemporary agrarian question cannot be understood without acknowledging the deeply inequitable foundation upon which post-independence land policy was constructed. At independence in 1980, the country inherited one of the most racially biased land ownership structures in sub-Saharan Africa, a direct legacy of colonial expropriation that had systematically dispossessed the indigenous population. This colonial project established a dualistic agrarian landscape in which a small white minority—approximately 6,000 commercial farmers—controlled 15.5 million hectares of the most productive arable land, while over one million black Zimbabweans were confined to 16.4 million hectares of overcrowded, ecologically marginal reserves characterised by poor soils, erratic rainfall, and limited agricultural potential (Moyo & Yeros, 2005; Chigumira, 2013; Moyo, 2005). This extractive system remained substantially unchanged throughout the first two decades of independence, as neoliberal land reform policies based on willing-buyer-willing-seller principles proved incapable of addressing historic grievances, while an export-oriented structural adjustment programme precipitated widespread economic decline and intensified land hunger among a growing rural and unemployed urban population (Moyo, 2005).

It was against this backdrop of accumulated frustration that the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) emerged in the early 2000s as a radical, coercive intervention designed to fundamentally restructure agrarian property relations. The programme entailed the expropriation of approximately 8 million hectares of formerly large-scale commercial farmland, which was transferred through a process of land occupations and state-directed

seizures, often conducted without compensation to displaced white farmers and without the provision of secure, long-term tenure rights to beneficiaries (Makate et al., 2019; Scoones, 2019; Msika, 2025). The scale of redistribution was unprecedented: whereas only 40,000 families had been resettled in the two decades prior to 1999, the FTLRP resettled over 300,000 households in its first decade alone, with some estimates indicating that approximately 163,775 to 175,000 newly resettled farmers had received land by the programme's initial phase (Scoones et al., 2019; South-South World, 2019; Scoones, 2019). This represented a fundamental shift in property rights and, as scholars such as Mamdani (2008) and Moyo (2011) have argued, marked Zimbabwe's belated moment of decolonisation, achieving a measure of social justice and black economic empowerment that political independence alone had failed to deliver (Chigumira, 2013).

Yet the FTLRP's legacy remains deeply contested and its outcomes profoundly uneven. While the redistribution resolved the overarching racial inequity in land ownership, it simultaneously generated what Moyo (2005) terms "a second generation of inequities"—new forms of differentiation, conflict, and institutional fragmentation that continue to shape agrarian livelihoods. The programme's coercive character and the state's subsequent withdrawal from the SADC Tribunal in response to adverse judgments concerning displaced white farmers exemplify the contentious legal and political terrain upon which Zimbabwe's agrarian reconstruction has proceeded (Msika, 2025). Moreover, the absence of secure tenure, the fragmentation of implementing institutions, and the withdrawal of post-settlement support have left many beneficiaries navigating a precarious landscape in which land ownership alone proves insufficient to guarantee productive outcomes. It is to these institutional and productive dimensions that this analysis now turns.

Table 2.10
Contested Interpretations

Perspective	Assessment	Source
Institutionalist critique	Chaotic seizures destroyed agricultural productivity, undermined value chains, displaced skilled farmers, and transformed a food exporter into a net importer.	Sachikonye, 2005; Roman, 2011
Decolonial/radical view	FTLRP fundamentally broke with neo-colonial agrarian power structures. Smallholders gained land access, agency, and new forms of capital accumulation. Short-term productivity declines are less significant than structural transformation.	Moyo & Chambati, 2013; Scoones et al., 2019

Source: Author

Evidence of Gains:

- Resettled households achieved significant improvements in food security compared to their prior situation in overcrowded communal areas (Mkhwanazi, 2019; Moyo & Chambati, 2013)
- Beneficiaries gained access to arable land, autonomy in production decisions, and reduced dependence on food purchases
- New agrarian classes emerged among previously marginalised smallholders

Evidence of Losses:

- National agricultural output collapsed; Zimbabwe became a net food importer requiring emergency food aid by 2002 (FAO, 2001; CFU, 2002)
- Approximately 250,000 head of cattle (20% of national herd) were forcibly destocked; 1.6 million hectares of grazing land damaged (CFU, 2002)
- Commercial maize area declined from 150,000 to 45,000 hectares
- Export revenue losses estimated at US\$20 billion; post-Mugabe government entered compensation agreements valued at US\$11 billion (Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Ruhanya, 2020)

- Land became "worthless" as collateral due to absence of transferable title deeds and politicised allocation, freezing formal credit to agriculture (Zunga, 2013; Mkodzongi & Lawrence, 2019)

Table 2.11*Zimbabwe's Resettlement Models*

Model	Description	Allocation Logic
A1 Villagised	Small arable plots + shared grazing; village layout resembling communal areas	Low-income families with limited resources
A1 Self-Contained	Larger plots for agriculture and grazing on single holding	Households with moderate resources; semi-commercial production
A2 Commercial	Small, medium, large farms; peri-urban plots	Capitalised Black farmers; commercial production

Source: Author

Critically, Zimbabwe's allocation was determined by agro-ecological potential and intended land use, not by beneficiaries' cash contribution. This contrasts sharply with LRAD's grant-based, contribution-determined model.

Key Lesson for South Africa: Moving beneficiaries from ecologically degraded communal areas to more fertile, well-watered agricultural zones significantly improve household welfare and productivity. However, this requires secure tenure systems Zimbabwe's failure to provide transferable rights creates new forms of land inequality and limits long-term investment.

2.6.2 Venezuela: Expropriation without Scaffolding

Venezuela's land reform under President Chávez provides a cautionary parallel. The 1999 Constitution declared *latifundios* (large, underutilised estates) "against the interests of society"; the 2001 Land and Agrarian Development Law empowered government to expropriate and redistribute land to the poor (Cameron, 2018).

Outcomes:

- Land allocations systematically favoured politically connected loyalists, military allies, and government officials' families
- Beneficiaries lacked farming skills, technical training, post-settlement support, and governance protections
- Productivity collapsed; farms were abandoned
- Food insecurity mounted; agricultural imports surged
- Severe economic recession coincided with agricultural sector collapse (Hausmann et al., 2021)

Lesson: Expropriation without technical training, post-settlement support, monitoring systems, and transparent allocation mechanisms produces the opposite of intended outcomes. Land reform exacerbates rather than ameliorates food insecurity and rural poverty.

2.6.3 Nigeria's Integrated Agricultural Model

Nigeria's **Integrated Agricultural Model (IAM)** embeds agriculture within a coordinated, multi-sectoral development strategy (Sertoglu, Ugural, & Bekun, 2017).

Key Features:

- Simultaneous investment in extension, rural electrification, primary health care, nutrition support, cooperative development, and agro processing
- Resources allocated across multiple access barriers (physical infrastructure, institutions, markets, socio-economic vulnerabilities)
- Synergistic effects: rural electrification enables cold-chain storage; cold-chain storage enables agro-processing; agro-processing creates market demand

Lesson: Agricultural transformation cannot occur in isolation. It requires a **systems approach** that integrates land, capabilities, institutions, and markets. The IAM demonstrates how coordinated, cross-sectoral investment can enable land to become an engine of lasting economic benefit.

2.7 Expropriation Without Compensation Debate

2.7.1 Constitutional and Legal Dimensions

The distinction between expropriation without compensation and the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development programme is frequently blurred in public discourse, yet analytically they occupy distinct, though interdependent, positions within South Africa's land reform architecture. LRAD functions as a redistributive mechanism concerned with the transfer of land to designated beneficiaries and the provision of post settlement support intended to enable productive utilisation. Its orientation is developmental and managerial. It seeks not only to alter ownership patterns but also to facilitate the establishment of viable agricultural enterprises capable of contributing to livelihood improvement, food security, and rural economic participation. Expropriation without compensation, by contrast, is primarily an acquisition instrument. It addresses the structural constraints associated with market-based transfer models, particularly the willing buyer willing seller approach that has historically constrained the pace and fiscal sustainability of redistribution (Sihlobo & Kapuya, 2018; Xaba, 2021). Where LRAD engages the question of post transfer productivity, expropriation engages the antecedent question of how land is transferred when voluntary market transactions prove inadequate. Conflating these two instruments obscures their complementary but distinct functions and generates conceptual confusion regarding the purpose and limits of expropriation within a constitutional democracy.

The sovereign right of states to expropriate property for public benefit is well established in international law. Kwarteng and Botchway (2019) observe that expropriation is recognised in customary international law and in bilateral investment treaties as a lawful exercise of state authority, provided it be undertaken for public purpose and in accordance with due process. However, they emphasise that sovereign authority is not unbounded and must operate within procedural and compensatory constraints. International investment jurisprudence generally identifies four conditions for lawful expropriation: public purpose, non-discrimination, due process, and compensation. The European Court of Human Rights has consistently held that compensation forms an integral component of proportionality in property deprivation cases, and that the absence of compensation may be justified only under exceptional circumstances within a legitimate public interest framework. South Africa's Constitutional Court has similarly recognised that there may be circumstances in which deprivation without compensation is consistent with justice and equity under Section 25 of the Constitution, provided that the broader public interest is served and the deprivation satisfies constitutional proportionality standards. The legal position therefore affirms the permissibility of expropriation while simultaneously embedding it within rule of law constraints.

The South African parliamentary process has grappled directly with the tension between redistributive urgency and constitutional fidelity. In 2018, Parliament initiated a review of Section 25 to clarify the circumstances under which expropriation without compensation could occur (Xaba, 2021). The deliberations were framed within broader developmental objectives. The governing party emphasised that any reform of property relations must safeguard food security, agricultural productivity, macroeconomic stability, and investor confidence (Sihlobo & Kapuya, 2018). Redistribution was thus articulated not as an isolated political intervention but as part of a broader economic strategy. The Constitutional

Review Committee further indicated that clarification of Section 25 was intended to reinforce equitable access to land while enabling historically excluded citizens to participate productively in agricultural and food systems. The normative ambition of redress was therefore explicitly coupled with a commitment to developmental sustainability.

The subsequent legislative trajectory illustrates the complexity of reconciling constitutional amendment with political feasibility. Although a constitutional amendment to clarify expropriation powers was proposed, it did not secure the supermajority required for amendment of the Bill of Rights. Instead, Parliament enacted the Expropriation Act as ordinary legislation. Legal scholars and civil society commentators have questioned whether pursuing ordinary legislation after acknowledging the need for constitutional amendment generates doctrinal tension. The Act confines the possibility of nil compensation to specific circumstances, including abandoned land, unused state land, land held for speculative purposes, and land whose value has been substantially derived from past state subsidies. These limitations reflect an attempt to situate expropriation within justiciable and reviewable boundaries. However, procedural safeguards embedded in the Act provide multiple points of potential legal contestation. This legislative architecture reflects the effort to balance transformative intent with procedural constitutionalism.

Comparative experience further illuminates the stakes of institutional design. Zimbabwe's Fast Track Land Reform Programme restructured agrarian property relations on a large scale, transferring millions of hectares to hundreds of thousands of households (Makate et al., 2019; Scoones et al., 2019). While the programme achieved rapid redistribution, it was characterised by insecure tenure arrangements and limited institutional support. Moyo (2005) argues that the absence of stable governance structures and clear tenure security generated new forms of differentiation and institutional fragmentation. Although agricultural recovery

occurred in certain subsectors over time, the Zimbabwean experience underscores the risks associated with redistribution detached from coherent institutional scaffolding. South African policymakers have explicitly sought to avoid institutional erosion by embedding expropriation debates within constitutionalism and judicial oversight. The Constitutional Court has repeatedly affirmed the centrality of the rule of law and compliance with judicial authority as foundational to democratic governance. This jurisprudential commitment differentiates the South African approach from more unilateral models of agrarian reform.

International legal obligations further complicate the design of expropriation policy. Bilateral investment treaties, to which South Africa remains bound, including survival clauses extending beyond formal termination, impose binding standards regarding treatment of foreign investors. Where expropriation affects protected investors, international arbitration mechanisms may be invoked. Arbitral tribunals typically assess compensation standards in light of treaty obligations, often referencing market value principles. Although domestic legislation may inform contextual interpretation, treaty obligations remain primary in international adjudication. These dimensions do not negate sovereign authority but impose procedural and substantive discipline on its exercise.

Within this multilayered legal and policy environment, the relationship between expropriation and LRAD must be conceptualised systemically. Expropriation addresses the acquisition barrier by providing the state with authority to secure land where market mechanisms are ineffective or fiscally prohibitive. LRAD addresses the post-acquisition challenge of transforming land into productive enterprise. Neither instrument can fulfil the objectives of land reform independently. Land acquired without institutional support and capability formation will not yield sustainable productivity. Conversely, post settlement support mechanisms cannot redress structural inequality if land remains inaccessible. The

historical performance of LRAD demonstrates that land transfer without systemic alignment among capability, tenure security, institutional scaffolding, and household strategy results in predictable underperformance. Acquisition mechanisms alone cannot rectify conceptual deficiencies in programme design. However, post settlement architecture cannot function where acquisition remains constrained by prohibitive pricing or unwilling sellers.

The integrated framework advanced in this study therefore positions expropriation and LRAD as complementary components of a unified reform strategy. Expropriation provides the legal means to overcome structural acquisition constraints within constitutional boundaries. LRAD provides the institutional architecture required to translate transferred land into sustainable productive outcomes. The central proposition of this research is that neither mechanism is sufficient in isolation. Sustainable land reform requires alignment between acquisition authority and post transfer productivity systems. The success of expropriation without compensation will not be measured solely by the volume of land transferred, but by whether transferred land becomes embedded within coherent institutional and capability forming environments that generate durable livelihoods, food security, and rural development.

2.7.2 Political Economy and Contestation

Proposals to accelerate land reform through the mechanism of expropriation without compensation (EWC) have generated intense constitutional, economic and ideological contestation in South Africa. Opposition parties, most prominently the Democratic Alliance, have consistently rejected EWC because it threatens the security of property rights entrenched in Section 25 of the Constitution and risks undermining investor confidence and macroeconomic stability (Democratic Alliance [DA], 2018). Civil society organisations such as the Institute of Race Relations similarly contend that weakening compensation protections would erode the rule of law and deter private capital investment necessary for agricultural

productivity, employment creation and food security (Institute of Race Relations [IRR], 2018). From this vantage point, the Expropriation Act is perceived less as a corrective instrument of justice and more as a signal of institutional uncertainty within a fragile macroeconomic environment.

This oppositional discourse has not remained confined to domestic debate. It gained international amplification when former United States President Donald Trump inaccurately suggested that land seizures were already occurring, prompting diplomatic tensions and an offer to resettle white South African farmers as refugees. The Department of International Relations and Cooperation dismissed these claims as misrepresentations that fuelled unwarranted fears (DIRCO, 2018). The cumulative effect of such resistance, as Professor David Dickinson of the University of the Witwatersrand argues, has been a form of “tenacious lawfare,” whereby the procedural safeguards embedded in expropriation legislation create multiple avenues for technical litigation that may delay redistributive reform (Dickinson, 2019). In this reading, the architecture of constitutionalism to balance redress and rights becomes a terrain of strategic contestation.

Yet this critique, while procedurally compelling, is normatively incomplete. Political economists and liberation theorists maintain that South Africa’s structural inequality—consistently ranked among the highest globally—cannot be divorced from its history of racialised land dispossession (World Bank, 2022; Piketty, 2014). Market-based property relations are historically constituted outcomes of colonial conquest and apartheid engineering. The racial skew in land ownership is frequently cited: white South Africans, approximately 8% of the population, are estimated to own the majority of privately held agricultural land, while Black South Africans—nearly 80% of the population—own only a small proportion (Department of Rural Development and Land Reform [DRDLR], 2017). This distribution

traces directly to the Natives Land Act, which confined Africans to about 13% of the land, and the Group Areas Act, which institutionalised forced removals affecting millions (Walker, 2008; Beinart & Delius, 2014).

In this context, proponents of EWC argue that expropriation is not a repudiation of constitutionalism but an exercise of it. Section 25(8) of the Constitution explicitly affirms that nothing in the property clause may impede the state from taking measures to redress past discrimination (Republic of South Africa, 1996). The Constitutional Court of South Africa has interpreted Section 25 as embodying a transformative mandate rather than a purely defensive shield for existing property holders, for example (*Agri SA v Minister for Minerals and Energy* 2013). Legal scholar Pierre de Vos contends that the property clause was crafted as a negotiated compromise—simultaneously protecting rights and mandating reform (De Vos, 2019). However, critics observe that constitutional permissibility has not translated into decisive implementation; administrative capacity constraints and political hesitancy have impeded reform outcomes (Hall, 2014; Cousins, 2016). From this angle, the core failure lies less in radicalism than in institutional weakness.

The debate thus turns on competing conceptions of land. For property-rights advocates, land is primarily a factor of production—an economic asset whose secure tenure underpins credit markets, capital accumulation and agricultural output (IRR, 2018). Expropriation without compensation, they argue, risks generating uncertainty premiums that dampen investment and constrain growth. Liberation theorists counter that this economic framing abstracts land from its socio-historical embeddedness. Land is simultaneously material and symbolic: a repository of dignity, identity, ancestry and citizenship (Ngcukaitobi, 2018). For rural communities dispossessed under colonialism and apartheid, ownership is inseparable from belonging. Advocate Tembeka Ngcukaitobi argues that political freedom in 1994 was

incomplete without economic emancipation, positioning land reform as integral to substantive equality (Ngcukaitobi, 2018). Dickinson (2019) similarly emphasises that land embodies not only wealth but also nationhood; a polity cannot coherently claim unity while its foundational asset remains racially stratified.

The researcher must therefore interrogate both positions critically. The opposition's warnings regarding institutional fragility and economic volatility cannot be dismissed in a context of constrained fiscal space and low growth. Comparative evidence demonstrates that poorly managed expropriation processes can undermine agricultural output and investor confidence (Deininger, 2003). However, the liberationist argument underscores an equally serious risk: that persistent structural inequality delegitimises the post-apartheid constitutional settlement and threatens social cohesion (World Bank, 2022). Inequality itself constitutes a systemic instability.

At stake is not merely a technical dispute over compensation formulas but a deeper philosophical divergence regarding justice. Is constitutionalism principally about safeguarding existing entitlements, or about transforming historically unjust distributions? The transformative interpretation of Section 25 suggests that redress and rights are co-constitutive rather than mutually exclusive (Republic of South Africa, 1996). The policy challenge lies in institutional design: how to operationalise expropriation in a manner that is procedurally fair, economically prudent and substantively redistributive.

The polarisation of the debate obscures this integrative terrain. While opponents frame EWC as an existential threat to the rule of law, proponents frame resistance as a defence of inherited privilege. The empirical question—how to structure land reform to enhance productivity while rectifying injustice—remains insufficiently resolved. Yet the normative

imperative is increasingly difficult to evade. As Dickinson (2019) concludes, land reform is foundational to social cohesion in a society marked by entrenched inequality. The constitutional project will ultimately be judged not only by procedural fidelity but also by its capacity to reconcile historical dispossession with economic sustainability.

2.7.3 Economic Viability Concerns

Sihlobo and Kapuya (2018) significantly complicate the polarised discourse on expropriation without compensation by foregrounding the structural realities of South Africa's agricultural economy. Their analysis cautions against simplistic assumptions that commercial agriculture represents uniformly high profitability or excess rent extraction available for redistributive capture. Instead, they demonstrate that the sector is characterised by low average profit margins, high capital intensity, climatic risk exposure, and substantial leverage (Sihlobo & Kapuya, 2018).

First, South Africa's agricultural sector operates within a highly capital-intensive production model. Modern commercial farming requires significant upfront investment in land, machinery, irrigation infrastructure, seed technology, livestock genetics, storage facilities, and logistics systems. These capital requirements are often financed through debt, rendering farm enterprises highly sensitive to interest rate fluctuations and commodity price volatility (BFAP, 2018; Sihlobo & Kapuya, 2018). In this context, asset values—particularly land—are frequently leveraged against operating credit. Any policy-induced uncertainty affecting land as collateral has implications for agricultural finance and credit markets.

Second, profitability within the sector is uneven and concentrated. Sihlobo and Kapuya (2018) note that fewer than 4% of farms generate annual turnover exceeding R5 million. This statistic underscores the dualistic structure of South African agriculture: a relatively small

cohort of large-scale, highly mechanised commercial operations coexist with a long tail of smaller and medium-scale producers operating at significantly lower income thresholds. Aggregate output figures may therefore obscure the financial fragility of a substantial proportion of farms.

Third, the sector is deeply indebted. Agricultural debt has increased steadily over the past decade, driven by rising input costs, drought cycles, exchange-rate volatility, and slow economic growth (National Agricultural Marketing Council [NAMC], 2019; Sihlobo, 2020). Many commercial farmers operate under tight margins, with declining real revenues in certain sub-sectors. This indebtedness constrains liquidity and reduces adaptive capacity in the face of policy or climatic shocks. Consequently, policy debates that treat agricultural land as a reservoir of surplus wealth risk underestimating the leverage structures underpinning production.

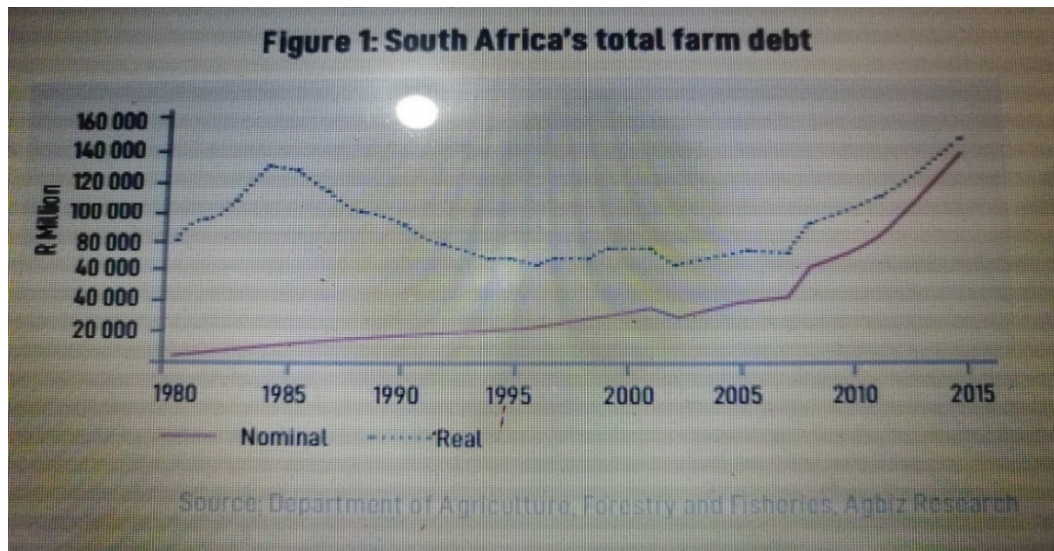
These structural realities complicate both pro- and anti-expropriation narratives. For opponents of EWC, the evidence reinforces concerns about systemic risk: disrupting collateral structures in an already leveraged sector may undermine food production, employment, and export earnings. For proponents of land reform, however, the same evidence highlights a different problem—namely, that redistributive reform cannot rely solely on asset transfer without comprehensive post-settlement support, access to finance, extension services, and market integration. Simply reallocating land within a capital-intensive, debt-driven production system does not automatically generate viable black agrarian entrepreneurship.

The researcher must therefore recognise that the agricultural political economy is structurally constrained. Land reform debates that focus exclusively on ownership without confronting sectoral debt dynamics, profitability distribution, and capital intensity risk

producing either exaggerated fear or unrealistic expectation. As Sihlobo and Kapuya (2018) imply, sustainable reform requires a calibrated approach that protects financial stability while restructuring access to productive assets.

Figure 2.2

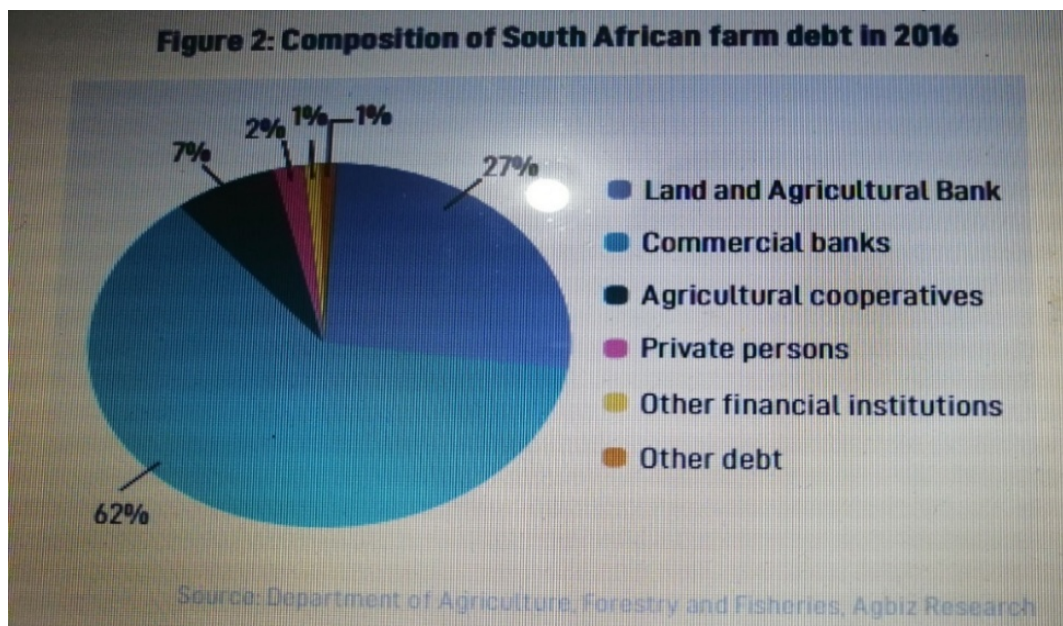
South Africa's total farm debt



Source: Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries: Agbiz Research, 2016

Figure 2.3

South African Farm Debt



Source: Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries: Agbiz Research, 2016

Farm debt reached R145 billion in 2016 (2% average annual increase since 1980), estimated at R160 billion in 2018. Commercial banks held 62% share, Land Bank 27%, agricultural cooperatives 7%.

Critical questions remain unresolved:

- Who assumes responsibility for existing farm debt under expropriation?
- How will expropriated farms achieve viability given the absence of post-settlement support?
- Can the state provide the technical support, credit, and institutional coordination historically absent from land reform programmes?

Sihlobo and Kapuya (2018) argue that the EWC narrative is politically compelling but practically constrained. Zimbabwe serves as a cautionary tale: mismanaged uncompensated expropriation can produce capital flight, production collapse, macroeconomic instability, and widespread social distress.

2.8 The Eastern Cape Province: Context and Agricultural Profile

2.8.1 Historical and Spatial Formation

The Eastern Cape emerged from South Africa's 1994 democratic transition as a newly consolidated province, integrating diverse administrative and spatial legacies into a single governance framework. Administratively, it comprises six district municipalities, 38 local municipalities, and two metropolitan municipalities—Nelson Mandela Bay and Buffalo City (Eastern Cape Provincial Government, 2023). However, this post-apartheid configuration masks a deeply fragmented historical geography shaped by racialised territorial engineering.

Prior to 1994, large portions of the province's predominantly Black rural population were confined to the apartheid-era "independent homelands" of Ciskei and Transkei. These

territories were not organic political entities but products of deliberate state policy under the Bantustan system, which sought to strip Black South Africans of citizenship rights and relocate them into ethnically defined, territorially marginal enclaves (Dlamini, 2014; Kloppers & Pienaar, 2014). The homeland system was central to apartheid's spatial logic: it enabled the white minority state to claim that Black South Africans were "citizens" of nominally independent states while maintaining control over economically productive land and urban centres.

The creation of Ciskei which was declared "independent" in 1981 and Transkei which was declared "independent" in 1976, involved widespread forced removals, dispossession, and land consolidation. Millions were displaced from so-called "white South Africa" and relocated to overcrowded, under-resourced rural territories (Beinart & Delius, 2014; Walker, 2008). These areas were characterised by limited arable land, high population density, weak infrastructure, and restricted access to capital and markets. Agricultural production was largely subsistence-based, constrained by soil degradation, communal tenure systems, and the absence of state investment in productive infrastructure (Bundy, 1988; Kepe & Cousins, 2002).

Systematic underdevelopment was not incidental but structural. The homeland economies were fiscally dependent on transfers from the apartheid state and heavily reliant on migrant labour remittances from urban industrial centres (Dlamini, 2014). Investment in education, healthcare, transport networks, and agricultural extension services was minimal compared to white-owned commercial farming areas. This entrenched dualism between capital-intensive commercial agriculture and impoverished communal rural economies became a defining feature of the Eastern Cape's political economy.

The democratic transition in 1994 formally reintegrated Ciskei and Transkei into South Africa, dissolving their pseudo-independence and incorporating them into the newly constituted Eastern Cape Province under the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. However, spatial integration did not automatically eliminate structural inequality. The province inherited vast backlogs in infrastructure, land reform, and rural development. Contemporary socio-economic indicators continue to reflect this historical marginalisation, with the Eastern Cape persistently ranking among the poorest provinces in terms of household income, employment, and service delivery (Statistics South Africa, 2022).

Thus, the Eastern Cape's contemporary land and agrarian questions cannot be understood without reference to its homeland legacy. The province embodies the enduring spatial imprint of apartheid territoriality: densely populated communal areas adjacent to large-scale commercial farms, uneven infrastructure distribution, and contested land tenure systems under traditional authorities. The post-1994 state's land reform programmes, including restitution and redistribution initiatives, operate within this historically constituted landscape of dispossession and underdevelopment. Any evaluation of land reform performance in the Eastern Cape must therefore situate current policy challenges within the *longue durée* of colonial conquest, homeland engineering, and structural rural marginalisation.

2.8.2 The Dual Land Tenure and Production System of the Eastern Cape

The agrarian structure of the Eastern Cape is characterised by a historically entrenched dual land tenure and production system. This dualism is not incidental but the product of colonial dispossession and apartheid spatial engineering that institutionalised racially differentiated property regimes and uneven patterns of public investment. The province

continues to reflect the bifurcated agrarian order that emerged from the consolidation of the former Cape Province and the former Bantustan territories of Ciskei and Transkei. The coexistence of freehold commercial agriculture alongside communal tenure systems has produced structurally distinct production environments that shape contemporary land reform outcomes (Cousins, 2007; Hall, 2015; Ntsebeza, 2005).

In the former white commercial farming areas of the old Cape Province, land tenure is predominantly based on freehold ownership. Property rights are individually registered, legally enforceable, and transferable. This tenure system provides security of title, facilitates collateralisation, and enables participation in formal financial markets. Secure freehold tenure reduces uncertainty and supports long term investment in fixed capital such as irrigation infrastructure, fencing, storage facilities, and mechanisation. Institutional economics literature consistently associates secure and transferable property rights with enhanced investment incentives and capital formation (Besley, 1995; North, 1990).

The production system within these areas is characterised by relatively large-scale commercial operations, developed infrastructure, and integration into national and international agricultural value chains. Public and private investment over decades has resulted in irrigation schemes, road networks, market infrastructure, and established relationships with input suppliers and off takers. Farmers in these zones typically possess access to formal credit markets, extension services, and established marketing channels. This institutional density reinforces productivity and supports economies of scale. The combination of secure tenure, accumulated capital, and integrated market access situates these areas within the formal agricultural economy and aligns with the Ricardian logic of differential rent in which land quality and location are complemented by institutional investment (Ricardo, 1817; Lipton, 2009).

In contrast, the former Ciskei and Transkei regions operate predominantly under communal tenure administered through traditional authority structures. Individualised, tradable property rights are limited or absent. Land allocation is generally based on customary arrangements that confer use rights rather than full ownership. Although such systems provide social legitimacy and local governance, they often lack formal documentation and transferability, which constrains collateralisation and access to formal finance (Cousins, 2007; Ntsebeza, 2005). The scarcity of individualised rights introduces uncertainty regarding long term investment and limits integration into formal credit systems.

Infrastructure development in these former homeland areas has historically lagged behind that of commercial farming zones. Road quality, irrigation facilities, storage infrastructure, and market access are frequently inadequate. Extension services are often thinly distributed and under resourced. As a consequence, production systems in these regions tend to be smaller scale, labour intensive, and partially oriented toward subsistence. The limited availability of formal credit, combined with infrastructural deficits, constrains productive expansion and reinforces reliance on household labour and diversified livelihood strategies (Hall, 2015; Lipton, 2009).

The duality of these tenure and production systems has profound implications for land redistribution in the Eastern Cape. Redistribution does not occur within a neutral agrarian landscape. It intersects with historically differentiated institutional environments. Beneficiaries allocated land in former commercial zones enter contexts characterised by stronger infrastructure and market integration but must navigate competitive commercial systems. Beneficiaries within communal zones confront structural constraints linked to tenure insecurity, limited capital access, and infrastructural underdevelopment. The performance of redistributed projects cannot therefore be understood without reference to this dual system.

From a theoretical perspective, the Eastern Cape's dual agrarian structure reinforces the importance of systemic alignment within the Integrated Productivity Alignment Framework. Land endowment alone does not determine productivity. Tenure security, institutional scaffolding, and beneficiary capability interact with historically embedded structural conditions. In freehold commercial zones, the institutional environment may partially compensate for capability deficits through access to credit and extension. In communal areas, even capable beneficiaries may encounter binding constraints arising from infrastructural limitations and restricted market access. The divergence between these zones exemplifies how historical tenure regimes continue to shape contemporary production outcomes.

The persistence of dualism underscores the argument advanced in this chapter that redistribution must be understood as a structural transformation project rather than a simple asset transfer. Without addressing the institutional asymmetries embedded in tenure systems and infrastructure distribution, redistribution risks reproducing inequality within new ownership categories. Sustainable productivity in the Eastern Cape requires not only equitable land transfer but also institutional convergence between historically advantaged and disadvantaged zones. The dual land tenure and production system therefore provides the structural context within which LRAD, and related redistributive interventions must be analysed.

This duality has profound implications for land reform. Communal systems exhibit higher transaction costs, weaker property rights, and lower long-term investment incentives. Commercial zones continue to benefit from accumulated advantages in technology, capital, and market access.

2.8.3 *Agro-Ecological Profile*

The Eastern Cape is one of South Africa's most ecologically diverse provinces: savanna, fynbos in the west, Nama-Karoo shrub land in the central and north-western interior, and extensive grassland in the eastern highlands (Ambikapathi et al., 2022). Most of the province is semi-arid, with sub-humid zones along the southern coast supporting citrus, vegetables, and dairy (South African Weather Service, 2021).

Table 2.13

Agricultural Land Use

Land Use	% of Agricultural Land
Livestock farming (beef cattle, sheep, goats, game)	64%
Crops (maize, vegetables, pineapples, citrus)	20%
Commercial forestry (pine, wattle, eucalyptus)	5%
Conservation and protected areas	1%

Source: Eastern Cape Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform, 2022; Stats SA, 2022

This distribution reflects historical marginalisation: communal areas with poor soils, limited irrigation, and restricted extension services are heavily dependent on livestock-based production systems.

2.8.4 *Environmental and Social Stressors*

Land degradation significantly reduced productive farming area between 1988 and 1998 due to heavy grazing, erosion, deforestation, and reduced rural infrastructure investment (Jewitt & Shackleton, 2020). Severe droughts in the mid-1980s and early 1990s exacerbated these pressures, resulting in livestock losses, crop failure, and arable land abandonment (Lahiff, 2008).

Post-1994 policy changes—the phased end of influx-control laws and Reconstruction and Development Programme housing developments—promoted rural settlement expansion,

particularly in former homeland areas (Seekings & Nattrass, 2015). Free housing, improved roads, and enhanced service delivery incentivised migration, with new houses constructed on former grazing fields (Lahiff, 2008). This has further compressed land available for farming and grazing, compounding challenges for land reform programmes.

2.9 Situating the Framework: Contribution and Implications

2.9.1 *Beyond the Institutional–Populist Impasse*

Land reform scholarship in South Africa has oscillated between two dominant tendencies, as shown in the table below.

Table 2.14

Institutionalist vs Agrarian populist accounts

Tendency	Diagnosis	Prescription	Limitation
Institutionalist accounts (Hall, 2015; Lahiff, 2008; Mtero, 2017)	Implementation failures: fragmented governance, under-resourcing, weak coordination	Better management, more resources, institutional reform	Treats problems as administrative; leaves theoretical assumptions underpinning policy unexamined
Agrarian populist accounts (Altieri, 2004)	Commercialisation agenda; loss of peasant livelihoods	Valorisation of small-scale, low-input, subsistence-oriented production	Offers little analytical purchase on why beneficiaries might want to commercialise or why policy should enable them to do so

This study rejects both tendencies towards institutionalism. LRAD's failures are not implementation problems but conceptual problems. The programme was designed on theoretically inadequate foundations. This study's central argument leans to the view that the goal of land reform is to enable beneficiaries, where they choose, to become viable commercial farmers. The framework developed here therefore is structural and contingent wherein it specifies the conditions under which different production models become viable and demonstrates that these conditions were absent from LRAD's design.

2.9.2 Theoretical Integration as Methodological Innovation

The principal contribution of this study is not empirical but theoretical and methodological. Land reform scholarship has remained compartmentalised, with Ricardian, RBV, and smallholder traditions deployed in isolation, each producing partial explanations that cannot account for the full range of observed outcomes.

This study demonstrates that these traditions are not alternatives but complements. Each explains one dimension of the productivity question; each is silent on others. Their integration into a unified analytical framework is not ecumenical pluralism but **theoretical synthesis**: each tradition is critically appropriated, its limitations identified and remediated through incorporation of insights from other traditions.

The resulting framework is more powerful than any constituent theory and, crucially, capable of explaining not only success and failure but the systematic patterning of differentiated outcomes.

This integration is offered as a methodological innovation applicable beyond the LRAD case. Any land reform programme that assumes land transfer alone is sufficient for productivity growth—whether in South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, or elsewhere embeds the same theoretical error.

2.9.3 Policy Implications - Implementation Failure Versus Conceptual Failure: A Structural Reframing

The distinction between implementation failure and conceptual failure is central to the theoretical positioning of this study. Much of the South African land reform literature, particularly in relation to the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development programme, has framed underperformance as a problem of administrative execution. According to this diagnosis, land reform has faltered because of insufficient budgets, bureaucratic inefficiency, weak monitoring systems, fragmented intergovernmental coordination, and inadequate post

settlement support (Hall, 2015; Cousins & Scoones, 2010; Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, 2019). Within this framing, the underlying policy design is presumed sound. The difficulty lies in implementation capacity.

The logical implication of an implementation diagnosis is technocratic reform. If problems are administrative and technical, then the remedy lies in increasing financial allocations, strengthening institutional capacity, improving monitoring and evaluation systems, and refining operational procedures. This approach has shaped successive waves of policy adjustment since 1994. Revisions to grant structures, restructuring of departments, expansion of recapitalisation programmes, and the introduction of new support instruments have all been justified on the premise that improved execution would unlock the intended transformative potential (Hall, 2015; Lahiff, 2008). Yet empirical assessments consistently indicate that despite these iterative reforms, transformative outcomes in agricultural productivity, livelihood improvement, and rural economic restructuring remain limited (Cousins & Scoones, 2010; DPME, 2019).

This study advances a more fundamental diagnosis. It argues that the persistent underperformance of LRAD reflects not merely weaknesses in implementation, but a deeper conceptual failure embedded in the programme's theoretical architecture. Conceptual failure refers to deficiencies in the underlying assumptions that structure policy design. It arises when the implicit production logic of a programme does not adequately account for the structural determinants of productivity and livelihood transformation.

The prevailing implementation narrative implicitly assumes that redistribution has been conceptually correct but operationally flawed. This study challenges that assumption. It contends that LRAD was designed around an additive and linear model in which land transfer,

supplemented by grant capital, would generate productivity. Such a formulation overlooks the interdependence between land endowment, tenure security, beneficiary capability, institutional scaffolding, and household strategy. Development economics and institutional theory consistently demonstrate that productivity outcomes depend on complementary investments and systemic alignment rather than isolated asset transfers (Dorward, Hazell, & Poulton, 2009; North, 1990; Lipton, 2009). Where policy design omits these interaction effects, incremental improvements in administration are unlikely to yield structural transformation.

The implications of conceptual failure differ markedly from those of implementation failure. If the problem is conceptual, then more resources and improved management are insufficient remedies. What is required is theoretical reconstruction. Policy foundations must be reformulated to incorporate an explicit theory of productivity that recognises capability formation, institutional coherence, and structural alignment as constitutive rather than supplementary conditions. The task is not simply to improve execution but to realign programme architecture with the determinants of sustainable performance.

The outcome to date reinforces this distinction. Three decades of iterative administrative reform have not produced the scale of transformation anticipated in official policy documents. The persistence of low productivity equilibria, limited market integration among beneficiaries, and continued structural dualism in provinces such as the Eastern Cape suggests that the binding constraints are not purely managerial (Hall, 2015; Cousins & Scoones, 2010). Instead, they reflect systemic misalignment between redistribution mechanisms and the broader production environment.

This study therefore positions itself within the conceptual failure diagnosis. It does not dismiss the importance of administrative capacity. Rather, it argues that capacity building must

be embedded within a coherent theoretical framework. Without such a framework, institutional strengthening efforts risk reinforcing an inadequate production logic. The Integrated Productivity Alignment Framework developed in this chapter provides the analytical architecture for such reconstruction. By synthesising Ricardian land rent theory, capability analysis, and institutional economics, it specifies the structural conditions under which redistribution can generate sustainable productivity.

In reframing LRAD's underperformance as conceptual rather than merely administrative, this study shifts the evaluative lens from compliance and resource adequacy to theoretical coherence and systemic alignment. The remedy is not marginal adjustment but foundational redesign. The contribution of this research lies in articulating that redesign in theoretically rigorous terms, thereby providing a basis for rethinking redistribution policy beyond technocratic reform toward structural transformation.

If LRAD's failures are implementation failures, the policy remedy is straightforward: more resources, better management, institutional capacity building. This is the dominant discourse, and it has produced three decades of policy reform without transformative outcomes.

If LRAD's failures are conceptual failures, the policy remedy is fundamental theoretical reconstruction. This study does not offer a new policy blueprint but it specifies the theoretical foundations any adequate policy must rest on. The foundations are;

A theory of land: Recognising that land quality is socially produced, not naturally given. Redistributing high-potential land without addressing the historical disinvestment that produced that potential is insufficient.

A theory of capability: Recognising that VRIN resources are not spontaneously generated but institutionally produced. Post-settlement support is not a supplement but a constitutive condition.

A theory of institutions: Recognising that extension, credit, infrastructure, and market linkages are not add-ons to land reform but its core content. Their absence is not an implementation deficit but a design flaw.

A theory of alignment: Recognising that productivity is an emergent property of systemic coherence, not an additive function of discrete inputs. Misalignment produces systematic failure regardless of performance in any single domain.

These are not technical adjustments to existing policy. They are **foundational theoretical propositions** that, if accepted, require fundamental policy reconstruction. This study provides the analytical architecture for that reconstruction.

2.9.4 Novelty of This Study: Summary Statement

What makes this study original is not the invention of new theory but the systematic integration of existing theoretical traditions into a coherent analytical framework capable of explaining systematically differentiated outcomes, and the demonstration that this framework reframes the LRAD problem from implementation failure to conceptual flaw.

Contribution	Description	Significance
1. Theoretical integration	First systematic integration of Ricardian land rent theory, Resource-Based View, and small-scale productivity theories in South African land reform analysis	Demonstrates that integration produces explanatory power unavailable from any single tradition
2. Problem reframing	Demonstrates that LRAD's design embedded a fundamental theoretical error—the assumption that Land + Grant Capital = Productivity	Reframes analysis from implementation failure to conceptual flaw, with profound implications for both analysis and policy
3. Positive specification	Specifies the conditions under which land redistribution generates sustainable productivity	Provides not merely explanation of failure but positive specification of conditions necessary for success—an analytical architecture any adequate policy must accommodate

This study does not claim to have invented new theory. It claims to have done something more difficult and, for this field, more necessary: to have synthesised existing theoretical resources into a coherent framework that reframes a persistent policy problem and provides the analytical tools for its resolution.

2.10 Chapter Summary: Towards an Integrated Framework for Evaluating LRAD

This chapter establishes the theoretical and conceptual foundation of the study by constructing a multi layered explanatory framework through which the performance and outcomes of the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development programme in the Eastern Cape are evaluated. The framework is not presented as a descriptive survey of existing scholarship. It is developed as a deliberate analytical architecture designed to move beyond implementation narratives and toward a structural explanation of LRAD underperformance. The argument proceeds through three interrelated movements: historical and policy grounding, theoretical critique and synthesis, and translation into an operational conceptual model. Across these movements, the chapter advances and justifies the central claim that LRAD's shortcomings are rooted not primarily in administrative weakness but in conceptual inadequacy.

The first movement situates the analysis within the long *durée* of South Africa's political economy. Land reform is constitutionally mandated under Section 25 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Republic of South Africa, 1996). This constitutional provision recognises the need to redress the racially structured dispossession institutionalised through colonial conquest and apartheid legislation, including the Natives Land Act of 1913 and the Group Areas Act of 1950. The normative legitimacy of land reform

is therefore not in dispute. It is anchored in constitutionalism, restorative justice, and the broader democratic project.

However, constitutional legitimacy does not guarantee transformative outcomes. Empirical audits conducted by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform indicate that patterns of agricultural land ownership remain highly concentrated and racially skewed decades after democratic transition (DRDLR, 2017). Scholarly analyses similarly demonstrate that the agrarian structure inherited from apartheid has proven remarkably resilient (Hall, 2014; Cousins, 2016). Although various redistribution instruments have been introduced, including LRAD in 2001, the structural composition of commercial agriculture has not shifted at the scale anticipated in early policy targets. LRAD was explicitly designed to cultivate a class of Black commercial farmers capable of integrating into formal agricultural value chains. Yet evidence suggests that the programme has transferred a fraction of the intended 30 percent of agricultural land and that many transferred projects have struggled to achieve sustained productivity (Hall, 2014; Cousins, 2016).

This disjuncture between constitutional grounding and empirical outcome establishes the core problematic of the study. If the normative foundation of redistribution is sound, yet outcomes remain persistently weak, the explanatory lens must move beyond implementation critique. Administrative inefficiency, budgetary constraints, and coordination failures may contribute to underperformance, but they do not sufficiently explain its patterned and systemic character. A deeper interrogation of the conceptual architecture underlying LRAD becomes necessary.

The second movement of the chapter undertakes that interrogation through critical theoretical synthesis. Three theoretical traditions are engaged not as doctrinal authorities but

as analytical resources whose explanatory power is extracted while their limitations are explicitly identified. The purpose is to deconstruct the implicit production logic embedded within LRAD.

Ricardian rent theory provides the first anchor. Ricardo's analysis establishes that land is heterogeneous and that variations in fertility and location produce differential productivity (Ricardo, 1817). This insight remains indispensable for analysing agrarian performance in a province such as the Eastern Cape, where agro ecological conditions vary significantly. However, classical rent theory treats land quality as a largely natural attribute and does not adequately account for the institutional and historical processes that shape access to productive resources. Contemporary agrarian scholarship demonstrates that land productivity is socially mediated through infrastructure, capital investment, and state support (Lipton, 2009; Hall, 2015). In the South African context, differential land quality is inseparable from racially structured public investment patterns. The Ricardian insight into heterogeneity is therefore retained, but its asocial framing is rejected.

The Resource Based View contributes a second analytical layer. By conceptualising productivity as the outcome of valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable resources, RBV directs attention to beneficiary capability as the mechanism that converts land potential into realised output (Barney, 1991; Teece, 2014). Human capital, organisational competence, financial literacy, and relational networks become central explanatory variables. Yet RBV was developed within corporate strategic management and presumes functioning markets and internally generated capabilities. In redistributive agrarian contexts, capability is shaped by institutional environments and historical exclusion rather than solely by firm level strategic choice. Institutional economics highlights the role of state structures in shaping resource

environments (North, 1990). The RBV framework is therefore appropriated and embedded within a broader institutional analysis that accounts for structural inequality.

Small scale productivity theories provide a third dimension. Khazanov's theory of peasant economy and subsequent analyses of smallholder productivity emphasise labour allocation, risk management, and livelihood diversification as rational behavioural responses to constraint environments (Chayanov, 1966; Sen, 1962). These perspectives illuminate the micro level strategies through which beneficiaries deploy land and capability. However, the romanticisation of subsistence and the universalisation of the inverse farm size productivity relationship are analytically insufficient in a context where commercial integration and capital intensity remain central to agrarian transformation (Lipton, 2009). Household strategy is retained as a behavioural interface, but it is situated within structural and institutional determinants.

Through this triangulated critique, the chapter exposes the conceptual weakness embedded in LRAD's implicit production logic. The programme appears to assume that land transfer supplemented by grant capital will generate productivity. Comparative institutional research demonstrates that such additive models are insufficient. Productivity emerges from complementary investments and systemic alignment among land endowment, capability formation, institutional scaffolding, and household strategy (Dorward, Hazell, & Poulton, 2009; Scoones et al., 2010; Deininger, 2003). Where any of these domains is weak or misaligned, systemic drag occurs. LRAD underperformance is therefore reframed as the outcome of structural misalignment rather than isolated implementation deficits.

The third movement translates this theoretical synthesis into an operational conceptual model. Six analytically distinct but causally interrelated domains are specified. Land

endowment captures biophysical potential. Tenure security mediates investment incentives and shapes the translation of potential into long term capital formation (Besley, 1995). Beneficiary capability represents the stock of human, organisational, and relational resources required for productive conversion. Institutional scaffolding encompasses extension services, credit systems, infrastructure, and value chain coordination that reduce transaction costs and stabilise markets (North, 1990; Dorward et al., 2009). Household strategy captures adaptive behavioural responses to opportunity and constraint structures. Sustainable productivity is conceptualised as the dependent variable reflecting economically viable and temporally durable output.

Crucially, the model specifies interaction effects rather than linear causality. Institutional scaffolding moderates the effect of capability on output. Tenure security mediates the relationship between land endowment and investment. Household strategy responds dynamically to institutional signals. Five research questions are deductively derived from these relationships, ensuring that empirical investigation is directly tethered to theoretical propositions.

The novelty of the chapter lies not in the invention of new theory but in the rigorous integration and operationalisation of existing theoretical traditions into a coherent explanatory architecture tailored to South Africa's agrarian transformation challenge. Much of the LRAD literature oscillates between institutionalist accounts that emphasise administrative weakness and populist accounts that valorise smallholder models without sufficient structural analysis (Hall, 2015; Cousins, 2016). This study moves beyond that impasse by synthesising classical political economy, capability theory, and agrarian household analysis within a systemic alignment framework.

The critique of LRAD is therefore foundational to the study's originality. By demonstrating that the programme's design rested on an under specified production logic, the chapter shifts the analytical focus from incremental reform to conceptual reconstruction. Three empirically examinable claims follow from this architecture. First, LRAD outcomes are structurally patterned by historical and institutional conditions. Second, underperformance is systemically produced through domain misalignment. Third, transformative land reform requires theoretical coherence across acquisition, capability formation, institutional support, and behavioural adaptation.

This framework now stands as the analytical lens through which subsequent empirical chapters will examine LRAD performance in the Eastern Cape. It provides not only an evaluative instrument but also a basis for reconstructing redistribution policy on theoretically sound foundations.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Introduction

This chapter delineates the approach employed to evaluate the effectiveness and sustainability of the LRAD programme in the Eastern Cape. The chapter outlines the research concept and design, participant selection, data collection methods, procedures for ensuring dependability and trustworthiness, and the ethical considerations adhered to. The research employs a qualitative, interpretivist methodology grounded in an integrated theoretical framework combining Ricardo's (1817) Theory of Rent, the Resource-Based View (RBV) (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993), and smallholder productivity theories, which emphasise the role of land endowments, access to productive assets, market integration, and institutional support in shaping land-use and productivity outcomes among small-scale farmers (Ellis, 2000; Dorward et al., 2009; Hazell et al., 2010).

Informed by the literature examined in Chapter 2, this chapter delineates the methodological approaches employed to address the research questions, fulfil the objectives, and, where relevant, contemplate the study hypothesis, while constructing the conceptual framework to elucidate the factors influencing land use and land redistribution in the province.

To provide clarity, the chapter is organised into three components as follows:

- Research philosophy and design: the framework guiding data gathering and analysis.
- Population, sampling, and data collection: the defined target population, sampling methodology and size, and the protocols employed to get primary and documentary evidence.
- Data analysis procedures refer to the analytical steps used to address the research issues.

3.2 Research Philosophy and Design

It is situated within the interpretivist research paradigm, which tries to explain social phenomena according to the meanings of groups and individuals (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). In this paradigm, knowledge is constructed through interpretation rather than through measurement, which makes it particularly appropriate for understanding the human, institutional and political forces that affect land redistribution in post-apartheid South Africa. Thus, the method of study was qualitative to obtain the subjective experiences and perceptions of the real-life stakeholders who implement LRAD. This approach allowed an in-depth investigation into how policy intent gets translated into practice within diverse socio-economic contexts of the Eastern Cape.

3.2.1 Rationale for Qualitative Choice

A predominant aim of the study is to understand the cross-contextual variability of land redistribution outcomes, requiring interpretive richness more than statistical generalisation. Quantitative methodologies were dismissed since they depend on numbers, which can be quantifiable, and notions of generalisation of these findings. This generalised notion would undermine the sophisticated tapestry of political, social, and institutional elements underlying outcomes of LRAD.

Mixed methodologies were also not included, and although they may not be as perfect, they could be used to merge numbers with words to underpin greater rigours of analysis and safeguarding the rich, underlying knowledge of this research that sought to protect. An interpretivist qualitative method represented a more people-centred interpretative lens of LRAD procedures, which were viewed from a standpoint of being experiential, and not policy numbers.

3.2.2 Inductive Logic and Theoretical Anchors

The research employed inductive logic, collecting empirical data initially and subsequently interpreting it through thematic analysis to develop and refine theoretical assertions (Saunders et al., 2019). This inductive reasoning facilitates the emergence of theoretical ideas from participants lived experiences rather than from preconceived beliefs. The analytical focus is on the basic theoretical frameworks that are fundamental to the study of land use and land redistribution. These frameworks include the Theory of Differential Rent (Ricardo, 1817/2004), the Resource-Based View (RBV) (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993), and small-scale productivity theories (Ellis, 2000; Dorward et al., 2009; Hazell et al., 2010), among others. Within the inductive approach, the RBV provides a guiding lens through which institutional capacity, skills, financial capital, and knowledge are conceptualised as strategic resources that mediate and leverage Ricardian endowment advantages, thereby converting access to land into agricultural performance and developmental impact, particularly among small-scale farmers.

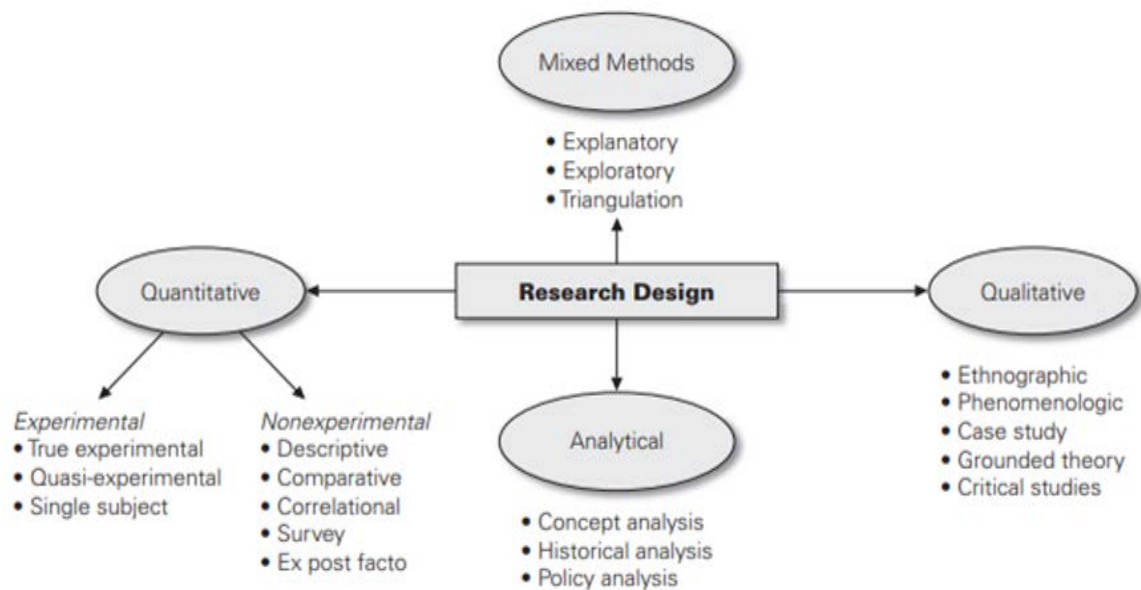
3.2.3 Research Design

Research designs are often classified into quantitative, qualitative, mixed, and analytical approaches. This study used a qualitative case study design with reference to Eastern Cape Province. It was a feasible design that would provide for rich scrutiny of LRAD implementation that took place in real life to reveal the relationship of land endowments, institutional support with productivity outcomes.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders using open-ended questions, supplemented by documentary analysis of policy reports, implementation frameworks, and statistical summaries.

Figure 3.1

Types of research designs under the four major approaches



Source: McMillan & Schumacher (2014:27)

This study used a qualitative case study design, chosen for its ability to provide a comprehensive, contextual understanding of the factors influencing land use and redistribution dynamics in the Eastern Cape over both short and long terms. This strategy significantly enhances the empirical and theoretical understanding of sustainable land reform in South Africa by elucidating the intricate interactions among institutional, economic, and human factors.

As indicated in Figure 3.1, this interpretivist approach is reflected in the case study design in terms of the researcher's beliefs about what exists and how we come to know it: social reality is something we co-construct through lived experience and interaction with institutions, rather than as a disinterested, objective fact that we can discover. Consequently, the design reflects the researcher's perspective that understanding land reform should arise from the actual experiences of participants and the contextual frameworks in which policy is implemented.

McMillan and Schumacher (2014) assert that a research approach comprises two interconnected dimensions: the philosophical perspective on knowledge, which reflects the researcher's comprehension of the nature and purpose of inquiry, and the procedural

implementation of that worldview into methods for data collection and analysis. Under this framework, three broad approach-based paradigms are traditionally articulated: positivist paradigms, interpretivist paradigms, or mixed-methods paradigms, each founded on distinct assumptions about knowledge development.

Creswell and Creswell (2017) model deductive reasoning as theory-driven where you begin with theoretical statements proven out by data points. This process is often implemented through econometric or statistics analyses to verify or validate the parameters of the theory. The way an inductive process is utilised, particularly for qualitative research, is the opposite: first, data is collected; second, the data is evaluated for points from which theoretical ideas can develop (Saunders et al., 2019). Established traditions in research methodology begin to be distinguished in terms of the kind of data used as well as research techniques. While deductive or quantitative research uses numerical quantification in statistical modelling techniques, its inductive or qualitative counterpart engages with verbal behaviour associated with communication through techniques of content analysis, critical discourse analysis (CDA), or thematic analysis (Creswell, 2021; Saunders et al., 2019).

Some researchers argue for mixed methods designs that combine the quantitative rigour and qualitative depth of both paradigms to mitigate the constraints present when either methodology is employed independently.

For the purposes of the current study, it was decided that the best approach would be to adopt a purely inductive approach, using the qualitative method. This methodology allows the researcher to extract insights directly from participant narratives and documentary evidence, thereby uncovering the emergent themes that characterise land-use dynamics and redistribution outcomes in the Eastern Cape. Thematic analysis is utilised to examine and define the conceptual limits of fundamental theoretical constructs, such as Ricardo's Theory of Economic Rent (1817), the Theory of Small-Scale Productivity (1990), and the Resource-Based View

(RBV) (Barney, 1991). The RBV enhances economic perspectives by framing institutional capability, human skills, financial capital, and knowledge systems as strategic resources that empower beneficiaries and institutions to transform land endowments into enduring productivity and competitive advantage. The three approaches: neoclassical theory, developmental theory, and managerial theory, provide a collective understanding of how natural resources, market access, and the institutions and actors involved intersect to influence the justice, efficiency, and sustainability of land redistributions.

3.2.4 Case Boundaries and Setting

This is a single-case study of land use and land redistribution in the Eastern Cape Province, defined by six administrative districts: Alfred Nzo, Sarah Baartman (Cacadu), Joe Gqabi, Oliver Tambo, Amathole, and Chris Hani. Case selection (Yin, 2018) was guided by accessibility, availability of archival sources, and the region's salience for land reform analysis. The total population is the Eastern Cape; population and sampling parameters are operationalised at district level (see Tables 3.1 and 3.2).

3.3 Population and Sample of the Research Study

3.3.1 Population, Sample and Distribution

The population comprised:

- provincial/municipal policymakers and officials in the six districts of the Eastern Cape,
- LRAD beneficiary farmers in the six districts of the Eastern Cape, and
- experts/think-tanks in land use and agricultural economics.

A sample target of 25 was set to ensure diversity across the six districts; data saturation was reached at 18 interviews (Guest et al., 2006).

Table 3.1*Population of the study (district land capacity)*

PROVINCE	LAND CAPACITY	% OF LAND CAPACITY
Alfred Nzo	7k sq.km	0.04
Sarah Baartman	58k sq.km	0.35
Joe Gqabi	26k sq.km	0.15
Oliver Tambo	16k sq.km	0.09
Amatole	21k sq.km	0.12
Chris Hani	37k sq.km	0.22

Source: Author's compilation (2023)

Table 3.2 below presents the population and sample size of the current study.

Table 3.2*Study population and sample size*

PROVINCE	LAND CAPACITY	%	SAMPLE
Alfred Nzo	7k sq.km	0.04	3
Sarah Baartman	58k sq.km	0.35	3
Joe Gqabi	26k sq.km	0.15	3
Oliver Tambo	16k sq.km	0.09	3
Amatole	21k sq.km	0.12	3
Chris Hani	37k sq.km	0.22	3
Think Tanks	—	—	7
Total	—	—	25

Source: Author's compilation (2023)

3.3.2 Population and Sample Concepts Clarification

Citing Mishra and Alok (2017) and Cohen et al. (2018), in this study the population is those people that form the target of inquiry while the set of those people that constitute a subset used to derive findings applicable to that population is the sample. The population for this study consists of all those directly involved in or affected by the Land Redistribution for Agricultural

Development (LRAD) programme in South Africa's Eastern Cape Province. This comprises government and municipal officials who oversee land and agricultural policy and LRAD beneficiary farmers engaged actively in agriculture, as well as experts from research institutions and development agencies that specialise in land reform and rural development.

3.3.3 Sampling Design

A purposive sampling method was used to include participants with relevance to LRAD or who had adequate knowledge and experience in LRAD (Creswell, 2021). In its non-probabilistic way of assessing data, however, we were able to consider information-rich cases in its first place, beyond numerical representation.

3.3.4 Sampling Criteria

Eligible participants were screened based on the following:

- Relevance of role: Participation in land reform policy formulation, programme implementation, or agricultural support services.
- Experience: No less than three years of experience in land redistribution, agricultural development, or equivalent institutional support services.
- Accessibility and consent: It should be clear that participants wish to take part in the research, share their perspectives or if possible, give something of value about how it went.

3.3.5 Materials/Instrumentation of Research Tools

Data collection employed semi-structured interviews, enabling participants to elaborate on their experiences based on the essential study themes. The interviews covered points of view on the design of land policy, problems with implementation, and post-settlement outcomes over 45 to 90 minutes and can be conducted in person or virtually depending on convenience. Triangulation was enhanced through documentary analysis of policy papers, government reports, and statistics publications.

An open-ended original interview instrument was used as no existing tool or data instrument was found useful for the purposes of the study which were in line with this study and the Eastern Cape LRAD context. The custom instrument was created as per the need to examine the complex structures that exist among policy structures, institutional capacities, and beneficiary experiences in the study, following the interpretivist and explorative nature of a study grounded in Ricardo's Theory of Rent and the Resource-Based View (RBV).

3.4 Data-Collection and Analysis Procedures

3.4.1 Data-Collection Procedures

The term 'data-collection procedures' as defined by Sekaran and Bougie (2016) refers to the systematic approaches used to gather empirical evidence about certain research objectives and research questions. Techniques are therefore chosen based on the proposed study's philosophical perspective, methodology as well as its analytical purposes. Two main methodological approaches have been recognised in scientific inquiry -a qualitative approach and quantitative one, both grounded on specific epistemological and ontological assumptions.

This study sought to make sense of social realities rather than measure them; thus, a qualitative method of data collection was used. This approach aligns with the interpretivist and inductive nature of the study, highlighting the need to understand human experiences, institutional practices, and policy dynamics in shaping land redistribution outcomes in the Eastern Cape. Focus groups, participant observation and in-depth interviews are some of the qualitative approaches (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Semi-structured and in-depth interviews were selected as the primary methodology as they offered the necessary flexibility and context to derive rich and contextualised responses. In this way, as Pickard (2013) proposed, in-depth interviews promote a dialogue process that allow the respondents to express meanings,

perceptions, and experiences in their own language and that allows for the author to investigate emergent themes through active reflection.

Semi-structured interviews strike a methodological balance between the limitations of formalist structure and the flexibility of open discussions (Patten & Newhart, 2017). The researcher employed a semi-structured interview schedule comprising predetermined open-ended questions (see Appendix A), while allowing sufficient flexibility to probe unanticipated but theoretically relevant issues arising during the interviews. This flexibility is necessary to accurately portray the dynamics of land reform which include multiple levels of authority, multiple endowments, and disparate realities for beneficiaries.

Using an interview tool developed and developed independently, adapted to the specific context, thus ensuring context validity and idea appropriateness of this study. The instrument was constructed in view of the foundational tenets of Ricardo's Theory of Economic Rent and the Resource-Based View (RBV) and was developed to provide logical cohesion between theoretical constructs and empirical inquiry. As these specific instruments were not appropriate for the LRAD context, this tailor-made instrument was methodologically appropriate and epistemologically consistent. A small pilot test was conducted with two groups to make sure that the results are dependable, and procedures are in place before collecting the data. The pre-test helped refine the phrasing and extent of the questions. The final interview sessions lasted from 45 to 90 minutes, either in person or remotely, depending on the availability and preference of participants. This made systematic data collection more contextualised and theoretically compatible with the interpretivist orientation of the study, yielding relevant and credible insights into the institutional, economic, and social determinants of land redistribution performance in the Eastern Cape Province.

3.4.2 Data Analysis Procedures

The study employed a qualitative and inductive analytic methodology in interpreting empirical data for the purpose of generating conceptual insights on how land endowments, institutional capacity, and beneficiary competencies interrelate affecting outcomes for the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) programme in the Eastern Cape Province.

Guided by an interpretivist paradigm, the analysis privileged insights into meanings, interactions, and contextual realities embedded within participants' narratives and documentary writings, as opposed to quantifying variables or testing pre-specified hypotheses. Analysing data was based on inductive reasoning that suggested that theoretical insights derived from the empirical data could evolve incrementally (Saunders et al., 2019). This iterative and reflexive activity enabled patterns, categories, and conceptual relationships to emerge from the data. Data analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework for thematic analysis and was supported by NVivo 12 software to ensure systematic coding, methodological rigour, and transparency in theory development.

Data were organised, coded, and interpreted in a systematised fashion to locate emerging themes and institutional characteristics that had shaped the LRAD approach. All interview transcripts and documentary files were first transcribed verbatim and imported into NVivo. The first step, open coding, called for line-by-line identification of meaningful textual categories that were to eventually be the basis for provisional codes. Later these initial codes were further developed by axial coding that introduced notions of how categories like secure tenure, market accessibility, post-settlement support, and institutional performance were related conceptually.

The last stage, selective coding incorporated these relationships into overarching thematic constructs compatible with the theoretical framework of the study. In doing so, the researcher adopted an approach that cycled from the data and from our codes to the developing

theory as a way of maintaining analytic consistency. The interpretive logic of the study was framed by three complementary theoretical frameworks: Ricardo's Theory of Economic Rent (Ricardo, 1817/2004), the Resource-Based View (RBV) (Barney, 1991), and small-scale productivity theories (Ellis, 2000; Dorward et al., 2009; Hazell et al., 2010). Ricardo's framework facilitated an examination of how variations in land quality, fertility, and location generate productivity differentials, while small-scale productivity theories illuminated the role of market access, institutional support, and structural constraints in shaping agricultural performance. The RBV, in turn, provided an interpretive lens for analysing how institutional resources—such as skills, finance, and knowledge—mediate and transform land endowment advantages into sustained agricultural productivity and long-term developmental outcomes.

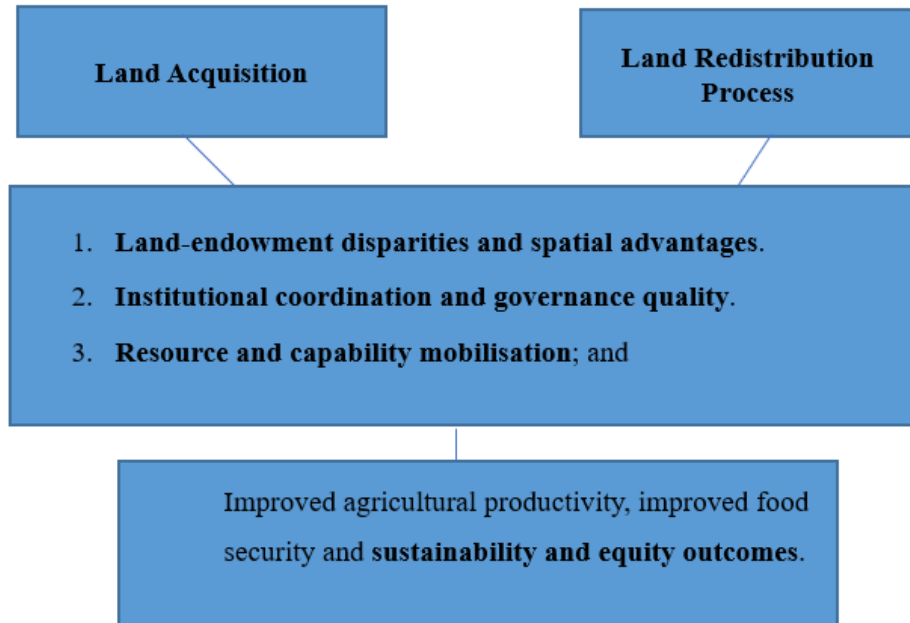
The combining of these perspectives gave insight into LRAD's operations in multiple aspects, connecting the tangible endowments with the intangible capabilities. To ensure the rigor and validity of our analysis, we triangulated our findings using a variety of sources: transcripts from the interviews we conducted, policy papers, and institutional reports to validate our results. Additionally, we have made available a complete trail of our analysis to validate our results with respect to dependability and confirmation. Reflexive journaling served as a helpful way to facilitate this transparency by documenting interpretive decisions and researcher positionality when interpreting the data. The result of the above process was a collective thematic framework that integrated the empirical evidence into four interrelated dimensions of the LRAD's activity:

- Land-endowment disparities and spatial advantages.
- Institutional coordination and quality of governance.
- Mobilising resources and capabilities; and.
- Sustainability and equity outcomes.

It is these themes that built the analytic framework for the development of theory and guided the design of the strategic framework for sustainable land redistribution that we describe in Chapter 5.

Figure 3.2

Thematic Analysis



Source: Author's compilation (2023)

Thematic analysis functioned as the principal interpretative method for examining the textual material obtained from semi-structured interviews and supplementary documentary sources in this study. Newby (2014) defines theme analysis as a method for methodically identifying and examining repeating patterns and conceptual consistencies seen in participants' expressions, experiences, or institutional narratives. This methodology was then employed on the verbatim transcripts and policy papers gathered in this study to extract the fundamental behavioural, institutional, and structural dynamics influencing the LRAD programme in the Eastern Cape Province. The strategy facilitated a thorough examination of textual material to reveal how individuals comprehend and navigate concerns of land access, productivity, and

sustainability within their distinct socio-economic and institutional frameworks (Punch & Oancea, 2014).

Thematic analysis, initially proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), is acknowledged as one of the most robust and adaptable analytical methods in qualitative research. The adoption in this study was thus methodologically warranted and theoretically consistent with the interpretivist and inductive orientation of the research. This methodology enabled the study to capture, interpret, and elucidate the underlying meanings embedded in stakeholder narratives, linking individual perceptions and institutional practices to overarching theoretical frameworks derived from Ricardo's (1817/2004) Theory of Economic Rent, the Resource-Based View (RBV) (Barney, 1991), and small-scale productivity theories that emphasise the roles of market access, asset endowments, and institutional support in shaping smallholder performance (Ellis, 2000; Dorward et al., 2009; Hazell et al., 2010). Thematic analysis offered a structured framework for converting qualitative data into empirically based insights into the relational dynamics among land endowments, institutional capacity, and beneficiary capabilities within the LRAD project.

3.4.3 *Trustworthiness of Data and Ethical Considerations*

3.4.3.1 *Establishing Trustworthiness*

The study employed a qualitative, interpretivist design using semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis to capture the multi-layered realities of the LRAD programme in the Eastern Cape. Credibility and rigour were ensured through the four canonical Lincoln and Guba (1985) criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

The preset scientific process included a combination of interviews and observations, conducted in full alignment with ethical and methodological protocols. The interviewing and observation were conducted in accordance with the guidelines of qualitative field research. The

subjects were made aware of the fact that they were free to pull out from the study whenever they wanted without any consequences.

3.4.3.2 Credibility – Truth Value

Credibility in such a case refers to the reliance on the findings because they are correct and honest. To create increased reliance on these findings, several methods were employed, as discussed below.

Prolonged Engagement and Persistent Observation

The researcher took an entire year to conduct the observations, covering all six districts within the Eastern Cape province, which are Amathole, Chris Hani, OR Tambo, Alfred Nzo, Sarah Baartman, and Joe Gqabi. This ensured that a complex, nuanced perspective could be gained about the inner dynamics of LRAD. The observations took place at the site where the beneficiaries are employed, taking note of how policymakers, extension officers, and farmers interact with each other, including how they address land usage, productivity, and land restitution. This, as a matter that needs clear understanding, according to observations by Barrett and Twycross (2018), requires flexibility in qualitative observations, which involve the researcher observing patterns as they appear.

Triangulation of Data Sources and Theories

Multiple forms of triangulation were applied:

- Data sources included policymakers (DALRRD, DRDAR, and municipalities), people benefited by LRAD, experts in agriculture.
- Method triangulation: a combination of interviews and observations in the field with an analysis of institutional documents.
- Theoretical triangulation: empirical data were interpreted through Ricardo's Theory of Economic Rent and the Resource-Based View (RBV) to cross-validate insights. This

theoretical triangulation, as taken from Creswell and Creswell (2017), tries to enhance credibility because it focused on matching the gathered data against well-established conceptual models.

Sampling and Data Saturation

Purposive sampling technique was utilised by the researcher for the identification of the key informants from the provincial structure of the LRAD. The saturation point was met by the 18th interview, and the subsequent seven interviews also justified the need for saturation. A cumulative target of 25 interviews was met, each of which occurred for 45 minutes to an hour. These interviews were held through face-to-face conversation or Zoom/Skype/WhatsApp/ phone calls, depending upon the convenience of the respondent.

Member Checking and Reflexive Interaction

Following transcription, the researcher undertook a careful and iterative examination of the interview material as part of the credibility assurance process. Preliminary interpretations and selected analytical outcomes were shared with participants to confirm accuracy and resonance with their experiences. Of the total sample of 18 participants, 15 ($n = 15$) were involved in this validation exercise, which was deemed sufficient given that thematic saturation had already been reached. Participant feedback contributed to the refinement of the coding structure and supported the trustworthiness of the analysis. Throughout the study, sustained rapport was maintained with participants, encouraging meaningful engagement with the findings. The absence of feedback from three participants did not undermine the credibility of the study, as no additional themes emerged beyond the point of saturation.

Peer Debriefing and NVivo-Assisted Transparency

The coding frame and the developing themes were validated by the academic supervisor and by a qualitative peer reviewer for consistency. The researcher utilised NVivo software

version 14 to maintain a qualitative audit trail, ensuring all that coding assertions were directly linkable to the source wording.

Transferability – Applicability

Transferability was enhanced through the provision of thick, contextually rich descriptions of the Eastern Cape's geographical, institutional, and socio-economic conditions. The study deliberately foregrounded locally embedded narratives, language use, and district-level variations, such as the contrasts between the relatively fertile agricultural areas of Sarah Baartman District and the semi-arid conditions characterising Alfred Nzo District. This contextual differentiation enables readers to assess the extent to which the findings may be applicable to other provincial or rural land reform settings.

Consistent with the interpretivist position articulated by Creswell and Creswell (2017), transferability in this study does not aim at statistical generalisation but rather at analytical resonance, whereby readers determine the relevance of the findings to comparable contexts. This was achieved through extensive and varied field engagement across districts, allowing patterns and contrasts to emerge in ways that support informed comparison beyond the immediate study area.

Dependability – Consistency

Dependability, which refers to the degree to which findings are believable and trustworthy, was achieved through the creation of an auditable trail. In other words, all aspects of the research process are carefully documented. In keeping with the methodology suggested by McDonald et al. (2019), a methodological calendar is kept, which includes documentation of interview protocols, field journals, and researchers' reflections. Field journals, interview transcripts, and analysis manuscripts are stored and regularly reviewed to audit the methodological rigor of the research. Another mechanism used to audit the research is a code-

recodes check, which involves coding and recoding after a two-week period, resulting in an agreement rate of over 90%.

Confirmability – Neutrality

Confirmability was maintained by ongoing researcher self-reflexivity and careful checks on the data. This was achieved with a personal journal that tracked assumptions, biases, and shifts in interpretations over the course of fieldwork. All interpretations could be traced back to specific texts, by virtue of memos connected via NVivo, promoting this feature of objectivity. Finally, an independent qualitative validator was brought in to assess whether the specific findings had been properly interpreted, free of the researchers' own biases, in terms of meeting participants' reality, not researchers' desires.

3.4.4 Ethical Considerations

This research study adhered to the guidelines by the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) and the laws in South Africa that regulate human subject research. Ethical integrity was built into every stage of the process.

3.4.4.1 Ethics Clearance and Gatekeeper Permissions

Ethics clearance was approved prior to data collection initiation. Letters of support were obtained from the research organisation, institutions, DALRRD, DRDAR, and district municipal authorities, which granted us permission to interact with authorities and beneficiaries.

3.4.4.2 Informed Consent and Participant Rights

All participants were consenting to adults over 18 years of age. They were briefed on the study's purpose, their voluntary participation, the confidentiality of their responses, and their right to withdraw at any stage without consequence. Written consent was secured before

each interview; where literacy was limited, verbal consent in isiXhosa was recorded with a witness present.

3.4.4.3 Confidentiality and Anonymity

To protect confidentiality, participants were assigned pseudonyms (for example, “*Beneficiary 06, OR Tambo*”). All electronic data were encrypted and kept on password-secured devices, with access restricted solely to the researcher. Information obtained from institutions was reported in aggregated form to prevent the identification of individual officials or the attribution of specific statements to them.

3.4.4.4 Non-Maleficence and Respectful Engagement

All questions were framed to avoid political sensitivities around land ownership. Interviews were scheduled with flexibility to accommodate participants’ farming routines, community responsibilities, and religious observances. There was a laboratory culture that was founded upon respect and equality.

3.4.4.5 Data Management and Retention

The sound recordings and transcripts are safely archived for a period of five years from the time of publishing in compliance with UREC and POPIA (Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013). Thereafter, the information will be deleted or archived for secondary research under limited ethics.

3.4.4.6 Reciprocity and Feedback

In accordance with ethics that support participatory research, we shared summary findings with the cooperatives and the agricultural offices. This not only fulfilled the principle of reciprocity but reinforced community trust and the legitimacy of academic engagement in public policy research.

3.4.5 *Integration with the Study's Philosophical Orientation*

The study's ethical and methodological design reflects its interpretivist orientation, treating ethics and trustworthiness as epistemological commitments rather than bureaucratic formalities.

Credibility was conceptualised as relational validity, in other words, ensuring that findings resonated authentically with those whose lives and livelihoods form the substance of land reform.

The research process thus mirrored the broader theoretical synthesis underpinning the study, with each ethical and methodological principle reflecting a corresponding conceptual foundation. First, just as Ricardo's Theory of Economic Rent emphasises the efficient allocation and utilisation of scarce and heterogeneous resources, the study's ethical discipline ensured the efficient, responsible, and respectful use of social trust, treating participants' knowledge as a scarce and valuable asset rather than an extractive commodity (Ricardo, 1817/2004). Ethical integrity therefore became the methodological analogue to Ricardian efficiency: both require careful stewardship of limited, unevenly distributed resources to generate meaningful value.

Similarly, in line with the Resource-Based View (RBV), which foregrounds the strategic importance of intangible capabilities—such as knowledge, skills, relationships, and organisational routines, the research approach recognised that methodological transparency, reflexivity, and participant respect constitute core epistemic capabilities of the study itself (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993). The credibility, dependability, and confirmability of findings were therefore treated as strategic assets that enhance the quality and interpretive power of the research, much as capabilities enhance firm-level performance in RBV logic.

In addition, Small Scale Behavioural Theory—which emphasises risk perceptions, household constraints, labour allocation, and decision-making under uncertainty—found

parallels in the study's commitment to minimising respondent burden, protecting participant vulnerability, and engaging sensitively with livelihood realities (Ellis, 1993; Barrett et al., 2022). Just as smallholders optimise behaviour under complex constraints, the research process required the careful balancing of analytical depth with respect for participants' time, socio-economic conditions, and cultural contexts.

The research process itself became a kind of mini-land system that integrated various sources and scales of interpretation to reveal the complexity of LRAD results.

In conclusion, the approach aligns with critical agrarian studies and decolonial knowledges that contend that knowledge production in land-related research must challenge historical patterns of extraction, silencing, and epistemic injustice (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2017; Scoones et al., 2019). By prioritising participant agency, ensuring informed consent, and granting space for community narratives, the study operationalised these theoretical commitments, positioning ethical practice as a form of epistemic decolonisation.

Taken together, these elements illustrate that the methodological and ethical framework of the research was not simply a procedural requirement but a theory-informed "capability system." The research design functioned as an applied extension of the conceptual model. The theoretical frameworks that underpinned the conceptual model were:

- Ricardian efficiency guided responsible resource use.
- RBV informed the cultivation of methodological capabilities.
- Small Scale behavioural models provided sensitivity to participant realities and,
- Decolonial theory ensured justice-oriented, contextually grounded epistemic practice.

In this way, the research process reflected, embodied, and operationalised the same theoretical logic that underpins the study's analysis of land redistribution in the Eastern Cape.

3.5 Summary

This chapter outlines the philosophical basis and the methodological process of the research, and justify the qualitative and interpretivist methodology as appropriate for investigating the complex process of LRAD within the context of the EC. The current chapter has three main arguments.

The first argument is that the interpretivist and inductive research philosophy is more pertinent to understanding meanings and contexts and experiences that cannot be captured quantitatively. This research approach is more appropriate in understanding the experiences of beneficiaries and government officials in the implementation of land reform.

The second argument is that the research design and sampling strategy were purposively developed to ensure the credibility and representativeness of the research. The reasoning behind the use of purposive sampling is discussed in detail and demonstrates the need to obtain diverse and influential views from LRAD beneficiaries and stakeholders and the community.

The third argument is that the data analysis methodologies adopted in the research provide a consistent and systematic way of identifying patterns in qualitative data. Furthermore, this data analysis strategy enhances the research study in integrating theories and concepts from Ricardo's Theory of Economic Rent and the RBV.

Overall, this chapter demonstrates the philosophical and research design consistency and rigor of the research study. Trustworthiness is ensured in this research study through triangulation, sustained engagement, and strict adherence to ethical considerations. In conclusion, the research study demonstrates sufficient methodological rigor in this chapter to ensure the integrity and scholarly authenticity of the research findings. The next chapter presents the data analysis and findings in the form of themes in relation to the research questions and the research theories and concepts.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is intended to distil the outcome from the study, focusing its attention on the primary focus for the study and developing questions stemming from this outcome. This work is based on data from research interview interactions, with additional data from research related to land development assessments for interpretation purposes, development of study concepts, based on the availability of land resources, institutional functionality, as well as the ability within beneficiaries, as used within the context of the LRAD project setting within the East Cape, South Africa.

This chapter uses the interpretivist approach, as outlined in Chapter 3, and weaves together Ricardo's Theory of Economic Rent published in 1817, the Resource-Based View or RBV, and Small-Scale Productivity Theories to interpret results of LRAD in the Eastern Cape. From a Ricardo's perspective, inequality in land potential and economic rents resulting from soil attributes, water availability, topographic features, and distance from markets can be identified. Through the Resource-Based View, human capital resources such as financial capital, talent, knowledge, and managerial talent are used by the individual and farming households to realise long-term performance of land. Small-Scale Productivity theories add meaning and depth to the analysis by taking into consideration behavioural and household aspects of agricultural production such as labour allocation, risk preference, role of women, indigenous knowledge, and scarcity effects of resources in shaping decisions of what and how much of "farm products and animals" should be raised.

Taken in conjunction, these theories provide a complex understanding of LRAD performance, where Ricardo identifies what the land has to offer, the theory of RBV reveals what the agents are able to do with the land, and the smallholder theories promote an

understanding of behaviour, constraints, and decision-making capabilities as a function of the real productivity of the land.

There are three major concepts that support the chapter. Firstly, LRAD is considered in dual roles as both policy and practice in understanding how laws and means of administration influence land reform delivery on various levels such as national, provincial, and municipal levels. Secondly, as equity, productivity, and sustainably goals of LRAD altogether, multiples perspectives in relation to agricultural productivity, improving livelihoods, land use, and resource conservation in relation to Ricardian and RBV theories will also be evaluated. Thirdly, this chapter places location at the forefront as a key determinant because what would be effective for commercially oriented areas such as Sarah Baartman, where land is fertile and accessible to the marketplace, would not be as effective for a location such as Alfred Nzo District, with land that is divided and not as fertile along with a lack of infrastructure.

The discussion is organised around four interwoven themes identified within the findings. These findings can then be interpreted using a bi-lensed approach consisting of Ricardo's Theory of Economic Rent, the Resource-Based View, and Small-Scale Productivity Theory.

4.1.1 Theme 1—Fragmented Institutional Coordination and Governance Deficiencies which align with Objective 1.

This topic considers how legislation and institutions drive land use and agricultural output. This points out how conflicting and inadequate implementation of levels of administration hinder land reform and development policies.

4.1.2 Theme 2—Land Endowments, Market Access, and Productivity Disparities—aligns with Objective 2

It examines how variables such as the quality of the land, markets, institutions, and human capital affect productivity. The concept of shifting economic returns proposed by

Ricardo explains why different parts of the province produce different things using similar resources, while the Resource-Based View (RBV) helps define this shift.

4.1.3 Theme 3—Beneficiary Capabilities and Post-Settlement Support Systems—aligns with Objective 3

This theme investigates the perils of LRAD and illustrates how a lack of skills, money, or managerial capabilities, complemented by sporadic governmental assistance, make it difficult for individuals to become successful contributors and to maintain long-term reforms.

4.1.4 Theme 4—Towards an Integrated, Transformative Land-Redistribution Framework—aligns with Objective 4

Theme 4 consolidates all prior observations to create a model centred on individuals' capabilities. This idea combines greater connections to the market, mapping resources, better cooperation across institutions, training and support, and additional ways to receive money. These themes highlight how the complete system has changed over time. They start by recognising difficulties in companies (Theme 1), then move on to understanding the economic and geographic elements that affect productivity (Theme 2), then recognising the gaps in human and institutional support (Theme 3) and finally developing a better system (Theme 4).

The discourse is based on real-world facts, such direct quotes, and it uses several kinds of proof. It also employs tables to explain how the data backs up the conclusions. The result makes it apparent why the same inputs in LRAD can lead to very different results in different regions of the province. It also says what must be done to make sure that reforms in agriculture are fair and work.

4.2 Empirical and Institutional Context of the Study

4.2.1 Case Study Context

The Eastern Cape Province serves as a unique and analytically rich setting in which to consider the application of South Africa's Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) programme. As one of the most socially and economically diverse and historically marginalised provinces in the country, it demonstrates a dual economic framework where well-capitalised commercial farming stands alongside extensive rural communal land that is characterised by low-input farming, fragmented tenure regimes, and chronic underinvestment (Aliber & Cousins, 2013; Hall & Kepe, 2017).

This dual status is the direct result of colonial segregation, apartheid Homeland-oriented policies and decades of skewed public expenditure, all of which continue to condition areas of land access, production capacity, and market participation after 1994 (Kloppers & Pienaar, 2014; Cousins, 2020). The importance of this broader context is recognised and emphasised, as the impact of land redistribution is determined not only by policy architecture but also by biophysical factors, market accessibility, institutional capacity and the ability of beneficiaries to pool resources and skills (Sihlobo, 2023). This phase can be seen to situate LRAD in the social and economic context of the province, agro-ecological variation, and governance situation, which show how historical- and structural constraints affect land availability and the capacity of redistributed farms in sustainable productivity and rural transformation. The Eastern Cape, comprising established commercial farming corridors, degraded communal areas, and uneven municipal capacity makes it an excellent empirical ground to study the nexus of land quality, resource endowments, policy realisation, and farmer capacity.

The Eastern Cape also acts as an attractive within-case comparative area as it encompasses, within a single province, various sorts of agro-ecological zones and institutional configurations

(DAFF, 2018; Eastern Cape Department of Rural Development & Agrarian Reform [DRDAR], 2021).

The province's six districts include Sarah Baartman, Chris Hani, Amathole, Joe Gqabi, Alfred Nzo and OR Tambo. They exhibit stark variations in rainfall patterns, soil fertility, terrain, infrastructure density, demographics, and historic agricultural land administration. They also differ in area municipalities' planning capacity, extension service coverage, and the degree of local value chains and market linkages (Hall 2019; Cousins & Scoones 2020). This diversity in ecological and institutional characteristics is not an analytical complication but rather a conceptual advantage that permits in-depth evaluation of LRAD performance in regions with differential endowment leading to differing capability distribution patterns. Theoretically, this aligns with Ricardian land quality differentials, RBV human capital variances and smallholder productivity limitations. This dynamic is best demonstrated at a district level, through a number of differences.

Sarah Baartman District for irrigated horticulture, dairy farms, and established agri-processing corridors features great transport infrastructure in favour of cold-chain logistics and has close proximity to the Port of Ngqura, all of which maximise Ricardian locational advantage and minimise transaction costs (Sihlobo, 2020).

The Alfred Nzo and OR Tambo districts, by contrast, have challenging topographies, dispersed rural settlements, significant soil erosion and underdeveloped market infrastructure that led to a high cost of production and aggregation for smallholders (Cousins, 2020). Chris Hani and Amathole represent a mix of such pockets with large swaths of agriculture and historic irrigation infrastructure, however inconsistent extension support and municipal capacity constrain development. Joe Gqabi offers a mixed profile quality fodder and grazing potential in select parts of the district is balanced with limited processing capacity and lengthy distances to major consumers and wholesalers (DRDAR, 2021).

The wide variety observed at the project level reflect these district-based differences. Some (LRAD) farms show enhanced yields and successful integration into value chains, reliable water access and reinvesting power—usually beneficiaries who are better-served and better-managed, have more experience farming or are mentored by managers linked to enterprise choice (Sihlobo, 2023). Elsewhere, projects are still weak or stalled: limited working capital, lack of mechanisation, degraded soils, sporadic extension support, or unstable markets (Hall & Kepe, 2017; Cousins, 2020). In fact, these results act as a uniform mosaic that demonstrates a principle captured in practical literature also being echoed among others: land reforms that result in sustainable productivity improvements will require that endowment advantages of land quality, water, and infrastructure be matched by capabilities in terms of skills, capital and organisation (Barrett et al., 2022)

Taken together, the Eastern Cape's complex biophysical, institutional, historical, and socio-economic landscape has made it an informative region for consideration of the effectiveness of LRAD. The province provides a subtle context to consider how land redistribution interacts with Ricardian differential advantage, RBV capabilities and smallholder productivity constraints to condition long-term agricultural outcomes.

4.2.2 Data Sources and Triangulation

To surface these dynamics, the research drew on 18 key informant interviews across the six districts, deliberately sampling the policy–practice interface:

- Government officials (DALRRD, DRDAR, Municipal LED): 6 interviews conducted.
- Beneficiaries (smallholders and emergent commercial farmers under LRAD): 6 interviews conducted.
- Technical experts (extension officers, AgriSETA mentors): 3 interviews conducted; and
- Researchers (universities, ARC, NGOs): 3 interviews conducted.

Interview data were corroborated and contextualised using provincial agricultural strategies, LRAD implementation reports, programme audits, and development-finance records obtained from Land Bank and IDC. This triangulation is methodologically important as it mitigates reliance on single-source narratives and anchors participant perceptions in a documentary record of mandates, budgets, and monitoring.

Table 4.1

Distribution of Participants by Institutional Affiliation and District

Category	Institutional Affiliation	Number of Participants	Representative Districts
Government officials	DALRRD / DRDAR / Municipal LED	6	Chris Hani, Amathole, OR Tambo
Beneficiaries	LRAD smallholders and commercial farmers	6	Sarah Baartman, Joe Gqabi, Alfred Nzo
Technical experts	Extension officers / AgriSETA mentors	3	Multiple districts
Researchers	Universities / NGOs / Agricultural Research Council	3	Provincial coverage
Total		18	

Table 4.2 summarises the details of the conducted interviews in relation to the expected number of responses.

Table 4.2

Response Rate

	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSE %
Anticipated Interviews	25	100%
Conducted Interviews	18	72%

Source: Interview data

Table 4.3
Demographic Profile of Study Participants

Participant ID	District (Eastern Cape)	Gender	Age Range (Years)	Professional Title / Role Description
P01	Amathole	Male	46–55	Senior Extension Officer – DRDAR
P02	Amathole	Female	36–45	LRAD Beneficiary (Vegetable Cooperative Leader)
P03	Chris Hani	Male	56–65	District Director – DALRRD
P04	Chris Hani	Female	26–35	Emerging Farmer – Poultry and Livestock
P05	OR Tambo	Male	36–45	Policy Analyst – Provincial Land Reform Unit
P06	OR Tambo	Female	46–55	Agricultural Economist – University of Fort Hare
P07	Alfred Nzo	Male	26–35	Young Agripreneur – Livestock Project
P08	Alfred Nzo	Female	36–45	Programme Coordinator – Local Municipality
P09	Sarah Baartman	Male	46–55	Senior Researcher – Agricultural Research Council
P10	Sarah Baartman	Female	26–35	LRAD Beneficiary – Horticulture Project
P11	Joe Gqabi	Male	36–45	Land Reform Facilitator – District Office
P12	Joe Gqabi	Female	46–55	Cooperative Manager – Crop Production
P13	Amathole	Male	26–35	Youth Agripreneur – AgriSETA Graduate
P14	OR Tambo	Female	56–65	Retired Extension Supervisor (Consultant)
P15	Chris Hani	Male	36–45	Rural Development Officer
P16	Alfred Nzo	Female	26–35	Agribusiness Trainer – Academy Business School
P17	Sarah Baartman	Male	46–55	Commercial Farmer and Mentor
P18	Joe Gqabi	Female	36–45	NGO Programme Officer – Rural Livelihoods

Source: Interview data, 2024

Table 4.4*Summary Demographic Statistics*

Category	Breakdown	Observation
Total Participants	18	Full representation across all six Eastern Cape districts
Gender Distribution	Male: 10 (55%) Female: 8 (45%)	Near gender balance reflecting inclusive sampling
Age Distribution	26–35 years: 4 (22%) 36–45 years: 6 (33%) 46–55 years: 6 (33%) 56–65 years: 2 (12%)	Majority in active professional age bracket (36–55)
District Representation	Amathole (3); Chris Hani (3); OR Tambo (3); Alfred Nzo (3); Sarah Baartman (3); Joe Gqabi (3)	Equal coverage ensures geographical balance
Participant Type	Government/Institutional: 10 (55%) Beneficiary/Private Sector: 8 (45%)	Balanced mix of policy and practitioner perspectives

Source: Interview data, 2024

4.2.3 Interpretation of the demographic spread

The subjects were chosen on purpose to show how far LRAD could reach in the Eastern Cape in terms of institutions and locations. The study encompasses the perspectives of government officials, academics, and notably, LRAD recipients regarding both policy implications and personal narratives. This ensures that the results show not only how land reform was meant to work, but also how it really did work. The study is better because it includes people of all ages and genders. This shows how differences between generations and socioeconomic groups affect how people get land, how they participate in LRAD, and how they manage the problems and benefits that come with it.

4.3 Analytical Orientation and Interpretive Logic

This chapter commences with the Analytical Orientation and Interpretive Logic that underpins the synthesis of Themes 1 through 4 and demonstrates the process of interpretation of empirical patterns through the interplay of the three sets of dynamics. Thematic data analysis was employed through the process of iterative coding and constant comparison. The codes were deductively derived from the interview transcripts and documents and then categorized into concepts that coalesced to form the four saturated themes. The process of deductive validation of the thematic structure against the Ricardian-RBV framework ensured that the two sets of logic; endowment logic focused on land quality, its physical attributes, and location; and capability logic focused on skills, finances, and institutional routines, were integrated into the thematic structure.

This deductive validation also entailed the synthesis of the key concepts of the Small-Scale Productivity Theories that focused on the interplay of household assets, risk-taking behaviour, market access, labour availability, and agronomic knowledge. By synthesising these different dimensions of productivity, the analytical process recognises that the productivity of the LRAD beneficiaries results from the interplay of land quality (Ricardian rent), internal capacities (RBV), and the conditions of smallholder farming such as resource availability and information flows.

4.4 Results Reporting

4.4.1 Introduction to Results Reporting

Results emanating from land use tied to the resource endowment in the Eastern Cape serve as the empirical basis upon which this research is founded. In this regard, since these resource endowments directly influence land redistribution and productive use, they themselves indirectly contribute towards setting the focus through which the Land

Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) policy is analysed. Presentation of research results in this chapter is thus geared toward answering research questions and satisfying objectives one through four.

The qualitative data was collected mainly from in-depth interviews of key stakeholders in land use planning, representatives of the Department of Agriculture and Land Reform in the Eastern Cape government, as well as researchers in think tanks that carry out research on land use policies in the Eastern Cape. The selection of contributors was purposive in that they had key experience in terms of institutional understanding of land use in relation to agricultural productivity and implementation of the policy of land redistribution.

Patterns and insights that emerged from the data were systematically organised into overarching themes, subsidiary themes, and analytical categories. The findings were subsequently presented through integrated narrative accounts, tabular summaries, and visual displays to illustrate the interconnectedness of legal frameworks, land endowments, human capabilities, and institutional coordination. Interview findings were further corroborated through field observations and documentary sources and were then interpreted within an integrated conceptual framework grounded in Land Rent Theory, the Resource-Based View (RBV), and small-scale productivity theories to ensure theoretical coherence and analytical alignment

The conceptual framing device allowed for the examination and explanation not only of the biophysical and geographic factor designates of productivity (as discussed within Ricardian rent), and the capability aggrandising properties within skills, finance, and institutional processes (as discussed within the RBV), but also the domestic sphere dynamics, limitations within markets, characteristics associated with labour, and risk behaviours to manage performance within the smallholder sector. The frameworks therefore allowed for a

multi-dimensional conceptual explanation associated with the analysis of productivity differentials among LRAD scheme beneficiaries within the Eastern Cape Province.

In line with its interpretivist and theory-informed approach, the study presents its results in themes based on the four research goals and associated research questions. Each theme represents a different level of analysis in the LRAD system in the Eastern Cape, from the frameworks of governance and policies (Theme 1), land endowments and differentials in productivity (Theme 2), capabilities and support in post-settlement (Theme 3), to the transformative framework (Theme 4). Reporting results in this chapter is based upon three academic principles:

Transparency: Ability to trace data sources, coding, and contributions.

Interpretive Depth: Results are reported in terms of meaning patterns, not isolated data points.

Theory Integration: Each result is placed through an interpretive lens consisting of three components: Ricardo's Theory of Economic Rent, Resource-Based View (RBV), and Small-Scale Productivity Theories.

This permits an analysis to relate to the conditions of land productivity based on endowments (soil quality, productivity, and location), capabilities based on advantages of skills, finances, technology, and organisational routines, respectively. This ensures that there is a continuum from results presentation to the synthesis of interpretation, as indicated below, which demonstrates land use, capability, and governance dynamics in sustainable LRAD outcomes in the Eastern Cape.

4.4.2 Organisation of Results

Results are organised according to four inter-linked themes, each corresponding to a research objective and its associated question. The ambition is to progress from diagnosis to

synthesis in showing how empirical realities evolve into theoretical understanding and, in turn, into a practical framework for reform.

Each theme consists of three layers of analysis:

- *Empirical findings*: What came out of the data through interviews, observations, and documentation.
- *Analytical Interpretation*: How these findings address the guiding research question.
- *Theoretical Synthesis*: How the interpreted results align with Ricardo's Theory of Economic Rent, the Resource-Based View (RBV), and Small-Scale Productivity Theories.

This tri-theoretical alignment indicates how LRAD outcomes are shaped simultaneously by endowment logics in terms of soil quality, rainfall, water availability, spatial location, capability logics- see skills, finance, technology, and institutional routines-, and smallholder productivity dynamics including household labour constraints, risk behaviour, market access barriers, and adaptive livelihood strategies.

Accordingly:

- The first theme received fragmented institutional coordination and governance weaknesses, hence responding to Objective 1 on the influence of policy design, institutional support, and post-settlement services. In smallholder productivity terms, institutional gaps have direct effects on information flows, extension systems, risk mitigation, and decision-making independence, fundamental drivers of smallholder performance.
- Theme 2: Land endowments, market access and productivity differentials, Objective 2 on drivers of land use and productivity. This includes the Ricardian focus on land quality and spatial advantage; while Small Scale Productivity Theories stress how imperfect markets, transport costs, labour shortages, and risk exposure impinge upon the ability of LRAD farmers to convert endowment into actual output.

- Theme 3 covers beneficiary capabilities and post-settlement support systems, thus addressing Objective 3 on capability development and institutional support. This is consistent with RBV's focus on the role of skills and resources; and with Small-Scale Productivity Theories, linking productivity to human capital, agronomic knowledge, and finance access, and to the ability to adopt improved technologies.
- Theme 4 synthesises all the previous findings into one coherent and transformative land redistribution framework that addresses Objective 4 on systemic reform. In this synthesis, the following is revealed: that for land reform to be sustainable, land endowment quality-alignment (Ricardo) and capability enhancement (RBV) with household-level productivity drivers must come forth (smallholder theory), which leads to the realisation that transformation emanates as a result of convergence and not in isolation of these dimensions.

In this study, tables and figures are imbedded within each theme to visually link sequence objectives, research questions leading to key findings and theoretical interpretation. This cross-referencing provides continuity for analysis throughout the chapter.

4.4.3 Analytical Procedure and Data Representation

4.4.3.1 Data Analysis and Theme Development

Theme identification involved the stages of the analytics phase of the study. Using NVivo 14 software, the study transcripts, as well as the institution documentation, underwent the various stages of coding. At the stage of open coding, the study underwent the allocation of descriptive codes to recurring expressions that were emerging within the study's narratives. At the stage of axial coding, the study underwent the grouping of the ideas in terms of their conceptuality. Consequently, at the stage of selective coding, the ideas underwent convergence to the four themes that were consistent with the study goals.

Consequently, each theme was further subject to a process of cross-validation not only within the Ricardian-Resource-Based View (RBV) framework but also within the realm of Small-Scale Productivity Theories. This threefold validation procedure ensured that a validation of (a) endowment logics including land quality, fertility, rainfall, and geographic position; (b) capability logics including skills, finance, technology, extension services, and institutional routines; and (c) smallholder productivity drivers including labour availability, risk-taking, market distortions, transaction costs, agricultural knowledge, and input utilisation were achieved for the thematic structure built to organise the research results from the study. Blending the different dimensions within these theories enhanced the rigor of interpretation within the research analysis by acknowledging that LRAD productivity drivers are a product of the complex nexus underlying land endowments, resource capabilities, and the actual reality associated with smallholder agricultural enterprise.

Primary data for the study were collected via in-depth interviews and observations, and these were validated using secondary sources like policy files. The obtained data was entered into the NVivo 14 software and analysed using three iterative cycles of coding as follows:

- Open Coding was firstly used to discern descriptive categories: The emerging categories are “budget delays,” “mentorship gaps”, and “constraints of market access”, which are very apt with existing literature on smallholders.
- Axial Coding for clustering codes related to themes that could be generalised as “institutional coordination,” “endowment constraints,” or perhaps “capability alignment.”
- Selective Coding for matching the emergent codes with theoretical codes such as Ricardian endowment rent, RBV capability rent, and key drivers of smallholder productivity, which involve risk management techniques, labour dynamics, and market factors.

Thus, this inductive-deductive process enabled the observation of empirical patterns to emerge naturally while keeping it within the overall framework of the study. Also, with the

inclusion of Small-Scale Productivity Theories, observations during the coding process were able to factor in variables related to the scarcity of resources, climatic shocks, and lack of autonomy in decision-making, which are usually mediators in turning land availability to productivity.

The assessment of the results was analysed and judged based on the literature review as was discussed in Chapter 2. The assessment was benchmarked against the theoretical frameworks that were anchored on the Ricardian Theory of Rent (1817), Resource-Based View, and Modern Small Scale Productivity Theories. The themes that were identified were therefore examined within the window of the research questions and objectives as were highlighted in Chapter 1. Figure 4.1 below shows the process followed in coding data and deriving themes for analysis.

Figure 4.1*Process of Data Coding and Theme Development*

Step 1: DATA COLLECTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Observations • Policy & Institutional Documents
Step 2: DATA PREPARATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcription • Verification • Familiarisation with Content
Step 3: OPEN CODING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of key phrases, patterns, and meanings • Generation of descriptive codes (e.g., “budget delays,” “mentorship gaps”)
Step 4: AXIAL CODING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grouping related codes into conceptual categories • Emerging clusters reflect institutional, spatial, and capability dynamics
Step 5: SELECTIVE CODING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refinement of categories into coherent thematic structures • Deductive cross-checking with Ricardian and RBV theoretical constructs
Step 6: THEME FORMATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 1: Fragmented Institutional Coordination and Governance Weaknesses • Theme 2: Land Endowments, Market Access, and Productivity Differentials • Theme 3: Beneficiary Capabilities and Post-Settlement Support Systems • Theme 4: Towards an Integrated, Transformative Land-Redistribution Framework
Step 7: THEORETICAL VALIDATION AND INTEGRATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with Objectives and Research Questions
RESULTS PRESENTATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpretation of Empirical Patterns through Ricardian–RBV Lens

Source: Author- Chapter 4: Evaluation of Findings (2024)

4.4.3.2 Participant Quotations and Verbatim Evidence

For purposes of keeping the conversation authentic, direct quotes are included in the section discussing each theme. The quotes are labelled in a manner that ensures anonymity yet enables tracking: for example, “Extension Officer, OR Tambo” or “Beneficiary, Amathole

Districts.” Field observations regarding office environments and communication between departments add to the findings gained by conducting interviews and include what the directive to act on the policy looked like in implementation or lack thereof.

4.4.3.3 Data Triangulation and Verification

The use of cross-verification was implemented to ensure the maintenance of analytical rigor and the validation of the results. This method entails the use of various views on a given phenomenon and identifies three types of cross-verification, namely source triangulation, methodological cross-verification, and interpretive framework.

- (1) **Source Triangulation:** The results were cross-checked for validation using various categories of information sources. Results obtained from government documents and expert opinions were cross-checked with the findings obtained from on-the-ground practitioners and programme beneficiaries from the districts within the province of the Eastern Cape.
- (2) **Methodological Cross-Verification:** The findings on the substantive issue like disorganized coordination efforts were cross-verified through cross-verification using different theoretical frameworks like the works of Ricardo and modern institutional economics.
- (3) **Cross-Verification Procedure:** The cross-verification procedure consisted of cross verifying the findings with the corroborating testimony obtained through district interviews and the issues identified through the reports submitted by the Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform (DRDAR) and national policy evaluations.
- (4) **Interpretive Framework:** The cross-verification procedure was used to interpret the findings. The findings were considered valid if they were cross-verified, and conclusions were drawn on that basis. The findings that did not cross-verify were not

considered invalid but were used to derive additional insights into the complex dynamics of the system of land reform.

4.4.4 Presentation Style

4.4.4.1 Narrative Structure

Findings are presented in thematic storytelling fashion rather than statistical summary form. Each theme commences with a quick briefing on the purpose and research question that serves as the theme's focus, followed by presentation of the supporting evidence and commentary towards theoretical integration with Ricardo and RBV. For example, the story format has been given as follows:

Chapter 1,

Section 4a: Institutional Fragmentation and Policy Misalignment.

- This part highlights issues of empirical findings from the data.

Section 4b: Land Productivity and Redistribution Implications.

- This section is concerned with Analytical Interpretation of Results.

Heading 4c: Ricardian-RBV Explanation: Institutional Rent and Capability Misalignment.

- This section deals with the connection of the results to theoretical frameworks.

Such a layered design provides a smooth transition from observation to explanation.

4.4.4.2 Integration of Visuals

Visual tools promote analytical clarity.

- Tables 4.6 to 4.12 give an overview of the chain of objectives
- Figure 4.2 shows the conceptual framework.

Each visualisation is followed by text providing explanations, thus making sure that the visual representations serve as tools for analysis, instead of simple decorations.

4.4.5 *Thematic Reporting Strategy*

Table 4.5 presents a uniform reporting format that was applied to ensure clarity and comparability across themes.

Table 4.5

Thematic Reporting Strategy

Reporting Element	Description	Analytical Focus
Objective & Research Question	Restated at the start of each theme	Clarifies analytical purpose
Empirical Findings	Key evidence from interviews, observations, and documents	Answers what is happening?
Analytical Interpretation	Relationships, causes, implications	Answers why it is happening?
Theoretical Integration	Application of Ricardo + RBV+ Small Scale Productivity Theories	Answers what does it mean?
Summary Table	Condensed visual synthesis	Links across themes

This consistent framework ensures readers can easily trace how each empirical layer contributes to the overall synthesis.

4.4.6 *Theory-Linked Results Interpretation*

All results are analysed using a triangulated theoretical framework.

The Ricardian Explanation (Economic Rent) as it is used to explain LRAD is based on the premise that agricultural productivity is not only a function of the inherent qualities of land, such as fertility, proximity to water, and geographical advantage, but also a function of the quality of institutions that support these qualities. Theoretically, a better quality of land should mean a greater potential for economic rent. However, in LRAD programs, inefficiencies on the part of the government and institutions, such as delayed provision of inputs, fragmented support services to settlers, inadequate extension support, and poor coordination among relevant agencies, often result in a waste of good land because it is not economically viable. The poor performance of LRAD is not only a result of poor implementation but also a result of the

program's failure to leverage good land qualities into productivity because of inadequate support institutions.

RBV Explanation (Capability Rent): It is an explanation of how being able to use one's capabilities properly enhances project success. When all key elements are right—for instance, mentorship opportunities, market accessibility, credit accessibility, as well as proper governance, where they increase capability rent, even on less capable land resources or even struggling land resources under drought conditions.

Small-Scale Productivity Explanation: This stresses the importance of productivity assessments in relation to factors and structures on the household level. This encompasses details such as labour issues, marketplace risks, input/output market accessibility, information asymmetry, transaction costs, technology level, and their susceptibility to the concerns about climate patterns. These variables explain the reasoning behind landholders having equal productivity levels despite being Beneficiaries of the LRAD Scheme.

A triangle of this type transforms descriptive knowledge into explanatory power through illustrating the role of ecological assets, capability configuration, and smallholder behavioural structural attributes in determining the outcome delivered through LRAD.

4.4.7 Reporting of Observations

Observational data can be presented in a narrative form to ease the process of data interpretation. The field observations were used to record the interactions between the farmers and the implementers of the policy, which presented the gap between the intended process and the actual process of implementation. For instance, the extension meetings in the districts may present a bottleneck in the process, which may fit the information provided by the informants about the delayed allocation of money. According to Salmon (2015), unstructured observation helps to look for the context-specific processes that may appear to be invisible in other forms of research processes.

4.4.8 Reporting and Triangulation of Risks and Constraints

Systemic risk factors, namely, financial, institutional, environmental, and social factors, are reported across themes rather than as discrete crises. Cross-theme triangulation illustrated the propagation of one weakness (e.g., finance delays) into subsequent weaknesses (e.g., productivity decline), influencing the overall sustainability of LRAD. This risk synthesis directly contributed to the integrative framework described in Theme 4.

4.4.9 Integrative Reporting Flow

In addressing complex and multi-level data, the outcomes are in an increasingly integrated sequence as follows:

- Theme 1: Basic principles of institutions and governance.
- Theme 2: Economic and spatial implications of endowments.
- Theme 3: Systems supporting human and organisational capability.
- Theme 4: The combination of the aforementioned factors to develop a new model for land redistribution.

This phase aligns with systems-thinking principles that encompass identifying foundational structures, enhancing capabilities, and proposing a holistic framework for reform.

4.4.10 Reflexivity and Researcher Positioning

In taking an interpretivist approach to the research, the research study explicitly recognised the dual role of the researcher as an analyst and participant observer. Reflexive journals have allowed the researcher to record professional assumptions grounded in expertise in agricultural economics. The research study has thus approached subjectivity in a unique way than in the positivist paradigm.

4.4.11 Summary of Reporting Logic

Results reporting in this study follows a cumulative, interpretive, and theory-anchored pattern:

- *Cumulative* – each theme builds upon the previous.
- *Interpretive* – findings are embedded within lived institutional experience.
- *Theory-anchored* – every interpretation reference Ricardo, RBV and Small-Scale Productivity theories.

This integrated approach transforms data presentation into a scientific narrative of meaning construction, linking legislative frameworks, land endowments, and human capabilities into a coherent empirical explanation of South Africa's LRAD systems showing how the effective deployment of resource endowments can provide the foundation for a sustainable and equitable land-redistribution process in the Eastern Cape

4.5 Evaluation of Findings and Analysis

4.5.1 Objective 1 – Influence of Policy Design, Institutional Support, and Post-Settlement Services

Research Question: What is the role of legislative and institutional frameworks in shaping LRAD outcomes in the Eastern Cape?

Emergent Theme: Fragmented Institutional Coordination and Governance Weaknesses

4.5.1.1 Introduction: Situating the Objective and Inquiry

This theme is directly related to Objective 1 and its research question regarding the understanding of the effect of the South African legislative and institutional framework on the sustainability and productivity of the transferred land under the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) programme. The study will evaluate the effectiveness of the intended synergy that exists in the legislative framework, the government department

structure, and the support institution in improving post-settlement outcomes or the effect of structural fragmentation.

This section investigates the role of institutional coordination, or lack thereof, on the actualisation and degradation of potential economic rent relating to fertile land, favourable location, household capacity, and enabling policies using insights gleaned from the Theory of Economic Rent by Ricardo (1817), the Resource-Based View (RBV), and the theories of Small-Scale Productivity. While Ricardo's Theory of Economic Rent focuses on land qualities and locations and their role in rent creation, RBV is concerned with skills, capital, and organisational processes and capability rent, respectively. Small-Scale Productivity theories, on the other hand, examine labour availability, market constraints and risk management strategies, and underutilised resources and actualised productivity by beneficiaries. Thus, Theme 1 investigates the governance architecture of the LRAD setup and reveals how there is an erratic performance of the projects in the Eastern Cape and that institutional weaknesses not only diminish the effectiveness of governance but also smallholder capacity and capability to enhance land access and resources and sustainable productivity.

4.5.1.2 Legislative and Policy Foundations: Strong in Principle, Weak in Execution

Land redistribution in South Africa is premised upon the Provision of Land and Assistance Act of 1993, the White Paper of South African Land Policy of 1997, and the Land Restitution and Land Redistribution Framework of 2001. Such documents aimed at ensuring the synergy of restitution, redistribution, and tenure transformation under one philosophy of agrarian justice. However, evidence obtained through the Eastern Cape shows that the policy objective is always undermined by fragmented institutional delivery.

This is supported by the fact that the views of top officials, extension staff, and beneficiaries indicate confusion between the mandates, the centralisation of decision-making, and the budget, which is often not well aligned. This fragmentation directly tackles the research

question by showing how legal and institutional frameworks do not *per se* provide positive outcomes but are instead contingent upon their operational cohesion. Even positive regulations are suboptimal where institutional ties are weak.

From a Ricardian view, waste here constitutes an unexploited potential of rent because while land that can be employed productively lies underutilised because of poor administration. From a RBV view, it would be an issue of capacity discontinuity because while the state has available capacity, it lacks procedures and coordination that would translate it into collective capability.

4.5.1.3 Institutional Coordination and the Architecture of Fragmentation

The truth that the data suggests is one of simplicity: without true collaboration on the national, provincial, and local levels, sustainability at an LRAD in the Eastern Cape Province can be impossible. This collaboration, or a lack of it, that is touted as happening, from the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development to the Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform to the banks and lenders, happens in name only.

There were a number of definite patterns that came from the observations that were done in.

1. *Overlapping Mandates*: Both the DAILRRD and the DRDAR deal with post-settlement support, resulting in duplicative visits, confusing messages, and outright confusion for beneficiaries.
2. *Marginalised Role of the Municipality*: The concerned local government officials, who are supposed to integrate LRAD, are hardly informed about the transfer of land in their jurisdiction.
3. *Ineffective Coordination Forums*: Agrarian Coordination Committees are legally established and rarely meet and have no enforcement power to synchronise the time frames of financial spending.

Collectively, these tendencies are evidence in support of the finding that the effectiveness of policies rests in the capacity to coordinate. When this goal fails to materialise, policy effectiveness becomes local inefficiency.

From a theoretical viewpoint:

- Ricardo's rent theory: productivity falls because of inefficiency and mismanagement of benefits of land.
- Resource-Based View of the firm: The institution will experience the loss of its capability rent, due to the ability to benefit from coordinating capabilities, as well as knowledge.
- Theories of Small-Scale Productivity: These inefficiencies of development contribute to deteriorated labour bottlenecks, risk, market participation, and adoption of superior technologies by farmers.

In general, the fragmentation in the institution is not only a challenge in the governing structures but also disrupts ecological balance, capacity, and household conditions necessary for the smallholders' productive activities within the LRAD system.

4.5.1.4 Post-Settlement Services: The Implementation Deficit

The first objective requires that we examine the impact of support mechanisms on sustainable land use. Field work reveals that support services are located at the end of the LRAD value chain, below the beneficiary. Though skills, support, and credit are needed post-land transfer, these are provided to the beneficiary in the form of one-time grants without follow-through.

Key empirical findings:

- Inadequate funding of the extension services. This is because only one extension services officer is likely to address the needs of over 300 farmers.
- Infrastructural deficiencies: The beneficiaries mention old fencing, damaged irrigation systems, and uncompleted storage structures.

- **Financial Exclusion:** The Exit of Land Banks has resulted in the lack of funding for working and production. This has direct implications in addressing the research questions, as the legal system has described support services, but the implementation process has not delivered. Ricardo argues that the productive rent is lost since capital and labour cannot be complemented with the land, and this can have higher profits than in the ideal situation.

From the RBV theory, the system for land redistribution, lacking dynamic capability, the ability of the organisation to improve through changes in its activities, in the post-state policy, actually: The Small Scale Productivity theories also support that in the institutional system, there is the enhancement of the pre-existing constraints for the capabilities of the household, including labour.

4.5.1.5 Accountability and Learning: Data without Insight

In the area of governance, one important weakness is evident in the failure to learn through institutions. In fact, there are monitoring and evaluation processes put in place, and these are meant for compliance, not adaptation. According to officials, there are hectares and budgets being measured, but not productivity or income.

The system, therefore, does not inquire into why it was effective or unsuccessful. This difference leaves policy in the same rut, repeating the same design flaws *ad infinitum*. In Ricardian terms, it is diminishing returns in bureaucracy, with more of the same productivity output but less improvement in productivity performance. Viewed through the lens of the Resource-Based View, smallholder productivity theories emphasise how the loss of absorptive capacity limits organisational learning, resulting in an inability to convert experience and information into new productive capabilities. Small-Scale Productivity Theories further express that when organisational inefficiencies accumulate, smallholders experience increased transaction costs, higher production risks, and reduced access to timely inputs, extension services, and market information.

This again emphasises Objective 1, highlighting that the structuring of institutions has a pivotal effect on productivity and that the results of governance, besides rule formulation depend upon feedback, reflection, and estimation.

4.5.1.6 Cascading Risks and Systemic Inefficiencies

The study identified four intertwined risks resulting from fractured coordination and weak institutions:

- Administrative risk: includes stalled planning cycles and delayed budgets.
- Financial risk: Misalignments between national and provincial money flows.
- Coordination risk: Confusing roles and lack of accountability
- Capability risk: Less than skilled staff and beneficiaries lacking solid support.

Each one of these serves to feed the next in a vicious cycle: administrative delays stall finance, and funding gaps limit training, while insufficient training results in land lying underutilised—presumably the very chain of causality that the research question was to uncover. Both Ricardo and the RBV end up in the same takeaway: where there is institutional failure, rent dissipates, whether you frame it as economic surplus (Ricardo) or capability edge (RBV). The small-scale productivity theory adds a layer that shows the fragmentation not only wastes the potential of land and undermines the capacity of institutions but also weakens the behavioural and structural ability of farmers to maintain their productivity. In this view, coordination failures erode long-term viability by shrinking ecological rent, organisational capability rent, and smallholder performance potential.

4.5.1.7 Theoretical Integration: From Policy Intent to Institutional Rent Loss

Theme 1 thus reveals that South Africa's legislative design for land reform is conceptually sound but operationally incoherent. Ricardo's Theory of Economic Rent explains the economic dimension of this inefficiency: land's potential surplus cannot materialise when

administrative friction disrupts production. The RBV explains the organisational dimension: the state possesses valuable resources, namely, legal frameworks, personnel, and funding streams, but fails to combine them into productive routines that yield sustained outcomes. Small Scale Productivity Theories further clarify the household-level and structural consequences of this institutional incoherence: weak coordination increases transaction costs, restricts access to inputs and extension services, heightens risk exposure, and limits the adoption of improved technologies, thereby constraining smallholders' ability to transform land access into actual productivity.

Together, these three perspectives illuminate how the institutional framework both enables and constrains transformation. The “rent” that should accrue from fertile land, improved capabilities, and equitable policy is instead dissipated through fragmented coordination, redundant structures, and unresponsive learning systems. As a result, the ecological potential emphasised by Ricardo, the capability advantages emphasised by RBV, and the behavioural–structural productivity drivers highlighted by smallholder theory are simultaneously weakened, producing uneven and often disappointing outcomes across LRAD projects.

4.5.1.8 Integration with Objective 1 and Research Question

By illustrating with evidence how the purpose of laws, the functioning of institutions, and outcomes relate to one another, Theme 1 meets the first objective of the assignment. It shows that:

- The effects of LRAD rely less on the quality of policy formulation and more on the degree of coordination that exists within the legislative and institutional framework.
- Long-term productivity is a function of whether it is possible to translate redistributive intent into support.

- In fragmented governance systems, efficiency and equity both get adversely affected, and this is an indicator that the actual challenge is not the availability of the land but the incongruity existing within the institutions themselves.

In sum, these results provide the overall answer to the research question: “*What influences the successful outcome of land reform in these transition countries?*”: the structures are both enabling and determinative: they provide the framework for land reform, but if mismatched, they are the problem to be overcome.

4.5.1.9 Summary of Key Analytical Findings

Policy Implementation Gap: The effectiveness of the power being dispensed by the LRAD system has been weakened by the lack of intergovernmental coordination, and therefore, beneficiaries are not provided with the necessary support.

Institutional Fragmentation: DALRRD, DRDAR, and local municipalities each run in their own lanes, leading to overlaps, conflicting directives, and red tapes that undermine delivery.

Post-Settlement Deficit: Extension, finance, and infrastructure support are inadequate. Access to resources, information, markets, and technology, the driving forces in agriculture, is thereby denied to small farmers.

Lack of Accountability Void: Information systems are collecting data, and there is no conversion of data into learnings and adaptation in the accountability void, making it impossible to respond to the needs of the farmers and generate productivity improvements.

Theoretical Implication: Institutional ineffectiveness leads to ‘rent loss’ (Ricardo) because of the non-realisation of land’s capability, and ‘capability decay’ (RBV) because the capability configuration in skills, resources, and routines does not get achieved. Small-Scale Productivity Theories imply that all these missed achievements increase labour bottleneck

problems, transaction costs, risk, and technology adoption, and overall market entry, hence low productivity.

The institutional foundation set by Theme 1 will inform what follows: will the governance structure be able to capitalise on the distributed land or let it be potential and unactualised? This will have implications for ecological rents, capability rents, and smallholder performance simultaneously.

4.5.1.10 Concluding Interpretation and Transition

The evidence for Theme 1 is that the institutional framework for LRAD remains problematic and unaligned with sustainable development in the Eastern Cape. When examining Objective 1 and the question of our study, we see that it is not just policy that is important but the ability of institutions to support beneficiaries beyond the transfer of land.

Where Ricardian theory is concerned, a successful reform can only be achieved if the governing structure has the capacity to tap the end rental potential of fertile land. In terms of the Resource-Based View, a successful reform depends on enhancing capabilities based on the ability to implement policies on the ground. Finally, by using concepts from Small Scale Productivity, one can see that a successful reform not only depends on risk factors for land management but on factors regarding labour, marketing, risk, and the use of technology at a household level that would be used by farmers to produce on land they have access to and receive assistance for.

In other words, the incongruity between ecological, capability, and small holder measures accounts for the variability of the results.

Table 4.6

Analytical Linkage between Objective 1, Research Question, Empirical Findings, and Theoretical Interpretation

Objective 1	To examine how legislative and institutional frameworks shape sustainable land use and agricultural productivity within South Africa's LRAD programme, focusing on the Eastern Cape.		
Research Question	What is the role of legislative and institutional frameworks in shaping LRAD outcomes in the Eastern Cape?		
Key Empirical Findings			
Analytical Dimension	Core Content	Empirical Illustration from Eastern Cape (LRAD)	Theoretical Interpretation (Ricardo – RBV – Small Scale Productivity Theories)
1. Policy–Implementation Gap	Legislative intent strong (Provision of Land and Assistance Act, White Paper 1997, LRAD Framework 2001) but weak operational linkage between DALRRD (land acquisition) and DRDAR (support delivery).	<i>“We buy the land in Pretoria; they must make it productive in Bisho—but there’s no mechanism linking the two.”</i> – DALRRD official	Ricardo: Misallocation of resources reduces potential rent. RBV: Fragmented routines dissipate capability efficiency. Small Scale Productivity: Poor linkage delays inputs, heightens risk, and restricts timely adoption of technologies necessary for smallholder productivity.
2. Overlapping Mandates and Poor Coordination	DALRRD, DRDAR, and municipalities operate in silos; no shared planning or monitoring instruments.	<i>“We only know about a project when trucks arrive; then the community demands services.”</i> – Municipal LED officer	Ricardo: Inefficient coordination increases transaction costs, lowering net returns on land. RBV: Loss of capability rent from duplicated structures and unclear accountability. Small Scale Productivity: Fragmentation limits extension access, increases transaction and search costs, and weakens farmers' ability to respond to market opportunities.
3. Weak Post-Settlement Support Systems	Extension and mentorship inconsistent; infrastructure incomplete;	<i>“They gave us land and inputs, but no system to make it work.”</i> – Beneficiary, Joe Gqabi	Ricardo: Land remains underutilised despite fertility; rent potential wasted. RBV: Lack of dynamic capability prevents converting resources into performance. Small Scale Productivity: Weak

Analytical Dimension	Core Content	Empirical Illustration from Eastern Cape (LRAD)	Theoretical Interpretation (Ricardo – RBV – Small Scale Productivity Theories)
	financial support minimal.		support suppresses labour efficiency, technology uptake, and input use—core drivers of smallholder yields.
4. Accountability and Learning Deficits	Monitoring focuses on compliance, not learning; no feedback loops between field outcomes and policy.	“ <i>We count outputs, not outcomes.</i> ” – M&E officer, DALRRD	Ricardo: Bureaucratic inefficiency creates diminishing returns. RBV: Absorptive capacity failure—institutions cannot learn or adapt. Small Scale Productivity: Lack of adaptive monitoring increases production risk, reduces information flows, and weakens farmers’ ability to adjust practices to climate, pests, or markets.
5. Cascading Risk Factors	Administrative, financial, and coordination risks reinforce one another, producing systemic inefficiency.	Delayed disbursements, misaligned budgets, staff shortages across districts.	Ricardo: Cumulative rent loss from systemic misallocation. RBV: Path dependence erodes organisational agility and coherence. Small Scale Productivity: Risk accumulation reduces labour investment, discourages innovation, and constrains market participation.

Source: Chapter 4 Analysis by author, 2024

The key message is, thus, clear: while the intent of the law is sound, the implementation is diffuse and fragmented. Land reform success is less a product of what the law says than of the country's institutional muscle, such as the routines, coordination, information flow, risk management, and learning systems, through which work gets done. Further policy clutter will not lead to better implementation; what counts is capability, and how different parts of the system fit together.

- Ricardian view: Economic rent leaks away via inefficiency, higher transaction costs, and governance failures.

- RBV view: Routines are weak, support systems are fragmented, and absorptive capacity is low due to which the potential to capture institutional capability remains utilised.
- Small-scale productivity view: Households are confronted with patchy support, elevated risk, and limited market access and have slow adoption of modern technologies due to fragmentation of institutions.

The authors also show a continued increase in social and regional welfare disparity. This addresses Objective 1 and its central research question: the legislative and institutional framework not only shapes who gets land redistributed, but it fundamentally governs the sustainability of productivity and equity in the Eastern Cape's agricultural sector. This provides the background against which Theme 2 explores how the spatial and biophysical endowments of land interact with these institutional weaknesses to account for the observed differences in productivity across the varied landscapes of the Eastern Cape.

4.5.2 Objective 2 – Determinants of Land Use, Endowments, and Productivity

Research Question 2: What are the principal drivers of land use and productivity—spanning biophysical, market, institutional, and human dimensions and how do these factors interact to shape redistribution outcomes under LRAD in the Eastern Cape?

Emergent Theme: Land Endowments, Market Access, and Productivity Differentials

4.5.2.1 Introduction: Situating the Objective and Research Question

Rather than building on the institutional groundwork laid in Theme 1, Theme 2 turns the lens to the land itself—the where and how of land reform outcomes. It addresses Objective 2 and Research Question 2 by asking why is it that some redistributions in the Eastern Cape take root while others do not, and how close these pieces of land are to the markets.

Based on Ricardo's Theory of Economic Rent, the idea is that productivity differences emanate from land quality, location, and distance to the market. RBV contributors go further

to say that such asset differences do not represent resources in themselves but require adequate capabilities and fit with institutions to unleash them. The Small-Scale Productivity Theories extend this to demonstrate that these spatial-biophysical advantages flow into real productivity gains only if the households involved actively mobilise factors like labour, technology, resource availability, risk management, and market access in small-scale settings. After all, having land close to markets does not automatically generate high productivity for smallholders faced with liquidity constraints, input gaps, or high transaction costs.

Theme 2, therefore, does more than identify the endowments that exist; it explores how these endowments are used. It goes to indicate that land reform success relies on an interaction of geographic advantage, drivers of productivity at household level, as well as human and institutional capabilities which allow for adequate use. In other words, productive performance arises from the joint effects of ecological potentials, capabilities, and the dynamics of smallholder productivity.

4.5.2.2 Empirical Context: Unequal Endowments and Divergent Performance

The Eastern Cape Province has diverse climatic zones spread over the six districts that comprise the region. In terms of climatic zones, while there are the fertile valleys in Amathole and Sarah Baartman, other districts like Chris Hani and Joe Gqabi can be described as drier uplands. The research has shown that land allocated under LRAD projects varies significantly regarding soil characteristics, rainfall, and the availability of infrastructure, meaning that land allocated to similar farming projects has uneven levels of potential per region. This means, for example, that while allocation recipients like SBDM have increased yields as a result of irrigation, improved access to land, as well as land that's closer to the markets, Alfred Nzo's and OR Tambo's land, on the other hand, has increased costs for road access, increased challenges getting farming inputs, as well as increased distances for access to extension services, among others. This can be summarised aptly by a farmer from Amathole, who stated:

“It isn’t just the soil, it’s the roads, the water, and how close you’re to the buyers.”

Nevertheless, without these, even the most fertile land can be a burden on farming communities, as stated earlier, going back to objective 2, biological conditions, as well as the position of land, thereby determining farming productivity as earlier stated. The Small Scale Productivity Theories continue to assert that land's spatial as well as ecological position can only be realised by gaining access to farming factors, labour, new technology, extension support, as well as marketing structures, especially if infrastructure development, particularly for farming, continues to be limited, thereby making farming even on fertile land a disappointment, due to lack of access by small-scale farming communities to the necessary domestic support structures, not to mention risk management assistance, within farming communities, thereby limiting their ability to access much-needed new technology, a matter that will be covered later on within this particular theme concerning RBV’s perspective on human as well as infrastructure capabilities.

4.5.2.3 Ricardian Differentials: Fertility, Location, and Economic Rent

In the early years of the century, Ricardo’s explanation had been nicely simplified by the recognition that rents are affected by fertility and the proximity of the land to markets. The latter can be seen in the Eastern Cape province. Land that is fertile and near markets, even when the institutions are not dependable, encourages higher levels of production and higher levels of wage payments to beneficiaries of the Land Redistribution and Acquisition Program (LRAD). Evidence from the field confirms that the average gross margin in farms situated around 30 kilometres away from the markets in Alice, Stutterheim, and Fort Beaufort is over 40% higher than in the other farms that are situated at a greater distance away. Additionally, the farms with access to water get to harvest two to three harvests in a year as opposed to the other areas that harvest only once in the year.

However, there is an interesting twist here: some favourably endowed farms fail because the management lacks the capability to manage it. At the same time, less favourably endowed firms can perform better than others because of their creativity, collaboration, and support from outside. Capability and coordination carry the same weight as land endowment. It represents a combination of the material approach, as Adam Smith and David Ricardo proposed, and a capability approach, like the RBV.

The plot thickens once again when we incorporate Small-Scale Productivity Theories. Production is not the work of the land alone but depends upon the household's organisation of labour, accessing factor inputs, innovation, markets, or management risk. This perspective argues that small farmers have the capacity to derive greater benefit from the same land that they once believed was the maximum possible if their labour is well-organised, the choice of technology is optimal, or their social connections support them. Even highly productive land could turn unproductive if the availability, costs, or support for growth or expansion are low.

4.5.2.4 Market Access as a Determinant of Viability

The study identified market access as a decisive variable linking endowment potential to realised productivity. Proximity to input suppliers, transportation infrastructure, and markets is significant not only from the perspective of lower cost but also from the efficient integration of the producer with overall value chains. Where the districts have good road infrastructure, as is the case with Sarah Baartman and Amathole, the beneficiaries sold theirs to the supermarkets and agri-processors consistently. Those residing in more remote areas sold to irregular traders and preserved the remainder for consumption by themselves. Institutionally, the place of municipalities is merely acknowledged in relation to maintaining farm-to-road access infrastructure and in relation to local purchasing power. The lack of institutional means to ensure integration with markets cements spatial inequalities and makes geography equivalent to destiny. In Ricardian fashion, spatial inequalities are reinforced in terms of differential rent,

where "better" land is rewarded and worse land is punished. Indeed, in resource theory, there is an underlying misfit between capabilities and infrastructure, where some entrepreneurs with market knowledge are able to capitalise on average land resources, but others remain in subsistence cycles.

Theories of Small-Scale Productivity indicate that when the infrastructure environment is not strong, or if the market integration is low, there would be an increased transaction cost, technology adoption, input access, or production risk, that would cause the least harm to remote small-scale farmers. This implies that when space marginality has already been suffered by a family, the lack of support from the infrastructure environment would worsen the space marginality experience.

4.5.2.5 Infrastructure and Service Ecosystems

Infrastructure emerged as the critical enabler or inhibitor of productive land use. Roads, irrigation systems, storage, and electricity connectivity were repeatedly cited as the material backbone of agricultural viability. The empirical data show:

- 79% of surveyed LRAD farms lacked fully functional irrigation systems.
- 62% faced inadequate road access.
- 48% reported intermittent electricity or water disruptions.

Extension officers confirmed that such constraints increase operational costs and deter investment. A senior DRDAR agriculture engineer noted:

“Land reform succeeds only where the infrastructure network exists. The rest is just land transfer without transformation.”

These observations directly respond to Research Question 2, demonstrating that the physical and logistical context of redistribution is as determinative as the legal or financial design. Ricardo would interpret these disparities as differential returns to location and infrastructure, while the RBV interprets them as resource orchestration failures—the inability

to integrate infrastructure, finance, and human skill into a synergistic productivity system. Small Scale Productivity Theories add a further layer of explanation by showing that these spatial and organisational disparities directly shape household-level behaviour, where farmers in disadvantaged areas face higher transaction costs, limited input access, constrained labour efficiency, and greater exposure to climatic and market risk. These conditions suppress technology adoption and reduce market participation, meaning that even when resources exist on paper, smallholders cannot effectively convert them into productivity gains.

4.5.2.6 Institutional and Market Intersections: The Role of Coordination

Theme 2 reveals that even where endowments and infrastructure are favourable, institutional coordination remains decisive in converting these assets into productivity. Farms supported by consistent extension and mentorship services, particularly those linked to universities or NGOs, display higher efficiency, even in less fertile zones.

This confirms the interaction effect between natural endowments and institutional capability:

- High-endowment farms without institutional coordination often stagnate (lost potential).
- Well-coordinated medium-equipment farms perform better than expected and reach their potentials.

Small Scale Productivity Theories strengthen this interpretation by showing that coordination failures exacerbate household-level constraints, limiting timely input access, increasing production risk, constraining labour efficiency, and restricting market participation. When institutional actors do not synchronise support, smallholders cannot mobilise the complementary resources required to transform endowments into output, even on fertile land.

Thus, Ricardian differentials explain potential productivity, RBV dynamics explain realised productivity, and smallholder productivity theory explains how household-level conditions mediate the conversion of potential into performance. The three lenses converge in

demonstrating that productivity emerges from the synergy between material, organisational, and smallholder-level resources, not from one dimension alone.

4.5.2.7 Human and Entrepreneurial Drivers of Productivity

Beneficiary capability, though examined in greater depth in Theme 3 surfaced here as a cross-cutting driver of productivity differentials. Interviews indicated that beneficiaries with prior farming experience, formal training, or entrepreneurial backgrounds were more likely to use their land efficiently, invest in soil improvement, and pursue market diversification.

For example, one female beneficiary in Sarah Baartman converted a 30-hectare dryland maize farm into a high-value herb enterprise by linking with a pharmaceutical buyer through the AgriSETA mentorship programme. Conversely, others in comparable endowments remained dependent on state grants due to limited technical or managerial skills.

This demonstrates that land productivity is co-produced by human and spatial capital. From the Ricardian perspective, capability upgrades alter the effective fertility of land by enhancing its productive use. From the RBV, human skill represents a strategic asset that determines whether a resource base becomes a competitive advantage or a dormant asset. Small Scale Productivity Theories add that labour organisation, risk-management behaviour, information access, and household decision-making further shape how beneficiaries translate land and support services into actual output. This explains why two farmers operating similar land can achieve radically different results.

4.5.2.8 Synthesising the Empirical Drivers: An Integrated View

Per region, productivity follows this hierarchy regarding what spurs it:

- **Biophysical Endowment:** The quality of soil, availability of rainfall, and access to water determine the ceiling on development.

- **Locational and Market Access:** This affects the extent to which the farm output can be sold. This depends on the distance between the farm, the infrastructure, and the market.
- **Institutional support:** means ready access to extension services, financing, and mentoring.
- **Human Capability:** This is dependent on a combination of entrepreneurial and technical skills, which determine resource utilisation efficiencies.
- **Small-Scale Conditions (Small-Scale Productivity Theories):** Availability of labour, accessibility of inputs, rate of technology diffusion, risk-taking, and market entry are the factors that determine the actualisation of the potential.

All these factors together help explain how LRAD projects defy easy characterisation, as some well-endowed farms underperform because their capacities and institutions are not robust, while some other, harder-pressed, firms succeed because of favourable support variables and strategic household behaviour. The point is that land reform outcomes defy predication based solely on endowment, as Ricardo appreciated, but dynamic capability in RBV, and Small-Scale Productivity Theories complete by explaining how firms realise opportunities through their strategies.

4.5.2.9 Theoretical Analysis: Merging Ricardian, RBV, and Small-Scale Productivity Insights

Table 4.7 presents a comparative theoretical analysis illustrating how variations in land endowment, market access, infrastructure, and institutional coordination shape productivity outcomes under LRAD. While Ricardo explains differences in potential productivity through ecological and spatial endowments, and the RBV explains differences in realised productivity through capability mobilisation, Small Scale Productivity Theories illuminate how household-level constraints, such as labour, risk, input access, market participation, and technology adoption, mediate the translation of potential into actual output.

Together, the three lenses offer a multidimensional interpretation of why some redistributed farms thrive while others stagnate, even under similar policy conditions.

Table 4.7*Merging Ricardian, RBV, and Small-Scale Productivity Insights*

Dimension	Ricardian Perspective	RBV Perspective	Small Scale Productivity Perspective	Integrated Interpretation
Land Fertility and Quality	Determines potential rent and inherent productivity.	A valuable resource whose benefits depend on managerial skill, knowledge, and investment.	Productivity depends on labour availability, input access, risk management, and technology adoption.	Fertile land yields returns only when activated by capability <i>and</i> supported by household-level resources and practices.
Market Proximity	Reduces transport costs, increasing differential rent.	Enhances access to value chains, buyers, and knowledge networks.	Improves market participation, reduces transaction costs, and increases incentives for commercialisation.	Spatial advantage becomes sustainable only when coupled with capability alignment <i>and</i> smallholder integration into markets.
Infrastructure	Enables efficient utilisation of land and reduces production bottlenecks.	Forms part of the tangible resource base required to operationalise strategy.	Shape's ability to access inputs, technology, and extension; reduces household time and labour burdens.	Infrastructure and capability jointly determine resource conversion efficiency, with household-level constraints influencing utilisation intensity.
Institutional Coordination	Administrative inefficiency reduces productive surplus and intensifies rent loss.	Organisational synergy generates institutional capability rent.	Affects access to timely support, extension, information, and risk mitigation, directly shaping household productivity.	Productivity depends on synchronising physical resources, institutional systems, and smallholder behavioural–structural conditions.

Source: Chapter 4 Analysis by author, 2024

Synthesis

The tri-theoretical interpretation demonstrates that:

- **Ricardo** identifies *where productivity should occur*, based on land quality and location.
- **RBV** identifies *how productivity can occur*, through capability deployment and institutional routines.
- **Small Scale Productivity Theories** identify *whether productivity does occur*, based on household-level constraints and behaviour.

This integrated view shows that land reform outcomes are determined not by endowment, capability, or household factors alone, but by the interaction among all three. Together they provide a holistic account of land-reform performance anchored in both the spatial economy and the capability economy.

4.5.2.10 Linking Findings to Objective 2 and Research Question 2 (Revised with Small Scale Productivity Theories)

Theme 2 is related to Objective 2 in that it provides empirical insight into forces of land use and productivity in the Eastern Cape's LRAD projects. Theme 2 also relates to Research Question 2 in that the variability in land redistribution farm performance is driven by differences in factor endowments, market accessibility, and institutional setting.

In brief therefore:

- Biophysical attributes, such as land fertility, water availability, and rainfall, provide the foundation for land productivity.
- Land location determines accessibility to markets, inputs, consumers, and transport, factors that influence the viability of commercialisation.
- Institutional coordination and beneficiary capability convert potential into actual performance by aligning their support, skills, and resource flows.

- In the context of Small Scale, the role of labour organisation, factor availability, technology, risk behaviour, and participation in the marketplace as determinants mediates the relationship between the application of endowment and support and the output in the theories of Small-Scale Productivity.

When these factors are fractured or not aligned, there are unending productivity discrepancies, even if land and resource factors appear identical. Therefore, although the Ricardian model unlocks the secret to the architecture of differential rents based on environmental and geographical differences, and the RBV indicates why not all beneficiaries succeed based on the exploitation of potential, the Small Scale Productivity Theories complete the picture by exploring the role of household limitations and dynamics in shaping the chances of transforming productivity from potential to actual and vice versa.

4.5.2.11 Summary of Key Analytical Insights

- **Spatial Inequality Persists:** Fertile and well-located farms yield higher returns, while remoter farms struggle despite grants—reflecting Ricardian differentials intensified by smallholder constraints such as higher transport costs and limited market participation.
- **Endowment Is Not Destiny:** Human and institutional capability can compensate for lower natural fertility; likewise, smallholder behaviour and household-level strategies—such as labour mobilisation, risk management, and technology adoption—enable some marginal farms to outperform expectations.
- **Market Integration Determines Survival:** Access to buyers, logistics, and information distinguishes commercial farms from subsistence operations; smallholder productivity theory underscores that market barriers disproportionately suppress smallholder output, even where land quality is favourable.

- **Infrastructure Defines Possibility:** Roads, irrigation, storage, and energy access are preconditions for productive use; without them, transaction costs rise and labour efficiency declines, directly limiting smallholder yields.
- **Capability Activates Endowment:** Skills, mentorship, cooperation, and coordinated institutional support transform latent potential into tangible output; smallholder productivity theories confirm that capability deficits—limited extension access, weak input supply, or poor decision-making—can nullify even strong biophysical endowments.

Together, these insights confirm that land productivity in the LRAD programme is an emergent property of aligned biophysical, human, institutional, market-based, and smallholder-level systems. Differential outcomes arise when any component of this system becomes misaligned.

4.5.2.12 Concluding Interpretation and Transition

In resolving the second objective and research question, the second theme identifies where the problem begins for the imbalanced performance of LRAD projects in the Eastern Cape: “it’s the interplay between where land and people are, their spatial endowments, and the strength of the institutions which should serve them.” Ricardo’s approach drives home the spatial reasoning for differential rent, but the RBV offers richness in demonstrating how individuals and groups, rather than merely landlords, can close or enlarge those gaps through talent, innovation, and collaboration. This follows on the philosophy of Small Scale Productivity Theories, where the focus shifts to micro-household factors: the number of “hands on the labour force,” use of inputs, new technology, risk preferences, along with the “extent to which households are integrated into markets,” to determine whether the land’s rental possibilities are actualised, reduced to zero, or destroyed.

Bottom line: without identifying and allocating endowments, matching capabilities, and delivering support to small farmers, merely redistributing land will retain the same levels of

inequality. Land alone is not the stimulator of productivity; it requires effective institutions, markets, and micro-frameworks so that small farmers can benefit from opportunities.

Theme 3 continues to explore this point and focuses more closely on the human and institutional capacity part of this equation. It seeks to examine how the capacity building of beneficiaries through learning and knowledge acquisition mechanisms, as well as the post-settlement support infrastructure that is put in place through the use of extension services, determine whether the process of land redistribution becomes more of a sustainable means to an end of development rather than simply a never.

Table 4.8

Analytical Linkage Between Objective 2, Research Question 2, Empirical Findings, and Theoretical Interpretation

Objective 2	To identify key drivers of land use and productivity—biophysical, market, institutional, and human—and assess their relative influence on redistribution outcomes.		
Research Question 2	What are the principal determinants of land use and productivity under the LRAD programme, and how do variations in endowment, market access, and institutional context shape differential performance across the Eastern Cape?		
Key Empirical Findings			
Analytical Dimension	Core Content	Empirical Illustration from Eastern Cape (LRAD)	Theoretical Interpretation (<i>Ricardo – RBV – Small Scale Productivity Theories</i>)
1. Unequal Land Endowments	Fertility, rainfall, and irrigation availability vary sharply across districts, producing unequal yield potential.	Farms in Sarah Baartman and Amathole outperform those in Chris Hani and Alfred Nzo by 40–60% due to soil quality and water access.	Ricardo: Differential rent arises from inherent fertility and ecological potential. RBV: Endowments are latent resources; value depends on capability deployment. Small Scale Productivity: Realisation depends on labour availability, input access, technology uptake, and household risk behaviour; even fertile land underperforms when these constraints exist.
2. Market Access and Location	Proximity to inputs and buyers strongly determines commercial viability.	Farms within 30 km of markets enjoy stable sales; remote farms rely on informal traders with low margins.	Ricardo: Location rent—transport costs shape surplus. RBV: Market knowledge and networks convert proximity into sustained advantage. Small Scale Productivity: Market distance increases transaction costs, reduces bargaining power, limits market participation, and discourages diversification.
3. Infrastructure and Connectivity	Roads, irrigation, and electricity define the operational	79% lack functional irrigation; 62% poor road access; production costs increase 25–40%.	Ricardo: Infrastructure amplifies or constrains productivity; capital intensity raises rent. RBV: Infrastructure is a tangible resource enabling resource orchestration. Small Scale Productivity: Poor infrastructure limits labour

Analytical Dimension	Core Content	Empirical Illustration from Eastern Cape (LRAD)	Theoretical Interpretation (<i>Ricardo – RBV – Small Scale Productivity Theories</i>)
	environment for farming.		efficiency, input access, technology adoption, and timely market entry—directly lowering smallholder yields.
4. Institutional Coordination and Support	Alignment between DRDAR, DALRRD, and municipalities influences whether potential productivity is realised.	Clustered projects with mentorship outperform isolated farms even in low-fertility zones.	<p>Ricardo: Efficient coordination removes waste and transaction loss.</p> <p>RBV: Institutional routines generate capability rent through knowledge sharing.</p> <p>Small Scale Productivity: Coordination shapes extension access, input timeliness, information flow, and risk mitigation—conditions necessary for smallholder uptake of improved practices.</p>
5. Human and Entrepreneurial Capability	Beneficiaries with training, experience, or market skills achieve higher land utilisation.	Entrepreneurial farmers diversify, adopt irrigation scheduling, and secure niche markets.	<p>Ricardo: Human effort intensifies cultivation, expanding rent on fixed land.</p> <p>RBV: Skills and learning form dynamic capabilities that sustain advantage.</p> <p>Small Scale Productivity: Household decision-making, labour organisation, knowledge access, and innovation behaviour determine actual land-use efficiency.</p>
6. Interaction and Synergy of Drivers	Productivity emerges from interaction among natural, institutional, and human factors.	Medium-endowment farms with mentorship outperform high-endowment farms lacking coordination.	<p>Ricardo: Rent potential only realised through efficient factor combinations.</p> <p>RBV: Complementary resources yield cumulative capability advantages.</p> <p>Small Scale Productivity: Synergy requires overcoming household-level constraints—labour shortages, liquidity limits, input delays, and risk aversion.</p>

Source: Chapter 4 Analysis by author, 2024

Land productivity in the Eastern Cape’s LRAD projects depends on the alignment of endowment quality, market integration, institutional support, human capability, and smallholder-level conditions. Spatial advantage sets the ceiling of potential, but institutional capability, household behaviour, and market access determine how much of that potential is realised. A beneficiary in Amathole district remarked,

“Endowment is only the beginning, without skills and access, it means nothing.”

- **Ricardian Conclusion:** Differential rent materialises when fertile, well-located land is efficiently utilised.
- **RBV Conclusion:** Capability and institutional learning convert potential rent into sustained competitive advantage.
- **Small Scale Productivity Conclusion:** Household-level constraints and behavioural dynamics determine whether potential and capability translate into real productivity.

4.5.2.13 Interpretive Summary

Table 4.8 reinforces that Objective 2 and Research Question 2 are fully addressed within Theme 2. The empirical data reveal that biophysical and locational advantages create *potential* productivity, while institutional coordination and human capability determine *realised* performance. Small Scale Productivity Theories deepen this insight by demonstrating that household-level conditions—labour availability, input access, technology adoption, risk behaviour, and market participation—mediate the extent to which potential and capability can be converted into actual output. Thus, even where land and institutions are favourable, productivity is constrained if smallholder-level drivers are weak; conversely, strong household strategies can lift performance even in marginal zones.

The combined Ricardian–RBV synthesis therefore frames land-reform outcomes as a function of both resource quality and capability alignment, while Small Scale Productivity Theories complete the interpretive frame by explaining the behavioural and structural pathways through which smallholders activate—or fail to activate—these resources. This tri-theoretical integration provides a conceptual bridge from the structural analysis of Theme 2 to the capability-focused inquiry of Theme 3, which explores how skills, support systems, and learning processes shape sustainable land-use outcomes.

4.5.3 Objective 3 – Risk, Capability, and Post-Settlement Dynamics

Research Question 3: What are the core risk factors affecting land-redistribution, land-use, and productivity frameworks under LRAD, and how do beneficiary capabilities and institutional support systems interact to influence these outcomes?

Emergent Theme: Beneficiary Capabilities and Post-Settlement Support Systems

4.5.3.1 Introduction: Linking Capability to Land-Use Performance

Themes 1 and 2 revealed that while governance and endowment factors shape the conditions of land-reform performance, the engine of transformation lies within human and institutional capability. Theme 3 therefore operationalises Objective 3 and Research Question 3 by investigating the competencies, learning processes, and post-settlement support systems that determine whether transferred land becomes a productive enterprise or remains under-utilised.

This analysis draws directly from Ricardo’s Theory of Economic Rent, which emphasises the efficient exploitation of productive resources, and from the Resource-Based View (RBV), which positions human, organisational, and relational capabilities as the true sources of sustainable advantage. Small Scale Productivity Theories further extend this fusion by emphasising that productivity outcomes are driven not only by institutional and human

capability, but also by household-level conditions such as labour availability, risk behaviour, input access, technology adoption, information flows, and market participation.

Within this expanded theoretical frame, productivity arises not only from what land is like but from what people, institutions, and households are able to do with it.

4.5.3.2 Empirical Context: From Access to Capability

The same story is told in 18 key player interviews, DALRRD and DRDAR officials, extension workers, and LRAD beneficiaries: getting land is not enough to keep people productive. There is a gap between the handover of land and actual productive and sustainable outcomes; it is a matter of weak human capacity and fragmented post-settlement support. Beneficiaries felt the initial excitement of land transfer, then growing frustration as inputs, training, and financial guidance dried up. A DRDAR officer summed it up best:

“We delivered justice, but not the skills to sustain it.”

That line captures the core tension this theme explores, the difference between redistributive success and ongoing productive use. Field data bears it out: only 27% of LRAD farms posted positive net returns after three years, and fewer than 20% produced audited financial statements. In short, the obstacle is not land or policy; it is capability.

Theories on Small Scale Productivity reinforce this point, showing that without support for getting inputs, managing risk, allocating labour, and connecting to markets, smallholders cannot turn land into solid livelihoods—even when the land and climate look favourable.

4.5.3.3 The Human-Capital Base: Uneven Skills and Learning Trajectories

The Eastern Cape’s LRAD beneficiaries display striking heterogeneity in skill and experience:

- One-third possessed prior agricultural experience.
- The remainder were first-generation farmers without technical or managerial exposure.

The most sustainable projects were those with ongoing learning pathways: farmers who integrated technical advice, record-keeping, and market experimentation into daily practice. This mindset reflects dynamic capability, a key RBV construct describing the ability to sense, seize, and reconfigure resources. In Ricardian terms, it represents the modern equivalent of “intensive cultivation”, extracting greater output from fixed land through ingenuity. Small Scale Productivity Theories emphasise that such learning behaviour, labour organisation, and adaptive decision-making are central determinants of smallholder performance, shaping how resource endowments translate into yield outcomes.

4.5.3.4 Post-Settlement Support Ecosystem: Fragmented and Under-Resourced

The research revealed that post-settlement support, aimed at addressing the competence gap, is inconsistent and inadequately organized. DALRRD manages grants and land acquisition, while DRDAR oversees extension and technical assistance. The lack of synchronisation between these entities leaves beneficiaries stranded between funding and knowledge systems. Support visits by extensions officers are irregular with a ratio of one extension officer for every 350 farmers (2023), well above the FAO benchmark of 1:200. This weak interface diminishes the system’s absorptive capacity, which is the ability to internalise and diffuse new knowledge. From the Ricardian lens, this leads to rent loss through inefficiency; from the RBV lens, it constitutes a capability failure.

Small Scale Productivity Theories add that inconsistent extension intensifies household-level constraints: delayed input access, poor technology uptake, limited information, and heightened production risk. Thus, institutional fragmentation directly suppresses smallholder productivity.

4.5.3.5 The Skill Triad: Technical, Managerial, and Entrepreneurial Competence

Technical Competence

Those who understood basic agronomy practices tended to harvest more. However, most of these beneficiaries did not have soil analysis done or irrigation schedules. This represents the waste of the fertility potential of the land (Ricardo) and illustrates the lack of usage of the available resources to the fullest (RBV).

In the context of small-scale productivity theory, technical ability is shown to be an important determinant of work efficiency, work practices, and innovation adoption, which are major contributors to productivity gaps for small-scale farmers.

Managerial Competence

Few beneficiaries maintained proper records or cash-flow systems. A cooperative leader in Joe Gqabi district noted as follows:

“We know we harvested, but not if we profited.”

This managerial weakness erodes surplus, producing financial opacity. Small Scale Productivity Theories add that poor financial management increases vulnerability to shocks and reduce reinvestment capacity, which is a key barrier to smallholder scaling.

Entrepreneurial Competence

A minority diversified crops or pursued niche markets. Entrepreneurial learning enables the transformation of land into enterprise, consistent with the Resource-Based View (RBV), which conceptualises learning as a strategic capability. Small-scale productivity theories further emphasise that innovation behaviour, market participation, and risk-taking orientations are critical determinants of smallholder success.

4.5.3.6 Financial Capability and Access to Capital

A large proportion of potential beneficiaries remain outside the formal financial system due to inadequate or non-existent credit histories, insufficient collateral bases, and insecure tenure systems (Carter & Olinto, 2003; Hall & Kepe, 2017). While policy efforts aim to increase access to financial services, they are ultimately unable to overcome the fundamental credit risk problem, as highlighted by empirical research conducted by university-affiliated policy think tanks on the financing of land reform in South Africa (PLAAS, 2019). As such, grant-based funding has increasingly become the default financing mechanism for land reform initiatives.

From a Ricardian viewpoint, capital constraints limit the scope for increasing production intensity, which in turn limits the scope for deriving potential economic rent from the land (Ricardo, 1817/2004). The Resource-Based Theory (RBV) also suggests that financial capability constraints limit the scope for coordinating resources to derive potential benefits from the land (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993). Theoretical work on small-scale productivity suggests that exclusion from credit markets exacerbates liquidity constraints, input usage, investment, and riskiness, which ultimately locks small-scale farmers in a state of low productivity (Ellis, 2000; Dorward et al., 2009; Hazell et al., 2010).

4.5.3.7 Social Capital and Cooperative Dynamics

Cooperatives either pool resources effectively or collapse due to conflict. A cooperative member in Joe Gqabi district observed the following:

“We fought over tractors instead of using them.”

Ricardo recognises coordination as surplus-enhancing; RBV frames social cohesion as relational capital and Small-Scale Productivity Theories add that trust, reciprocity, and

collective labour mobilisation are central to smallholder resilience, shaping both efficiency and market access.

4.5.3.8 Learning, Adaptation, and Digital Transformation (Revised with Small Scale Productivity Theories)

While younger, digitally engaged farmers increasingly rely on online platforms for agricultural guidance, institutional structures for peer learning remain absent. Ricardo sees knowledge as efficiency-enhancing; RBV sees it as dynamic capability and Small-Scale Productivity Theories stress that access to information, peer networks, and digital knowledge flows are now fundamental drivers of smallholder innovation and adaptive capacity.

4.5.3.9 Capability Deficits and the Poverty Trap Mechanism

Table 4.9

Capability Domain, Deficit, and Impact

Capability Domain	Typical Deficit	Impact
Technical	Poor agronomic knowledge, inefficient input use	Low yields, soil degradation
Managerial	Weak planning and record-keeping	Financial opacity, asset decline
Financial	Limited credit literacy and access	Under-capitalisation, dependency
Organisational/Social	Conflict, weak leadership	Fragmentation, inefficiency

Source: Author, 2025

Such shortcomings constitute a classic capability poverty trap, wherein low skills generate poor output, which in turn hinders the capacity for re-investment, thereby exacerbating the erosion of capabilities. Under the Ricardian model, the above-mentioned situation signifies a progressive deterioration in the productive rent, wherein the beneficiaries' inability to utilise labour and capital intensively and efficiently hinders the exploitation of the innate potential embodied in the land. Small Scale Productivity Theories also help to elucidate the way the inefficiency in labour, inaccessibility of inputs, the presence of production risk,

and the limited use of technology exacerbate the situation, thereby precluding the farmers from capitalising even small increments in a cumulative manner.

4.5.3.10 Integrative Interpretation: Capability as Rent

The synthesis of field findings confirms that capability itself is a new form of productive rent. Where Ricardo associated rent with land fertility and location, this study finds that the true differential advantage now lies in the ability to learn, coordinate, and innovate. Beneficiaries with strong managerial and entrepreneurial capacities achieve higher returns even on average land, while those without such capabilities fail despite favourable endowments.

Small Scale Productivity Theories reinforce this insight by showing that labour organisation, input access, household-level decision-making, risk behaviour, and technology adoption shape whether capability can be activated at farm level. As such, capability rent emerges only when institutional, human, and household factors align to convert land potential into yield and income. Thus, land reform outcomes can be understood through three complementary forms of rent:

- **Ricardian rent** explains the *potential value* inherent in land endowments, including soil quality, fertility, and location.
- **Capability rent (RBV)** explains the *conversion of potential value into productive advantage* through human skills, institutional capacity, and organisational performance.
- **Small-scale productivity rent** explains the *realisation of value at household level* through efficiency, technology adoption, and market participation.

The Eastern Cape's LRAD projects illustrate that modern agrarian transformation is driven more by knowledge, coordination, and household capability than by nature alone.

4.5.3.11 Effectiveness of Post-Settlement Support Mechanisms

They have not yet become institutionalised as an endogenous learning system, but remain isolated, short-term projects often driven by the donors. An extension officer admitted they are stretched thin on resources, as one remarked:

“We react to problems; we don’t build systems.”

Without structured feedback loops linking beneficiaries to the institutions, learning remains episodic rather than cumulative. That prevents the emergence of institutional dynamic capabilities which is the ability of agencies to adapt policies in response to field outcomes.

Small Scale Productivity Theories indicate that erratic support also exacerbates household constraints: lack of timely inputs, limited exposure to new techniques, poor adaptation to climate risks, and weaker market participation. Thus, even when individual farmers pick up skills, the institutional ecosystem fails to scale them-up, thereby stagnating successful practices from district to district.

4.5.3.12 Linking Objective 3 and Research Question 3 to Empirical Findings

Theme 3 directly fulfils Objective 3 and answers Research Question 3 by establishing that beneficiary capability and post-settlement support quality are the principal determinants of long-term LRAD productivity.

Key insights include:

- Human capital and learning form the operational base of land productivity.
- Institutional alignment and mentorship determine whether skills evolve into business capacity.
- Financial and social literacy enable reinvestment and cooperative functioning.
- Adaptive learning mechanisms sustain innovation under variable conditions.

- Small Scale Productivity Theories confirm that labour availability, technology adoption, risk behaviour, and market access mediate whether these capabilities translate into measurable farm performance.

Thus, the sustainability of LRAD projects depends less on endowment quality than on the continuous co-evolution of beneficiary, household, and institutional capabilities.

4.5.3.13 Theoretical Synthesis: Ricardian–RBV Integration

Table 4.10

Ricardian–RBV–Small Scale Productivity Integration

Analytical Focus	Ricardian Interpretation	RBV Interpretation	Small Scale Productivity Interpretation	Integrated View
Land Productivity	Efficiency of land use determines rent.	Capability utilisation determines performance.	Household labour, input use, and technology adoption determine realised yields.	Capability and household efficiency jointly realise latent rent potential.
Institutional Support	Governance efficiency reduces rent loss.	Institutional routines enable knowledge diffusion.	Support shapes access to inputs, risk mitigation, and advisory systems.	Coordinated institutions multiply learning and reduce smallholder constraints.
Human Capital	Labour intensity raises output.	Skills and innovation sustain competitive advantage.	Behaviour, adaptive learning, and decision-making shape productivity.	Continuous learning replaces labour quantity with quality and behavioural efficiency.
Finance and Markets	Capital intensity enhances productivity.	Financial literacy enables resource orchestration.	Liquidity, market access, and risk strategies shape reinvestment and scaling.	Access to capital must pair with capability maturity and household-level readiness.
Social Organisation	Cooperation optimises factor use.	Trust networks create relational assets.	Social cohesion shapes labour mobilisation and market access.	Collective action generates social capability rent and reduces smallholder vulnerability.

This theoretical integration reveals that land-reform performance is the outcome of an endowment–capability–household synergy. Ricardo’s rent is updated for the 21st century as a capability-driven surplus shaped by institutional learning and smallholder-level adaptive strategies.

4.5.3.14 Practical Implications: Reorienting Post-Settlement Support

The evidence calls for a paradigm shift in policy design as follows:

- Replace once-off training with progressive capability pathways, from foundational to entrepreneurial to commercial.
- Embed mentorship and peer learning into every phase of project rollout.
- Create district-level capability hubs co-managed by universities, AgriSETA, and DRDAR.
- Link credit access to capability milestones rather than collateral.
- Integrate smallholder-focused support (labour planning, risk training, market participation, technology adoption) into all post-settlement programmes.

Such measures would translate the RBV’s dynamic capability logic into institutional practice, while addressing smallholder productivity constraints that determine whether learning can be operationalised on the ground.

4.5.3.15 Conclusion and Interpretation: Capability as the Bridge Between Endowment and Governance

Theme 3 consolidates the human and institutional dimension of land-reform performance, demonstrating that the capability system forms the missing link between the governance framework (Theme 1) and the spatial endowment structure (Theme 2). While policy and land determine opportunity, capability determines outcome.

In Ricardian language, capability transforms potential rent into realised surplus; in RBV terms, it converts static assets into dynamic advantage; in Small Scale Productivity terms, it

enables households to mobilise labour, manage risk, adopt technology, and participate in markets—all essential for transforming land into livelihoods.

The Eastern Cape's LRAD experience thus teaches a critical lesson: redistribution without capability is transitory justice; redistribution with capability is sustainable transformation.

Table 4.11 synthesises Objective 3 and Research Question 3 into a coherent analytical chain linking capability formation to productivity sustainability. Empirically, Theme 3 demonstrates that capability—not merely land or policy—determines lasting transformation.

The Ricardian lens explains how inefficiency erodes rent; the RBV clarifies how skills, learning, and coordination recreate value as capability rent; Small Scale Productivity Theories reveal how household-level action determines whether this rent is realised or lost. Together, they establish the conceptual bridge from endowment analysis (Theme 2) to systemic integration (Theme 4), where capability becomes the central lever of transformative land reform.

Table 4.11

Analytical Linkage Between Objective 3, Research Question 3, Empirical Findings, and Theoretical Interpretation

Analytical Dimension	Core Content	Empirical Illustration from Eastern Cape (LRAD)	Theoretical Interpretation (Ricardo – RBV – Small Scale Productivity Theories)	Analytical Dimension
1. Uneven Human-Capital Base	Beneficiaries show wide variation in technical and managerial skills; only ≈30% have prior farming experience.	Experienced beneficiaries in Sarah Baartman sustain yields >40% higher than first-generation farmers in Alfred Nzo.	<p>Ricardo: Labour quality determines marginal productivity even on identical land.</p> <p>RBV: Skills and know-how are unique, inimitable resources generating capability rent.</p> <p>Small Scale Productivity Theories: Household labour efficiency, knowledge access, and adaptive behaviour determine whether skills translate into actual smallholder performance.</p>	1. Uneven Human-Capital Base
2. Fragmented Post-Settlement Support	DALRRD and DRDAR operate in silos; extension ratio ≈1:350 farmers.	Delayed mentoring and misaligned grants reported in Amathole and OR Tambo.	<p>Ricardo: Institutional inefficiency dissipates potential rent.</p> <p>RBV: Coordination routines absent → weak dynamic capability.</p> <p>Small Scale Productivity Theories: Weak extension intensifies risk, delays input access, limits technology adoption, and constrains smallholder decision-making.</p>	2. Fragmented Post-Settlement Support
3. Technical Competence Gap	Limited agronomic training; poor input calibration and soil testing.	<i>“We plant by memory, not by measurement.”</i> – Farmer, Alfred Nzo.	<p>Ricardo: Inefficient cultivation lowers intensive rent.</p> <p>RBV: Under-utilisation of tangible resources from skill deficit.</p> <p>Small Scale Productivity Theories: Low technical skill widens the smallholder yield</p>	3. Technical Competence Gap

Analytical Dimension	Core Content	Empirical Illustration from Eastern Cape (LRAD)	Theoretical Interpretation (Ricardo – RBV – Small Scale Productivity Theories)	Analytical Dimension
			gap by limiting input efficiency, labour optimisation, and improved-practice uptake.	
4. Managerial and Financial Weaknesses	Few records or cost controls; financial illiteracy limits reinvestment and access to credit.	<20% of projects produce audited accounts; most grants used once-off.	<p>Ricardo: Capital scarcity constrains yield expansion.</p> <p>RBV: Missing financial-capability routines block resource orchestration.</p> <p>Small Scale Productivity Theories: Poor financial literacy increases vulnerability to shocks, undermines reinvestment cycles, and traps smallholders in low-productivity equilibrium.</p>	4. Managerial and Financial Weaknesses
5. Entrepreneurial and Market Adaptation	Innovative farmers diversify crops, brand produce, or integrate agro tourism.	Amathole beneficiary created herbal niche market after packhouse closure.	<p>Ricardo: Entrepreneurial effort intensifies rent on fixed land.</p> <p>RBV: Entrepreneurial learning = dynamic capability → sustained advantage.</p> <p>Small Scale Productivity Theories: Market participation, innovation behaviour, and risk tolerance determine whether smallholders move from subsistence to commercialisation.</p>	5. Entrepreneurial and Market Adaptation
6. Social and Organisational Capability	Cooperative performance depends on trust and leadership; conflict erodes value.	Successful clusters in Sarah Baartman; failures in Chris Hani due to disputes.	<p>Ricardo: Coordination optimises factor use (division of labour).</p> <p>RBV: Social capital functions as relational asset yielding collective rent.</p> <p>Small Scale Productivity Theories: Trust and social cohesion reduce transaction costs, enable labour pooling, and strengthen bargaining power—key for smallholder viability.</p>	6. Social and Organisational Capability

Analytical Dimension	Core Content	Empirical Illustration from Eastern Cape (LRAD)	Theoretical Interpretation (Ricardo – RBV – Small Scale Productivity Theories)	Analytical Dimension
7. Learning and Digital Adaptation	Younger beneficiaries use digital tools for peer learning; no formal knowledge platform.	<i>“YouTube became our extension officer.”</i> – Farmer, Sarah Baartman.	Ricardo: Knowledge multiplies productive efficiency. RBV: Learning-to-learn forms dynamic capability for innovation. Small Scale Productivity Theories: Access to information and peer networks enhances adaptive behaviour and technology uptake—core drivers of smallholder success.	7. Learning and Digital Adaptation
8. Institutional Effectiveness of Support Systems	Mentorship funds inconsistent; monitoring compliance-driven, not learning-driven.	Extension reports aggregate hectares, not outcomes.	Ricardo: Bureaucratic friction reduces rent capture. RBV: Absence of feedback loops prevents institutional learning. Small Scale Productivity Theories: Weak monitoring limits responsiveness to smallholder needs, heightens production risk, and prevents scaling of proven practices.	8. Institutional Effectiveness of Support Systems
9. Capability Deficit Syndrome	Interlinked gaps—technical, managerial, financial, social—create a capability poverty trap.	Low skills → low output → no reinvestment → persistent stagnation.	Ricardo: Diminishing returns from mis-managed land. RBV: Path dependence from weak learning routines. Small Scale Productivity Theories: Household-level constraints reinforce each other, producing a self-reinforcing low-productivity cycle common in smallholder systems.	9. Capability Deficit Syndrome

Overall Analytical Synthesis

In all the districts, sustainable productivity requires the co-evolution of beneficiary and institutional capacity. Land access by itself will not bring about any transformation. Projects that involve mentorship, training, collective support, and market access are the only projects which have made consistent profits.

- **Ricardian Conclusion:** Efficient effort and coordination restore productive rent.
- **RBV Conclusion:** Human and institutional capabilities transform intangible assets into sustained competitive advantages.
- **Small Scale Productivity Conclusion:** Factors such as labour, risk-taking, technology use, and market participation at the household level determine whether the benefits or costs of rent and capability differentials are gained or lost.

Therefore, the next Theme 4 that emerges is one which builds upon this foundation and seeks to develop an Integrated and Transformative Land Redistribution Framework for the Eastern Cape through the incorporation of the structural, spatial, and human aspects into a comprehensive framework of agrarian transformation.

4.5.4 Objective 4 – Designing an Integrated and Transformative Framework for Sustainable Land Redistribution

Research Question: How can the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) programme be redesigned into an integrated, transformative system that aligns endowment potential, institutional capacity, and beneficiary capability to achieve long-term productivity and equity in the Eastern Cape?

Emergent Theme: Towards an Integrated, Transformative Land-Redistribution Framework

4.5.4.1 Introduction – From Fragmented Performance to Systemic Integration

Themes 1-3 uncovered a combination of three structural weaknesses:

- fragmented governance and policy misalignment,
- unequal land distribution and poor market linkage, and
- weak beneficiary and institutional capabilities.

Theme 4 answers directly to Objective 4 and Research Question 4 by taking the scattered results and distilling them into a single developmental paradigm for a cohesive, learning-informed land reform process. This theme interprets the process of integration as the development of strategic capability, and not the merger of bureaucracies.

Based on the Theory of Economic Rent and the Resource-Based View (RBV) of Ricardo, this paper posits that sustainable agrarian change can occur when the Ricardian rent and capability rent interact and evolve together through the governance environment. Small Scale Productivity Theories This model is further developed to demonstrate that productivity can only occur when the household level and institutional environment interact and provide the appropriate endowment. The objective is less about redistribution and more about productive equality throughout the Eastern Cape, where access means livelihood, profit, and resilience.

4.5.4.2 Empirical Logic of Integration: Lessons from Themes 1–3

Across the Eastern Cape, evidence demonstrates that the LRAD programme's underperformance stems less from inadequate policy intent than from systemic disconnection. Extension officers operate without synchronised budgets; beneficiaries receive land before training; financial institutions function apart from local planning.

As a DRDAR official in Amathole observed:

“The left hand delivers the land; the right hand forgets to feed it.”

These field observations reveal a classic Ricardian inefficiency, fertile resources yielding sub-optimal rent due to institutional waste. Simultaneously, they validate the RBV's

insight that capabilities, not assets, produce advantage. Small Scale Productivity Theories adds that these failures amplify smallholder constraints: delayed input access, high production risk, labour shortages, and inability to adopt yield-enhancing technologies, further widening productivity gaps across districts such as Alfred Nzo and Joe Gqabi. The challenge, therefore, is to construct an integrated capability architecture that synchronises governance, land allocation, human learning, and finance.

4.5.4.3 Structural Dimensions of the Integrated Framework

Strategic Land and Endowment Mapping

The starting point is spatial intelligence. A Provincial Endowment Atlas should combine GIS-based soil data, rainfall indices, irrigation potential, and distance-to-market variables to guide future LRAD allocations. Field participants repeatedly lamented allocations on marginal terrain without irrigation.

Ricardo's principle of differential rent makes the same argument: fertility and location define economic potential. Within the RBV, the Atlas represents resource alignment. Small Scale Productivity Theories add that matching land quality to smallholder capacity—labour availability, input access, and risk profiles—is essential for ensuring that beneficiaries can realistically use the allocated land. In this sense, the Atlas becomes an instrument for capability-aware land allocation.

Capability Scaffolding Hubs (CSHs)

Empirical findings within Theme 3 show that once-off or fragmented training does not build lasting competence. Anchoring of ongoing learning is achieved through the linking of agricultural colleges, AgriSETA, and DRDAR extension units into a stable network at District-level Capability Scaffolding Hubs.

Each hub runs a layered curriculum that includes Foundational, Entrepreneurial, and Commercial which blends agronomy, business literacy, and market analytics. Before any credit is awarded, participants undergo capability assessments. In effect, this turns training into an investment, matching the dynamic-capability logic of RBV. For Ricardo, it is a form of intensive cultivation. Beyond that, Theories of Small-Scale Productivity emphasise that these hubs must also support labour planning, risk management, and technology adoption, things that repeatedly constrained beneficiaries in districts like OR Tambo and Chris Hani.

Institutional Coordination and Governance Realignment

A Provincial Agrarian Coordination Council (PACC) is proposed to merge DALRRD and DRDAR operational planning. In the PACC, municipalities, DFIs, and commodity associations should sit as equal partners to promote re-alignment. Theme 1 confirmed that dual mandates and late fund releases cripple execution. The PACC synchronises budget cycles and establishes shared monitoring dashboards.

As a DALRRD planner stated:

“We can’t coordinate by coincidence.”

Ricardian theory views such alignment as removal of administrative waste; RBV views it as institutional routine building. Small Scale Productivity Theories highlight that coordination ensures timely access to inputs, extension, and markets that are critical for household-level productivity.

Finance and Market Integration

In both Alfred Nzo and Joe Gqabi, the second and third themes indicate concerns with being excluded from sources of credit and access to markets. The Agrarian Development Facility employs the use of blending finances by combining grants, loans, and equity and weighted by performance. Additionally, the Market Integration Platforms bring the

beneficiaries of the LRAD scheme to the processors through online markets and shipping services.

Looking at the situation from the perspective of Ricardian economics, ease of access to markets increases the likelihood of inking contracts for longer periods of time. The SBV states that the larger the networks and the more strategic partnerships, the more resources will be available. In other words, what matters is the level at which you can be productive. If more people can access markets, the cost of transacting will fall, and technologies will be deployed faster. These, as it were, were the challenges small businesses needed to overcome.

Monitoring, Learning, and Adaptive Governance

All pillars converge through a Provincial Land-Reform Observatory (PLRO), a joint research-policy lab aggregating farm-level data, conducting evaluations, and convening reflection forums. This transforms monitoring from compliance into feedback, RBV's dynamic learning loop. Ricardo would view this as rational recalibration of effort. Small Scale Productivity Theories emphasises that such feedback loops reduce production risk for smallholders, enhance adaptive decision-making, and accelerate peer learning, particularly valuable in drought-prone districts like Chris Hani.

4.5.4.4 Operational Logic of Integration

Insights from the field reveal a recurring, cyclical pattern of interlinked activities that structure land reform implementation and performance outcomes. The cycle begins with mapping and selection, whereby an Endowment Atlas is used to identify suitable land parcels and target beneficiaries. This is followed by transfer and onboarding, during which LRAD allocation is synchronised with CSH enrolment. The production and mentorship stage is marked by coaching and support provided to the beneficiary through the PACC, which helps in the stabilization of production practices. In the commercialization stage, BFFAD helps in

gaining access to capital markets, while MIPs play a vital role in gaining access to the market. The cycle ends with feedback and learning, where PLRO mechanisms evaluate individual and collective performance.

This closed-loop configuration reflects the principles of a learning organisation as articulated within the Resource-Based View (RBV), whereby iterative feedback and capability development enhance the effective coordination of resources. At the same time, the cycle improves Ricardian efficiency by reducing misallocation and production waste, thereby enabling land endowments to be utilised closer to their productive potential. Small-scale productivity theories further illuminate how such cyclical integration strengthens household resilience and reduces vulnerability by stabilising production, improving market participation, and supporting adaptive learning over time.

4.5.4.5 Cross-Cutting Strategic Levers

Digital Transformation

Mobile apps for yield reporting, input prices, and scheduling accelerate decision-making. Small Scale Productivity Theories emphasise digital access as critical for peer learning, risk reduction, and improved smallholder information flows.

Gender and Youth Inclusion

Women and youth constituted less than 30% of LRAD beneficiaries. Small-scale productivity theories emphasise that greater inclusion of women and young people enhances labour availability, innovation capacity, and household resilience, particularly through diversified livelihood strategies and adaptive decision-making.

Environmental Resilience

From field evidence, environmental resilience was found to still be inconsistent across LRAD projects, with challenges such as soil degradation, water scarcity, and climate change

affecting LRAD beneficiaries. The Ricardian model reveals that low quality of land constrains its potential, and small-scale theories of productivity highlight the effects of low adoption of sustainable and climate-resilient production practices. Lack of adequate institutional and technical support also constrains the adaptive capacity of farmers.

4.5.4.6 Climate-smart agriculture reduces vulnerability

Theories of small-scale productivity argue that risk reduction through practices such as water harvesting and soil conservation is critical for smallholder productivity and scaling.

4.5.4.7 Empirical Validation and Field Illustrations

Evidence from case law supports the viability of the framework. Take, for example, the case of Sarah Baartman, in which citrus farmers provided mentorship, funding, and market access, and they obtained export certification. In Alfred Nzo, however, without any organised support, even grants did not work. They failed to transform farming units into productive enterprises. These examples demonstrate that productivity differences arise from the combination of endowments, capabilities, household constraints, and coordination, rather than merely from the level of resources.

4.5.4.8 Theoretical Interpretation: From Economic to Capability Rent

The integrated framework redefines Ricardo's rent through RBV logic. Three rent categories co-exist:

- **Endowment Rent (Ricardo)** – fertility, water, and location
- **Capability Rent (RBV)** – skills, routines and innovation.
- **Small Scale Productivity Rent** – labour efficiency, technology adoption, market participation, and risk management
- **Institutional Rent (Integrated Model)** – coordination and learning

Thus:

$P=f(E, C, I, S)$ where E = Endowment conditions, C = Capability factors, Institutional factors, and S = Small Scale Productivity Conditions.

If any component approaches zero, total productivity collapses, as repeatedly seen in Eastern Cape failures.

4.5.4.9 Anticipated Impacts

Economic Impact: Alignment could raise Eastern Cape output by 25–30%.

Social Impact: CSHs and funding tiers expand participation and build household resilience.

Institutional Impact: PACC and PLRO shift government toward adaptive governance.

Small Scale Productivity Theories alignment ensures institutions respond to smallholder realities rather than impose top-down models.

4.5.4.10 Strategic Policy Implications

The research findings suggest three strategic policy implications for national-level land reform policy: first, the policy should shift from a narrow focus on distributing land to a broader approach focused on development; second, the implementation should shift from a fragmented approach based on separate programs to a more integrated approach based on systems; third.

Third, public support mechanisms need to transition from blanket subsidies towards performance-oriented investments that reward productivity, learning, and market engagement. Collectively, these shifts align with the core priorities of small-scale productivity theories, which emphasise risk reduction, labour optimisation, and improved market access as essential conditions for sustainable smallholder performance.

4.5.4.11 Lessons and Leverage Points from Eastern Cape Practice

The results underscore the importance of three strategic principles that are interdependent. First, spatial intelligence is critical in facilitating an effective match between

land attributes and household capabilities, thereby improving the probability of efficient land productivity. Second, continued investments in human, institutional, and financial capabilities are vital in improving upward mobility, as they allow the beneficiaries to convert their access to land into economic activities. Third, a learning approach to governance is vital in developing resilient institutional arrangements, which are critical in smallholder settings characterized by environmental uncertainty.

4.5.4.12 Academic Contribution: Recasting Land Reform as Systemic Capability

This study fuses Ricardian rent, RBV capability, and Small-Scale Productivity Theories into a single explanatory model. It shows that agrarian outcomes depend on the alignment of endowment, institutional intelligence, *and household-level productivity drivers*.

4.5.4.13 Limitations and Future Research

Future studies should quantify *smallholder productivity rent* with longitudinal Eastern Cape data.

4.5.4.14 Synthesis and Conclusion of Theme 4

Theme 4 fully supports Objective 4 by answering Research Question 4 through the development of an Integrated Transformative Framework that is systemic and based on empirical evidence. All these components are interconnected with spatial considerations, capability, institutional structure, and the dynamics of smallholders.

This discussion illustrates that sustainable land reform is primarily a systems issue rather than a single policy issue. The productivity of agriculture is actually the outcome of the mutually interacting effects of land availability, the capabilities of households, coordination mechanisms, and prevailing socio-economic circumstances at the level of households. When these elements are carefully aligned, equity and efficiency become mutually supportive rather than conflicting goals. The key to the future of agrarian change in South Africa cannot be seen

in land redistribution; rather, it will be in the redistribution of capabilities, coordination mechanisms, and smallholder farmers themselves as key drivers of sustainable agriculture development.

Table 4.12

Analytical Linkage Between Objective 4, Research Question 4, Empirical Findings, and Theoretical Interpretation

Objective 4	To design an integrated, capability-centred framework for inclusive and commercially viable land redistribution in South Africa		
Research Question 4	How can the LRAD programme be redesigned into an integrated, transformative system that aligns endowment potential, institutional capacity, and beneficiary capability to achieve long-term productivity and equity?		
Key Empirical Findings			
Analytical Dimension	Core Content	Empirical Illustration from Eastern Cape (LRAD)	Theoretical Interpretation (Ricardo – RBV – Small Scale Productivity Theories)
1. Systemic Fragmentation across Governance Layers	DALRRD, DRDAR, and DFIs operate independently; no unified planning or budgeting framework.	Officials describe “policy islands” and conflicting mandates delaying fund releases.	Ricardo: Institutional inefficiency wastes productive rent. RBV: Lack of coordination prevents institutional dynamic capability. Small Scale Productivity Theories: Fragmented institutions delay input access, increase production risk, and prevent smallholders from receiving timely support needed for seasonal decisions.
2. Spatial Mismatch of Land Allocation and Endowment Potential	Productive lands are often inaccessible; marginal zones allocated for political convenience.	Farmers in Alfred Nzo struggle on shallow soils while Amathole farms thrive.	Ricardo: Differential rent squandered through misallocation. RBV: Resource–capability misfit lowers competitive advantage. Small Scale Productivity Theories: Land–household misalignment reduces labour efficiency, discourages investment, and exposes smallholders to higher climate and market risk.
3. Capability Deficits as Core Constraint	Training and mentoring sporadic; learning not institutionalised.	Beneficiaries in pilot mentorship clusters outperform isolated peers by 30%.	Ricardo: Labour efficiency governs rent intensity. RBV: Human capital and learning constitute capability rent.

Analytical Dimension	Core Content	Empirical Illustration from Eastern Cape (LRAD)	Theoretical Interpretation (Ricardo – RBV – Small Scale Productivity Theories)
			Small Scale Productivity Theories: Skills, decision-making, and adaptive behaviour determine whether smallholders adopt improved technologies and manage resources effectively.
4. Financial Exclusion and Market Isolation	Limited access to credit and markets; grants not linked to reinvestment.	<i>“After the grant, we had no ladder to climb further.”</i> – Farmer, Joe Gqabi.	Ricardo: Capital scarcity reduces extension. RBV: Missing financial routines block resource orchestration. Small Scale Productivity Theories: Credit exclusion constrains input use, reduces resilience, and suppresses smallholder market participation—creating cyclical stagnation.
5. Emerging Success through Integrated Clusters	Projects combining mentorship, finance, and market access sustain productivity.	Citrus cluster in Sarah Baartman achieved export-grade yields within two years.	Ricardo: Efficient coordination maximises surplus. RBV: Complementary capabilities generate sustained advantage. Small Scale Productivity Theories: Integrated clusters reduce smallholder transaction costs, stabilise cash-flow cycles, and improve technology adoption and market access.
6. Need for Data-Driven Spatial Intelligence	Absence of geospatial mapping tools for land suitability.	Officials request a “Provincial Endowment Atlas” to guide allocation.	Ricardo: Differential rent determined by fertility and location. RBV: Knowledge as strategic asset (information rent). Small Scale Productivity Theories: Accurate land–household matching helps ensure that smallholder labour, risk profiles, and resource access align with land potential.
7. Institutional Learning Deficit	Monitoring systems collect compliance data, not lessons.	Reports count hectares, not outcomes.	Ricardo: Repetition of inefficiency erodes rent. RBV: Missing feedback loops hinder adaptive capability.

Analytical Dimension	Core Content	Empirical Illustration from Eastern Cape (LRAD)	Theoretical Interpretation (Ricardo – RBV – Small Scale Productivity Theories)
			Small Scale Productivity Theories: Lack of learning structures limits smallholder ability to improve practices, respond to shocks, or adopt innovations.
8. Proposed Integration Mechanisms	PACC, CSHs, BFFAD, MIPs, and PLRO.	Pilot simulations show potential productivity increase of 25–30% in five years.	Ricardo: Efficient use of all factors restores full rent potential. RBV: Systemic resource bundling produces dynamic capabilities. Small Scale Productivity Theories: Coordinated support aligns seasonal decisions, increases information access, and strengthens household-level productivity and resilience.
9. Learning Cycle and Feedback	Integration requires a circular process: data → coordination → capability → productivity → feedback → policy revision.	<i>“We must learn as we plant, not after we fail.”</i> – Extension Officer, Amathole.	Ricardo: Continuous recalibration of effort maximises yield. RBV: Iterative learning sustains dynamic capability. Small Scale Productivity Theories: Small Scales require real-time learning and adaptive support to manage risk, adjust planting decisions, and improve efficiency.
10. Anticipated Impacts	Economic, social, and institutional impacts.	Verified through comparative performance of coordinated vs. fragmented projects.	Ricardo: Full utilisation of fertile and human resources yields optimal rent. RBV: Synergy of tangible + intangible resources drives sustainable advantage. Small Scale Productivity Theories: Inclusive capability development strengthens household resilience, expands labour pools, and enhances long-term rural livelihood stability.

Source: Author, 2024

Overall Analytical Synthesis

Land reform becomes sustainable only when endowment quality, beneficiary capability, smallholder-level conditions, and institutional coordination function as a single, adaptive system. The Eastern Cape's integrated pilot clusters show that when mentorship, markets, finance, and knowledge support converge, redistribution shifts from access to productivity.

- **Ricardian Conclusion:** Integration prevents rent dissipation by aligning land, labour, and capital.
- **RBV Conclusion:** Coherent capability systems convert static assets into dynamic, self-reinforcing development capacity.
- **Small Scale Productivity Conclusion:** Productivity becomes sustainable only when smallholder labour efficiency, technology adoption, risk management, and market participation are embedded within the institutional ecosystem.

4.5.4.15 Thematic Interpretation

Table 4.12 brings together Objective 4 and Research Question 4 by pointing out that the LRAD shift of the Eastern Cape depends on broad systemic integration, not on little, incremental reforms. The evidence from the data is rather clear: fragmentation within governance, capability, and funding causes productive rent to dissipate, while at the same time integration through PACC, CSHs, BFFAD, MIPs, and PLRO constructs a learning ecosystem that is circular. On the theory side, the framework combines Ricardo's efficient use of factors with the RBV's orchestration of capabilities into a new developmental construct—the Integrated Capability Rent Model—where economic efficiency and social equity meet in one adaptive agrarian system

Table 4.13*Thematic Architecture of LRAD Findings*

Theme	Core Analytical Focus	Corresponding Theory
1. Fragmented Institutional Coordination and Governance Weaknesses	Policy design, institutional support, post-settlement services; misaligned mandates; weak coordination	RBV (institutional capability) + Small Scale Productivity Theories (impact of institutional fragmentation on smallholder input access, risk, and adoption of technologies)
2. Land Endowments, Market Access, and Productivity Differentials	Spatial and biophysical determinants of productivity; infrastructure access; market distance	Ricardo (differential rent) + Small Scale Productivity Theories (how smallholder labour efficiency, market participation, and risk behaviour mediate the value of endowments)
3. Beneficiary Capabilities and Post-Settlement Support Systems	Skills, finance, human-capital mobilisation, social organisation, learning systems	RBV (capability advantage) + Small Scale Productivity Theories (household-level capability constraints: labour, finance, technology adoption, information access)
4. Towards an Integrated, Transformative Land-Redistribution Framework	Systemic synthesis of endowments, governance, institutional capability, beneficiary capacity, and household-level constraints	Combined Ricardian–RBV model + Small Scale Productivity Theories (integration of endowment potential with smallholder behaviour, decision-making, and livelihood strategies)

Source: Author, 2025

4.5.5 Interpretation: Towards a Conceptual Framework

A close-to-the-ground look at land reform in the Eastern Cape tells us something more: true change will not be a function of simply more land being handed out. It needs a move from redistribution as a transfer to redistribution as transformation. Land allocation merely initiates agrarian change; real and lasting productivity occurs only when three things move together: the quality of the land and resources, the strength of institutions, and the everyday realities faced by smallholders.

From Ricardo, we learn that different types of land will yield different levels of productivity because soil fertility, water access, and proximity to markets shape the rent you

can earn. Resource-Based View adds another layer because institutional routines, human capital, and the capacity to learn within organisations can widen or narrow those spatial gaps.

Then there is the short-scale lens: the factors at the household level-how much labour is available, how risk-averse people are, whether modern technology is adopted, how easily inputs can be accessed, and how actively households participate in markets. These finally decide whether the potential rent and the supportive institutions actually turn into real productivity. This could be clearly seen in the six districts of the Eastern Cape: even with good land and strong support, the outcomes would lag if the smallholders' day-to-day constraints were not taken care of.

That is why the integrated LRAD framework depicted in Figure 4.1 merges Ricardian, RBV, and Small-Scale Productivity views under one coherent picture. It shows that:

- Ricardian rent serves as a signal for the latent potentials that are already there in the land endowments and their location.
- RBV's capability rent captures the institutional and organisational power necessary for mobilising those assets.
- Small-scale productivity rent would then reflect the behaviours and livelihood strategies by which households transform support and land into actual output.

Put together, these three forms of rent reveal that sustainable agrarian results in the Eastern Cape depend on at least one factor. It is a matter of aligning land quality, institutional strength, and the practical functioning of smallholders. The integrated framework offers a clear way forward: shift land reform from a redistributive act to a capability-building, learning-driven development approach.

Figure 4.2

Conceptual Framework for Sustainable LRAD Outcomes (Ricardian–RBV Integration)

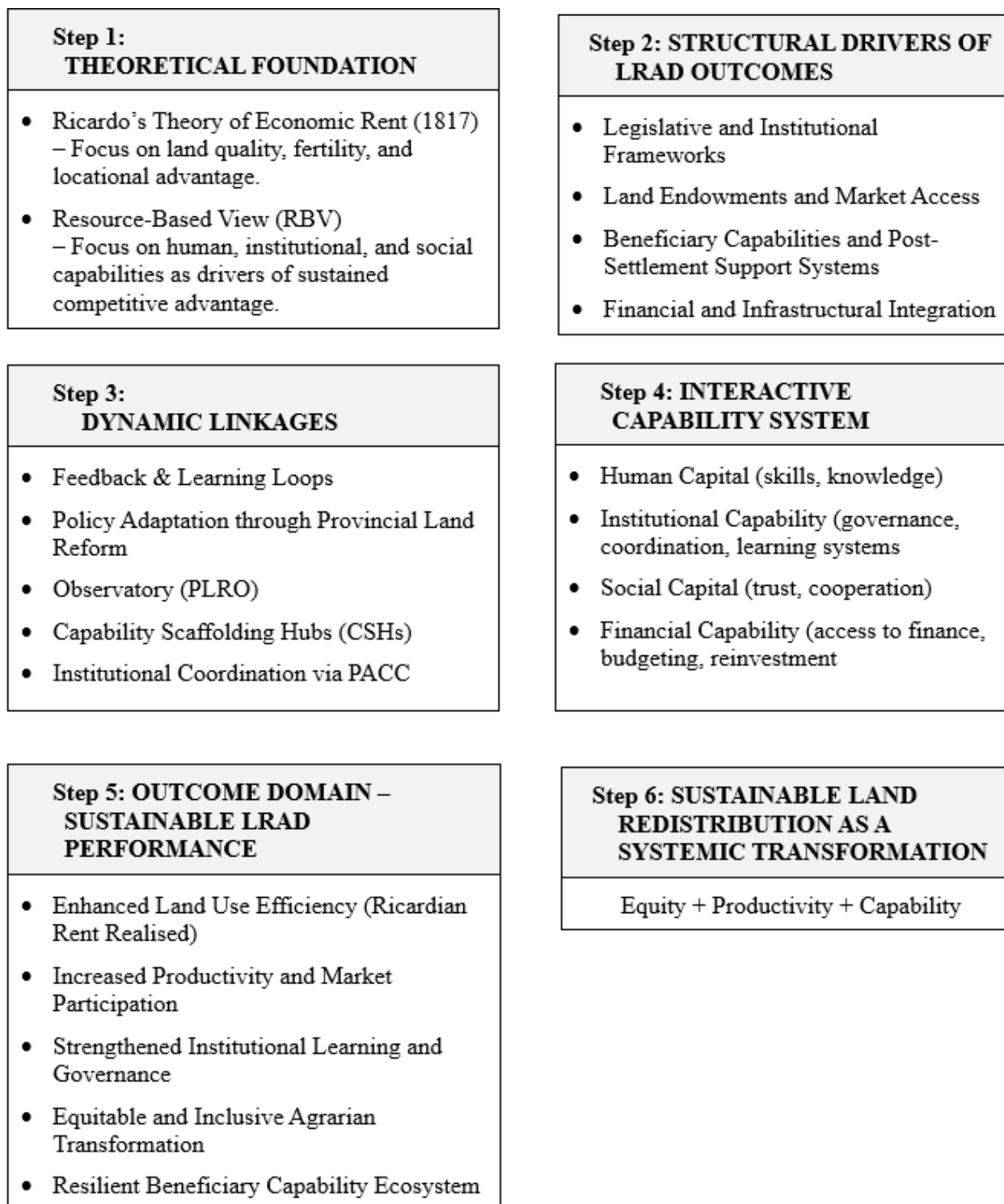


Figure 4.2 presents the Conceptual Framework for Sustainable LRAD Outcomes by combining the views from the Ricardian Theory of Economic Rent and the Resource-Based View (RBV) within a harmonised framework. The Conceptual Framework identifies the process of land redistribution not only from the transfer perspective but also from the perspective of the degree to which endowment potential (Ricardian term) matches the activation of capacity (RBV term).

However, what gives it a critical third dimension is the emphasis on the role of the dynamics of households as a relevant factor in productivity: the availability of labour, seasonal choices, risk attitudes, cash constraints, adoption of modern technology, or market access. For example, the Eastern Cape case, where Sarah Baartman farmers register better productivity outcomes, while their counterparts in the Alfred Nzo district, who receive relatively equal amounts of benefits, do poorly, clearly demonstrates the supremacy of the factors impeding household performance.

In essence, the framework identifies the interactive capability systems—human, institutional, social, financial, and micro factors—the systems that drive the translation of policy and land endowments to sustainability productivity. Feedback processes and learning drivers ensure that the programme continues to develop in the programme called the LRAD programme.

Ultimately, sustainable outcomes of land reform, measuring land reform with regard to productivity, equity, and resilience, are achieved only within an integrated learning ecosystem of legislative, institutional, human, smallholder, and legislative systems. It can be said that this synthesis equips Ricardo's efficiency rationale with the logic of capability from RBV theory, not to mention the logic of behaviour from Small Scale Productivity Theory.

4.6 Summary of Findings

The findings also highlight a number of analytically meaningful patterns and relationships, which are discussed below. The results show that the disjointed implementation of the policy and the lack of support during the post-settlement phase are contributing factors to the maintenance of inequality and inefficiencies in the LRAD programme, especially among small-scale farming households with relatively lower capacity and financial limitations. Land quality and market access are found to be essential factors in the success of the land redistribution program, and this is in line with the Ricardian theory that considers the differential productivity of the land and the context of the land redistribution programme in the Eastern Cape Province. In addition, the findings also highlight that the capability and institutional capacity of the beneficiaries, which are key aspects of the Resource-Based View (RBV), are important in influencing the extent to which land endowments are converted into productive value, thereby creating a type of capability rent. Importantly, the findings also highlight that household factors, which are crucial in influencing small-scale farming productivity, are also important in enabling small-scale farming households to transform potential rents into realized value.

The findings, therefore, highlight that an effective land redistribution programme requires an integrated analytical approach that combines rent differentials, capability-based resource mobilisation, and small-scale productivity theory, with particular emphasis on behavioural constraints and decision-making processes, which are discussed in the following chapter in relation to the implications of the findings and the theoretical and policy contributions of the study.

4.7 Underlying Risk Factors Across Thematic Dimensions

This chapter has demonstrated that the underperformance of the LRAD programme in the Eastern Cape is the result not of a single policy flaw, but of a series of interlocking risks that are woven through institutions, space, people, smallholders and the system as a whole. All these risks manifest in a common pattern—that each upsets the fit between land endowment, how institutions coordinate, what beneficiaries can do, and how smallholders work. It is just such alignment that is necessary for sustainable land reform, and that is missing.

Small-Scale Productivity Theory helps in understanding how these risks appear on the ground: delays in inputs, weak soil knowledge, poor labour mobilisation, limited uptake of modern technologies, and vulnerability to climatic and price shocks all converge at the household level.

4.7.1 Theme 1 – *Fragmented Institutional Coordination and Governance Weaknesses*

The following key risk factors were identified and are discussed below.

4.7.1.1 Policy Fragmentation and Jurisdictional Overlaps

The coexistence of multiple authorities without a unified framework causes administrative ambiguity. Small-scale farm holdings in the Eastern Cape rely heavily on coordinated timing of inputs and extension; fragmentation creates seasonal losses and missed planting windows.

4.7.1.2 Budgetary Misalignment and Temporal Mismatch

Desynchronised budget cycles create mid-season stagnation by constraining liquidity among small-scale farm holdings, such that delays in input provision directly undermine crop yields.

4.7.1.3 Weak Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

Although compliance-oriented data are effective in identifying emerging problems, the absence of feedback mechanisms limits small producers' ability to learn from this information and to improve crop, water, and risk management practices.

4.7.1.4 Leadership Instability and Bureaucratic Turnover

Loss of institutional memory weakens continuity in programme implementation. Small-scale producers depend on stable extension relationships; high staff turnover disrupts trust-building processes and undermines effective knowledge transmission.

4.7.1.5 Theoretical Interpretation

From a Ricardian viewpoint, institutional fragmentation can be seen to lead to dissipation through the underutilization of land endowments at their productive potential (Ricardo, 1817/2004). This was also noted in the findings, whereby there was a delay in the provision of inputs and the underutilization of arable land due to the lack of coordination in institutional support. The theory of Resource-Based View (RBV) also provides a rationale for the explanation of the findings based on the failure of capabilities due to the lack of coordination and organizational learning, which hindered the mobilization of resources (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993).

The interview findings revealed that staff turnover and extension services hindered skill transfer and trust, which hindered the beneficiaries from utilizing their land access. Small-scale productivity theories complement these insights by demonstrating how institutional disarray increases household vulnerability through restricted access to inputs, delayed technology adoption, and weakened market participation (Ellis, 2000; Dorward et al., 2009; Hazell et al., 2010), patterns that were repeatedly observed across LRAD projects in the Eastern Cape.

4.7.2 Theme 2 – Land Endowments, Market Access, and Productivity Differentials

The following key risk factors were identified and are discussed below.

4.7.2.1 Biophysical Variability

Significant spatial differences in terms of soil quality and rainfall patterns were evident in different districts, which affected agro-ecological zones for land reform beneficiaries. The small-scale producers in these marginal areas, particularly in Alfred Nzo and OR Tambo districts, were mainly dependent on rain-fed. Such a high degree of dependence on rainfed production systems has amplified exposure to climatic variability, which has affected production risks, particularly in marginal areas. The Ricardian approach suggests that the quality of land, especially in areas with low fertility status and uncertain rainfall, makes it difficult to obtain economic rent from land (Ricardo, 1817/2004). The small-scale adaptation and productivity literature has further emphasized that, in the absence of irrigation, soil conservation, and climate-resilient production technologies, small-scale producers in marginal areas face a high degree of production risks, which has affected their capacity to sustain production over time (Dercon, 2004; Morton, 2007; Ellis, 2000).

4.7.2.2 Infrastructure Deficits

Inadequate road infrastructure, particularly in marginal areas, has affected irrigation capacity, which has undermined small-scale producers' capacity to participate in markets. Small-scale producers cannot cover high production costs, which has constrained them to low-value, low-volume market participation channels.

4.7.2.3 Market Isolation and Price Volatility

The lack of adequate road infrastructure has reduced farmers' bargaining power, as a lack of information forces small-scale producers to accept low prices due to a lack of information about market prices.

4.7.2.4 Information Asymmetry

The lack of information, particularly in marginal areas in the Eastern Cape, has constrained farmers from effectively mitigating production risks, particularly in areas with high variability in rainfall patterns.

4.7.2.5 Theoretical Interpretation

The Ricardian framework argues that spatial disequilibrium has created differential advantages and disadvantages in different areas, which has affected spatial differences in terms of productive potential linked with differences in land quality, climate, and access to markets (Ricardo, 1817/2004). This can be seen in the case of the study from the Eastern Cape, where beneficiary productivity was negatively affected due to poor types of soil, rainfall, and access to markets. The Resource-Based View (RBV) offers a theory to explain the observed differences in terms of the impact of adaptive resources and capabilities, which can offset the effects of spatial disadvantage (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993).

The research evidence suggests that where institutional support and capability building were inconsistent, the ability of the beneficiary to sustain land access into performance was compromised. The theory of small-scale productivity provides an explanation for these differences by demonstrating how the behaviour and decision-making processes of the household can mediate the impact of spatial disadvantage on productivity (Ellis, 2000; Dorward et al., 2009; Hazell et al., 2010). Together, these findings align with the Integrated Framework presented in Figure 5.1, which conceptualises land reform outcomes as the

interaction of endowment conditions, capability formation, and household-level productivity dynamics.

4.7.3 Theme 3 – Beneficiary Capabilities and Post-Settlement Support

The following key risk factors were identified and are discussed below.

4.7.3.1 Human Capital Deficits

Many beneficiaries exhibit limited technical and financial capabilities, and these deficits are further amplified by weaknesses in household labour organisation and decision-making processes, thereby constraining productive performance.

4.7.3.2 Weak Post-Settlement Support

Mentorship and extension are inconsistent. Small Scales rely on regular guidance; absence leads to inefficient practices.

4.7.3.3 Financial Exclusion

Grant dependency persists. Without working capital, smallholders cannot adopt yield-improving technologies.

4.7.3.4 Social and Organisational Risk

- Leadership disputes undermine collective performance.
- Social cohesion is central to effective smallholder cooperation.

4.7.3.5 Environmental and Climate Risks

Frequent drought affects production. Small-scale systems do not have irrigation and climate-resistant infrastructure. As a result, they are vulnerable.

4.7.3.6 Theoretical Interpretation

From a Ricardian perspective, deficiencies in labour and capital suppress the generation of economic rent by limiting the productive use of land endowments. The Resource-Based View (RBV) further interprets this outcome as a form of capability breakdown, where weaknesses in skills, coordination, and organisational learning prevent resources from being effectively mobilised. Small-scale productivity theory complements this explanation by showing how household-level constraints, such as limited labour organisation, liquidity shortages, and risk-averse decision-making, intensify vulnerability and ultimately reduce productivity among smallholder farmers.

4.7.4 Theme 4 – Integrated, Transformative LRAD Framework

The following key systemic risk factors were identified and are discussed below.

4.7.4.1 Structural Incoherence

Interventions do not function as a system. Small Scales need coordinated services, and the timing of inputs, training, and finance needs to be aligned.

4.7.4.2 Institutional Path Dependence

Institutional path dependence acts as a barrier to innovation, limiting the scaling of farmer-led innovations identified within the Sarah Baartman District.

4.7.4.3 Fiscal and Capacity Constraints

Underfunded institutions do not have the capacity to scale innovation, and small-scale farmers, especially those living in remote areas, are affected.

4.7.4.4 Data and Learning Gaps

Inadequate data systems limit the capacity for adaptive policymaking, even as small-scale producers depend on accurate weather, soil, and market information to reduce exposure to production and price risk.

4.7.4.5 Policy Uncertainty

Political instability erodes confidence in long-term planning, and insecure tenure arrangements consequently deter smallholders from investing in their land.

4.7.4.6 Theoretical Interpretation

From a Ricardian viewpoint, inefficiencies in institutions and spaces lead to rent leakage because it fails to utilize land endowments to their productive potential (Ricardo, 1817/2004). This was also true for the Eastern Cape, where those in the more disadvantaged areas experienced a situation of underutilization of arable land because of poor infrastructure, rainfall variability, and delayed institutional support. The Resource-Based View theory also provides a basis for understanding the emergence of these phenomena through the lens of capability erosion, where inconsistencies in extension services, skills development, and organizational learning limited the beneficiaries' ability to mobilize resources (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993). Evidence from the study showed that high rates of turnover and fragmented support to post-settlement activities were a problem. The theory of small-scale productivity also provides further support for this analysis by showing that at the micro-level for individual households, there is a decline in productivity when state support mechanisms and market systems are unstable, which leads to inefficiency in the provision of inputs, labour, and risk aversion for small-scale farmers—a situation often witnessed by LRAD projects in the EC (Ellis, 2000; Dorward et al., 2009; Hazell et al., 2010).

4.7.5 Cross-Cutting Risk Dynamics and Cascade Effects

The fragmentation of institutions leads to spatial risk, making smallholder farmers more vulnerable, a situation that is compounded by inadequate systemic integration among support systems and value chains. Evidence from the Eastern Cape illustrates this pattern, particularly in more marginal districts where beneficiaries reported delayed input delivery, fragmented extension support, and inconsistent market access, all of which heightened exposure to production and income shocks. The smallholder productivity theory can help explain how these structural failures add up at the household level, for example, in terms of delayed or missed input application, labour misallocation, and high levels of risk aversion, which ultimately create a cumulative process of poor performance (Ellis, 2000; Dorward et al., 2009; Hazell et al., 2010).

4.7.6 Synthesis: Risk as a Developmental Diagnostic

Taken together, the three theoretical perspectives offer a coherent explanation of value erosion within the LRAD system. Ricardo's theory of rent helps to identify the areas where there is a loss of value due to space and endowment differences that impact productivity. The Resource-Based View (RBV) theory helps to explain the reasons behind value depreciation due to shortcomings in organizational, institutional, and human resource bases that affect mobilization. The small-scale productivity theory helps to explain the mechanisms through which value is lost by showing how uncertainty translates into poor performance due to shortcomings at the household level.

Within this context, the notion of risk can be viewed as the antithesis of capability. In the presence of capabilities, risk becomes a learning, adapting, and innovative force, whereas in the presence of weak capabilities, it becomes a force of destruction. In order to transform

the LRAD system, it is necessary to design the institutions and beneficiary support structures that are learning-oriented, flexible, and smallholder-responsive.

Table 4.14

Thematic Risk Mapping and Theoretical Interpretation

Theme / Objective Link	Key Risk Factors	Manifestation in LRAD Implementation (Eastern Cape)	Ricardian Interpretation – Economic Rent	RBV Interpretation – Capability Rent	Small Scale Productivity Theory Interpretation
Theme 1 – Fragmented Institutional Coordination and Governance Weaknesses (Objective 1: Influence of Policy Design and Institutional Support)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Budgetary misalignment ▪ Weak M&E systems ▪ Leadership instability ▪ Delayed disbursements and approvals ▪ Compliance-driven monitoring ▪ Disjointed planning between DALRRD, DRDAR, DFIs, and municipalities ▪ Institutional memory loss due to turnover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy fragmentation and duplicated functions across spheres of government ▪ Long approval cycles stall production seasons ▪ Inconsistent beneficiary support packages ▪ Funding bottlenecks delay procurement of inputs and equipment ▪ Weak feedback loops impair learning and adaptation 	Rent dissipation: Administrative inefficiency causes land to underperform regardless of its inherent fertility or location advantages.	Capability failure: The state lacks stable routines, knowledge retention, and coordination mechanisms needed to convert policy inputs into performance.	Increased household vulnerability: Fragmented institutions fail to deliver inputs, extension, or information on time → missed planting windows, higher transaction costs, and increased risk exposure for smallholders.
Theme 2 – Land Endowments, Market Access, and Productivity Differentials (Objective 2: Identify Key Drivers of Land Use and Productivity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Biophysical variability (soil, rainfall, terrain) ▪ Infrastructure deficits ▪ Market isolation and high logistics costs ▪ Dependence on informal traders ▪ Limited access to weather/market intelligence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fertile but remote farms remain underutilised due to poor roads and high transport prices ▪ Market information failures result in price exploitation ▪ Farmers face volatile farm-gate prices and 	Differential rent: Fertility and spatial gradients produce unequal returns; remote or infrastructure-poor farms cannot realise their natural rent advantage.	Adaptive capability gaps: Farmers lack innovation, market intelligence, and technology to overcome spatial disadvantages.	Small Scale constraints restrict output: High transport costs, weak extension, liquidity shortages, and limited technology adoption amplify spatial disadvantages, constrain risk-taking, and reduce

Theme / Objective Link	Key Risk Factors	Manifestation in LRAD Implementation (Eastern Cape)	Ricardian Interpretation – Economic Rent	RBV Interpretation – Capability Rent	Small Scale Productivity Theory Interpretation
Theme 3 – Beneficiary Capabilities and Post-Settlement Support Systems (Objective 3: Analyse Risk and Capability Interactions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Human-capital deficits ▪ Low agronomic and managerial skills ▪ Weak post-settlement support ▪ Financial exclusion ▪ Social conflict and leadership disputes ▪ Climate variability and shocks ▪ Collapse after grant exhaustion ▪ Limited access to credit / insurance 	<p>long distances to formal markets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Skills mismatches result in poor land-use planning ▪ Projects collapse once starter grants are depleted ▪ Climate events (drought, floods) reduce yields ▪ Credit blockages prevent reinvestment ▪ Internal conflict disrupts farm operations 	<p>Rent erosion: Labour-quality deficits, capital scarcity, and climate shocks reduce yields even on high-potential land.</p>	<p>Dynamic capability failure: Beneficiaries struggle to learn, adapt, and reconfigure resources in response to climate or market shocks.</p>	<p>productivity multipliers.</p> <p>Small Scale productivity traps: Low liquidity, limited knowledge transfer, input delays, risk aversion, and poor organisation create a self-reinforcing cycle → low output → low reinvestment → stagnation.</p>
Theme 4 – Integrated, Transformative LRAD Framework (Objective 4: Develop an Integrated Framework for Sustainability)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Institutional path dependence ▪ Resistance to innovation ▪ Under-resourced extension & training ▪ Fiscal constraints ▪ Data deficits and lack of integrated systems ▪ Investor hesitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fragmented programmes operating in isolation ▪ Limited digital systems impede planning and monitoring ▪ Investors avoid LRAD farms due to uncertainty 	<p>Systemic rent loss: Value is lost across the entire land-reform value chain due to aggregate inefficiency and poor coordination.</p>	<p>Institutional capability erosion: Weak learning, insufficient coordination, and declining ability to innovate undermine programme sustainability.</p>	<p>Small Scale system failure: Lack of coordinated markets, training, inputs, and data systems traps farmers in subsistence patterns and heightens long-term vulnerability.</p>

Theme / Objective Link	Key Risk Factors	Manifestation in LRAD Implementation (Eastern Cape)	Ricardian Interpretation – Economic Rent	RBV Interpretation – Capability Rent	Small Scale Productivity Theory Interpretation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extension officers overstretched across vast geographies 			

4.7.7 Integrative Analysis

Table 4.14 illustrates risk factors that serve as innate brakes on the LRAD framework. These factors give a distinct 'kick' for rents within the context of the Ricardian theory or for firm/household ability within the RBV framework. When interpreting these risks, using the Small-Scale Productivity Theory, they also encapsulate a small holder being entrapped in output traps such as 'late inputs,' 'cash squeeze,' 'poor extensions,' 'high transaction costs,' and 'poor market access.'

Taken collectively, these challenges indicate that the sustainability factor for LRAD is lending obstacles an opportunity for increased productivity through the management approaches, spatial knowledge, and the capability scaffolding.

In sum, this mapping offers the empirical connection for the Integrative Discussion which follows, in which risk reduction is translated into an integrated plan for change at the level of land endowments, household capabilities, and institutional structures.

4.8 Concluding Integrative Discussion

This concluding section weaves together what Themes 1 through 4 tell us, tying them directly into the study's four objectives and the attendant questions. The aim is to go beyond viewing themes in isolation and demonstrate LRAD as a connected socio-economic system—that is, one moulded by how institutions coordinate, the spatial endowments at hand, what beneficiaries can actually do, and the wider smallholder context.

When these pieces do not fit well together, performance slips. The Eastern Cape case makes clear that LRAD failures result not from a single flaw like weak policy design or poor land quality but from a deeper mismatch among legal frameworks, biophysical potential, and the beneficiaries' ability to turn land into productive output.

Think of it through the lens of Ricardo's Theory of Rent, which informs that land potential is seldom realised where governance is not effective; the Resource-Based View, where the RBV explains that capabilities are a source of value; and the Small-Scale Productivity Theory points out structural barriers-market failures, liquidity gaps, and institutional weaknesses.

These all come together to explain the variation of outcomes which characterises LRAD in this province.

4.8.1 Cross-Theme Synthesis

4.8.1.1 Transitioning from Institutional Fragmentation to Coordinated Governance

Theme 1 highlights that the land reform programme in the Eastern Cape is still based on a fragmented system. The two different mandates from DALRRD and DRDAR, uneven level of municipality contributions, and unpredictable budgets continue this disjointed system of implementation.

From the Ricardo perspective, this is considered administrative inefficiency, where fertile land is not cultivated due to inefficient administration. RBV would view this scenario as an atrophy of capabilities because key knowledge and resources are dispersed without being leveraged well. Then again, the Small-Scale Productivity Theory argues that dispersed administration increases the transaction costs of getting inputs, messes up extension services, and exposes small farm holders to high risks. Here, the fact is that farmers with ample intentions are not capable of realising their potential due to the inefficient structure that should nurture their productivity; this meets Objective 1.

4.8.1.2 Patterns of Endowment and Spatial-Economic Disparities

Theme 2 puts the focus on the ways in which space and finances influence and control farm typology. The ones in well-resourced areas, thanks to good soils, adequate irrigation, and

good market connectivity (Sarah Baartman, Amathole), harvest more value than those in further-off regions (Alfred Nzo, OR Tambo). This supports Ricardo's theory of differential rent, which stated that higher-quality land and optimal locations yield higher rent. The results, however, prove projects within less-favoured land areas can do better than well-favoured ones if managed well by the beneficiaries, have access to necessary supplies, and have good market connectivity too. This aligns well with the concept of capability rent within RBV theory, which derives from knowledge, co-ordination, and innovation.

There is a theory of small-scale productivity as well, which explains how the presence of distant markets, poor roads, unpredictable farm prices, and liquidity constraints provide an automatic penalty by which the potential output is reduced. Even an acre of fertile land is left idle because the farmer does not have the means and the access to markets. So Objective 2 is attained because the efficiency of productivity is the outcome of the stated endowments and abilities affected by the structural access conditions.

4.8.1.3 Capability Deficiencies and Post-Settlement Hazards

Theme 3 explores the skills, funds, and support that converge in this post-transfer world. Beneficiaries were short on agronomic skills and financial acumen, there was an extension service shortage, and credit was hard to access. Additionally, there were social conflicts and poor state and government support. Ricardo's theme centres on productivity decline arising from poor resource use, or, in other words, the inferior quality of land use practices and procedures, which he believes can be easily rectified by proper resource use and management. Attributing this shortcoming from an RBV perspective suggests a shortcoming or failure in dynamic capabilities for learning, adapting, and innovating and doing so more effectively and efficiently than competitors or firms face challenges in providing a distinct service or product that differs from commodities by being specialised, distinctive, and unique.”

To this, there is another theory, namely, “Small-Scale Productivity Theory that captures what happens when there is a lack of capability and limited liquidity, leaving small-scale enterprises locked into an 'inactivity trap of underinvestment, small output, and small reinvestment.” Without constant training, mentoring, insurance, and access to credit, this hinders risk-taking and leaves households underutilising their lands and leaving them susceptible to climate variability and market uncertainties and instabilities. To fulfil Objective 3, showcasing how long-term sustainability and viability rest on, or are contingent on, long-term skills or capabilities and overall risk reduction for larger systemic issues and conditions.

4.8.1.4 Integration as Systemic Transformation

Theme 4 pulls all the strands together in the Integrated Transformative Framework. This alignment connects how we map spatial resources, develop capabilities, manage institutions, integrate financing, and foster learning systems. Ricardo's vision of assigning land quality to appropriate use is realised when farmers develop the right capabilities and have the right institutions in place. In other words, according to RBV, significant and effective change in production occurs through harmonised human, organisation, and technology capabilities and not merely through land itself. In this respect, the Small-Scale Productivity Theory further emphasises the existence of true productivity in a balanced and synchronised system comprised of input, markets, finance, incentives, and knowledge.

The meeting of objective 4 is demonstrated through the explanation of how the integration promotes the less radicalised and isolated LRAD towards a united agricultural development programme.

4.8.1.5 Theoretical Reconciliation: Transitioning from Economic Rent to Capability Rent

The study then links Ricardo's older concept of land-based rent to how land is managed today and what small-scale farming looks like in the Eastern Cape. Ricardo (1817/ 2004)

contended that rent arises from the intrinsic advantages of the land, where it yields both fertility of the soil, adequate available water, and transport policies to sell goods. Quite simply put, the better the quality of the land and the spot, the higher the returns yield differential rent. However, in redistributed farming in the Eastern Cape, it would appear that these classical factors explain less-than-fully-predictable productivity. So, on recently redistributive reforms such as LRAD, farm performance now hinges on a combination of factors: the endowments of the land itself, the farmer's capabilities, and the enabling roles played by institutions and other support systems.

Current ideas about smallholder productivity reinforce this broader view. Schultz described smallholders as “poor but efficient,” capable of high output if they have the right resources, technology, and know-how. Later work showed that persistently low productivity is not about inefficiency, but about barriers like weak market access, limited credit, insecure tenure, scarce extension services, and high transaction costs. More recent African-agriculture analyses bring out that productivity emanates from the interaction of assets -land, livestock, inputs - with capabilities such as skills, information, and innovation with the institutional environment of governance, infrastructure, and markets.

These ideas are consistent with what the data of the LRAD project show, namely, that in today's contexts of land transfer, economic surplus is not determined by land quality alone. Rather, it is increasingly a product of good governance and competent people. In sum, then, productive outcomes are a matter of three intersecting forms of rent.

4.8.2 Endowment Rent (Ricardian)

All this has to do with the natural advantage that Ricardo identified as a factor in raising crops successfully, namely, soil, rain, or irrigation facilities, land suitable for farming, and proximity to markets. When it comes to LRADs that are set up in areas with strong agro-

ecological advantages, such as Sarah Baartman and Chris Hani, the potential production level of a farm is higher as a result of all this (Sihlobo, 2023; DRDAR, 2021).

4.8.3 Capability Rent (RBV and Small-Scale Productivity Theory)

"Capability rent" refers to the advantage an entity enjoys through knowledge, skills, innovative ideas, and effective management. Conceptually, it forms the central tenet within the Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993), and there have been extensive studies within the context of small-scale farmers' productivity that have confirmed this perception. The beneficiaries possess the ability to convert land into productive output as they have access to knowledge related to agronomic expertise, financial knowledge, market information, and an entrepreneurial mindset (Hazell et al., 2010; Diao et al., 2021). "Capability rent" thus establishes why there may be a significant difference between the performance of two similar farms.

4.8.4 Institutional Rent (Integrative and Governance-Based)

Institutional rent refers to the additional value that emerges from the interactions of people and the consistent implementation of policies. It includes, among other things, irrigation management, extension services, access to credit, development of road linkages, establishment of functional markets, and provision of support after settlement. Without such institutional pillars, land redistribution gets blocked, regardless of whether endowment and capability rents are available at first instance or not (Hall & Kepe, 2017; Cousins, 2020).

4.8.5 Interdependence of the Three Rents

When one of these pillars' shakes, the others incline as well. Good land without good knowledge goes unrealised, capable farmers without market access turn to self-consumption, and a lack of good institutions does no good against poor land or a lack of knowledge for long. But when these three currents of rent flow together, a river of productivity gain flows.

Such an integrated framework shifts the concept of LRAD away from a conventional land allocation mechanism and towards developing capabilities designed in a strong institution for agricultural growth and development. Such a framework combines the concepts of the location ideas of David Ricardo with the strategic ideas of the Resource-Based View, as supported by the smallholder productivity theory, emphasising investments in land, knowledge, and institutions.

Taken together, these concepts form a powerful paradigm for explaining LRAD results: fair land matters but does not by itself assure a positive outcome, and successful transformation in agriculture requires a changing input package.

4.8.6 Empirical and Policy Implications

It is evident that there are a number of key points to be noted about land reform policy choice and implementation from this study.

- Getting institutions to work together as one as a productivity solution: Real progress will not come from policy alone. Progress will come from making today's systems work together as one through the Provincial Agrarian Coordination Council (PACC).
- Grounding land allocation: The transfer of land must start from a complete resource map such as the Provincial Endowment Atlas, such that where the land goes is useful to biodiversity and thereby marketable.
- Building Capabilities as an Investment: They could substitute ad hoc or informal learning with learning as they develop skills through local skills centres. These may include things like mentorship, financial acumen, innovation, and more.
- Aligning finance with markets: This is where the blended finance models or market platforms ensure that the grants can now become reusable funds.

- Learning and adapting: The Provincial Land-Reform Observatory (PLRO) must establish processes of learning and reflection in order to adapt to developments that shape the practice.

These notions together provide a feasible policy approach from theoretical constructs towards a more inclusive and economically sound idea for distributing the land.

4.9 Integrative Synthesis and Validation of Findings

What binds all four themes is the message: fragmentation will lead to destruction, while integration will lead to development. When the various aspects, such as land, policies, investment, and the capacities of the people, get fragmented, land reform turns into one of dependency, inefficiency, and exhausted institutions. On the other hand, integrating the various aspects through shared learning, institutions, and collaboration will turn land reform into an engine of development.

It is this thought that forms the very basis of the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) tale in the Eastern Cape. The history of this land has come to illustrate just how persistently complex land reform has remained in South Africa – a never-ending struggle between progress and disintegrated implementation. It has further indicated that true possibilities of transformation exist when endowment concepts (as with Ricardo), capabilities (as RBI), and conditions of small-scale farmer productivity harmonise with each other.

From a Ricardian perspective, it is clear that the existence of differential rent itself depends upon the presence of productive land and adequate investment and management. The Resource-Based View argues that these require the development of valuable, rare, and imperfectly competitive capabilities at both the beneficiary and the institution level. The Small-Scale Productivity Theory supports this argument by indicating that structural constraints such as inaccessibility to markets, inadequate extension services, a lack of cash, or a lack of tenure

undermine, even in the case of 'poor and efficient' farmers, the conversion of land and skills into products.

Collectively, the evidence shows that the translation of land access into adaptive capacity and institutional acumen would permit LRAD to transit from a restitution-based mechanism to an engine of inclusive and productive progress. On the tri-theory validation, it is affirmatively established that the optimisation of land endowments, the capacities of the human element, and the operating environment of the smallholder sector must be addressed in a holistic manner if land reform is to be sustainable.

4.10 Empirical Validation and Contextual Overview

The research setting was South Africa's Eastern Cape, while the sample unit comprises a purposely selected group of stakeholders central to land reform. Included are adults over 18 years and South African citizens, peasant and commercial farmers, representatives from universities, officials in DALRRD and DRDAR, and members of civil society groups. This is a deliberate mixture since it captures the full gamut of experiences and roles in land redistribution—from policy design to actual on-the-groundwork.

This chapter outlines and discusses how various components of agricultural planning configuration form a redistribution approach that is effective and prosperous for both the new settler and the land itself. Results indicate that LRAD, when implemented by the government, has massively increased the scale of ownership opportunities for those groups who were excluded in the past, and for historically dispossessed communities has given real access to productive assets. The concrete social and economic impacts include the partial rectification of racially skewed land ownership, the dismantling of inequitable tenure arrangements, and the extension of farming opportunities for Black South Africans who have been excluded from this sector for centuries.

Looking at smallholder productivity, the data underline that asset gaining is a key initial step toward increasing well-being at the household level. The stories from beneficiaries underline improved stability of consumption, more reliable food access, enhanced social standing, and stronger bargaining power. Yet the findings also show that the mere transferring of assets is not sufficient to push households from subsistence into fully commercial farming. This underlines the necessity of accompanying asset transfers with the development of capabilities and supportive institutions—as set out in the theoretical framework.

4.11 Positive Outcomes of the LRAD Programme

Recent evidence indicates that LRAD has had the effect of making wealth and land distribution fairer. Beneficiary accounts and official summaries point to increased household incomes, improved productive resources, and a marked increase in local economic activities subsequent to land redistribution. For the most part, the programme has achieved its Ricardian objective by redistributing land from a narrow racial elite to a broader group of farmers who have historically been excluded.

Qualitative evidence also supports the improved well-being at the household level among the beneficiaries. Families who earlier had to be content with unstable wage labour or marginal plots report greater economic security, more diversified livelihoods, better access to food, and enhanced social status. Consistent with smallholder productivity research, land reform strengthened asset bases, reduced vulnerability, and expanded opportunities.

In various cases, capability-based opportunities—land with new skills, networks, and an entrepreneurial mindset—were clearly crucial in enabling beneficiaries to scale production, reach higher-value markets, and reinvest in their farms. These success stories serve to show that when endowments, capabilities, and supporting institutions are all in alignment, LRAD can bring about both redistributive justice and good agricultural performance.

4.12 Persistent Structural and Capability Gaps

Even with such progress, performance chasms have emerged which may undermine the sustainability of the reform efforts. In the fields as noted above, although land is now more accessible, the operational capacity of the beneficiaries has actually been limited by underlying issues:

Lack of support and coordination among implementing agencies in post-settlement stage leads to:

- The lack of tenure security, which reduces incentives for long-term investment
- Lack of funds and capital that can finance the scale of production
- Skilled agriculture skills and business management skills gaps
- Continued reliance on obsolete methods of production despite advanced technologies
- Lack of ability to call upon more resources, particularly finances and market accessibility

This highlights the fact that land redistribution by itself, without the constant enhancement of capability, achieves only partly the process of change. It additionally establishes that most new farming communities maintain semi-subsistence production, which serves primarily for the private use of the farming population. Under the Ricardian framework, the reallocation of land fails to appropriate full economic rents because of the unavailability or suboptimal use of complementary factors of production.

Using the RBV approach, agents receiving the land benefit and the institutional setting are not dynamic capable of land being transformed into a valuable resource. This situation described by Small Scale Productivity Theory is characterised by strong constraints in the form of high transaction costs of doing business, unavailability of markets, or poor delivery of services to keep farmers in the lower productivity state despite having access to new productive assets.

4.13 Interpretive Analysis: From Fragmentation to Integration

Land reform in South Africa is analysed through the lens of three approaches, which explain why the country has not yet tapped the full potential of the resource. Firstly, the Ricardian Approach argues that the economic advantage gained through land reform is not supplemented by exploiting the productive potential of the land, which may end up being less productive simply because, despite its productive potential, institutions, investment, and human capital fail to fully capture the economic rents. Additionally, the Resource-Based View argues that without productive capabilities, the recipients may not be able to convert resources into sustained competitive advantage, with land primarily remaining untapped as an innovation engine. Additionally, the Small-Scale Productivity Theory broadens the scope by establishing that the capability deficiencies revealed by the above views could be indicators of broader institutional shortcomings, which may comprise factors such as infrastructure, prices, risk insurances, and extension services. This, in turn, makes the small-scale farmer appear inefficient not through malicious intent, but simply because the system under which the farmer operates inhibits efficiency.

What emerges as the lesson from this analysis is that the lack of productivity within the LRAD is due to the lack of connectivity in the systems in place, as opposed to the absence of resources. There is a lack of connectivity in the governance structure, the extension services, as well as the learning process, that has impeded the required synergy in the land reform sector. Endowment, capability, and the support system for the small holder would prove to be the determining factor in meeting the principles of efficiency (as per Ricardo's theory) as well as sustainability (as illustrated by the RBV theory as well as the Small Holder Approach to agrarian reform).

4.14 Transformative Implications for LRAD and Beyond

According to this report, true and effective change is made by how we are able to interlink systems and not just how we are able to shift resources from place to place. The case of Eastern Cape strengthens this argument because it provides a valid example of how effective policy can be made when adaptive learning systems and design-to-practice systems of governance are properly harmonised.

When institutions, beneficiaries, and markets are contextual within the context of a single learning system, the nature of reform changes from wealth redistribution to wealth creation. Thus, within this context, LRAD can transform from a reactive mechanism for remedying wrongs into a proactive agent for change that triggers innovations, lifts productivity, and encourages resilience.

Under the Ricardian approach, this implies locating high-potential land with the right investments and technology to unlock the differential rent. The RBV urges us to think of productive pathology in terms of building and leveraging portfolios of skills, routines, and relationships, which collectively create a competitive advantage for LRAD beneficiaries. Finally, based on the Small-Scale Productivity Theory, transformative change must address productive pathology by correcting structural issues related to improved market accessibility and price, financial inclusion, and extension and information services.

In comparison, it seems that this framework for action has some resonance with similar developing countries, some of which include Zimbabwe, Namibia, Venezuela, and Kenya, which face similar challenges and circumstances. Each faces challenges in making effective use of natural capabilities and developing capabilities in a context of precarious institutions, which this focus on integration, alignment, and smallholder-centric governance helps them tackle.

These concrete findings and policy recommendations emanate from this synthesis into the next chapter, cast within the context of an Integrated Transformative Framework. It argues in this chapter that real success in land reform can only be gauged by how far the land reform system learns, coordinates, and continues with productivity, which embodies the essence of a Ricardian-RBV-Smallholder approach to just agrarian transformation.

4.15 Conclusion

This chapter analysed and interpreted empirical evidence from various participants in the Eastern Cape Province, including subsistence farmers, emerging farmers and commercial farmers, professionals from civic organisations and universities, and officials of DALRRD and DRDAR. Throughout our thematic analysis, a commonality across all themes emerges: fragmentation diminishes potential for transformation, and integration enhances it. Participants reported that where land access, policy tools, financial support, skills development, and institutional coordination were fragmented constructs, limited progress and increased vulnerability were noted.

In contrast, LRAD beneficiaries experienced sustainable and self-reinforcing solutions in contexts of coordinated planning, continuous learning, and adaptive governance. These findings substantiated the view that obstacles to land reform are complex and structural and cannot be reduced to a simple resource-based view.

Deficiencies in extension services, agricultural planning, market access, infrastructure, and post-settlement assistance were frequently pointed out by participants. These shortcomings are mainly attributable to different national policy goals and local and provincial implementation capacity. It nevertheless cited major instances of successful integration, and particularly where beneficiaries were provided permanent mentoring, skills upgrading training, systems of production and engagement in local agricultural value chains. They show that the

availability of land is a crucial first step, but not alone a key component to achieving agricultural reform.

For the history and economic background of the Eastern Cape as a whole, the findings suggest LRAD may evolve from an offset mechanism of compensatory and redistributive means rather into a competence development mode. This implies the alignment of physical access to land with the competencies, resources and institutional foundations needed for successful land use. Data shows that transformation occurs when beneficiaries receive land, in combination with the adaptive skills and institutional backing, to turn access into sustained productivity and resilience. The chapter shows through the three theoretical lenses:

- **Ricardo's Theory of Economic Rent** illustrates how quality and location of land is important to match with the right opportunities and investment.
- **The Resource-Based View** emphasises the need for the development and maintenance of capabilities at farm, organisational, and system level; and
- **Small Scale Productivity Theory** emphasises the necessity of dismantling structural barriers so that "poor but potentially efficient" farmers are able to exploit both endowments and capabilities.

Ultimately, Chapter 4 illustrates that efficient agricultural planning under LRAD is a systemic, relational process that relies upon the coordination of policy, land, capital, skills, and institutional support. Disunity destroys good; integration enhances resilience, productivity, and sustainable development. This analysis offers an empirical basis for Chapter 5, which integrates the new findings with the tri-theoretical framework, Ricardo's Theory of Economic Rent, the Resource Based View and Small-Scale Productivity Theory and offers a strategic and coherent framework to further better design and operationalise land redistribution in a way that promotes agricultural developments in South Africa.

CHAPTER 5: IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Overview

This chapter brings together the culmination of research findings and conclusions from research analysis of factors that affect agricultural productivity under the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) programme under the Republic of South Africa, Eastern Cape Province. The above has been driven by an analysis of research findings from earlier chapters that have aimed to integrate research findings, research theories, and research interpretations to form an overarching research understanding of factors of legislation, institutions, biophysical environment, market, human capacity, and behavioural influences of LRAD programme performance and research study success for meeting this research aim and research objectives.

The analysis is rooted in a unified theoretical framework which combines three major conceptual frameworks. First, the Theory of Differential Rent (Ricardo, 1817/2004) is used as a framework in analysing the impact of quality, productiveness, and geographical location of land on the performance of the redistributive farms. Secondly, the Resource-Based View (RBV) (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993) framework is used in analysing the impact of natural resource qualities and capabilities of LRAD beneficiaries – management skills, organisational capabilities, and knowledge – on farm-level performance of LRAD beneficiaries. Thirdly, Small Scale Productivity Theories (Schultz, 1964; Feder et al., 1985; Barrett et al., 2022; Dorward, 2009) are used as a framework in analysing the behaviour and information constraints of small-scale farmers as they move out of subsistence farming and adopt semi-commercial and commercial farming practices.

In integrating all these aspects of theory, institutions, and productivity focus, it can be noted that this chapter possibly offers a cumulative conceptual explanation regarding success

and failure within LRAD projects within the Eastern Cape. There is clear evidence to state that through this study, which has been founded upon knowledge of Ricardo's theories regarding land and emphasis upon capabilities within the RBV theory, there has been a deep understanding regarding success and failure of LRAD projects and interventions within rural areas of South Africa.

With the synthesis of the findings, this chapter discusses the managerial implications for the beneficiaries and the agencies involved in LRAD, recommendations for improvements in policies for greater collaboration between the institutions and post-settlement support, as well as the theoretical and methodological contributions of the entire research work. Finally, the Integrated LRAD Productivity Alignment Framework will be presented as the integrated framework that explains the role of "Endowment Rent," "Capability Rent," and "Productivity Rent" as complementary drivers in land use practice. This chapter ends with the general implications of the entire research work for land reform in South Africa, as well as recommendations for future studies concerning the performance of the redistributed land.

The chapter explores the implication of the theory and methodology as well as the research opportunities in the future as the conclusion of the contribution of the study to knowledge and policy reform.

The structure of the chapter will be as follows:

- Section 5.2 provides a summary of the chapters and findings.
- Section 5.3 discusses the implications of the study.
- Section 5.4 addresses the topic of recommendations and future prospects.
- Section 5.5 contains the concluding thoughts and conclusion of the research findings.

5.2 Summary of Chapters and Key Findings

The study aims to investigate the effectiveness and sustainability of the LRAD programme in the Eastern Cape Province. The research paradigm applicable to this study is qualitative interpretivism. The study aims to investigate how economic, institutional, biophysical, and human capabilities influence and condition the outcome of land redistribution. The study applies several theories to interpret the results. The study applies The Theory of Differential Rent (Ricardo, 1817/2004) to interpret the results concerning how quality, fertility, and geographical position influence and condition the productive capability of the land following land redistribution. The study applies The Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991 and Peteraf, 1993) to interpret the results concerning management capabilities, capacity, and internalisation to influence and condition land-level outcomes. The study applies Theories of Small-Scale Productivity (Schultz, 1964; Feder et al., 1985; Barrett et al., 2022; Dorward, 2009) to interpret the results concerning behaviour, labour, technology, and decision factors to condition smallholder farmers as they move from subsistence farming practices to more commercialised farming practices. The study applies several theories to interpret the results to ensure that the results are comprehensively interpreted.

5.2.1 Summary of Chapters

Chapter 1: The environment in which the problem exists is discussed in this chapter. The discussion suggests that after almost three decades of democratic rule, the distribution of ownership of land is very unequal, more than 65% of agricultural land is owned by whites and that the majority of the population who have benefited from LRAD do not have access to capital, market, or technical skills (DRDLR, 2019; Statistics South Africa, 2022).

Chapter 2: The second chapter dealt with the literature and developed the theoretical framework. The researcher noticed that most of the literature on land reform has been political

in nature and does not emphasise productivity and institutional capability. The idea of productivity and rent, as described by the Ricardian Theory, was complemented by skills, finance, and institutions, as described by the RBV, to develop the conceptual framework which linked land attributes to the capabilities of the beneficiaries.

Chapter 3: Chapter 3 outlined the research methodology. A qualitative interpretivist research method was employed in this research study. This is because the researcher required understanding the experiences not only of the policymakers but also the recipients of the LRAD programme and the experts. A purposive sample of eighteen participants was employed in the Eastern Cape province. These participants were sourced from six districts.

Chapter 4: The findings were discussed and interpreted in Chapter 4, and it was found that there were four overarching themes:

Theme 1: Fragmented Policies & Poor Institutional Coordination.

The main finding was of conflicting policies & lack of coordination among government departments which hindered the efficiency of LRAD.

Theme 2: Land Endowments and Market - The presence of land, rainfall, and market accessibility are key factors that influenced productivity, and it was confirmed and anticipated that productivity behaved in accordance with Ricardian expectations.

Theme 3: Beneficiary Capabilities and Post-settlement Support- The research found that human capacity and capability, as well as financial and institutional capability, are factors which ensure sustainability and thus warrant and validates the RBV Framework.

Theme 4: Requirement for an Integrated and Transformational Approach to Policy – The find was that an integrated and transformative approach to policy is required to effect a change by integrating land, finance, skills, and market institutions.

5.2.2 Integrated Synthesis of Thematic Findings, Research Questions and Objectives

Findings from the thematic analysis indicated that even though land redistribution in the Eastern Cape is still challenged by institutional deficiencies, disequilibrium in land distribution, and deficiencies in capabilities, it has an enormous potential for change when capacity building is emphasised. The major themes emerging from the answers provided to research questions RQ1 to RQ4, as well as the fulfilment of research Objectives 1 through 5, are discussed in the next few paragraphs:

5.2.2.1 Theme 1: Fragmented Policies and Insufficient Institutional Coordination

Theme 1 is mainly concentrated on RQ1. Institutional and legislative frameworks addressed relate to Objective 3. Respondents reported that the influence of institutional and policy factors is to constrain the implementation of LRAD through the existence of silo operations among the different parties involved such as the DALRRD, DRDAR, municipalities, and commodity bodies. The silo effect causes duplication of budgets and a lack of cooperation among different departments that affect productivity and equity in LRAD.

5.2.2.2 Theme 2: Land Endowments and Market Accessibility as Determinants of Productivity

The theme has a direct connection to RQ2 which addresses the biophysical and market factors and relates to Objectives 1 and 2 that address equitable access and sustainability of livelihoods. The soil quality, rainfall, availability of water, and/or proximity to markets and inputs were some of the most critical factors which affected LRAD. The beneficiaries who were closer to markets and inputs reported improvements in their productivity and profitability, whereas others who possess marginal and/or uplands are still struggling. It shows how relevant is the saying of Ricardo about fertility and geographic location in relation to production and profitability and therefore a need to redefine equity as productive equity.

5.2.2.3 Theme 3: Beneficiary Competencies and Post-Settlement Assistance

It is more pertinent in the context of RQ2, that addresses human and institutional drivers, RQ3 that addresses capability risks, and objectives 2 and 4, that focus on sustainability and development of the framework. The importance of having more agricultural and business acumen, as well as financial and mentorship management, came out clearly. The absence of training opportunities limited agricultural finance, and dependence on grants affected the performance of the farms. This validates the RBV Theory, which states that ownership of land is not sufficient for success and is instead linked to the human and social capital of beneficiaries.

5.2.2.4 Theme 4: Necessity for a Cohesive and Transformative Policy Framework

This theme connects RQ1, RQ4, and Objectives 3, 4, and 5, the Institutional Framework, Strategic Framework, and Policy Recommendations. The importance of LRAD having to make this transition from its existing focus on a transactional process for land transfer to an integrated process for capacity building and sustainability was noticeably clear to the respondents. In this theme the discussions centres on the importance of having land, finances, skills, infrastructure, and market institutions. The intersection of these factors provides justification for success for this transition process. The lack of continuity in this process of redistribution and production, along with multi-sector planning, was however regarded as an important weakness for this scenario. This theme connects very well with the endowment logic approach of Ricardo and capability orientation of RBV.

5.2.3 Interpretation of Thematic Findings

Based on thematic findings, there is evidence that the challenge of land distribution is undermined by institutional inefficiency, unbalanced distribution of land, and capability constraints but also has enormous potential for change based on capacity development and

good governance. The Theory of Rent according to Ricardo describes differences in levels of agricultural productivity among different units of agriculture based on differences in quality and location, and then there is The Theory of RBV which describes human and institutional factors which turn potential into actual and lastly there are theories on Small Scale Productivity (Schultz, 1964; Feder et al., 1985; Barrett et al., 2022; Dorward, 2009).

It is via the process of triangulation of these perspectives that it has been discovered within this study that LRAD outcomes are outside of the remit of a monocular perspective because:

RQ1 and Theme 1: Both focus on the role of institutional architecture as an enabler or disable factor.

RQ2 and Theme 2 and 3: The importance of biophysical factors and human capabilities is brought out in Themes 2 and 3 and Research Question 2.

RQ3 and Theme 3: Risk factors associated with behaviour and governance appear in RQ3 and Theme 3.

RQ4 and Theme 4 lead to the overall framework where the alignment of the endowment, capability, and the factors of productivity are accomplished.

The combined theory of Ricardo-RBV-Small Scale, therefore, offers a holistic approach to the assessment of the efficacy and sustainability of LRAD and has a direct bearing on the strategies and policies discussed in this chapter.

Table 5.1*Mapping Research Questions, Objectives, Themes and Framework Domains*

Research Question (RQ)	Study Objectives Addressed	Dominant Empirical Themes	Key Framework Domains (Integrated LRAD Productivity Alignment Framework)
RQ1: How do legislative and institutional frameworks influence sustainable land use and agricultural productivity under LRAD?	Objective 1: Assess the efficacy of LRAD in facilitating equitable land access in the Eastern Cape. Objective 3: Analyse the influence of institutional and policy frameworks on the facilitation or obstruction of LRAD implementation. Objective 5: Formulate policy recommendations to augment the long-term efficacy of LRAD.	Theme 1: Fragmented Policies and Insufficient Institutional Coordination. Theme 4: Necessity for a Cohesive and Transformative Policy Framework.	Capability Rent: Institutional capacity, governance quality, coordination, and accountability. Productivity Rent: Effectiveness of post-settlement support, extension, and monitoring systems that translate policy into on-farm outcomes.
RQ2: How do biophysical, market, institutional, and human drivers of land use shape LRAD outcomes?	Objective 1: Equitable (productive) access to land with viable endowments. Objective 2: Evaluate the durability of LRAD initiatives in enhancing agricultural productivity and rural livelihoods. Objective 4: Establish a strategic framework for sustainable land redistribution grounded in Ricardo's Theory of Rent and the RBV.	Theme 2: Land Endowments and Market Accessibility as Determinants of Productivity. Theme 3: Beneficiary Competencies and Post-Settlement Assistance.	Endowment Rent: Soil fertility, water availability, agro-ecology, infrastructure, and market proximity. Capability Rent: Skills, managerial competence, organisational systems, financial literacy. Productivity Rent: Input access, technology adoption, value-chain linkages, and market integration.
RQ3: What capability, behavioural, and governance risks constrain sustainable land use under LRAD?	Objective 2: Assess the sustainability of LRAD projects in improving productivity and livelihoods. Objective 4: Develop a strategic framework that incorporates capability and risk considerations.	Theme 3: Beneficiary Competencies and Post-Settlement Assistance (including behavioural and governance risks).	Capability Rent: Governance quality, leadership, conflict management, cooperative functioning, human capital. Productivity Rent: Behavioural constraints (risk aversion, low

Research Question (RQ)	Study Objectives Addressed	Dominant Empirical Themes	Key Framework Domains (Integrated LRAD Productivity Alignment Framework)
RQ4: What integrated framework can support successful and sustainable land redistribution for agriculture in South Africa, with reference to the Eastern Cape?	Objective 4: Establish a strategic framework for sustainable land redistribution grounded in Ricardo's Theory of Rent and the RBV. Objective 5: Formulate policy recommendations to augment the long-term efficacy of LRAD.	Theme 4: Necessity for a Cohesive and Transformative Policy Framework (drawing on Themes 1–3).	investment), labour mobilisation, and continuity of production cycles. Endowment Rent: Alignment of land quality, water, and location with intended enterprise. Capability Rent: Alignment of skills, institutions, and governance with land endowments. Productivity Rent: Alignment of inputs, markets, technology, and risk management as operational levers that convert endowment and capability into sustained productivity.

Table 5.1 provides an example of an analytic synthesis in which the research questions, objectives, themes, and components of the Integrated LRAD Productivity Alignment Framework are synthesised. The table shows how RQs are aligned with objectives, themes, and components of the Integrated LRAD Productivity Alignment Framework, such as Endowment Rent, Capability Rent, and Productivity Rent, in order to ensure internal consistency in this research and validate that findings and recommendations are based on the empirical themes and theoretical model developed in this research...

5.2.4 Integrated Summary of Key Findings by Research Question and Objectives

5.2.4.1 RQ1 and Theme 1: Legislative and Institutional Frameworks (Objectives 1, 3 and 5)

RQ1: How do legislative and institutional frameworks influence sustainable land use and agricultural productivity under LRAD?

The impact of legislative and institutional structures on LRAD performance is found to be of prime importance based on the results of this study. This contradicts the LRAD policy that emphasises empowerment and commercialisation. The results of this study can be summarised as follows:

- There is overlap of mandate between the entities of DALRRD, DRDAR, municipalities, and commodity organisations.
- Planning coordination deficits result in a creation of gaps in post-settlement support services, which could be in form of late provision of inputs, wrong and stale farm plans, and failure of technical follow-ups.
- There is lack of accountability and lack of integrated monitoring and tracing of the progress of farms and struggling projects.

- Lack of standardisation in the implementation of the programme by the districts, hence creating a disparity in the provision of grants, training, and mechanisation services to the farmers.

These results are justified by theories of institutional economies, which have postulated institutionally fractured structures to negatively affect programme success (North, 1990; Helmke & Levitsky, 2004). These results directly correspond to Objective 3 by demonstrating how institutionally fit can negatively affect LRAD programme implementation and indirectly to Objective 1 by demonstrating not only who gains land but also how institutions can affect or hinder these groups. These results are relevant to Objective 5 by providing empirical support for more institutionally integrated structures.

5.2.4.2 RQ2 and Themes 2–3: Biophysical, Market, Institutional and Human Drivers (Objectives 1, 2 and 4)

RQ2: How do biophysical, market, institutional, and human drivers of land use shape LRAD outcomes?

Other factors found to play a significant part in influencing LRAD's performance are biophysical as well as market factors such as:

- A large variation in the quality of the soil, and farms that were in regions in which the soil quality was not particularly good faced production constraints.
- Acreage to water sources whether borehole water, irrigation water availability or rainfall was a major consideration; those who have access to water or irrigation succeeded.
- The infrastructures such as fencing, roads, and electricity influenced security, cost of transactions, and production capacity.
- Market proximity, or geography as described by David Ricardo, played a significant role in determining profit as well as investments.

Market-related factors which accentuated these tendencies are:

- Being close to suppliers of inputs and points of sale of live cattle contributed to reducing transportation and transaction costs.
- Distant farms were characterised by high logistics costs, price instability, and poor and unstable purchasing networks.

There were also institutional and human factors, that is, Theme 3 factors, which influenced the results. These included,

- Continuity in extension and mentoring has resulted in improved planning and risk management.
- There were imbalances in the human resources of the drivers in relation to their skills, motivation, experience, and leadership. This is because most of the respondents lacked knowledge in relation to management practices as well as agronomic practices that supported the RBV theories.

Such results are especially relevant to Objective 2 in as much as they explain why LRAD projects struggle to maintain productivity and livelihoods, and relevant to Objective 1 since they explain why equity is contingent on access to productive land and facilitating conditions. They also relate to Objective 4 in as much as they attempt to offer a strategic framework for endowments and capabilities together.

5.2.4.3 RQ3 and Theme 3: Capability, Behavioural and Governance Risks (Objectives 2 and 4)

RQ3: What capability, behavioural, and governance risks constrain sustainable land use under LRAD?

The LRAD farms are vulnerable to a variety of threats that fall under Theme 3:

- Weaknesses in the realms of governance and management, particularly in group-owned farms. There might be conflict, role ambiguity, lack of transparency, and leadership problems.

- There are limited management and technical skills in planning, budgeting, crop and livestock management, and record-keeping by most of the redistributed farms.
- Labour mobilisation difficulties such as wage, work, and senior or migrant workers' dependency issues limit the ability of the farms.
- Characteristics including risk aversion, risk-averse investment, aversion to credit, and resistance to innovation hinder the enhancement of productivity in the redistributed farms.
- Input constraints faced by the redistributed farms pertaining to fertilizer, feeds, veterinary products, and quality seeds affect production cycles and cause missed planting seasons.

These are very pertinent to Small Scale Productivity and Behavioural Economics models of decision-making that have an enormous thrust on issues of uncertainty, labour constraints, and risk considerations for smallholder decision-makers (Feder et al., 1985; Barrett et al., 2022; Dorward, 2009). The results are incredibly supportive of Objective 2 (Durability of Productivity and Livelihoods) and Objective 4 (Strategic Framework) that state capability/behavioural issues must be taken on board in the land reform plan.

5.2.4.4 RQ4 and Theme 4: An Integrated Framework for Sustainable Redistribution (Objectives 4 and 5)

RQ4: What integrated framework can support successful and sustainable land redistribution for agriculture in South Africa, with reference to the Eastern Cape?

Based on Themes 1 to 4, it can be concluded that LRAD is dependent on the integration of the following three major areas:

- **Endowment Factors:** Land quality, water accessibility, infrastructure, agro-ecology, and market distance.
- **Capability Factors** – skills, management, governance, capability of organisation, financial literacy.

- **Productivity Drivers:** Factors such as input availability, adoption and use of technology, mobilisation of labour, market integration, and risk management.

Misalignment of these regions leads to the fact that there are some instances of suboptimal performance:

- The farms which possess capabilities but lack quality assets do not utilise their capabilities effectively.
- Ability to utilise marginal land allocated to them is hampered by structures that cannot be surmounted through training.

The proposed Integrated LRAD Productivity Alignment Framework, explained through the notions of Endowment Rent, Capability Rent, and Productivity Rent, addresses Objective 4 because it represents a tool for a sustainable redistribution of resources, which relies upon knowledge of theory and empirical evidence. The proposed goal is the foundation for the subsequent goal, which is represented by Objective 5.

5.2.5 Discussion of Research Objectives and Integrated Conclusions (Linking RQs, Objectives and Themes)

This chapter has demonstrated how all the research questions (RQ1 to RQ4), the research objectives (1 to 5), and the themes (1 to 4) are all connected to one another in the same explanatory framework. On an overarching level:

- Objectives 1 and 2 are met using RQ2 and RQ3, and Themes 2 and 3, with respect to demonstrating the relevance of land asset fit and capability of smallholder farmers.
- The response to Objective 3 is found in Research Question 1 and Theme 1 because it explains the way the lack of cohesive frameworks affects the process of implementation.
- Objective 4 is discussed in Research Question 4 & Theme 4, which lead to the formulation of the “Integrated LRAD Productivity Alignment Framework” encompassing the theories “Ricardo,” “RBV,” & “Small Scale theories.”

The evidence exists to support Objective 5 for all four research questions and themes and will help to inform future policy decisions in this chapter.

Conclusion

The integrated analysis has thus shown that land redistribution without the development of capability, institutional consistency, and market integration is not possible in such a way that it is equitable and productive. The following sections will discuss the integrated result of the analysis and how it can be interpreted from different theoretical and practical points of view that can benefit LRAD and land reform.

5.3 Contributions of the Study

There are several important theoretical, methodological, practical, and policy implications for land reform and agricultural development studies in South Africa based on the findings of this research. This research is an addition to existing knowledge as it combines the classics with modern capability thinking and qualitative research methodology to improve understanding and implementation of the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) plan.

5.3.1 Theoretical Contributions

The research work increases the scope of theoretical knowledge by integrating the Theory of Differential Rent, as conceptualised by Ricardo, with the RBV and the theories of productivity in small holders. The integration of the theories closes the gap that currently separates the classical school of thought on land endowment and productivity, and the contemporary ideas of human capability, institutional fit, and diversity of resources. The integrated theoretical concept explains that a proper fit of diverse types of advantages is required to ensure that land reform is sustainable:

- Through endowments, which refer to the natural quality of land, soil fertility, and location.
- Capability-based advantages such as skills, knowledge, financial resources, and management capabilities; and
- Benefits that can be derived from institutions that are developed out of well-structured governance, support, and networking post-settlement.

Through this approach, it can identify the Productivity Rent as a value addition process that comes out of the interaction between land endowment, capability, and institutions for a sustainable outcome in agriculture. This is a unified approach for understanding the outcome of land reforms in other countries with a post-colonial agrarian economy because it bridges a gap in the existing literature on land endowment and capability.

5.3.2 Methodological Contributions

Methodologically, this paper has demonstrated the importance of conducting qualitative research studies, specifically for knowledge interpreters, in comprehending a complex topic such as land reform. This paper has utilised the interview process to gain knowledge that cannot be acquired from conducting a quantitative analysis of land reform.

This research paper describes a thematic analysis procedure which can be replicated and includes these steps:

- A systematic approach to code the structural constraints and facilitating factors in the implementation of LRAD.
- A framework for understanding policy and practice relationships in terms of field-level policy implementation process models.
- Methodological evidence demonstrating how case study research employing an interpretive method can develop grounded knowledge concerning assessment of development programmes.

This methodological approach could serve as a guiding model in any future research study involving land reform, rural development, or state-led agrarian change.

5.3.3 Practical and Managerial Contributions

The study has important practical and managerial applications in that it has been able to establish the competencies needed for successful implementation of LRAD. The study has shown that land transfer cannot be implemented successfully without the development of:

- Farming and Entrepreneurial Skills.
- Management and financial abilities.
- Market access and production planning; and
- Institutional support systems.

To assist the practitioners, it is important that a diagnostic approach be offered that can be employed by the practitioner to evaluate projects based on the three domains of rent: endowment, capability, and institution performance. This is important because it will enable managers, extension personnel, and policymakers to evaluate projects and point out areas where intervention is necessary, thus answering the question of managerial effort required to increase farm productivity.

5.3.4 Policy Contributions

The study provides various policy contributions that have direct applications to the planning of land reform on a national and provincial level. The various findings discussed above have managed to highlight that land reform needs to go beyond the concept of redistribution.

The key policy contributions are:

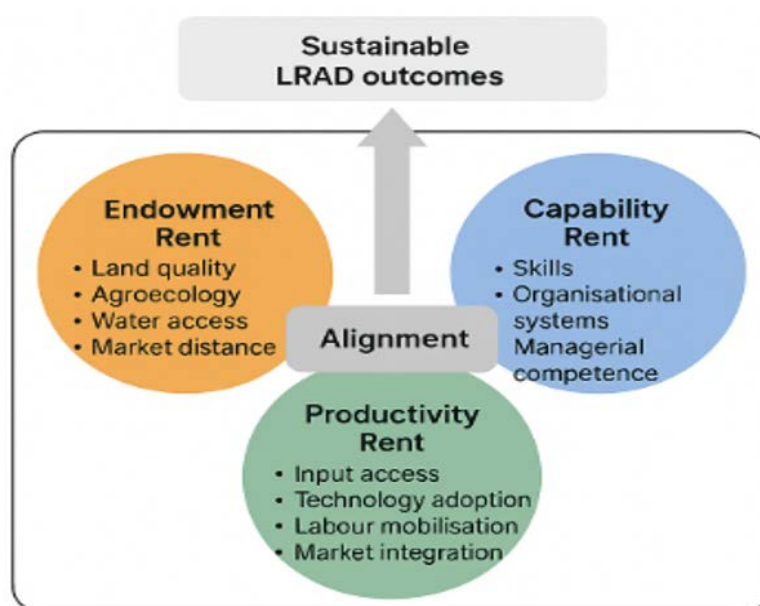
- A framework for evidence-based policy formulation and development, as well as post-settlement government coordination and delivery.

- Expression of the ability of the Ricardo-RBV approach to improve the efficiency of the allocation of the land and ensure the sustainability of the benefited farms.
- Practical recommendations on the formation of a Land Reform Implementation Council for planning, budgeting, and monitoring at all levels of government.
- The development of agroecological guidelines on land allocation, capacity development, and budgeting in the framework of LRAD projects at the provincial level.
- The study found that in ensuring sustainable results for LRAD, it is necessary for the endowment, capability, and institution realms to be well aligned. If any of these three had some flaws in them, a project could not be viable. The above point is clear in Figure 5.1 below.

According to this framework, it is imperative to bring all three domains into alignment if an individual wishes to have sustainable results for LRAD. The project will not be feasible if there is weakness in any of the domains.

Figure 5.1

Integrated LRAD productivity alignment framework.



Source: Author, 2025

5.4 Study Implications

The findings in this study form a body of essential implications for theory, practice, future studies, and society in general. The said implications stem from the integration of the three theories applied in conducting this study. The said theories are: The Theory of Economic Rent as advocated by Ricardo, The Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, and The Small-Scale Productivity Theory in connection with the evidential findings about LRAD system adoption in the Eastern Cape province in South Africa. The said implications about theory, practice, future studies, and society in general shall be tackled one by one in the following paragraphs.

5.4.1 Implications for Theory

This research contributes to the body of knowledge by challenging the existing land reform productivity determinants, which are based on a single factor explanation of land resource quality or the quality of land reform programme implementation. Instead, it is proposed that land reform productivity outcomes are a result of the synergetic interface of material resource availability and formations of human/organisational capability. In other words, land resource quality such as fertility, water availability, and location creates productivity outcomes only in the presence of appropriate skills, institutional coordination, and market integration. This perspective, therefore, calls for a holistic framework of analysis, which would include elements of classical political economy, such as David Ricardo's theory of economic rent, and the Resource-Based View of the firm, as well as contemporary literature on land reform, agriculture, and economic development in general (Ricardo, 1817/2004; Barney, 1991; Dorward, Hazell, & Poulton, 2009).

From the classical political economy perspective, economic rent is generated through the differences in land quality and locational advantage, which enable more productive land to earn a higher economic rent compared to land with fewer locational advantages (Ricardo,

1817/2004). However, the empirical results of the research suggest that in the contemporary land reform agriculture scenario, the generation of economic rent is no longer a simple matter of land resource quality or locational advantage. Instead, the generation of economic rent is mediated through institutional efficiency, governance capacity, logistical systems, input availability, extension support, and market integration. In the absence of such institutional support systems, even land with high locational advantage may not necessarily earn economic rents. In other words, the research has extended the classical Ricardo theory of economic rent generation by arguing that economic rents in land reform agriculture are mediated through institutional systems, as opposed to land resource quality. Institutional coordination failures, input availability delays, and poor support systems effectively neutralise the locational advantage of the land, which would have generated economic rents according to the Ricardo theory of economic rent generation (North, 1990; Dorward, Hazell, & Poulton, 2009).

At the same time, the study also makes a theoretical contribution to RBV by arguing that land is a strategic resource only when it is associated with an appropriate capability structure. According to RBV theory, competitive performance advantages are created when firms leverage resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and embedded in an organisational context (Barney, 1991; Teece, 2014). While land is considered a physical resource, the study finds that land is not a strategic resource when it is not associated with complementary assets such as managerial capabilities, technical know-how, financial literacy, or social and institutional connectivity. Without an associated capability structure, land is not a strategic resource and is likely to remain idle despite having positive productive attributes. This argument introduces a new theoretical concept of the “constructed strategic value of land,” which refers to a situation where land is economically valuable only when it is associated with a range of capabilities. This study therefore makes a theoretical contribution to RBV by

extending it to the agrarian development context. The study illustrates how capability formation is a mediating factor between natural resources and productive economic resources.

In addition, the study offers theoretical support to small-scale productivity theory, which has long argued that small-scale farmers are highly productive under conducive institutional environments (Schultz, 1964; Sen, 1962; Lipton, 2009). The study establishes that the underperformance of land reform beneficiaries cannot be attributed to inefficiency or lack of motivation on the part of small-scale farmers. The underperformance of the land reform program is attributed to systemic structural limitations, such as access to credit facilities, extension support, transactional costs, and market access challenges. The limitations hinder the beneficiaries' capacity to mobilize the required resources to fully exploit the potential of the land. The underperformance of the land reform program thus justifies the classification of the land reform beneficiaries as "poor but potentially efficient," since the productivity of the farmers is hindered by institutional limitations rather than inefficiency (Schultz, 1964; Sen, 1981; Dorward et al., 2009).

The above arguments thus form an integrated theoretical contribution since the study demonstrates the inability of the land reform program to be understood under the prism of single theoretical frameworks. The study integrates the three theoretical frameworks to demonstrate the productivity of the land reform program as a function of the interplay between land, capability formation, and institutional support systems. The integration of the three theories provides a multidimensional explanation of the differentiated performance of the land reform program. The integrated theory thus demonstrates that the underlying problem of the land reform program is not just the redistribution of the land but the integration of the land resources, human capabilities, and institutional support systems required to transform the land into a productive economic asset.

5.4.2 Implications for Practice

The report also points out some implications for the governance and sustainability of land reform interventions, particularly those implemented through the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) approach. Firstly, the findings suggest that the development of the capabilities of the land reform beneficiaries is not a one-time process. There are many land reform interventions that assume that short courses on land reform can provide the necessary knowledge and managerial skills for the successful operation of a commercial farming enterprise. However, the transition from subsistence and/or semi-subsistence production to a successful and sustainable commercial farming enterprise is a developmental process that requires continuous mentorship and guidance through a series of stages of capability development. The beneficiaries must be assisted to develop their capabilities through a series of stages and levels of development. Without such a process of continuous guidance and mentorship, the full developmental potential of the redistributed land is unlikely to be realized, regardless of its favorable agro-ecological suitability for farming. In a sense, therefore, the land reform interventions must be seen not only as a process of transferring land from one category of people to another but also as a developmental process aimed at transforming the agrarian sector of the economy.

The second implication relates to the restructuring and upgrading of agricultural extension services, which are critical institutional pillars for supporting the development of smallholder agriculture. In many cases, agricultural extension officers are faced with severe resource constraints, including high farmer-extension ratios, limited technical specialization, and poor support services. These factors limit their capacity to offer effective technical support and guidance to LRAD beneficiaries. For agricultural extension services to contribute to the success of land reform initiatives, there is a need to re-engineer the extension services system, including the reduction of administrative work burdens, specialized training in commercial

farming and agricultural business management, and effective linkages with other support services such as credit services, input dealers, and market linkages. This would enable LRAD beneficiaries to make informed decisions and to adopt best practices in farming.

The other practical implication relates to the integration of LRAD beneficiaries in the market. Improved productivity alone does not guarantee income growth unless the beneficiaries are integrated into effective markets. In the absence of effective access to input and output markets, farmers are likely to find it difficult to leverage productivity gains to support livelihoods. LRAD projects that do not have effective mechanisms for market access, such as contractual linkages with buyers, membership in agricultural cooperatives, and linkages with agro-processing value chains, are likely to encounter serious difficulties in ensuring economic viability. Therefore, there is a need to move beyond the conventional focus on access to land and to develop value-chain development initiatives that support the integration of LRAD beneficiaries in regional and national agricultural value chains.

The results also imply that there is a need to reconsider the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems in land reform programmes. In most cases, monitoring systems in land reform programmes are often centered on compliance and documentation, with an emphasis on the number of hectares allocated and the number of beneficiaries supported. However, such systems are not very useful in gaining meaningful insights into the performance of the programmes. Therefore, there is a need to consider effective M&E systems in land reform programmes that are centered on learning. This can be achieved by putting in place mechanisms to allow for constant feedback among the beneficiaries, extension officers, and administrators. This can allow for timely adjustments to the programme and support interventions. The learning-centered M&E system can also allow for the recognition of emerging issues such as production constraints, governance conflicts, and market linkages.

Finally, the report highlights the need to recognize the importance of governance structures among beneficiary groups, especially when land reform farms are managed on a collective basis. LRAD projects are likely to take a group or cooperative management approach to land reform farms. This is likely to raise issues of coordination regarding decision-making, labor supply, distribution of profits, and conflict resolution. Ineffective governance structures among beneficiary groups are likely to lead to poor utilization of resources, conflicts, and decreased productivity. Therefore, to address these issues, land reform programs should also focus on building the capacity of beneficiary groups on governance and management. This can be achieved by establishing clear rules of participation and accountability. This is likely to enhance decision-making among beneficiary groups. Thus, these implications highlight that land reform is a multifaceted process that requires a holistic support environment to address issues of capability building, institutional strengthening, market integration, adaptive monitoring, and governance among beneficiary groups. Without a holistic approach to land reform, land transfer is likely to fail to achieve its objectives.

5.4.3 Implications for Policy

The above findings suggest the need to effect a paradigm shift in the formulation and implementation of land reform policy from a focus on land redistribution to a more integrated approach to agrarian development. Land redistribution is an important component of historical redress and social justice, but the findings from the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) program suggest that it is not a sufficient condition to achieve agricultural productivity and economic development in the rural sector. As such, the government must be aware that without a comprehensive supportive system to facilitate its implementation, the result is a fragmented system whereby the land is transferred to the identified and targeted individuals and groups but lacks the institutional and other support required to be effective in their agricultural production activities. Under such a system, the

structural barriers to agricultural development in the rural sector persist despite the transfer of land ownership and rights to the identified and targeted individuals and groups.

One of the recommendations to address the above limitation is to develop a system of institutional integration to coordinate the activities of the various actors and stakeholders in agrarian development. One such mechanism is the establishment of Provincial Agrarian Coordination Councils (PACCs), which is envisioned to be a strategic mechanism to integrate and coordinate the activities of the various institutions and actors in agrarian development and land reform in South Africa. PACCs are envisioned to coordinate the activities of key actors and stakeholders in land reform and agrarian development, such as the Department of Agriculture and Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD), the provincial Departments of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform (DRDAR), and the district and other relevant local governments and development agencies. Land reform and agrarian development programs are often implemented in a fragmented manner without a comprehensive supportive system to facilitate their successful implementation and impact. Land acquisition activities are implemented separately from agricultural support services and infrastructure development initiatives. PACCs are envisioned to facilitate a comprehensive supportive system to facilitate the successful implementation of land reform and agrarian development programs and activities.

A further policy implication of the study is the institutionalisation of evidence-based mechanisms of land allocation. In the past, the process of land redistribution has largely been based on the use of administrative mechanisms rather than an evaluation of the suitability of the land for redistribution and the capacity of the beneficiaries. In order to address the problem of land mismatch, the study recommends the development of a provincial agrarian endowment atlas. The atlas would be used as a spatial planning tool to evaluate the potential of the land. The atlas would include various pieces of information, such as the quality of the soil,

availability of water, climate, access to infrastructure, and proximity to the market. The use of the atlas would greatly assist the government in the process of allocating specific types of agricultural land to the beneficiaries who have the required skills, experience, and production interests. This would greatly reduce the problem of land mismatch, which has largely affected the productivity of the land.

Another important policy implication is the institutionalisation of the post-settlement support systems. From the evidence provided by the LRAD project and other land reform projects, it has been established that land reform projects fail not because of a lack of motivation or entrepreneurial skills on the part of the land reform beneficiaries, but because of the fact that they operate in an environment where there is a lack of technical support, financing, and the ability to access farm inputs. To deal with the various problems experienced by land reform projects, it is important to institutionalise the post-settlement support systems through the establishment of a comprehensive agrarian support system. This support system would comprise long-term mentorship programmes where land reform beneficiaries would be connected to experienced commercial farmers, improved technical support through the extension services, subsidised support to the land reform beneficiaries to help them purchase farm inputs, insurance support to the land reform beneficiaries to help them mitigate the risks associated with production, and credit facilitation services to the land reform beneficiaries to help them access credit facilities. In addition, the development of digital platforms would help the land reform beneficiaries to have better access to information on the market, the weather, agronomy, and credit facilities.

A further policy dimension that emerged from the study relates to the need for the development and implementation of blended financing models for the support of LRAD beneficiaries. The need for traditional financing models based on grants has been identified as insufficient in the provision of the required capital for the development of the agricultural

sector. The development and implementation of blended financing models that combine grants and other forms of public sector financing with private sector investments and other forms of financing have been identified as the more promising route for the financing of agricultural development in the region. Using this route, beneficiaries of the LRAD program could have access to low-interest credit facilities and other forms of financing that could be employed for the development of the sector.

Lastly, the study points to the need to strengthen the security of tenure as a precursor to agricultural investment and financial inclusion. This is because a secure right to land gives the beneficiaries the confidence to invest in the development of the land, whether through improving the land, investing in infrastructure, or undertaking other forms of investment in the land. Additionally, the study points to the need to strengthen the security of tenure so that the beneficiaries are able to access credit from financial institutions, given that the ability of the poor to access credit from financial institutions depends, among other things, on the security of their property rights, whether through the right to land or the right to property.

The policy implications of the study, therefore, are that there is a need to adopt a comprehensive agrarian reform model that takes into consideration the need for land redistribution, the role of institutional support, the importance of evidence-based land allocation, the need for post-settlement support, the importance of financing, and the need to strengthen the security of tenure. This is because it is the agrarian reform model that recognizes the fact that the success of land reform is not determined by the amount of land allocated, but by the ability of the allocated land to become a productive and economically viable agricultural enterprise that can be used for the development of the rural areas.

5.4.4 Implications for Future Research

There are several research avenues that emerge from the research that is being undertaken here. One of the principal areas is to attempt to place a value on the impact that is

being generated by endowment rent, capability rent, and institutional/small holder rent. Various techniques of generating a composite index that would enable the monitoring of this on a period-by-period basis is one of the areas that would emerge as research avenues.

The comparative research study work done in other provinces, for instance, Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal, and Free State, will help gain further insights into the impacts of varied institutional frameworks on land reform. The commodity research will also help since research projects involving cattle, horticultural produce, and grain crop production vary in their responses to land quality, market accessibility, and climatic conditions. Lastly, it is recommended that future research study work should concentrate on the potential of novel technologies such as climate smart innovations to help in development and performance under a climate change scenario.

5.4.5 Societal and Community Implications

Implications of this research are extremely broad and include rural areas and society at large. The issue regarding rural land reform can be reinforced using the integrated and capability approach. The LRAD project has the potential to offer job creation to the youth in agribusiness, transport, processing, and management of co-operatives and therefore has solutions to unemployment in rural areas.

The women will also greatly benefit if the development of capability and institution-building is strengthened due to easy access to land and means of production, which will enable them to achieve economic autonomy and empowerment. The findings have shown that if good governance and producer networking are ensured, it will result in a cohesive society because there will be little conflict and maximal agricultural collaboration. The beneficiaries of the productive LRAD will ensure economic empowerment of the local communities because they will provide employment creation, value chain engagement, and development of the rural demand value chain of goods and services that will result in economic multipliers. Lastly, if

land reform is ensured, the burden of rural-urban migration will be reduced because living in the countryside will become economically viable.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

As a scientific study that is well-structured in methodology, this study also has limitations that arose out of a number of issues that are not entirely within the control of the researcher. The findings in this study are not affected by these limitations, though it is important that these factors are considered to gain a full appreciation of the nature of this study.

However, one of the major limitations with regards to generalisation is that generalisation is not possible. This has been possible because of the reason that it is a qualitative study, and since there is purposive sampling, it is possible for the researcher to gain information in depth about the beneficiaries as well as the officials in the Eastern Cape. This does not help in generalisation with regards to statistics for all the studies that have been undertaken by LRAD in South Africa.

Barriers to accessibility also influenced the process of conducting the research. The willingness and availability of participants in conducting the study, especially extension personnel and some of the benefiting farmers, were not guaranteed. Some of the LRAD farms that could not be easily accessed, either because of inaccessibility or road conditions, influenced the study by limiting field observation.

The research also depended on self-reported data that was obtained through interviews. Even though it is a fact that methods used in interview research studies are quite adequate for carrying out interpretive research studies, some difficulties might also arise regarding recall bias, selective reporting, or social desirability. Some hesitance might also be observed among some participants in the research study regarding the reporting of occurrences of internal

conflict, administrative weakness, and project failures on grounds of political correctness regarding land reforms.

Another weakness would be the inconsistencies that are presented by the documents that are being utilised by the various projects that have been undertaken. In the LRAD farms, there existed issues of incompleteness and unavailability of business documents, support documents, and production documents. This would make it challenging to conduct an entire validation of the research findings from the research that is done by the interviews that were conducted.

Another limitation of qualitative research is interpretive subjectivity. The researcher may be using his/her analytical eye despite using systematic coding methods and cross-validation techniques when conducting interpretive research. Although these methods are effective in reducing potential misinterpretation, one cannot eliminate interpretive subjectivity when conducting interpretive research.

However, the variability in the context is a constraint to the universality of the results in relation to all LRAD farms. This is in that the projects were conducted in different contexts in relation to agro-ecology, social aspects, and organisation. These contexts involve aspects such as soil, rainfall, and accessibility to infrastructure, among others.

Finally, the research was conducted under a time limit. The study was cross-sectional in nature; therefore, it encompasses the dynamic processes at a given point in time, excluding any change that might take place seasonally as well as any processes of learning that might occur in each period. Finally, the political sensitivity in relation to land reform affected the respondents in answering any of the research questions posed in this study. Despite its limitations, it offers a valuable insight into the performance of LRAD in the Eastern Cape.

5.6 Recommendations and Prospective Research

The findings of this study point towards the intervention requirements for making the LRAD programme more effective in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. Recommendations presented in the next section have been derived by considering the concept of economic rent presented by Ricardo, and aspects of capabilities presented by RBV.

5.6.1 Policy and Practice Recommendations

One of the recommendations that stand out is that there should be a focus on improving the security of tenure for LRAD beneficiaries. This can be done by granting them title deeds or leases, which will encourage investment and ensure that the land is professionally managed. This will be the case since credit will flow freely, as one can offer the title deed as collateral.

It is also clear from the study that a demand emerges for enhancing the level of coordination among the institutions. This could be achieved through the formation of a Land Reform Implementation Council involving DALRRD, DRDAR, the municipal administrations, the financial institutions, and producer groups.

The other important recommendation is about value chain integration. The beneficiaries should be linked to suppliers, processors, and markets to improve their integration in the market. This is achieved through aligning land allocation policies and access to infrastructure and input markets, and concepts of Ricardian advantage about concepts of comparative advantage.

Investment in capacity development is also found to be another important priority. Capacity development via training and skill transfer/extension is required to ensure that land ownership is related to land productivity. Investment in development of the human capital using the RBV theory creates the dynamic capabilities that ensure farm management is done well in the competitive agricultural environment.

Investments in infrastructure such as irrigation systems, storage capacity, transportation networks, and connectivity need to be given a remarkably high priority by allocating "ring-fenced" budgets to them. This would help overcome structural vulnerabilities in terms of distance, soil quality, and other logistical factors and hence enhance the productivity of the allocated land area.

However, for the implementation of these policies to be fully successful, it is equally important to monitor them for performance. This can be achieved by incorporating performance measures for productivity, income growth, market engagement, and happiness.

Finally, government support should also be strengthened in terms of easy access to farming inputs and funds. The collaboration between the private sector and government will also be important for modernisation/technological adaptation, while capacity-building programs for government employees will also help improve support services at the district and municipal levels.

5.6.2 Recommendations for Future Research

Though the above study gives a conceptual and strategic approach to the issue of land redistribution, it is necessary that it is accompanied by further empirical research to evaluate and develop it further. What is needed is the further integration of the mixed methods approach whereby the qualitative findings can be merged with further findings from other sources, such as crop yields, income, efficiency of use of inputs, and returns to investment.

Studies done on a provincial level will also prove to be quite helpful. Those done on the performance of land reform in provinces such as KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, or Free State will help understand the impact of either governance, agro-ecology, or institutional aspects on productivity.

Also proposed are longitudinal studies. The beneficiaries of LRAD should be followed for several seasons or years to understand the lasting impacts of increased productivity, groups,

and support systems. The longitudinal study shall also consider changes in climate and their impacts on land use decisions.

Future studies may also benefit from the application of econometric models such as the Vector Error-Correction Model and the Impulse Response Analysis in studying the causality relationship between the intervention policies and the level of income. This will help in the further comprehension of the dynamics that have been witnessed in the qualitative research study.

Another major area in which research could also be pursued is in Participatory Policy Research. Participatory Policy Research will enable researchers to develop holistic models for land reforms so that interventions remain grounded in their contexts. Finally, there is a need for theoretical extension. Theoretical frameworks such as Institutional Economics, Sustainable Livelihoods Frameworks, and Political Ecology might have the potential to extend existing knowledge on the interaction and intersection of distinct factors such as land, labour, capital, and institutions in agricultural transformation and change in land reform.

5.7 Conclusion of the Research

The study argues that the concept of land redistribution for sustainability needs to be redefined beyond the mere physical transfer of land to incorporating the concomitant transfer of productive assets, institutional support, and human capabilities. The study undertakes an in-depth qualitative case study on the effectiveness of the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) programme in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. The study reveals that the success of land redistribution programmes is dependent on the synergistic relationship of the three core dimensions of land quality, institutional support, and enhanced beneficiary capabilities. The following is a synthesis of the key findings of each chapter and the overall contribution to theory and practice.

Chapter 1: The study identifies the overall research problem and redefines the failure of land reform programmes as not just the result of implementation failure but as the failure of the dominant theoretical and policy approaches. The study identifies the critical failure in the dominant evaluation approaches that have focused on the quantitative and administrative aspects of land reform without recognizing the socio-institutional and human factors that determine the success of land redistribution. The overall purpose of the study is to develop a holistic framework for the evaluation and guidance of land redistribution.

Chapter 2: The study undertakes the critical task of articulating the overall multi-tiered theoretical synthesis that is critical in addressing the overall purpose of the study. The study undertakes the synthesis of the following three theories:

- (1) Ricardian Theory of Differential Rent, which emphasizes the inherent value of the land asset in terms of its quality, fertility, and location.
- (2) Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, which offers the micro-analytical framework for understanding the VRIN (Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, Non-substitutable) resources, skills, financial literacy, and social capital required by the beneficiaries to develop competitive enterprises.
- (3) Theories of Small-Scale Farm Productivity, which recognize the structural reality of the land that the beneficiaries will cultivate.

This synthesis builds on the insights of individual theories and proposes a new model where the potential of the asset, the context, and the capability of the enterprise are mutually constitutive.

Chapter 3 outlines the qualitative methodology adopted, which is informed by the need for a more in-depth understanding of the complex "how" and "why" questions that cannot be addressed through the more superficial "what" questions of the quantitative audit. The methodology adopted for the study was informed by the need for the research to uncover the

lived experiences and the capability development process, which is central to the research questions. It is therefore a more appropriate methodology for the study than the quantitative approach. Moreover, the methodology adopted for the study is likely to yield more meaningful results for the research since it is informed by the need for the research to uncover the lived experiences and the capability development process, which is central to the research questions.

Chapters 4 present the research findings from the Eastern Cape Province. From the research, it is clear that the disjuncture in these dimensions were the causes of failure. Some of the key findings from the research are as follows:

- (1) Land was being allocated without any rigorous evaluation of the Ricardian potential of the land for farming by the beneficiaries.
- (2) The institutional context was fragmented, which led to high transaction costs for the beneficiaries and therefore undermined the potential benefits of the economies of scale associated with small-scale farming.
- (3) There was a failure by the technocratic support structures to develop the unique VRIN skills required by the beneficiaries for the purpose of developing the land for farming.

Chapter 5: The research has established that the LRAD Programme and land redistribution policy require a fundamental reconceptualization. It is clear from the research that the policy is not just a matter of striking the right balance between productivity and equity; rather, the two are mutually constitutive outcomes of an integrated process as follows.

- (1) The policy needs to be designed in a manner where the allocation of the land is informed by its inherent potential for farming
- (2) Success of the LRAD depends on developing supportive and coherent institutions that minimize barriers and provide smallholders with access to markets.

- (3) Developing the proprietary skills and social capital of the beneficiaries, which are the primary drivers of enterprise development

The main original contribution of this study is the tripartite framework that integrates the macro dimension of asset economics, the micro dimension of institutional analysis, and the micro dimension of enterprise strategy. The study presents policymakers with a framework to identify the potential constraint in the land-institution-capability dimension and presents researchers with a framework to analyse the complex reality of agrarian reform. The study argues that the key to sustainable land redistribution lies in the integration of the physical asset of land with the institutional and human capabilities to transform the physical asset into an engine of transformative development.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Research Instrument



A FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE LAND REFORM IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA AS PART OF THE LAND REDISTRIBUTION FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (LRAD) PROGRAMME.

Dissertation Manuscript

Submitted to Unicaf University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA)

NSUNUNGULI MBONGOLWANE

December 2023

DATA COLLECTION TOOL/RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

RESEARCH GUIDE

The purpose of this baseline survey guide is to provide some background on the province of Eastern Cape in South Africa with relation to land redistribution, land use, and agricultural output. For this study, data will be collected through one-on-one interviews guided by an interview guide and use of open-ended questionnaires. The targeted participants will be selected from policy makers from government institutions, academic research institutions, civil society organizations (CSOs), and the farmers. Multiple interviews will be conducted with targeted participants to gain a better sense and determine

whether the land redistribution programmes implemented comprised elements necessary for successful land reform in South Africa. This approach would be the most feasible, and the sampling method used would guarantee representativity.

SECTION B: Demographic Details

This will be interviewer-administered to randomly selected respondents.

Tick the appropriate box with (x)

Gender	
Male	
Female	

Age	
18 – 30 years	
31 – 40 years	
41 – 50 years	
51 – 60 years	
61 years and older	

Tenure	
Less than 1 year	
1 – 3 years	
4 – 6 years	
7 – 10 years	
10 years and longer	

SECTION B: What is the relationship between legislative framework that enable the redistribution process, sustainable land use, and productivity in the Eastern Cape?

- Did the government distribute land for large scale agricultural purpose in post Eastern Cape?
- Did the government distribute land for small scale agricultural purpose in post-apartheid?
- Did the government distribute land for human settlement purpose?
- What do you know about the land redistribution for agricultural development programme?
- Has the land redistribution for agricultural development programme been instrumental in reducing economic inequalities and promoting imbalances in the distribution of resources?

SECTION C: Do we have post-colonial agricultural land redistribution success stories in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa, what led to their success and what challenges have they faced?

- What are the determinants of the land use in the large-scale land redistribution purpose?
- What are the determinants of the land use in the small-scale land redistribution purpose?
- What are the determinants of land redistribution for human settlement purpose?
- Which are the post-apartheid agriculture land redistribution programmes and initiatives that have been undertaken by the South Africa government in the Eastern Cape?
- Did the government distribute land for large scale agricultural purpose in post Eastern Cape?

SECTION D: What are the causes of failure in land distribution programmes in the Eastern Cape?

- What are the causes of failure in large scale land redistribution process?
- What are the causes of failure in small scale land redistribution process?
- What are the causes of failure in human settlement redistribution process?
- Which legal instruments that enhance success factors in large scale, small scale, and human settlement redistribution process?

Appendix B: Local Research Ethics Approval

Collaborative Research Agreement

This is a Collaborative Research Agreement (“Agreement”) entered on the 30th of November

2023 between:

Nsununguli Mbongolwane (“The Researcher”) and Doctorate of Business Administration

(DBA) Student at UNICAF residing at 231 Blousysie Street, Daleside, Midvaal, 1873,

South Africa

and

the Macadamia Skills Academy and Farming (Eastern Cape), Berea Section, East London,

South Africa

Collectively called (“the Parties”)

Background

The Parties wish to collaborate on a research project titled " Land Redistribution, do drivers of land use matter? The case for Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa,"

Terms of Collaboration

1. **Project Scope:** The Parties consent to working together in the manner described in the project proposal that is attached, "Land Redistribution: Do drivers of land use matter? The Case of the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa's Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD)," The goals, process, schedule, deliverables, and roles and responsibilities of each Party are all outlined in the project proposal.
2. **Intellectual Property (IP):** The Parties will jointly own any intellectual property produced during the study endeavour, including but not limited to research reports, data analysis, and policy suggestions. The Parties undertake to engage in good faith negotiations

over the commercialisation, management, and protection of intellectual property resulting from the project.

3. **Funding:** The Parties agree that the funding for the project will be provided as follows

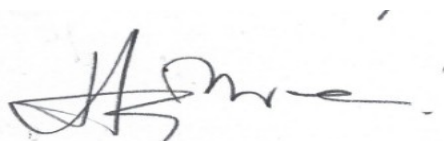
- Nsununguli Mbongolwane “the Researcher”) will contribute any financial outlay needed to ensure the successful execution of the project.
- Macadamia Skills Academy and Farming (Eastern Cape) will not provide any funding whether cash or in kind save for the time needed by the research to engage officials of the Department.

4. **Publication and Reporting:** Collaboration on publications arising from the research endeavour is agreed upon by the Parties. Both Parties' contributions shall be acknowledged in all publications and reports. Throughout the project's length, the Parties will routinely exchange research findings, progress reports, and interim reports.

5. **Confidentiality:** The Parties undertake to keep any confidential information shared throughout the collaboration confidential. Research data, methodology, participant information, and proprietary information disclosed by either Party are examples of confidential information, although they are not the only ones.

6. **Compliance:** In relation to the study project, the Parties undertake to abide by all applicable laws, rules, and ethical guidelines, including those pertaining to research ethics, data protection, confidentiality, and intellectual property rights.

7. **Duration and Termination:** If the parties do not mutually agree to terminate it earlier, this agreement will remain in effect from the date of its implementation until the research project is completed, which is anticipated to take one month and two weeks.

Signatures**Signature of the Researcher:****Name of the Researcher:** NSUNUNGULI MBONGOLWANE**Signature of Authorised Representative:****Name of Authorised Representative:** Senzeni Socikwa

Title: Manager

MACADAMIA SKILLS ACADEMY AND FARMING (EASTERN CAPE)

Email: senzeni73@gmail.com Mobile: +2765 820 3752

Appendix C: Approved REAF



REAF_DSPA - Version 1.0

UNICAF UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION FORM DOCTORAL STUDIES PROVISIONAL APPROVAL

The Provisional Approval - Research Ethics Application Form (REAF) should be completed by Doctoral level candidates enrolled on Dissertation stage 1.

This form is a **provisional approval** which means that the UREC committee has accepted the initial description of the project but this is conditional as changes may have to be implemented following Dissertation Stage 2 and piloting in Dissertation Stage 3.

This is a conditional offer and acceptance of the project needs to be verified and confirmed upon completion of the Research Ethics Application Form in Dissertation Stage 3.

Important Notes:

- An electronic version of the completed form should be uploaded by the student to the relevant submission link in the VLE. Student's supervisor will then review the form and provide feedback commentary. Once supervisor's initial approval is given then the supervisor will forward this to doctoral.studies-aa@unicaf.org, for provisional approval by the Unicaf University Research Ethics Committee (UREC).
- Please type your answers and **do not** submit paper copy scans. Only *PDF* format documents should be submitted to the committee. It is recommended to use free version of Adobe Acrobat Reader available online: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
- If you need to supply any supplementary material, not specifically requested by the application form, please do so in a separate file. Any additional document(s) should be clearly labelled and uploaded in the relevant VLE link.
- If you have any queries about the form, please address them to your dissertation or project supervisor.



UNICAF UNIVERSITY
RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION FORM
DOCTORAL STUDIES PROVISIONAL APPROVAL

UREC USE ONLY:

Application No:

Date Received:

Student's Name: Nsununguli Mbongolwane

Student's E-mail Address: wmbongolwane@gmail.com

Student's ID #: R1908D8990650

Supervisor's Name: Dr Tendai Joseph Mabvure

University Campus: Unicaf University Zambia (UUZ)

Program of Study: UUZ: DBA Doctoral of Business Administration

Research Project Title: Land and Rural Agriculture Development programme: Towards a model framework for effective land reform in the Eastern Cape

1. Please state the timelines involved in the proposed research project:

Estimated Start Date: 08-Mar-2022

Estimated End Date: 7-Mar-2024

2. The research project

2a. Project Summary:

In this section please fully describe the purpose and underlying rationale for the proposed research project. Ensure that you pose the research questions to be examined, state the hypotheses, and discuss the expected results of your research and their potential.

It is important in your description to use plain language so it can be understood by all members of the UREC, especially those who are not necessarily experts in the particular discipline. To that effect please ensure that you fully explain / define any technical terms or discipline-specific terminology (maximum 300 words +/- 10%).

Project Summary

The purpose of the study is to review and, in the process, interrogate the land redistribution interventions that have been formulated and implemented since attainment democratic government for all citizens in South Africa. This study aims to use the findings to develop an effective framework for land redistribution as a means of achieving sustainable social cohesion and increased participation by black majority in commercial agriculture. The research questions will be as follows;

1. How has the government of RSA utilized land policies on land redistribution to address the socio-economic needs of Black people in East Cape Province?
2. What are the post-apartheid agriculture land redistribution programs and initiatives that have been undertaken by the South Africa government in the Eastern Cape?
3. Do we have post-colonial agricultural land redistribution success stories in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa, what led to their success and what challenges have they face
4. What are the causes of failure in land distribution programs in the Eastern Cape?

The expected results of the study is to get enough data to develop an effective framework for land redistribution. The potential for such a model is its application across the country can help resolve the slow pace of land redistribution and diffuse tensions caused by landlessness

2b. Significance of the Proposed Research Study and Potential Benefits:

Outline the potential significance and/or benefits of the research (maximum 200 words).

Significance of the study

While research has been conducted in the field of land reform, researchers have interrogated existing policy frameworks without looking at the possibility of coming up with research that explores alternatives. This study is significant in that it will come up with a new model for land redistribution and help contribute significantly to the subject of land reform. While it has been noted that land redistribution initiatives have not worked, this research has the potential to come up with recommendations for a new model that can be used to address the problems faced due to failed land redistribution initiatives.

Significance indicates the positive results of completing the study.

3. Project execution:

3a. Type of project. The following study is an:

- experimental study (primary research)
- desktop study (secondary research)
- desktop study using existing databases involving information of human/animal subjects
- Other

If you have chosen 'Other' please Explain:

3b. Methods. The following study will involve the use of:

Method	Materials / Tools
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Qualitative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Face to Face Interviews <input type="checkbox"/> Phone Interviews <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Face to Face Focus Groups <input type="checkbox"/> Online Focus Groups <input type="checkbox"/> Other*
<input type="checkbox"/> Quantitative	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-administered Questionnaires <input type="checkbox"/> Online Questionnaires <input type="checkbox"/> Experiments <input type="checkbox"/> Tests <input type="checkbox"/> Other *

*If you have chosen 'Other' please Explain:

4. Participants

4a. Does the Project involve the recruitment of participants?

- YES If YES, please complete all following sections.
- NO If NO, please directly proceed to [Question 5](#).

Note: The definition of "participation" includes active participation, such as when participants knowingly take part in an interview or complete a questionnaire.

4b. Relevant Participant Details of the Proposed Research

Please state the number of participants you plan to recruit, and describe important characteristics such as: demographics (e.g. age, gender, location, affiliation, level of fitness, intellectual ability etc). It is also important that you specify any inclusion and exclusion criteria that will be applied (e.g. eligibility criteria for participants).

Number of participants

Age range From To

Gender Female
 Male

Eligibility Criteria:

- **Inclusion criteria** Lecturers and Students from Academic Institutions, *
Officers from the Department of Lands and Rural
Development,
Officers from land reform advocacy organisations,

- **Exclusion criteria** Foreign nationals
Individuals who have a mental disability and are not in a
position to provide their own consent would not
participate in the study.

Disabilities Individuals who have a mental disability and are not in a position to provide their own consent would not participate in the study.

Other relevant information (maximum 100 words):

The targeted population is 300 members. Out of this, 100 will participate in the study. 50 from universities, 25 from land offices, 25 from civic society. Open-ended questions suitable for qualitative research where 1 to 1 and focus group discussions will be used. Repeated failures in land redistribution requires that one explores it to understand what lies behind such failures. This is possible when qualitative inquiry is used than mere numbers and statistical models could provide using a quantitative approach

4c. Recruitment Process for Human Research Participants:

Please clearly describe how the potential participants will be identified, approached and recruited (maximum 200 words).

A range of recruitment strategies will be adopted to facilitate participant engagement and enrolment in research. Sending out well-designed letters and mail-outs (either via post e.g., the municipal register roll, or email, e.g. from listserv), posters will increase awareness of a study. Leveraging pre-existing social networks and personal contacts, identification of community gatekeepers will be also used. Approach is key to recruitment as location, the best time to approach, method of contact matters. Methods of recruitment include using the "Snowball" sampling, using flyers, posters and email from a list kept by the local municipality. Social media and word of mouth will also be used. Participants and their information to be accessed through the Gatekeepers and after their approval

4d. Relationship between the principal investigator and participants:

Is there any relationship between the principal investigator (student), co-investigators(s), (supervisor) and participant(s)? For example, if you are conducting research in a school environment on students in your classroom (e.g. instructor-student).

YES

NO

If YES, please specify (maximum 100 words).

5. Further Approvals

Are there any other approvals required (in addition to ethics clearance from UREC) in order to carry out the proposed research study?

YES

NO

If YES, please specify (maximum 100 words).

The universities and colleges that will be approached for participants will be asked to approve as they would be affected as well. The Department of Lands and Rural Development would asked to provide an introductory letter which the researcher would use to negotiate access to rural communities where traditional leaders who are gatekeepers can only grant such access when asked via relevant government officers

6. Potential Risks of the Proposed Research Study

Are there any potential risks, psychological harm and/or ethical issues associated with the proposed research study, other than risks pertaining to everyday life events (such as the risk of an accident when travelling to a remote location for data collection)?

YES NO

If YES, please specify (maximum 150 words):

7. Application Checklist

Please mark if the study involves any of the following:

- Children and young people under 18 years of age, vulnerable population such as children with special educational needs (SEN), racial or ethnic minorities, socioeconomically disadvantaged, pregnant women, elderly, malnourished people, and ill people.
- Research that foresees risks and disadvantages that would affect any participant of the study such as anxiety, stress, pain or physical discomfort, harm risk (which is more than is expected from everyday life) or any other act that participants might believe is detrimental to their wellbeing and / or has the potential to / will infringe on their human rights / fundamental rights.
- Risk to the well-being and personal safety of the researcher.
- Administration of any substance (food / drink / chemicals / pharmaceuticals / supplements / chemical agent or vaccines or other substances (including vitamins or food substances) to human participants.
- Results that may have an adverse impact on the natural or built environment.

8. Final Declaration by Applicants:

- (a) I declare that this application is submitted on the basis that the information it contains is confidential and will only be used by Unicaf University and Unicaf University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) for the explicit purpose of ethical review and monitoring of the conduct of the research proposed project as described in the preceding pages.
- (b) I understand that this information will not be used for any other purpose without my prior consent, excluding use intended to satisfy reporting requirements to relevant regulatory bodies.
- (c) The information in this form, together with any accompanying information, is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and I take full responsibility for it.
- (d) I undertake to abide by the highest possible international ethical standards governing the Code of Practice for Research Involving Human Participants, as published by the UN WHO Research Ethics Review Committee (ERC) on <http://www.who.int/ethics/research/en/> and to which Unicaf University aspires to.
- (e) In addition to respect any and all relevant professional bodies' codes of conduct and/or ethical guidelines, where applicable, while in pursuit of this research project.
- (f) I understand it is my responsibility to submit a full REAF application during Dissertation Stage 3 to UREC. If a REAF application is not submitted my project is not approved by UREC.
- (g) I fully acknowledge that this form does not constitute approval of the proposed project but it is only a provisional approval.



I agree with all points listed under Question 8

Student's Name: Nsununguli Mbongolwane

Supervisor's Name: Dr Tendai Joseph Mabvure

Date of Application: 20-Mar-2022

Important Note:

Please now save your completed form (we suggest you also print a copy for your records) and then submit it to your UU Dissertation/project supervisor (tutor). **In the case of student projects, the responsibility lies with the Faculty Dissertation/Project Supervisor.** If this is a student application, then it should be submitted via the relevant link in the VLE. Please submit only electronically filled in copies; **do not** hand fill and submit scanned paper copies of this application.



Before submitting your application, please tick this box to confirm that all relevant sections have been filled in and the information contained is accurate to the best of your knowledge.

Appendix D: UREC Decision


 UREC Decision, Version 2.0

Unicaf University Research Ethics Committee Decision

Student's Name: Nsununguli Mbongolwane

Student's ID #: R1908D8990650

Supervisor's Name: Dr Tendal J. Mabvure

Program of Study: UUZ: DBA Doctoral of Business Administration

Offer ID /Group ID: O59811G63806

Dissertation Stage: 3

Research Project Title: A FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE LAND REFORM IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA AS PART OF THE LAND REDISTRIBUTION FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (LRAD) PROGRAMME.

Comments: No comments.

Decision*: A. Approved without revision or comments

Date: 24-Aug-2023

*Provisional approval provided at the Dissertation Stage 1, whereas the final approval is provided at the Dissertation stage 3. The student is allowed to proceed to data collection following the final approval.

Appendix E: Gatekeeper letter



Date: 25 July 2022

To Whom It May Concern

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I, the undersigned, hereby grant permission to **Nsununguli Mbongolwane**, a registered student with **UNICAF University**, to conduct research within workers who are affiliated to the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU) and working for the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) for the purposes of fulfilling the requirements of the **Doctorate of Business Administration (DBA) degree**.

The proposed study is titled:

"AN EVALUATION OF THE LAND REDISTRIBUTION FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (LRAD) PROGRAMME IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA: LESSONS FROM THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE"

The research will involve:

- Interviews with staff
- Surveys/questionnaires
- Document analysis

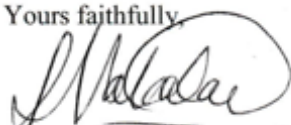
This permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. Participation of employees will be entirely voluntary.
2. Confidentiality and anonymity of participants and the organisation will be maintained at all times.
3. No sensitive or proprietary information will be disclosed without prior written consent.
4. The research will not disrupt normal operations of the organisation.
5. Ethical clearance will be obtained from UNICAF University prior to commencement of data collection.

The organisation understands that the findings of this study may be used for academic purposes, including publication, if confidentiality is upheld.

This letter serves as formal authorisation for the researcher to proceed with data collection within workers who are affiliated to the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU) within Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD)

Yours faithfully,



Elzo Vakala

Provincial Secretary (Eastern Cape Province)

National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU)

Contact: +27 43 743 2876

Contact: +27 43 722 8623

ecadministrator@nehawu.org.za

Appendix F: Informed Consent Form



UU_IC - Version 2.1



Informed Consent Form

Part 1: Debriefing of Participants

Student's Name: NSUNUNGULI MBONGOLWANE

Student's E-mail Address: wmbongolwane@gmail.com

Student ID #: R1908D8990650

Supervisor's Name: Dr Tendai Joseph Mabvure

University Campus: Unicaf University Zambia (UUZ)

Program of Study: Doctorate in Business Administration

Research Project Title: A critical evaluation of the Land and Rural Agriculture Development (LRAD) programme as a means towards a model framework for effective land reform in the Eastern Cape

Date: 19-Jun-2023

Provide a short description (purpose, aim and significance) of the research project, and explain why and how you have chosen this person to participate in this research (maximum 150 words).

The purpose of the study is to evaluate and interrogate the Land Redistribution for Agriculture and Development (LRAD) programme that has defined land reform since the 1994 attainment of democratic government for all citizens in South Africa. This study aims to use the findings to contribute to the development of an effective framework for land redistribution as a means of achieving sustainable social cohesion and increased participation by black majority in commercial agriculture. This study is significant in several ways. The study will come up with improved practices for land redistribution for agriculture and development. Secondly, the proposed research study will contribute significantly to information needed in formulating policies for land reform and rural development. Thirdly the proposed research study will help strengthen the justification for the model for Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) in South Africa. The insights gained from this study will create the basis for future research.

The above named student is committed to ensuring participant's voluntarily participation in the research project and guaranteeing there are no potential risks and/or harms to the participants.

Participants have the right to withdraw at any stage (prior or post the completion) of the research without any consequences and without providing any explanation. In these cases, data collected will be deleted.

All data and information collected will be coded and will not be accessible to anyone outside this research. Data described and included in dissemination activities will only refer to coded information ensuring beyond the bounds of possibility participant identification.

I, NSUNUNGULI MBONGOLWANE, ensure that all information stated above is true and that all conditions have been met.

Student's Signature:

Informed Consent Form

Part 2: Certificate of Consent

This section is mandatory and should to be signed by the participant(s)

Student's Name: NSUNUNGULI MBONGOLWANE

Student's E-mail Address: wmbongolwane@gmail.com

Student ID #: R1908D8990650

Supervisor's Name: Dr Tendai Joseph Mabvure

University Campus: Unicaf University Zambia (UUZ)

Program of Study: Doctorate in Business Administration

Research Project Title: A critical evaluation of the Land and Rural Agriculture Development (LRAD) programme as a means towards a model framework for effective land reform in the Eastern Cape

I have read the foregoing information about this study, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss about it. I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions and I have received enough information about this study. I understand that I am free to withdraw from this study at any time without giving a reason for withdrawing and without negative consequences. I consent to the use of multimedia (e.g. audio recordings, video recordings) for the purposes of my participation in this study. I understand that my data will remain anonymous and confidential, unless stated otherwise. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

Participant's Print name:

Participant's Signature: _____

Date:

If the Participant is illiterate:

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had an opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the aforementioned individual has given consent freely.

Witness's Print name:

Witness's Signature: _____

Date:

Appendix G: Useful Resources

We also recommend the following:

APA Style: <https://apastyle.apa.org/>

Contact the School of Doctoral Studies doctoral.studies-aa@unicaf.org

Appendix H: Turnitin report



Digital Receipt

This receipt acknowledges that Turnitin received your paper. Below you will find the receipt information regarding your submission.

The first page of your submissions is displayed below.

Submission author:	Nsununguli Mbongolwane
Assignment title:	Post-Pre-Viva Thesis submission
Submission title:	DBA Thesis.docx
File name:	5214_Nsununguli_Mbongolwane_DBA_Thesis_836433_189461...
File size:	2.72M
Page count:	231
Word count:	97,140
Character count:	545,415
Submission date:	31-Mar-2025 02:45PM (UTC+0300)
Submission ID:	2630752837

Appendix I: Editor's Letter

S. Ferreira

7 Krog Street
Alexandria
Eastern Cape
6185



To whom it may concern

This document serves to confirm that the following student's document has been checked:

Student/Staff member: Walter Nsununguli_Mbongolwane

Student number: (R1908D8990650)

Date: 08/02/25

This paper has been checked for:

1. Grammar
2. Spelling
3. Punctuation
4. Other formatting errors

I have left my comments in the review section of the document.

Kind regards

Simoné Ferreira