

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESEARCH COUNCIL END OF AWARD REPORT



For awards ending on or after 1 November 2009

This End of Award Report should be completed and submitted using the **grant reference** as the email subject, to **reportsofficer@esrc.ac.uk** on or before the due date.

The final instalment of the grant will not be paid until an End of Award Report is completed in full and accepted by ESRC.

Grant holders whose End of Award Report is overdue or incomplete will not be eligible for further ESRC funding until the Report is accepted. ESRC reserves the right to recover a sum of the expenditure incurred on the grant if the End of Award Report is overdue. (Please see Section 5 of the ESRC Research Funding Guide for details.)

Please refer to the Guidance notes when completing this End of Award Report.

Grant Reference	RES-167-25-0037		
Grant Title	Livelihoods after land reform: the poverty impacts of land redistribution in southern Africa		
Grant Start Date	01/10/2006	Total Amount	£489 983.29
Grant End Date	31/03/2010	Expended:	
Grant holding Institution	University of the Western Cape, South Africa		
Grant Holder	Professor Ben Cousins		
Grant Holder's Contact Details	Address	Email	
	Institute for Poverty, land and Agrarian Studies, University of the Western Cape, P. Bag X17, Bellville 7535, RSA	bcousins@uwc.ac.za	
		Telephone +27 21 959 3733	
Co-Investigators (as per project application):		Institution	
Professor Ian Scoones		Institute for Development Studies, University of Sussex	

1. NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Please provide below a project summary written in non-technical language. The summary may be used by ESRC to publicise your work and should explain the aims and findings of the project.

[Max 250 words]

Through case studies in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia, this project explored to what extent land redistribution in southern Africa is achieving poverty reduction and improvement of livelihoods. In all three countries planning approaches are informed by a model of 'farm viability' drawn from large scale commercial agriculture, which results in project plans and support systems that are poorly aligned to the needs and aspirations of beneficiaries. Positive impacts on livelihoods are more in evidence in Zimbabwe than elsewhere, because of greater flexibility in land use and livelihoods and the much larger scale of land redistribution. In South Africa, various trajectories of change at both project level and in individual livelihood pathways were identified, providing insight into reasons for project success or failure. In Namibia, policies are focused solely on creating small-scale commercial livestock production units, but many beneficiaries do not desire to become commercial farmers, productivity is low, and few other options for land use or livelihoods are provided. In Zimbabwe, a new agrarian structure has emerged. Many beneficiaries are investing in their new plots and producing significant levels of output, despite poor availability of inputs and other problems. This pattern of relative success is highly differentiated by commodity, by annual rainfall, by type of resettlement, and socially. The study demonstrates the utility of a dynamic livelihoods pathways approach to the assessment of land reform in southern Africa, the importance of socially differentiation in land reform contexts, and the need to radically re-think the notion of 'viability' of land reform.

2. PROJECT OVERVIEW

a) Objectives

Please state the aims and objectives of your project as outlined in your proposal to the ESRC.

[Max 200 words]

Through case studies in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia, this project explores to what extent land redistribution in southern Africa is achieving poverty reduction and improvement of livelihoods, by:

1. Providing empirical data, in a systematic and comparable form, on livelihoods impacts in post-land reform settings
2. Understanding what conditions – including appropriate land transfer mechanisms, resettlement models, tenure arrangements and post-settlement support – are likely to result in poverty reduction
3. Advancing conceptual thinking about post-transfer livelihood options, interrogating what is meant by 'viable' land reform in southern Africa
4. Developing replicable methodological approaches for assessing impacts at different scales – e.g. household, scheme/project, regional economy – for use as assessment and monitoring and evaluation tools.

The project also aims to engage a range of end-users in exploring the policy implications of research findings, by:

1. Developing a replicable methodology for livelihood impact assessment, monitoring and evaluation
2. Providing inputs into the design of specific support programmes in post-land reform settings
3. Facilitating exchanges between researchers, government officials, NGO personnel and service providers engaged in land reform, to share their experiences and to engage with research findings
4. Feeding research findings into high-level discussions on land reform policies and programmes in southern Africa.

b) Project Changes

Please describe any changes made to the original aims and objectives, and confirm that these were agreed with the ESRC. Please also detail any changes to the grant holder's institutional affiliation, project staffing or funding. *[Max 200 words]*

No changes were made to the original aims and objectives. The grant holder remained at the Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) at the University of the Western Cape. Staffing changes: Dr Edward Lahiff was replaced by Dr Michael Aliber as team leader of the South African research team in 2007, and Tshililo Manenzhe left the project in 2009. Bertus Kruger and Daniel Motinga left the Namibia team in late 2007 and were replaced by Willem Odendaal of the Legal Advice Centre and Heiko Binding. No changes took place in the Zimbabwe team. William Wolmer of the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) left the project at an early stage. Funding changes: in early 2007 ESRC approved an increase in the cash limit of the award by GBP 59 482, to add GBP 7900 to the Zimbabwe country study, and because the funds for a PhD studentship (GBP 51 582) were now to be incorporated into the award budget rather than being administered separately. Later it was agreed that the funds for the PhD studentship would be claimed by PLAAS rather than by IDS.

c) Methodology

Please describe the methodology that you employed in the project. Please also note any ethical issues that arose during the course of the work, the effects of this and any action taken. *[Max. 500 words]*

Research sites were selected in South Africa (Limpopo Province), Zimbabwe (Masvingo Province) and Namibia (Hardap and Omaheke regions) because they are i) the focus for land redistribution; ii) broadly comparable in terms of agro-ecology, infrastructure and livelihoods, and iii) areas where the researchers have extensive field contacts. Within each province or region field sites were selected to represent zones of higher and lower rainfall and contrasting land redistribution settings (e.g. individual vs group schemes; small-scale vs large-scale holdings; low-input, dryland agriculture and livestock production vs joint venture arrangements for high-value, irrigated crops).

Within each site, data were collected using a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods at two levels:

- Individual household level – a survey was undertaken of livelihood impacts, with data on i) production; ii) asset ownership; iii) employment, on and off

farm; iv) social networks supporting production and livelihoods; v) land rights, and vi) institutional support. A combination of participatory appraisal techniques and a short questionnaire survey instrument were used.

- Scheme or project level – aggregate data were collected to allow (i) analysis of crop and livestock production and marketing and assess scheme/project productivity and sustainability. (ii) assessment of institutional and organisational arrangements, including emerging land tenure and rental/sale arrangements, forms of community organisation and mechanisms for accessing services of different sorts.

This two-level assessment was diachronic, tracing changes and comparing the situation ‘now’, with the ‘pre-settlement’ situation. Largely qualitative data were collected on households’ livelihood status before land reform, as well as on micro-histories of livelihood building and biographies of change since redistribution. The project traced the pathways of change that occur in livelihood patterns after land reform, using a ‘dynamic livelihood pathways’ approach. It was the original intention to collect data on production and returns from the land in its former use prior to land redistribution but this proved to be impossible in practice.

Household and scheme level data were complemented by assessments of the wider economic and social impacts of land reform. Useful data, mostly qualitative in character, were collected on shifts in services, processing, input supply and markets, as well as the wider structure and social/market relations of the agrarian economy after land redistribution, and a tentative mapping of processes of change was undertaken. In Zimbabwe, an audit of new enterprises in all research sites was undertaken, and changes in the maize, cotton sugar and beef commodity chains were analysed, with a particular focus on Masvingo Province. In South Africa, an assessment was undertaken of the impact of land redistribution on the economy of a sub-regional service centre, Moreleng, and of emerging rural settlements in parts of Makahdo District, as well as analysis of the impact of land reform on the beef, poultry and maize commodity chains in Limpopo Province.

No ethical issues arose in the course of research.

d) Project Findings

Please summarise the findings of the project, referring where appropriate to outputs recorded on *ESRC Society Today*. Any future research plans should also be identified. *[Max 500 words]*

The study found significant differences in the livelihood impact of land redistribution in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia. In all three countries planning approaches are informed by a model of ‘farm viability’ drawn from large scale commercial farming. In South Africa and Namibia this has resulted in project plans and support systems which are poorly aligned to the needs and aspirations of beneficiaries and allow for little flexibility in implementation. Positive impacts are often the result of beneficiaries abandoning official plans. Zimbabwe’s fast-track land reform was chaotic and often led to beneficiaries designing their own systems of settlement and production. Yet positive livelihood impacts are more in evidence in Zimbabwe than elsewhere, because of (a) greater flexibility in land use and livelihoods, if only by default; and (b) the much larger scale of redistribution.

In South Africa, the study found that redistribution beneficiaries are highly socially differentiated. Project plans tend soon to give way to unplanned patterns of land use, and the composition of beneficiaries can quickly alter, but poor levels of post-settlement support constrain production. The study identified a wide array of trajectories of change at both project level and in individual livelihood pathways, as well as a variety of types of impact on livelihoods, providing insight into the complex reasons for project success or failure.

In Namibia land redistribution policies are focused solely on creating small-scale commercial livestock production units. The study found that these units are too small to be sustain livelihoods. Productivity is low, cash flow is a major constraint, no post-settlement support is provided, and formal leases have yet to be issued. Despite the limitations of official models, few other options for land use or complementary livelihoods are provided for, despite the fact that many beneficiaries do not desire to become commercial farmers. Opening up a wider range of livelihood options is strongly recommended.

In Zimbabwe, the study found that radical land redistribution has created a new agrarian structure and set of commodity chains, and that many of the beneficiaries of fast-track land reform were investing in their new plots and producing significant levels of output, despite the poor availability of inputs and a hyperinflationary macro-economic environment for much the period under investigation. This pattern of relative success is highly differentiated by commodity, by annual rainfall, by type of resettlement, and socially: not all the new farmers are doing well, and some are simply 'hanging in' or are 'dropping out'. A great majority of beneficiaries are ordinary people, rather than political cronies. Relative success is constrained by continuing problems around the supply of farm inputs, marketing and lack of clarity around land tenure and administration.

The study demonstrates the utility of a dynamic livelihoods pathways approach to the assessment of land reform in southern Africa, the importance of socially differentiation in land reform contexts, and the need to radically re-think the notion of 'viability' of land reform. It has also produced a wide range of policy recommendations tailored to different national contexts.

e) Contributions to wider ESRC initiatives (eg Research Programmes or Networks)

If your project was part of a wider ESRC initiative, please describe your contributions to the initiative's objectives and activities and note any effect on your project resulting from participation. *[Max. 200 words]*

3. EARLY AND ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

a) Summary of Impacts to date

Please summarise any impacts of the project to date, referring where appropriate to associated outputs recorded on *ESRC Society Today*. This should include both scientific impacts (relevant to the academic community) and economic and societal impacts (relevant to broader society). The impact can be relevant to any organisation, community or individual. *[Max. 400 words]*

Scientific impacts:

The project has opened up debate within the research community in southern Africa on the meaning of the term 'viability', as is discernible in recent publications on land reform. A paper by Cousins and Scoones on contested notions of viability was presented in seminars, workshops and conferences, and published on the project and PLAAS websites and in an academic journal in 2010. Project findings have also influenced scholarly discussion of current political dynamics in Zimbabwe, through an article by Ian Scoones in 2008 and a debate in the *London Review of Books* sparked by renowned scholar Mahmood Mamdani, which referred to the study. Findings from all three countries were presented at a public workshop in Pretoria in March 2010 attended by a number of researchers, and the impact of earlier dissemination activities was evident.

Policy impacts: South Africa

In 2007 Edward Lahiff used early project findings in a study for the Commission on the Restitution of Land Rights that influenced final recommendations. In 2008 team leader Michael Aliber led a study for the Presidency on smallholder farming that was informed by the project's approach, and formed the basis of a section on land and agrarian reform in the *Second Economy Strategy Framework* (TIPS 2009). Aliber was subsequently requested to undertake work for the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform on land reform settlement models. In 2009 the principal investigator, Ben Cousins, drew on the study in a presentation to the parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Rural Development and Land Reform, and to a 'think tank' workshop of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform. Current government policy on 'pro-poor agrarian reform' and on enhancing multiple rural livelihood strategies as a key focus of rural development policy may reflect policy impacts to a degree.

Policy impacts: Zimbabwe

Project findings have been communicated to government officials in Masvingo province, donor groupings in Harare and research groupings in Zimbabwe and South Africa. In addition, the 2008 summary of emerging findings by Ian Scoones was disseminated through the internet and received very wide coverage. This has clearly influenced scholarly, policy maker and public perceptions. Further media debates followed in 2010 on publication of an article on the project's findings in the *Mail and Guardian* by Ben Cousins. The project has clearly contributed greatly to a more nuanced understanding of land reform in Zimbabwe.

Policy impacts: Namibia

Discernable policy impact has been limited to date because of the unreceptive character of the policy environment, but recent dissemination of the final Research Report and two Policy Briefs based on project findings may be changing this.

b) Anticipated/Potential Future Impacts

Please outline any anticipated or potential impacts (scientific or economic and societal) that you believe your project might have in future. [*Max. 200 words*]

Further impacts on scholarly, policy maker and public audiences are anticipated over the next 12 months following publication and dissemination of the final outputs of the project.

In South Africa, a full-length PLAAS Research report and four Policy Briefs on the SA country study are nearing completion, and will be launched at a public event in September 2010, accompanied by an op-ed piece in a national newspaper.

In Zimbabwe and elsewhere, publication of a full-length book on *Zimbabwe's Land Reform: Myths and Realities* in late 2010 by Weaver Press, Harare and by James Currey, Oxford is likely to stimulate widespread debate.

In Namibia, a final Research Report has been published and widely distributed by the Legal Advice Centre, as have two Policy Briefs, and the country team are hoping to arrange a workshop for senior government officials from the Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation in the next few months. In addition, it is hoped that a national newspaper will soon print an article summarizing the findings of the country study.

The anticipated impact of these dissemination activities is that research, analysis, debate and public perception of land redistribution in southern Africa will be informed by a deeper understanding of the differentiated livelihood impact and diverse trajectories of change within government programmes.

You will be asked to complete an ESRC Impact Report 12 months after the end date of your award. The Impact Report will ask for details of any impacts that have arisen since the completion of the End of Award Report.

4. DECLARATIONS

Please ensure that sections A, B and C below are completed and signed by the appropriate individuals. The End of Award Report will not be accepted unless all sections are signed. Please note hard copies are NOT required; electronic signatures are accepted and should be used.

A: To be completed by Grant Holder

Please read the following statements. Tick ONE statement under ii) and iii), then sign with an electronic signature at the end of the section.

i) The Project

This Report is an accurate overview of the project, its findings and impacts. All co-investigators named in the proposal to ESRC or appointed subsequently have seen and approved the Report.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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ii) Submissions to *ESRC Society Today*

Output and impact information has been submitted to <i>ESRC Society Today</i> . Details of any future outputs and impacts will be submitted as soon as they become available.	<input type="checkbox"/>
OR	
This grant has not yet produced any outputs or impacts. Details of any future outputs and impacts will be submitted to <i>ESRC Society Today</i> as soon as they become available.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OR	
This grant is not listed on <i>ESRC Society Today</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/>

iii) Submission of Datasets

Datasets arising from this grant have been offered for deposit with the Economic and Social Data Service.	<input type="checkbox"/>
OR	
Datasets that were anticipated in the grant proposal have not been produced and the Economic and Social Data Service has been notified.	<input type="checkbox"/>
OR	
No datasets were proposed or produced from this grant.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>