# A critical analysis of development NGO programmes in rural areas:
# A case study of East Cape Agricultural Research Project in South Africa

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# ABSTRACT

For a number of decades now, development non-governmental organisations (DNGOs) have been central to the world-wide development system which involves funding from international donors. Overall, DNGOs rely quite fundamentally on their donors for organisational sustainability, such that upward accountability to donors is inevitable. At the same time, as development agents, DNGOs are often celebrated for the deep participatory methodologies used when engaging with the beneficiaries of their programmes, leading to significant downward accountability – as least potentially. Often, for DNGOs, an awkward tension between upward and downward accountability exists. This thesis considers this tension by examining a DNGO in South Africa, namely, the East Cape Agricultural Research Project (ECARP), which focuses on questions around land redistribution. ECARP works with farm labourers and dwellers on commercial farms and small-scale farmers on redistributed farms. In the context of a broader understanding of ECARP's mission, capacities and programmes, the thesis looks specifically at ECARP's food security and sovereignty programme amongst small-scale farmers on redistributed farms. By drawing upon Interface theory, the thesis discusses in detail the diverse manner in which ECARP uses participatory methodologies in this particular programme. The thesis concludes that there is a reasonable degree of downward accountability in this programme, but that this does not distract from the fact that ECARP remains within the tension-riddled space marked by dual demands for accountability.

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# ACRONYMS

| | |
|---|---|
| ANC | African National Congress |
| DNGO | Development non-governmental organisation |
| DLA | Department of Land Affairs |
| ECARP | East Cape Agricultural Research Project |
| EFT | Evaluation Facilitation Team |
| EU | European Union |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| LRAD | Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development |
| NGO | Non-governmental organisation |
| NLC | National Land Committee |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| RDP | Reconstruction and Development Programme |
| PLAS | Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy |
| SLAG | Settlement Land Acquisition Grant |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |

# CHAPTER ONE:

# INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The study seeks to provide a critical analysis of the programmes of development Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) using the East Cape Agricultural Research Project (ECARP) in South Africa as a case study. In particular, the thesis focuses on ECARP's food security and sovereignty programme amongst small-scale farmers on redistributed farms in the broader context of the NGO's mission, capacity and effectiveness. Of particular concern is the ways in which ECARP seeks to position itself in the face of upward accountability to donors and downward accountability to its beneficiaries, such as small-scale farmers.

## 1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Over many years now, Africa has experienced high levels of poverty affecting, amongst others, women and children in marginalised rural communities. This poverty has deepened due to the failure of most African governments to provide services to their citizens especially those in rural areas. Because of the immense challenges faced by these governments, international organisations such as the World Bank started channelling funds through DNGOs so that they could assist in alleviating poverty in marginalised communities. Existing DNGOs are involved in a wide range of activities including mainstream development programmes around agricultural production and food security, capacity-building within local communities, and provision of social services such as health clinics and boreholes. They have been taking up this role because it is often said that they have comparative advantages over governments, in large part because of their supposed ability to reach the most marginalised people, their use of deep participatory approaches to development, and the innovative and cost-effective dimension to their development initiatives. Hence, many large global development agencies, both bilateral and multilateral institutions, sometimes prefer to channel funding to DNGOs instead of apparently incapacitated state bodies.

Nevertheless, concerns soon arose within the scholarly literature about the effectiveness of DNGOs to deliver on their lofty visions and missions, particularly because of the often problematic relationship established between donors and DNGOs, the absence of significant poverty-reducing outcomes, insensitivity to class, racial and gender-based power in local communities, and shortfalls in participatory methodologies (Edwards & Hulme, 1996). But the main concern became about the donor-DNGO relationship, with this being depicted as a relationship of dependence and involving almost unilateral upward accountability (Lewis & Opoku-Mensah, 2006). In itself, upward accountability is not problematic given that DNGOs need to be accountable for funds disbursed and used. Nevertheless, it tends to compromise what DNGOs consider to be their main comparative advantage, namely, downward accountability to rural communities involving participatory methodologies. Further, the donor-NGO relationship is also sometimes complicated by the relationship between DNGOs and governments. DNGOs in particular tend to refrain from politically-charged situations but, at times, governments may feel threatened by them, particularly when they crowd out funding for public services or seek to empower groups marginalised by government (Clark, 1997; Edwards & Hulme, 1997). Despite this, it is not unusual for DNGOs to have solid working relationship with state officials at local levels.

Although the donor-NGO relationship complicates the work of DNGOs, the number of DNGOs continued to rise. South Africa has experienced an expansion in the DNGO sector since the end of apartheid in 1994 as the donor agencies re-engaged with South Africa in seeking to address urban and rural poverty. As well, given the need to overcome the pre-1994 effects of grand apartheid (including the racialised geography of the countryside), some DNGOs focused specifically on the post-apartheid government’s land redistribution process, including both development and advocacy work. Amongst these DNGOs is ECARP. ECARP is a local DNGO based in Grahamstown (now Mhkanda) which has been in existence for fifteen years, and it works amongst small-scale farmers (including on redistributed farms) and farm labourers on commercial farms (Naidoo, 2011). Living conditions and wages amongst farm workers are inadequate and ECARP works closely with the Department of Labour in trying to rectify these issues. Under its food security and sovereignty programme (which is the specific focus of the thesis), it also seeks to assist emerging farmers on redistributed farms in terms of agricultural production and engages with the departments of lands and agriculture for this reason (ECARP, 2013). At times, this involves advocacy work as well in mobilising small-scale farmers and farm labourers into local committee structures as the basis for a rural social movement (ECARP, 2012).

In examining the food sovereignty programme for small-scale farmers, the work of ECARP is examined with reference to the state's land redistribution programme. The land redistribution programme in South Africa has been based on a market-focused system whereby land is sold under the concept of willing buyer-willing seller, and this process is facilitated by the government. Since 1994, three programmes have been introduced by the government to assist in the redistribution of land, known by their acronyms as SLAG, LRAD and PLAS. In considering ECARP's food security and sovereignty programme, the thesis considers in particular small-scale farmers on Masizakhe farm, who received land under LRAD. The ECARP programme seeks to improve the food security of small-scale farmers on redistributed farms through their adoption of agro-ecological farming methods.

## 1.3 THESIS OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the thesis is to *critically examine ECARP's development programmes with a particular focus on its food security and sovereignty programme on redistributed farms in South Africa*. The secondary objectives include:

a) To provide an overview of ECARP as an organisation and its portfolio of programmes in order to contextualise its food security and sovereignty programme;

b) To examine the extent to which ECARP is accountable downward to small-scale farmers;

c) To examine the ways in which donor funding influences the pursuance of ECARP's food security and sovereignty programme and;

d) To identify the key internal organisational challenges faced by ECARP in pursuing its food security and sovereignty programme.

## 1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology underpinning the thesis is qualitative. There is no attempt to quantify ECARP's programme outcomes as the study examines the social processes which underpin ECARP's organisational existence. Also, as a case study research design which seeks to examine ECARP specifically and contextually, there is no attempt to generalise the findings beyond this DNGO to South Africa broadly. Babbie and Mouton (2001:56) argue that a qualitative research design involves studying human action through the perspectives and experiences of the subjects themselves. The use of a qualitative research design is important as it facilitates the description of life experiences and the meanings people give to these experiences, while also allowing the researcher to gain insights into the richness and complexity inherent in the phenomenon under study (Babbie, 2009).

The research for this study was undertaken in the second half of 2018. With reference to research methods, there was a heavy reliance on the use of documents along with discussions and an interview with the director of ECARP. Using the document analysis method, the researcher made full use not only of available documents produced by ECARP and appearing on its website, but also documents accessed directly from the DNGO, including reports pertaining to donors and programmes (in particular, the food security and sovereignty programme). According to Bowen (2009:27), making use of and studying primary documentation entails eliciting meanings, gaining understanding and developing empirical knowledge about the topic. Like other qualitative methods, there are both advantages and disadvantages in using documents. Because the researcher undertook the research within a short period of time, drawing upon documents became a less time-consuming and more efficient way of undertaking research as it involves data selection instead of data collection (Bowen, 2009:28; Flick, 2014:354). Also, the availability of a vast array of ECARP documents in the public domain (as accessed on the internet via ECARP's website) further enhanced the appropriateness of this research method. However, documents from any organisation are produced for particular purposes particularly when they are to be made available publicly. This might then distort the information contained in documents because of certain biases, or it may lead to certain details being excluded completely from the documents (Bowen, 2009:29). In mitigating these problems, the researcher conducted discussion and an interview with the director of ECARP to fill in the gaps and address the silences in the available documents.

The discussions and interview undertaken with the director of ECARP were semi-structured. Initially the researcher had planned to conduct interviews with ECARP programme officers managing the food and security and sovereignty programme. However, after outlining the set interview questions to the director of ECARP (during the process of seeking permission to interview the programme officers), the director indicated that she was in the strongest position to answer the questions. As some of the questions would be difficult for the programme officers to address, I thus proceeded to interview the director. The director was involved in the founding of ECARP and, along with her deep involvement in all ECARP programmes and her institutional memory, she had insights into the food security and sovereignty programme which the programme officers did not possess. Further, ECARP programmes are well documented in the ECARP reports to which I was able to gain access, and any interviewing of ECARP staff was merely meant to fill in missing details or to gain clarity on specific matters. All evidence collected through documents and interviews was thematically analysed based on the subsidiary objectives, but reworked and refined in the process of musing over the evidence.

### 1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study contributes to the general body of knowledge about DNGOs and with specific reference to DNGOs in South Africa and their activities in relation to land redistribution. In doing so, in drawing upon interface theory (see chapter 2), it is hoped that the thesis offers an innovative way of theorising about and critically analysing the work of DNGOs as specific organisational forms.

According to Sternberg (2004), ethical considerations are a set of moral principles which are widely accepted for purposes of undertaking research, particularly when it comes to research on human subjects. In line with this, the researcher adhered to the research ethics of Rhodes University. The research in large part involved the use of documents on ECARP and one interview. I ensured that no harm was done to them during the research process and that the production of my thesis (and the contents therein) poses no risk to them. My research objectives were made clear to the director and she had the right to terminate the informed consent agreement at any point during the interview. In relation to confidentiality, the interviewee (director) granted me the right to refer to her position held within ECARP when citing the interviews in the thesis.

## 1.6 THESIS OUTLINE

Chapter 2 and 3 are the contextual chapters for the thesis. The following chapter (chapter 2) sets out the theoretical framing for the study and discusses development non-governmental organisations (DNGOs) in the context of the worldwide development system. Chapter 3 focuses specifically on South Africa, with a particular focus on land inequalities, land redistribution and the involvement of DNGOs in seeking to bring about meaningful rural change through land redistribution. Chapters 4 and 5 focus on the case study for the thesis, namely, ECARP as a DNGO. Chapter 4 provides an overview of ECARP as an organisation and its range of programmes and then, in chapter 5, the emphasis is on the food security and sovereignty programme more specifically. The concluding chapter (chapter 6) shows how the thesis was able to address the main and secondary objectives and it does so in relation to the theoretical framing for the thesis.

# CHAPTER TWO:

# THEORETICAL FRAMING AND DEVELOPMENT NGOs

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

With the failure of top-down approaches to bringing development especially in developing nations, a number of decades ago there was a shift from total reliance on the state to the involvement of NGOs in facilitating broad-based socio-economic development. The NGO sector, as it is called, has grown considerably ever since, with DNGOs in particular being at the forefront of this shift. These DNGOs are part of the world-wide development system in which they are funded by international donors. Initially, DNGOs were seen as an almost magic bullet for resolving development challenges but, more recently, the literature has been more critical. In the debates around DNGOs, the main focus has been on questions around their upward accountability to donors and their expected downward accountability to the marginalised people on whose behalf they claim to work. This chapter considers this debate and seeks to contextualise it theoretically by drawing upon Interface theory.

## 2.2 DNGOS AND THE WORLDWIDE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

NGOs operate in the world-wide development system funded by international donors (typically, bilateral and multilateral agencies) (Bebbington, Hickey & Mitlin, 2008). However, there is considerable diversity amongst NGOs, in terms of their ideologies, purposes and practices (Lewis, 2016). There are indeed different types of NGOs, with the distinction often made between development NGOs (DNGOs) on the one hand, and research and advocacy NGOs on the other hand. At the same, a particular NGO may engage in development, research and advocacy simultaneously. Combined, NGOs engage in socio-economic development, democracy building, social mobilisation, human rights advocacy, and research and policy analysis (Lewis & Opoku-Mensah, 2006: 666). Development NGOs (DNGOs), such as ECARP, seek to reduce inequalities and poverty mostly within marginalised rural communities (Edwards & Hulme, 1997). ECARP though is also heavily involved in research along with advocacy with reference to the rights of commercial farm workers and small-scale farmers

All NGOs are non-membership organisations and act as intermediaries between donors and communities by making use of donor funds in the pursuit of their programmes (Bebbington et al., 2008: 48). In support of the work of DNGOs, multilateral and bilateral agencies such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), European Union (EU) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) channel money to DNGOs for development work (Gillis et al., 1992:379). In 2008, for instance, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) channelled a total of US $ 112 billion into development in Africa (Nega & Schneider, 2014:487). At times, DNGOs seek to raise their own funding to complement donor funding, such as through consultancy work, or they turn to other funders such as private corporations including banking institutions.

Initially, even within the scholarly literature, DNGOs were presented almost as a 'magic bullet' for world-wide development (Banks & Hulme, 2012; Lewis & Opoku-Mensah, 2006: 667). Within a short time, however, a more critical scholarly approach to DNGOs emerged and, by the mid-1990s, even international donors no longer saw DNGOs as their "favoured child" (Edwards & Hulme, 1997: 127). Though scholars do not dismiss DNGOs outright and, while international donors continue to fund DNGOs, many concerns have arisen within the literature. Key concerns involve the problematic relationship between donors and DNGOs, the absence of significant poverty-reducing outcomes, an insensitivity to class, racial and gender-based power in local communities, and shortfalls in participatory methodologies (Edwards & Hulme, 1996). Related to this are significant problems internal to DNGOs as organisational forms, including practices and imperatives which undercut their development mission (Bebbington et al., 2008). One example around gender issues is illustrative of these broader concerns. DNGOs have played an important role in re-negotiating gender relations within households and markets through struggles around property rights. However, through their programmes, NGOs often end up reinforcing the gender-based division of resources.

Development NGOs emerged mainly from the 1980s because of the supposed pervasive failure of states in developing nations to provide public goods for all their citizens (Hearn, 2007; Banks & Hulme, 2012; Choudry & Kapoor, 2013). Because of this, and in the context of a growing neo-liberal critique of the interventionist state, the major international funding agencies began to increasingly channel funding for socio-economic development through DNGOs (Lewis & Opoku-Mensah, 2006: 666). These DNGOs, as indicated earlier, were seen to have comparative advantages vis-à-vis states, particularly by engaging in development work in a more participatory and inclusive manner (Choudry & Kapoor, 2013). Thus, they were seen as the pre-eminent, if not sole, organisational form which could implement the global commitment of 'bottom up' development (Bebbington & Hickey, 2008). Unlike governments, DNGOs were seen as more accountable and transparent; more economical and efficient in the provision of infrastructure; more innovative in their development methodologies; and more effective in empowering local communities in a sustainable manner.

### 2.2.1 Development NGOs in Africa

Currently, in Africa, DNGOs operate both at national and local level focusing on reducing poverty in marginalised areas, as well as advocating for policy change, labour rights, land rights and community participation of citizens in the development projects which they implement (Manji & O' Coil, 2002; Nega & Schneider, 2014:488). Where governments lack capacity, NGOs are seen as well-placed, given their supposed autonomy to innovate, to test new development approaches to persistent social and economic challenges (Makoba, 2002; Ndegwa, 1996). Where a government has a progressive social agenda, and where NGOs are effective, there is potential for collaborative and synergistic relationships between government and NGOs. Nevertheless, this is not always the case: in some instances, the relationship can be one of distrust, particularly so when governments fear that NGOs will erode their political power (Clarke, 1995).

There has been a continuous expansion of DNGOs in Africa. In South Africa alone, there are said to be more than 100,000 registered non-profit organisations (though not all are DNGOs) and, in Kenya, the number of NGOs grew by over 400% between 1997 and 2006 (Brass, 2012; 387; NGO Pulse, 2010). In Uganda there are over 3,000 registered foreign and indigenous NGOs (Dicklitch, 1998), and Zambia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe also have vibrant DNGO sectors (Hearn, 2007: Ndegwa 1996). Similar trends exist in other parts of the global South, such as India and Bangladesh (AbouAssi, 2012; Edwards & Hulme, 1997). The growing role of NGOs in all sectors of development is an indication of the decreasing capacity of the African state to undertake meaningful development.

### 2.2.2 South African DNGOs

In the context of South Africa, NGOs pre-date the end of apartheid but most pre-1994 NGOs were mainly advocacy NGOs involved in the struggle against apartheid (Habib, 1999). These organisations were sponsored by international organisations and institutions, but they did not always provide adequate account of the funds received due to improper organisational structures and systems (Habib & Taylor, 1999). In the early years of the post-apartheid period, or the so-called 'honeymoon period' between the state and NGOs, the DNGO sector grew and the relationship between government and DNGOs was deeply collaborative; however, it soon became more strained in part because of the absence of meaningful land reform (Nauta, 2001). Under this tense environment, NGOs had to approach government led agencies for funding or alternatively seek other funding avenues (such as international donors), while others had to re-examine their roles and undergo a re-orientation phase in order to move away from their struggle mode during – post-1994 – a time of national reconstruction and development (Habib & Taylor, 1999:79).

Changing donor patterns, routes and conditions of funding affected the composition and development approaches of the DNGO sector in South Africa. For instance, DNGOs often had to compete for limited funds and inevitably many became more 'donor-driven'. As a result, many NGOs (which in the past focused on mobilising against apartheid) adjusted their way of being and core activities and took on the appearance of mainstream development NGOs dependent upon external funding. There was also a growing focus by multilateral and bilateral funders on direct financial support to the government, with donors claiming that – as an emerging economy – funding for South African DNGOs was not necessarily a priority (Nauta, 2001). Nevertheless, because of the presence of deep rural poverty across the different forms of land tenure in rural South Africa, significant donor support for DNGOs remains. In this context, DNGOs are heavily engaged in different programmes such as infrastructural development, micro-finance, advocacy, research, social mobilisation and agricultural activities (Makoba, 2002; Clark, 1997). Oddly, no significant analysis of DNGOs in contemporary South Africa exists besides Nauta (2001), with scholarly attention focused on advocacy NGOs in the country such as the Treatment Action Campaign.

## 2.3 DNGO ACCOUNTABILITY - UPWARD VS DOWNWARD ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability in the NGO sector is very important because it defines relationships between the various stakeholders involved in the NGO development sector; and the extent and authenticity of an DNGO's use of participatory methods in a development project is an indication of to whom the NGO is most accountable (Ebrahim, 2003; Bawole & Langnel, 2016). Being accountable for DNGOs involves transparency to beneficiaries, donors and governments. Ebrahim (2003) argues that NGOs' actions and their development goals should reflect a high level of accountability to the intended beneficiaries of their development projects (downward accountability), a situation whereby NGOs answer to the needs, values and desires of those whom they aim to help (Clark 1991; Najam, 1996). However, in many instances, DNGOs fail to be accountable to their beneficiaries and instead their work tends to be particularly accountable to donors who provide them with funding for their projects and overall sustenance of their organisation.

### 2.3.1 Problems of Upward Accountability

In addressing the issues of accountability within the DNGO sector, donors deploy a number of tools, mechanisms and processes to assess and ensure accountability. According to Ebrahim (2003:121), these include the submission by DNGOs of annual reports, financial accounts, performance assessments, quarterly reports and audits (Ebrahim, 2003:121). Such arrangements are not in-themselves problematic as they make sure that DNGOs are using donor funds in a legitimate and proper manner. They thus form an integral part of the principle-agent contracting relationship between donors and DNGOs respectively. However, problems do arise in the sense that donors set conditions which become attached to particular tranches of funding, whether the funding is to sustain the core activities of the DNGO or is geared towards a particular programme or project. Further, both the conditions set and the accountability measures put in place allow for limited input from DNGOs (and limited donor-DNGO negotiation) and hence they become beholden to the whims and wishes of their donors. As such, in many circumstances, DNGOs operate in a difficult space which sometimes requires them to engage with donors to ensure that their own organisational existence is not placed in jeopardy and that they can maximise benefits to rural and other communities so as to justify their very existence in a downwardly accountable manner.

In this context, the main concern in the scholarly literature, and the issue from which other challenges for DNGOs often flow, is the donor-NGO relationship. This is understood as a relationship of dependence and involves almost unilateral upward accountability (Lewis & Opoku-Mensah, 2006). In itself, as noted, upward accountability is not problematic given that DNGOs need to be accountable for funds disbursed and used. However, it tends to compromise what DNGOs consider to be their main comparative advantage, namely, downward accountability to rural communities (Lewis & Opoku-Mensah, 2006). Overall, donors transfer funds to DNGOs such that the very existence of DNGOs, as well as the quality, sustainability and effectiveness of their development programmes, is contingent upon donor funding (Choudry & Kapoor, 2013). In addition, NGO staff (often employed on a contractual basis) depend on donor funding as the life-line for their salaries and job security. In this way, the condition of donor dependency ensures that the continuity and stability of every aspect of DNGOs' survival and purpose, including their development programmes, remain in a constant state of precarious uncertainty (Lewis & Kanji, 2009). This is particularly the case because donors tend to shift priority areas over time, so that permanent funding is never guaranteed (Knight, 2013).

The procurement of donor funding significantly limits the use of participatory methods by DNGOs, therefore undermining their central goals of community empowerment and sustainability (Edwards & Hulme, 1996). The process of fundraising is very competitive and normally takes place on a project-by-project basis (Lewis & Opoku-Mensah, 2006), with DNGOs desperate to obtain and retain core funding for their basic administrative costs. DNGOs formulate and submit project or programme proposals to potential donors, including a line-item budget for specific projects which are consistent with donor funding priorities. From the beginning of a project, as funded by a donor for a specific time period only, the extent and quality of community participation is already in large part pre-determined and driven in a top-down manner (Knight, 2013: 48). It is difficult for DNGOs to conduct participatory needs-assessments prior to developing and submitting a funding proposal for the intended project (Bebbington & Riddell, 1995: 121). It is also difficult to use participatory methodologies (involving downward accountability) during the project because there is a rush for closure of the project to be able to report results to donors to enable further funding (Knight, 2013; Makoba, 2002). This tends to weaken the legitimacy of DNGOs amongst rural communities.

### 2.3.2 Accountability to Governments

Besides donors and communities, NGO development work must also respond to pressures from the state. Government and NGO relationships are historically contingent and can be delicate and inconsistent. At times, governments may feel threatened by NGOs, particularly those NGOs that engage in advocacy work around human rights and that pose questions about state power and legitimacy. In this respect, governments may raise doubts about NGOs as “apolitical participants” (Jacob & Bernard, 2013:442) in socio-economic development. Donors also sometimes circumvent governments by identifying NGOs as the preferred deliverer of certain social services, based on the perhaps dubious claim that NGOs are more efficient and accountable than government apparatuses in serving rural communities. These tendencies may ultimately lead governments to see foreign-funded NGOs as a challenge to national sovereignty (Ndegwa 1996; Makoba, 2002), leading to NGO legislation controlling NGO activities.

### 2.3.3 Problems of Downward Accountability

The overall existence of DNGOs and the core principles of their missions, values and goals involves meeting the needs and interests of their primary beneficiaries which is the main reason these DNGOs exist in the first place. At the heart of participatory initiatives is the emphasis placed on being accountable to the people whom the project is intended to help; this means that the achievement of that responsibility is the primary goal of, and indeed the rationale for, the development of participatory methods (Knight, 2013; Banks & Edwards, 2014: 708). Even though it is the founding principle of genuine participatory development and is the key intention of DNGO development work, being accountable to project beneficiaries is sometimes last in the line of NGO priorities. Ideally, NGOs value people first; however, downward accountability, where the NGO is accountable to the people it aims to help, is the most difficult to achieve (Bawole & Langnel, 2016:923). This is because conflicts around accountability end up coming down to a question of who wields the most power over the NGO, as well as the fact that “there is no contractual relationship between NGOs and recipients” (Tvedt, 1998:161-

162). Because of this, whether NGOs help people to make claims for their basic rights and improve communities' socio-economic conditions, or whether they simply strengthen their own institutional relationships and stability, requires investigation (Choudry & Kapoor, 2013).

For DNGOs to be accountable to their beneficiaries, Ebrahim (2003) suggests that beneficiaries should be allowed to participate in the activities and projects that are implemented by DNGOs. According to Kumar (2002), the deep participation of beneficiaries would involve them partaking in decision-making that affect their lives, including participating in the initiation, planning, implementation and evaluation of the development projects. Involvement in the planning of projects provides them with new opportunities for creative thinking and innovative planning and development (Kumar, 2002; Burger: 2014). Hence, the community should be involved in the planning stage of the development projects until the end of the project. This is important because beneficiaries then become leading actors in their own development as opposed to being mere recipients of external development interventions (Choudry & Kapoor, 2013: Rahim, 1994). In practice, initiating and planning is often outside the ambit of beneficiary responsibility, as these responsibilities remain within the grasp of donors and DNGOs. Because of this, the participatory methodology used by DNGOs regularly takes a shallow form.

The absence of pronounced downward accountability is sometimes said to arise because beneficiaries are not educated sufficiently and do not have the correct skill-sets for project planning and management (Bawole & Langnel, 2016:924). This means that, until beneficiaries are trained in the requisite skills in community project planning and management, downward accountability if pursued fully would lead to significant systems and procedural failures. Whether these claims about beneficiaries are mere assertions, or are abundantly clear based on the experiences of DNGOs remains unclear; but it certainly legitimises shallow forms of participation. In addition, because of poverty and resultant vulnerability, beneficiaries are cautious in criticising NGOs for any absences in downward accountability, as they might fear the loss of tangible and material benefits or being side-lined for future DNGO projects (Hulme & Edwards, 2013). Overall, Ebrahim (2004:213) argues that participation of beneficiaries in the development projects which are implemented by DNGOs has not been successful, as it typically entails local communities agreeing to what a DNGO already intended to do.

This agreement often entails a performance on the part of potential beneficiaries. More specifically, local people may form their declared statements of needs around what they perceive to be the development agenda of the DNGO (Knight, 2013). If a DNGO is perceived as only delivering a particular dimension of development (such as a primary health care project), people will prioritise their own needs in relation to what the DNGO intends to deliver. They thus tell the DNGO what the latter wants to hear; in this way, they secure their right to receive the assistance, even if it is not actually the most crucial or pertinent need in the community (Jacob & Bernard 2013,  Knight, 2013). If this is the case, even if participatory methods are initiated and pursued by the DNGO, the on-the-ground development carried out by the NGO cannot be considered as representing what the community if fact needs or wants. This is important because DNGOs often make claims to legitimacy by arguing that they act on behalf of rural communities and their interests even if they do not work at their behest (with the latter marking their relationship with donors).

In many situations, and despite their best efforts, DNGOs experience difficulties ensuring that there is inclusive participation by all beneficiaries. Poor rural people (particularly women) may not participate because they are busy and over-burdened with the daily tasks of life (Kumar, 2002); and through years of hardship, they may have even accepted their fate, and therefore feel apathetic towards NGO initiatives (Choudry & Kapoor, 2013). Participatory development methodologies may be helpful in bringing communities on board, but these cannot compel people to participate (and indeed should not do so). While development NGOs willingly prescribe to the concept that local people should feel a sense of ownership for a development project, it is not inherent or inevitable that the people themselves will willingly connect and ‘own’ accordingly (Clark, 1997; Edwards & Hulme, 1997). Local people’s desire or the lack thereof to participate in development initiatives is also affected by the fact that their main interest, in times of extreme vulnerability, is to receive the tangible benefits and, as such, there is a disinterest in participation on their part (Bratton, 1987; Burger, 2014). In these ways, the donor-DNGO relationship itself does not explain – in full – the challenges with regard to downward accountability.

At times, DNGOs typically work with communities which are internally differentiated. What may be perceived as partisanship and favouritism in the distribution of services by DNGOs in rural communities might exist, in which some groups are excluded from a particular project because they do not meet the criteria for inclusion. This may breed inter-group conflict at local level and, simultaneously, undermine any prospects for engaging with the local beneficiaries in fear of heightening the tensions and conflicts (Bawole & Langnel, 2016:924). As well, in the case of rural areas in Africa, local power structures in the form of chieftainships further complicate the DNGO relationships with communities. Given that the chieftainship system tends to be deeply patriarchal, with the public domain (within which DNGOs operate) being seen as the exclusive domain of males, women may be marginalised in the participatory process. Because of this, DNGOs often seek to mainstream gender in all their programmes and projects. This, though, can be a significant challenge as the very presence of a DNGO might be contingent upon the approval of the senior males in the community, and going against cultural prescriptions might compromise the very work of a DNGO. In such situations, where local systems of power oppress and undermine those people who are in the most vulnerable positions, it is difficult and potentially impossible for DNGOs to be accountable to both local traditional values and the marginalised groups they aim to help (Banks, Hulme & Edwards, 2014; Bebbington, 2004). Unless NGOs are sensitive to this, they may simply reproduce existing power structures and allow for elite capture of NGO resources.

## 2.4 INTERFACE THEORY

There is no doubt that the NGO literature, vast as it is, insufficiently theorises DNGOs if it does so at all. In framing DNGOs, this thesis will use interface theory, which builds upon symbolic interactionist and phenomenological perspectives of the 1960s in terms of understanding social interaction (Long, 1989, Long, 2001). In terms of this theory, DNGOs would be seen as existing in a space characterised by continuities and discontinuities in interests, values and power, and operating in and through negotiations along multiple interfaces (Long & Villarreal, 1993: 143). Thus, as a theory of development, it considers and examines co-operation, tension and ambiguity in the negotiated relationships between DNGOs on the one hand, and donors and NGO beneficiaries in particular on the other hand (Long, 2001; Mosse, 2013). Within this space of contestation, DNGOs have to negotiate with their so-called development partners (donors, governments and beneficiaries) in order to fulfil their primary goal, that of uplifting the living standards of marginalised groups (Long, 1989). Using interface theory, the thesis thus aims to analyse how DNGOs manage and possibly overcome the ambiguous space in which they find themselves in, and how they negotiate with their beneficiaries and donors to ensure that their visions, missions and goals are pursued.

DNGOs try to assist communities in reducing poverty through development interventions, and they have to balance the need for both upward and downward accountability in doing so (Long & Mosse, 2001). In this regard, then, the process of negotiation involves multiple interfaces which have to be handled and managed simultaneously by DNGOs (Long, 1997; Mosse, 2004). At the core of the activities of DNGOs, as they seek to bring about meaningful change to marginalised communities, is therefore a complex drama of negotiation involving different organisational imperatives and power relations, differential skills and knowledge, diverse human needs and desires, and authoritative discourses and institutions, all of which often involve a clash between different sets of interests and orderings of the world (Long, 1997). Therefore, for Long (1997), the concept of development is nothing more and nothing less than an arena of struggle in which actors negotiate with each other, and often compete and manipulate each other at and along the different interfaces.

As a specific kind of organisational form, DNGOs tend to occupy a contradictory and tension-riddled social space marked by pressures involving simultaneously upward and downward accountability, referring to global funders and local communities, respectively (Helliker, 2013:318). These conflicting pressures become inscribed within the organisational practices, dispositions and trajectories of DNGOs. Therefore, in framing NGOs analytically, interface theory is of significance because it seeks to explore the ambiguous social space in which DNGOs find themselves. The space in which DNGOs operate resembles a struggle for space or room for manoeuvre over control over (and access to) relationships and resources, and the co-operation and tension this entails are captured through an interface perspective (Long, 2001; Mosse, 2013). In this respect, DNGOs are not neutral arbitrators between donors and communities in the field of development and they have their own dispositions and imperatives

For any NGO which operates in the development sector with the goal of improving the social and economic lives of marginalised communities, there is a heavy reliance on external support in terms of financial and resources, mainly funding support from donors. DNGOs are accountable to donors for how they spend any funds received and hence they have to fulfil the demands and conditions set by donors when pursuing their development work. At the same time, the very rationale for their existence is the enhancement of the lives of marginalised communities and groups, and thus they need to address the needs of their intended beneficiaries as set out in their visions and missions. They must do this while, at the same time, ensuring their own organisational sustainability. In this respect, the interests of donors are not invariably the interests of NGO beneficiaries, as the former must themselves show evidence of development success even if such success is not always forthcoming through NGO programmes and projects. In most cases, NGOs struggle to balance properly the interests of their donors and beneficiaries, in part because they need to prioritise their own organisational sustainability, even if this goes contrary to their laudable missions and values. In this context, DNGOs have a tendency of being accountable first and foremost to their donors because of the fear of losing financial and other resources from donors; and this may entail side-lining the needs of their primary beneficiaries and downplaying the depth of their participatory methodologies to simply close a programme or project to enable the finalisation of reports to donors. The interface perspective enables an understanding of this complex relational context within which DNGOs operate, as it shows how encounters between NGOs, donors and beneficiaries entail (particularly from the perspective of the DNGO) a range of negotiations involving power and resource differentials and different sets of interests (Long, 1989).

In this way, DNGOs are immersed in (and conditioned by) the worldwide development system in which they have to meet their own organisational missions and values, and the needs of both donors and beneficiaries. In pursuing their goals of enhancing the lives of marginalised groups, DNGOs must first ensure the fulfilment of their own organisational imperatives (primarily their own organisational sustainability), no matter how sincere NGO personnel are about developing communities (Lewis & Opoku-Mensah, 2006). This invariably entails a situation in which their very survival is contingent upon upward accountability. For this reason, DNGOs also have the organisational disposition (in the context of fierce competition for donor funding) to avoid collaboration amongst themselves in order to protect their own donor-funded organisational turf (Mitchell & Schmitz, 2013). These conflicting pressures become inscribed within the organisational practices and trajectories of DNGOs (Helliker, 2007).

A key organisational imperative, as implied already, is to complete their development programmes sooner rather than later so as to report results to donors for continued financial viability. In this regard, DNGOs have a tendency of speeding up their projects and, in this process, intended beneficiaries are marginalised from making key decisions and participating fully in the projects. In doing so, they may cut corners, ensuring that beneficiaries are involved in some form of participation, but often only when it comes to implementing the programme or only by way of being consulted about a programme which has all-ready been formulated and planned. Hence, in securing donor resources for their own organisational survival, they may compromise the interest of beneficiaries (Tvedt, 2002). In this light, DNGOs end up undercutting downward accountability to their beneficiaries and operating contrary to the stated vision of participatory development, in favour of upward accountability to donors who have power over their finances and priorities. More often than not, then, "DNGOs have to dramatically transform their organisational interests and cultures to align with those of other members in the circle. In doing so, they lose much of their identity and interaction with constituents" (AbouAssi, 2012:586).

Because of all these factors, the reliance on external sources of funding to sustain NGO operations jeopardises organisational credibility as well as sustainable development. NGOs, in chasing funding in the name of satisfying the development needs of marginalised communities, may then be involved in practices which diverge form their organisational values and visions. This is so because, in a competitive funding environment, DNGO strategies and activities must align with donor priorities and interests (AbouAssi, 2012:585). At times, this might involve a DNGO switching from one development priority (such as health) to another (such as food security), depending on the funding priorities of the donor community. This confirms that upward accountability shapes DNGO practices and undermines the credibility of DNGOs, often amongst communities themselves (Abouassi et al., 2016:310).

As White and Killick (2001:105) point out, the provision of funds places donors in a strong position to make certain demands, thereby not only dictating priorities to DNGOs but in the process, also removing community ownership from a development programme or project and limiting its decision-making powers. Overall, over-dependence on donor funding undermines the effectiveness of NGOs (as independent organisations) and undermines their organisation's mission and values (Nega & Schneider, 2014; Bratton, 1990). Dependency is not the only factor that is to be considered when an organisation faces mission creep, as other factors also come into play, including organisational mismanagement and personnel incapacities, but it is no doubt the most significant factor (AbouAssi, 2012).

Central to interface theory is clearly the issue of power, and power differentials and the capacity to set agendas certainly complicates the relationship between DNGOs, donors and beneficiaries. Donors in fact have the right and responsibility (and thus the authority) to delineate the very character of development interventions as well as to give and restrict financial resources to DNGOs, while beneficiaries are beholden to the wishes and wants of donors. In the event that donors and beneficiaries make competing demands on a DNGO, the latter is typically predisposed to favour those who have the power to implement rewards and punishments (Mitchell & Schmitz, 2013). Therefore, Long (1989; 2001) argues that the way power manifests itself in the relationship between DNGOs, donors and beneficiaries indicates complex struggles and negotiations over authority and resources, with the power to negotiate on the part of communities exceedingly limited. Ultimately, such struggles are founded upon the extent to which specific actors perceive themselves capable of manoeuvring within particular situations and developing effective strategies for doing so (Long & Villarreal, 1993; Mosse, 2013) with, again, the room to manoeuvre for beneficiaries being minimal. This is because creating room for manoeuvring implies a degree of negotiation and thus a degree of power, as manifested in the possibility of exerting some control, prerogative, authority and capacity for action (Mitchel & Schmitz, 2013; Mosse, 2013).

Considering the dispositions and the interests of DNGOs as they manoeuvre through their complicated social environment, this thesis argues that they do not always act in the best interests of their beneficiaries and in a manner that best achieves their stated goals (promoting empowerment and sustainable livelihoods). Nevertheless, DNGOs do pursue these goals with considerable vigour to the extent that they do not compromise their own survival and therefore, generally speaking, they are bound to play a development role which brings benefits to the community with which they work (Knight, 2013:48-49). The point is that, due to the various pressures of accountability, they are often not capable of meeting the requirements of all of their contradictory stakeholders (donors and beneficiaries); hence, they are caught in the middle so to speak. Though donors possess and enact power vis-à-vis DNGOs, interface theory recognises that interfaces are points or nodes of negotiation. This implies that DNGOs are not mere victims of donor machinations, as they do have some room to manoeuvre (Mitchell & Schmitz, 2013). Hence, it involves some degree of negotiated autonomy vis-à-vis donors, as their continued existence is absolutely necessary for the international development system. In other words, donors also need DNGOs and their very existence bestows a level of legitimacy on funders and the entire donor-funded worldwide development system (Tvedt, 2002). This facilitates the possibility of pursuing organisational- and community-defined development practices which go against the grain of donor funding imperatives. In part, DNGO capacity to successfully negotiate with donors and their capacity to set some dimension of the development agenda depends on the type of donor in question, with some donors more than others willing to allow for some leeway and wiggle-room for DNGOs. The position of DNGOs is, however, inevitably ambivalent since they must handle their own organisational dispositions and requirements as well as the expectations of those with whom they must negotiate (Mitchell & Schmitz, 2013; Long, 1989). Overall, then, this thesis understands DNGOs as both victims and agents in the complicated and convoluted web of donor-NGO-community social relations (Helliker, 2007).

This thesis thus tries to put across the argument that DNGOs operate in a space filled with contradictions in terms of differential control of resources, an unequal partnership and unequal power relationships. Because of these contradictions, the capacity of DNGOs to carry out successful development projects is at times compromised (Mosse & Lewis 2005: 22). In a situation of unequal access to resources and power, DNGOs often turn to donor control as a stable source of organisational existence and often neglect their intended beneficiaries (Mosse & Long, 2001). Although the donor-NGO relationship often undermines the performance of these DNGOs in terms of delivering services to their beneficiaries, it must be reiterated that (in many instances) the weak performance of DNGOs is not reducible pure and simple to their relationship with donors (Clark, 1997; Ebrahim, 2012). Factors such as DNGO's organisational development, the attitudes and competence levels of DNGO staff, and cultural differences between DNGO staff (who often have a middle-class background) and poor rural beneficiaries also contribute to determining how well a DNGO is able to operationalise its mission and vision (Makoba, 2002: Ndegwa, 1996). Therefore, the donor-NGO relationship is not being presented as the exclusive determinant of the quality of DNGO's accountability towards its beneficiaries.

## 2.5 CONCLUSION

From this chapter, it is clear that DNGOs find themselves in a tension-riddled space, located as they are between donors and beneficiaries. Simultaneously, they are expected to pursue both upward and downward accountability. In the end, their very existence is dependent upon ongoing donor funding and hence they need to be – at all times – sensitive to the demands and concerns of donors. But their legitimacy as development agents rests on their capacity to bring about meaningful change in the lives of their beneficiaries, such as marginalised rural communities; and they seek to do this through participatory methodologies (which is meant to ensure downward accountability). How this tension between downward and upward accountability works itself out is open to variation, such that empirical case studies (such as this one of ECARP) become significant. The emphasis in interface theory on negotiations, and the dynamics and contingencies these entail, allows for an investigation of the complexities of the donor-DNGO-beneficiary interfaces. Thus, this chapter concludes that DNGOs operate in a social space filled with ambiguities and to overcome this they have to negotiate with their donors, governments and beneficiaries for them to achieve their mission, goal and values.

# CHAPTER THREE:

# SOUTH AFRICAN LAND REFORM PROGRAMME POST-1994

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Because of massive dispossession of land under colonial conquest in South Africa, the post-apartheid government immediately sought (from 1994) to bring about land reform, including land redistribution. All of the land redistribution programmes pursued since then have been based on market-led reform based on the willing seller-willing buyer model, with the state meant to facilitate the land transfer and offer post-resettlement support. The redistribution programmes are marked by significant challenges and defects. This chapter analyses these programmes critically, and also goes on to consider the ways in which DNGOs have sought to engage with the state's land reform programme. In doing so, this chapter sets the stage for the next two chapters on ECARP.

## 3.2 OVERVIEW OF LAND OWNERSHIP IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa has gone through a series of events including the dispossession of black people of their lands by white colonisers. By the early 20th century, most of the best agricultural land had been reserved for the minority white settler population, with the African majority confined to just 13% of the territory, the 'native reserves', later known as homelands or Bantustans (Lahiff, 2007:1578). The Land Act of 1913 prohibited Africans from purchasing land except in the scheduled reserves, which meant that private ownership of land by blacks was exceedingly limited. In addition to this Act, the Group Areas Act and other legislation forced millions of black South Africans off so-called European lands (including from so-called black spots) and this further reduced their access to land (Hall, 2004; Jaricha, 2013). Black spot clearance, homelands consolidation, the abolition of labour tenancy, urban township relocation, influx control and betterment planning were all measures to forcibly remove blacks from white South Africa and to confine them within the boundaries of the Bantustans. Between 1960 and 1982, approximately 1,200,000 people were forcibly removed from white farms and a further 600,000 through black spot removal measures and Bantustan consolidation policies, along with forms of relocation and resettlement (Hall, 2004; Mbokazi, 2015).

By the early 1990s, a large population of black South Africans were concentrated in the homelands with agricultural production in these areas being very limited. Overall, over 70% of this population was living below the poverty line (Hall, 2004: Lahiff, 2007). There were also high levels of poverty amongst black labourers working on white commercial farms given that, historically, white agriculture was an extremely low-wage sector (Hall, 2004a:10). In the meantime, the racialised state had for decades given significant support and subsidies to white farmers. So, in 1994, there was a significant dualistic structure to the agrarian economy, consisting of a productive white commercial farming sector and an unproductive small-scale agricultural economy in the Bantustans. In the end, white farmers prospered at the expense of the blacks living in the homelands. This was the situation which any post-apartheid would need to redress if racialised inequality and subordination was to be rectified.

Towards the end of the 1980s, after years of intense struggle, the liberation movement and the apartheid regime started negotiations which led to the African National Congress (ANC) electoral victory in 1994. By then, at its 1992 National Policy Conference, the ANC had already started to develop its post-apartheid land policy. A political consensus was reached in terms of restoration of land in which the ANC ruled out confiscation of white-owned assets (Jaricha, 2013; Hall, 2004b). In the course of negotiating the policy framework for land reform, a range of options had been discussed, including expropriation of land with compensation, the imposition of ceilings on the size of landholdings, and the imposition of taxes to discourage the speculative holding of underutilised land (Hall, 2004b; Mbokazi, 2015). Eventually, it was agreed that property rights would be protected, while the transformation of property relations would be pursued through a gradual and market-based programme of land reform (Hall, 2004; Lahiff et al., 2007).

## 3.3 POST-APARTHEID LAND REFORM

Land reform was adopted as a measure towards reducing rural poverty. In this sense, the new South African government committed itself to eradicating the inequalities and injustices of the past through initiating a comprehensive land reform programme with a strong constitutional basis, consisting of three pillars, namely: restitution, land redistribution and tenure security (Hall, 2004a).

Besides the inevitable effort by an ANC-led government to tackle inequality through land reform, given the centrality of land dispossession to the apartheid state, other factors came into play. Among these was the existence of mobilised rural communities, drawing on the militancy of their resistance to forced removals, and a number of NGOs, civics and church groups which supported them in their demand for land to be returned (Hall, 2004a:214). Another factor shaping though the very character of the land reform programme was the advice of the World Bank, which promoted its own 'market-led' model of land reform and argued that redistributing land and creating a class of productive black smallholders was necessary to avert social and political instability, as well as to promote rural development (Hall, 2004: 213). This advice was important in leading the ANC government to adopt market-reform particularly in relation to land redistribution. Ultimately, though, the post-apartheid state's policies around land reform were meant to address the racialised colonial condition inherited from the apartheid era, which led to marked poverty and inequality along racial lines (Hall, 2004; Lahiff, 2007).

In terms of the three pillars of land reform, restitution seeks to return specific tracts of land of great historical, cultural or ancestral significance to their 'original' owners (Hendricks & Ntsebeza, 2000). Tenure reform aims to "ensure the security of tenure for all South Africans, regardless of system of land-holding" (Aliber & Mokoena, 2002:24). It seeks to strengthen the rights of people whose land tenure is insecure as a result of discriminatory laws and practices in the past: farm workers and dwellers living on privately-owned commercial land, and people living in the former homelands under the authority of traditional chiefs (Hendricks & Ntsebeza, 2000; Cousins, 2013). Redistribution of land aims to address the highly skewed ownership of land along racial lines. It is thus concerned with the overall racially-imbalanced ownership of land and tries to restore land to landless and land-short black citizens, without though necessarily compromising national agricultural productivity (Aliber & Mokoena, 2002: Jaricha, 2015).

The ANC committed itself, as part of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), to a land redistribution programme which would redistribute 30% of agricultural land to the poor and landless over a period of five years; however, this very ambitious target was not achieved (Aliber, 2009; PLAAS, 2012). World Bank advisors had proposed this target as feasible, noting that 6% of agricultural land was transacted each year and thus appearing to hold to the incredible notion that all, or nearly all, land on the market would be bought for redistribution (Aliber & Mokoena, 2002:10). To provide a sense of scale to this matter, the commercial farming areas of South Africa amount to about 86 million hectares: the land reform target, far beyond the realm of the possible, was to transfer 26 million hectares in the first five years (Aliber, 2009: PLAAS, 2012).

In this context, I discuss more specifically the land redistribution programme (as part of land reform more broadly) as this is the central focus of the thesis.

### 3.4 LAND REDISTRIBUTION

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa sets out the basis for land reform, particularly in the Bill of Rights, which mandates the state to carry out land and land-related reforms (Jaricha, 2013; Mbokazi, 2015). The foundations for the South African land reform programme were laid during the negotiated transition to democracy, when the ANC was itself in rapid transition from a national liberation movement to a government-in-waiting (Mbokazi, 2015). The concept of ‘willing buyer, willing seller’ entered the discourse on land redistribution gradually during the period from 1993 to 1996. It was entirely absent from the ANC’s ‘Ready to Govern’ policy statement of 1992, which instead advocated expropriation and other non-market mechanisms, and from the Reconstruction and Development Programme, the manifesto on which the party came to power in 1994 (Lahiff, 2007:1580).

By the time of the White Paper on South African Land Policy of 1997 (DLA, 1997), however, a market-based approach, and particularly the concept of ‘willing buyer, willing seller’, had become the cornerstone of policy under the influence of the World Bank and other global institutions (Lahiff, 2001; Aliber, 2001; Hall, 2004). Such an approach was not dictated by the South African Constitution, which makes explicit provision for expropriation for purposes of land reform and for compensation at below-market prices. Rather, it was a policy choice, in line with the wider neo-liberal macroeconomic strategy slowly but surely being adopted by the ANC (Aliber, 2001; Hall & Kepe, 2016). The White Paper also offered a critique of any reliance on large-scale commercial farming, and refers to the necessity for the establishment of small-scale family-operated farms as a basis for reducing unemployment and generating sustainable livelihoods (Cousins & Scoones, 2010: 49). In doing so, it refers to the resettlement of the poor, labour tenants, farm workers, women and emerging farmers on redistributed farms, but without detailing specific strategies and mechanisms that ensure that all these groups will benefit (Cousins, 2010).

Overall, land redistribution since 1994 has been market-driven such that market forces tend to regulate the form and extent of redistribution. This particular land reform programme, unlike restitution and land tenure reform, seeks quite explicitly to alter the racial pattern of land ownership and access in South Africa (Jacobs, Lahiff & Hall, 2003). South Africa's land market has a deep history with well-entrenched institutional arrangements, though in the past it was active within white agriculture only. The market arrangements include a deeds registry system, professional surveyors and property evaluation systems (Lahiff, 2009). Redistribution does of course take place with state assistance in terms of purchasing farms, settling people and providing post-settlement support.

However, a growing empirical and theoretical body of literature has criticised the market-assisted model of land reform, highlighting issues of high transaction costs faced by beneficiaries, problems of slow progress and elite capture (if only as an unintended consequence), as well as land titling programmes that have privatised communal resources, dispossessing poorer households and women (Lahiff et al., 2007; Cousins & Scoones, 2010). Additional, post-settlement support has been insignificant. This academic work generally argues that only minimal land can be redistributed through markets, and that no successful land reform has been based on a willing buyer, willing seller process (Aliber & Mokoena, 2002; Lahiff et al., 2008).

Three main land redistribution programmes have been pursued and implemented by the ANC government since 1994. The first was the Settlement Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG) which was initiated in 1994 and continued until 1999. It was followed by the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) which was implemented in 2000 until its official ending in 2010. The Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS) was initiated in 2006 and currently it is the main redistribution programme. There are redistributed farms currently existing in terms of all three of these specific programmes.

### 3.4.1 Settlement Land Acquisition (SLAG)

The Settlement Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG) was designed to improve land tenure security and to extend property ownership and/or access to land to the historically disadvantaged and the poor (DLA, 2001:9; Jaricha, 2013:83). The programme provided a R16,000 household grant, initially equivalent to the urban housing subsidy, with which people could buy land. These grants, though mainly to be used for the purchase of land, could also be used for agricultural investments on former Bantustan land or land acquired through the restitution programme (Jaricha, 2013:87). Many different interests were accommodated in the policy, including people wanting land for their own use as well as those wishing to live and use their land together as community (Aliber et al., 2002; Hall, 2004; Lahiff, 2008). This entailed the use of discretionary grants provided to potential resettlement farmers by the Department of Land Affairs (DLA) for the purchase of farmland on the open market.

Much criticism has been put forward against SLAG arguing that the grant was insufficient for households to purchase land and farm equipment; and that groups of households, which were formed to purchase land because of the small grant, achieved little success and led to conflicts among beneficiary households (Hall, 2004; Lahiff, 2007). The Department of Agriculture provided limited support to agricultural development of purchased farms. The cost to poor people of relocating to the acquired land was also at times simply unaffordable.

To give one example, in the case of Limpopo, there had been a reasonable of amount of land redistribution under SLAG delivery in terms of hectares and beneficiaries by 2001. In total, 71 SLAG projects had been implemented to the benefit of 6,655 households, which gained access to a total land area of 63087 hectares. Projects ranged in size from 9 to 724 members and from 26 to 22,500 hectares, with an average size of 94 members and 889 hectares (Lahiff, et al, 2008). Most projects followed a similar pattern, with groups living in communal areas of the former Bantustans pooling grants to purchase a piece of land. The beneficiaries stayed in their existing homes, while the land acquired was to be used only for production, largely grazing and arable farming (Lahiff et al, 2008; Hall, 2004). In most cases, the majority of members were not involved in actual production and saw little benefit from the project in terms of enhanced livelihoods.

### 3.4.2 Land Redistribution for Agriculture (LRAD)

This programme started in 2001, based again on the neo-liberal framework of the market, which takes as its principle the notion of the willing-buyer willing-seller (Aliber & Cousins, 2012; Hall, 2004). The main goal of LRAD was to assist previously disadvantaged people to purchase land primarily for commercial farming (Hall, 2004). LRAD allowed any black individual (no minimum income required) to apply for a land purchase grant that increased with the personal contribution made by the potential beneficiary. The grant gave individuals between R20, 000 and R100,000 depending on their personal contribution. The grant was designed to achieve the goal of transferring 30% of agricultural land to black South Africans by 2014. In 2008, the grant was increased to a maximum of R431,000 because previous amounts were still inadequate to purchase commercial farms (Hall & Kepe, 2016). Unlike SLAG, the implementation of LRAD projects was decentralised to provincial level (Hall, 2004). LRAD has been more successful than SLAG, as grants are larger and paid to individuals or groups rather than per household.

According to Lahiff (2007), some farm workers and dwellers and small-scale farmers managed to acquire land under this programme. However, under LRAD, the government showed an increasing emphasis on land being redistributed for agricultural productive purposes rather than merely for settlement. The government has therefore largely ignored the settlement component of LRAD. In all projects were land has been transferred, again only minimal post-land transfer support systems exist from the government. In this sense, the DLA has always employed a technical and mechanical approach to land facilitation with no commitment to invest in people and their ability to make farming sustainable (Naidoo, 2004; Hall & Kepe, 2016). In this way, small-scale farmers are unable to produce to full capacity (Naidoo, 2010). The problems for LRAD participants are further compounded because of the lack of integration and coordination between the DLA and other departments such as the Departments of Agriculture and Housing. This approach marks a major departure from a pro-poor-rights based approach to land reform.

Since LRAD's focus was on commercial farming (and not strictly subsistence farming, as per SLAG), most of the grant funding went to better-off applicants. The grants, clearly then, did not adequately address poverty and the food security needs of poor rural households. Given the willing-buyer willing-seller principle, commercial farms were also still too expensive for individuals to purchase farms with the grant, which led to groups being formed in order to pool their own contributions.

To cite the case of Limpopo, by 2005, about 138 LRAD projects, involving 1,183 beneficiaries, had been approved (Kirsten and Machete, 2005). These totals included projects implemented by the Land Bank using funds supplied by the DLA. Projects ranged in size from just one member to 203 members, although the great majority (83%) had ten or fewer members. Information on the total extent of land involved is simply not available. In Limpopo, it was found that more than 95.5% of the LRAD land was occupied and used by the beneficiaries before the 'land reform' project was initiated; and 82% was state land, which had been bought by the apartheid regime in the 1970s and 1980s for incorporation into the former Bantustans (Kirsten et al, 2014: Wegerif, 2004).

Kirsten and Machete (2005) carried out a comprehensive audit of 124 of 177 registered land reform projects in Northwest Province, most of them LRAD-based redistribution projects they determined that 27% were not operational. Only 42% of projects were producing effectively and marketing their produce. No production had occurred on 24% of the projects (Kirsten et al, 2014). In a detailed review of 43 selected projects, four categories of LRAD farms were identified: 10 projects showed increased production; 14 showed stable production; 10 showed decreased production; and nine showed no production (Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies, 2016). A number of reasons existed for poor or absent production: for instance, there has been no investment in farm infrastructure and there was limited access to funds for production costs. Farms were also characterised by poor decision-making and management, with beneficiaries having limited prior experience of agriculture and inadequate financial management skills. Because of limited beneficiary involvement, many beneficiaries had lost interest. There was a severe lack of support services for beneficiaries, with limited advice and support from the provincial Department of Agriculture, input suppliers and agribusiness.

### 3.4.3 Proactive land Acquisition (PLAS)

Like the earlier programmes, Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS) entails voluntary land market transactions at market prices. The backbone of PLAS is the idea of leasing high potential land to chosen beneficiaries with the option of future purchase. The key objectives, as set out by the Department of Land Affairs at the time of the introduction of PLAS, are: to accelerate the land redistribution process; to ensure that land is acquired in nodal areas and other areas of high agricultural potential; and to ensure maximum productivity on the redistributed land after resettlement (Hall & Aliber, 2010). The PLAS programme clearly articulates a productivist approach to redistribution, more so than the two previous programmes. For instance, the fact that redistributed land must first be leased prior to ownership is to ensure that agricultural production is taking place at a significant level prior to allowing for ownership; the implication is that the absence of a minimal level of agricultural production leads to the withdrawal of the land from the original beneficiaries (Aliber & Hall, 2012). About 49% of the total land redistributed in South Africa in 2007/08 and 85.6% in 2010/11 was acquired under PLAS. From May 2009 to March 2012, 882,238 hectares of land were acquired and redistributed to about 10,500 beneficiaries across South Africa (DLA, 2008; Aliber, &Hall, 2012).

In the last few years, PLAS has been criticised for facilitating elite capture. A number of other concerns have been made about PLAS. For example, leasing the land to beneficiaries for the initial period has caused concerns due to reluctance on the part of financial organisations such as banks to issue loans to lessee farmers who do not have security and collateral in fixed property (Lahiff, 2002; Cousins, 2009; Hall, 2004). Additionally, it is argued that it is unrealistic to expect farmers within the limited period granted (three to five years) to demonstrate productivity and profitability (Aliber & Hall, 2012). As well, PLAS increases the potential for the state to acquire properties and then subdivide them prior to being allocated to beneficiaries. Nevertheless, in practice, there is little indication that subdivided land is being appropriately matched to beneficiaries' needs (Hall 2009:83). Of course, PLAS also remains dependent on the willing seller notion with the possible risk that landowners may choose to sell only the most marginal, most remote and most ecologically fragile plots that they own, many of which may not currently be in production (Lahiff, et al, 2008; Aliber & Hall, 2012).

## 3.5 LIVELIIHOODS OF PEOPLE AFTER LAND REFORM

Since 1994, the new government in South Africa has adopted legislation, policies and programmes towards the advancement of land (and agrarian) reforms. Besides failing to meet the lofty promise of land redistribution, the models and strategies adopted for agricultural development have also not addressed the real issues of landlessness, poverty and hunger that affect the rural poor and landless people (Hall, 2004: Lahiff et al, 2008).

Post 1994 saw many black South Africans including commercial farm workers and dwellers, and small-scale farmers mostly in the former homelands, continuing to live under conditions reminiscent of apartheid, as they have not benefited from any dimension of the land reform programme (besides heightened tenure security for labourers and dwellers). In this sense, the land reform programme (including the redistribution component) has not fundamentally transformed agrarian spaces in post-apartheid South Africa (Aliber & Cousins, 2013). The vast majority of South Africa’s poor rural residents derive their livelihoods from a number of diverse sources including wages from the farms they work for, income from informal economic activities and funds from the state through for instance child support grants (Aliber & Hall, 2012). Additionally, access to land (in the former homelands) generates some income from the sale of crops, livestock and other natural resources; but, typically, these are survivalist activities which may generate income on a strictly seasonal basis (Aliber & Hall, 2012). In the case of land redistribution projects (whether under SLAG, LRAD or PLAS), the results may be uneven but, generally, significant numbers of land redistribution beneficiaries are failing to make a living through agriculture.

Existing literature, as indicted earlier, shows that (since the beginning of land redistribution) there has been a lack of support services to newly resettled beneficiaries of land reform. District and local municipalities are considered by many to be the most appropriate agencies for delivery of infrastructure and other services to land reform projects; however, the literature show that as, local development agents, they have not played a significant role in enhancing the lives of land beneficiaries. While some NGOs have sought to provide service delivery to some beneficiaries of land reform, the available evidence suggests that these only reach a minority (Lahiff et al, 2008). Studies shows that land reform beneficiaries experience numerous problems accessing services such as credit, training, extension advice, transport and ploughing services, and veterinary services, as well as input and produce markets (Hall, 2003). Moreover, most of those who acquired land through the LRAD programme are now indebted countrywide and are unable to repay loans due to the lack of after-settlement support and failure by the government to ensure the provision of water for irrigation purposes.

### 3.6 LAND SECTOR NGOS

In the context of South Africa, NGOs (and particularly land sector NGOs) sought to play a central role in the land reform process by emphasising the need to redress past injustices such that, in various ways, they became involved in all aspects of the reform process, including land restitution, redistribution and tenure reform (James, 2000:144; Nauta, 2001). In this regard, they were playing in large part an advocacy and lobbying role, acting as intermediaries between communities and state agencies in negotiating issues around land, while also researching on issues related to land for the government. In doing so, they were carrying on from what land NGOs were undertaking in the apartheid era.

In 1995, the National Land Committee (NLC) was formed to negotiate and debate with the ANC government about restitution and redistribution of land (James, 2000). The NLC network became a key segment of civil society with a national presence struggling for land ownership patterns to change. Further, they were involved in supporting the building of land social movements (James: 2000:144; Helliker, 2007). One of the major roles played by the NLC was to criticise the ANC government for adopting the market-based approach, arguing that it was an obstacle to land redistribution. This was at a time when there was a reasonably cordial relationship between land NGOs and the state, in part because many former land NGO activists entered the state in 1995 and worked within the Department of Land Affairs. But relations soon soured, as they became strained during the second five years of democracy. The NLC later collapsed but, despite its collapse, NGOs continued to feature significantly in land reform.

Because of the insignificant state-led land reform since 1994, and in recognition of an insidious state insulationism which involved the ANC government becoming increasingly unresponsive to pressure from NGOs, there has been a discernible shift broadly speaking towards a more society-centred strategy by NGOs (Helliker, 2013). This is not an anti-statist position as such; rather, it is a realisation that genuine land transformation requires forceful and sustained social pressure from below. Though funded by donors within the world-wide development industry, these land NGOs no longer see their primary role as advocacy (or development) agents but as agents for mobilisation: without foregoing their development and advocacy programmes. ECARP, among many land NGOs, has been involved in seeking to bring about meaningful changes to the South African countryside through its four main programmes, namely; social mobilisation; research, lobbying and campaigning.

One of the key roles played by land NGOs was assisting in the land restitution programme. The land NGOs aimed to restore lost lands to their former owners through helping communities to reclaim land; in doing so, they emphasised that land, in African culture, is a jointly-owned resource to be used for the common good (James, 2000:144; Nauta, 2001). This effort around land restitution also involved attempts to allow for restitution claims based on the apartheid government's better schemes in homelands, in which people were forcefully kept within the confines of the homelands. In addition, land NGOs have been actively involved in tenure reforms, lobbying and negotiating on behalf of labour tenants with the government so that they can become full owners of land (Nauta, 2001; Helliker, 2013). They have also assisted the labour tenants in making sure they are not evicted without appropriate procedures considered (Cousins, 2013).

In the Eastern Cape Province, in recent years, there have been at least eight NGOs working on land (and agrarian) reform. They have worked amongst diverse agrarian communities including in the former Bantustans, small-scale farmers on redistributed farms, and workers and dwellers on commercial farms (Helliker, 2013:323). Historically four of the NGOs (Khanyisa, Calusa, Masifunde and Zingisa) have been Trust for Community Outreach and Education (TCOE) affiliates while four others (ECARP along with three others known by their acronyms Tralso, BRC and SCLC) have been linked to a common key funder, the Africa Groups of Sweden (though its funding of Eastern Cape NGOs has been reduced over time).

To successfully carry out their role, land sector NGOs in South Africa have always relied heavily on donor funding. Post-1994, the landscape changed considerably: with a new democratic government, NGOs witnessed a shift to bilateral funding arrangements. This meant that most funding flowing into the country was diverted through the government for delivery on its own mandate, with most funders supporting only that which is aligned to government policy, leaving very little space for innovation

(Helliker, 2013; Nauta, 2001). Large donor agencies also began to explore social entrepreneurship as an alternative to donor funding. Although the emergence of social entrepreneurship holds enormous promise for addressing various issues of social injustice in South Africa, most ‘traditional’ NGOs found it difficult to make the shift required of them. The land NGOs sought to hold onto their focus of meaningful agrarian change which involved, from their perspective, a fundamental critique of the state and its market-led land reform programme.

Like all NGOs, these land NGOs spend considerable time and energy fundraising, managing funds and submitting reports to funders, and currently there is significant uncertainty amongst many of these NGOs with regard to financial sustainability (Helliker, 2013:323). They also often compete for funding from the same donors (and for the same programmes with regard to a particular donor) such as the European Union and the Dutch funder ICCO (Helliker, 2013). All the NGOs have multiple donors with different forms and methodologies of reporting, which puts considerable strain on the often minimal administrative capacity of the NGOs. This however is absolutely necessary if the NGOs are to ensure ongoing funds from a particular donor, or the release of the next tranche of funding. They typically dislike the complexities and intricacies required of them in reporting, but they see this as a necessary evil so to speak. Like NGOs globally, these land NGOs fully recognise their subordinate position vis-à-vis their funders (AbouAssi, 2012:587).

## 3.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter has demonstrated the serious challenges embedded in the South African state’s land redistribution programmes, and the knock-on effects this has for livelihoods on redistributed farms. The state has simply not provided sufficient support to so-called emerging farmers, and it seems to be increasingly focused on ensuring that only productive farmers receive land, particularly under PLAS. Because of these weaknesses, and particularly because of concerns around the market-led dimension of the programmes, DNGOs have intervened in the land redistribution process by advocating for more radical programmes but also by seeking to enhance the agricultural-based livelihood of redistributed farm beneficiaries. This provides a solid context for considering ECARP more specifically in the next two chapters.

# CHAPTER FOUR:

# ECARP AND LAND REDISTRIBUTION IN EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The East Cape Agricultural Research Project (ECARP) is a well-established DNGO working in the Eastern Cape Province. In order to understand and analyse its food security and sovereignty programme (which is the main focus of this thesis), it is first necessary to set out its organisational structure and dynamics as well as its various programmes, as detailed in this chapter. These programmes focus on research, mobilisation, advocacy and development, and are focused on small-scale farmers on redistributed farms and farm labourers and dwellers on white commercial farms. Before providing this broad overview of ECARP, it is first necessary to set out the modalities and reality of land redistribution in the province, as this is the specific spatial context within which ECARP operates.

## 4.2 LAND AND LAND NGOS IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

During apartheid, the region (then known as East Cape) was divided into zones of white occupation and the so-called African homelands of Transkei and Ciskei. In particular, the Transkei region was among the most densely populated parts of South Africa and was largely occupied by Africans holding land under so-called communal tenure (Nauta, 2001). Most of the western part of apartheid's East Cape Province consisted of vast expanses of white commercial farming.

The Eastern Cape Province has a population of about 6.3 million consisting of Xhosa-speaking people (who constitute the majority) and Afrikaans, English and Sotho people who constitute the minority (Lahiff, 2003:16). There are six district municipalities falling within the boundaries of the province. In terms of agricultural productivity, the province as a whole has significant potential (Du Toit, 2004). But the areas with fertile soil, which consist of about 10 million hectares of land (59% of the province), are in the hands of 6,500 white commercial farmers, employing approximately 70,000 farmworkers (Hall & Kepe, 2017; Lahiff et al, 2008). The former homeland areas, now called communal areas, are marked by comparatively marginal agricultural areas.

In this context, the province suffers from extreme levels of poverty, not only in communal areas and amongst farm labourers on white commercial farms but in urban areas such as Port Elizabeth and Grahamstown (with high unemployment amongst the youth in particular). In the case of the communal areas, high levels of poverty emanate from limited access to productive land in conjunction with the failure of the post-apartheid state to provide sufficient agricultural support. As well, since the beginning of the redistribution programme after 1994, only limited numbers of communal area people have managed to receive land from the government. In fact, studies conducted by Lahiff & Hall (2008) show that redistribution of land under SLAG, LRAD and now PLAS has been very slow in the province. This problem has continued over the last ten years as well.

Due to poverty and insufficient redistribution of land in the province, NGOs such as ECARP have been actively involved with the Department of Land Affairs (DLA) in advocating for redistribution and in implementing land redistribution projects as well. In many ways, it has been claimed that both the DLA and NGOs have proved to be innovative and reasonably successful, although they have been obstructed by the various constraints affecting reform projects in other areas of the country (Lahiff, 2003). Despite some meaningful changes in land redistribution, it is important to highlight that ECARP still struggles to assist in ensuring proper transfer of land and consequent agricultural productivity among small-scale farmers with whom they work (ECARP, 2010). Simultaneously, they have focused much of the attention on the rights, tenure security, wages and livelihoods of farm workers and dwellers on commercial farms, including on the many game reserves which have arisen in the province in recent years. Other NGOs, such as the Border Rural Committee and Tralso, have sought to enhance the livelihoods of small-scale farmers in the communal areas.

### 4.3 LAND REDISTRIBUTION IN EASTERN CAPE

Land redistribution in Eastern Cape Province, like elsewhere, has been designed to provide previously disadvantaged groups of people with access to land for residential and productive uses, in order to improve their income and quality of life. The redistribution of land in the Eastern Cape Province has been done through either SLAG, LRAD or PLAS. Like elsewhere as well, land redistribution in the Eastern Cape has taken place in the context of a neo-liberal paradigm, which curtails the role of the state and public sector in the economy and promotes service delivery through the market (Aliber, 2004). Under SLAG, LRAD and recently the PLAS programme, state assistance has been largely confined to the provision of grants in order for beneficiaries to acquire farming land through willing-buyer, willing-seller transactions. This policy framework has major implications for the state (in terms of budgetary requirements), for intended beneficiaries (in terms of access to land and farming activities) and for the wider process of post-apartheid transformation (Jacobs, Lahiff & Hall, 2003). By the late 1990s, only 450 redistribution projects had been approved countrywide, involving 3.2 million hectares; 79% of the land approved was situated in Eastern Cape yet only 0.5% of the land approved for redistribution had been transferred by May 1998 (Aliber, 2004).

The redistribution strategy in the province has focused mainly on groups of black people pooling their grants, and other resources, to purchase white-owned commercial farms (Lahiff, 2002; 12). Mostly, such projects are based on the creation of a communal property association (CPA), a relatively new form of legal entity that allows groups, democratically constituted in terms of a written constitution, to acquire property collectively (Lahiff, 2002). Under a CPA, land does not necessarily remain collectively owned after initial purchase, or agricultural activities are not necessarily carried out on a collective basis, but this was the pattern initially. Since 2001, however, there has been a shift towards sub-division of land and more individual or household-based production, influenced by the problems experienced in many collective enterprises, and a shift in policy towards a more private-entrepreneurial model of farming under LRAD (Lahiff, 2002; Hall, 2004). This has also involved the emergence of strategic partnerships with white commercial farmers (sometimes as mentors for land beneficiaries) as a basis for facilitating and maximising agricultural productivity.

### 4.3.1 Case studies of land redistribution in the Eastern Cape

Since the beginning of the redistribution programme in the Eastern Cape Province, some progress has been noted across the province. In the early phases of LRAD, between 2001 and 2002, the Eastern Cape was the leading province in terms of land transfer, accounting for 51,632 hectares (19 percent of the national total), comprising 127 projects and 1,378 beneficiaries (Jacobs et al, 2003). By the end of 2003, approximately 140,000 hectares had been transferred under all aspects of the redistribution programme in the province, but this still amounted to only 1.4 percent of the total agricultural land in the hands of white commercial farmers in 1994.

In 2001 under the LRAD programme, ten farmers received ownership of fourteen small farms (about 4,800 hectares) in Beeskraal located in the Cala district (Jaricha, 2013:97). In 2002, a R1,9 million community farming project was launched by the Maasdorp-Jurishoek Community Property Association at Balfour involving the purchase of state-owned land and commercial farms for olive and vegetable production (Jaricha, 2013:97). In June 2002, the Masakhane Communal Property Association, representing 100 beneficiaries living on state-owned land at Cathcartvale, acquired title to 674 hectares using the SLAG (Jaricha, 2013; Lahiff, 2002:25). Of the emerging projects under PLAS in the Eastern Cape Province, only a few farm workers have been targeted as participants. Women workers and farm dwellers are not viewed as 'suitable' participants (Lahiff, 2012). In a recent study conducted by Jaricha (2013:54), it was noted that farm workers and dwellers have their own land needs which include securing tenure, housing and human settlement, to keep livestock and to grow vegetables. However, in large part, these needs have been ignored in the land redistribution projects.

According to the DLA, at least 151 redistribution projects have been approved for implementation in the Eastern Cape, including LRAD commonage and SLAG projects, since 2002. A majority of all land redistributed (59%) has been for non-agricultural purposes (that is, settlement), with the rest divided into agricultural projects (under both SLAG and LRAD), share equity schemes (whereby employers buy shares in existing agricultural enterprises), and municipal commonage (land under the control of municipalities) (Lahiff, 2002; ECSECC, 2010). In the facilitation of PLAS, consultations take place between the Department of Land Affairs (DLA) project officers and the farm owners. However, no consultations take place with the identified participants. Instead, they are treated as passive recipients who are unable to make positive contributions to the process; therefore they are unable to define and drive the project.

The above case studies represent a number of areas and groups of people who have successfully received land either under SLAG or LRAD and a few under PLAS. Although there is no clear indication of how much land was received in a particular year, the above overview helps in understanding how the redistribution process has been taking place in the province since 2001.

## 4.4 MAKANA MUNICIPALITY

Located in the Cacadu District Municipality in Eastern Cape, Makana is a local municipality covering an area of 422,200 hectares of which 200,000 hectares is suitable for some type of agriculture (Lahiff, 2005). Makana experiences extreme temperature variations with mean annual rainfall being 550 mm. In terms of agricultural-ecological regions and farming activities, the municipality can be divided into two areas. One area is called Upper Albany (which is two-thirds of the area) and is located north of the main town of Grahamstown and the other area is called Lower Albany. This area is un-suitable for dry-land crop production (with less than 400 mm rainfall per year) such that irrigation is required for field crops. Because of this, most farming activities entail either livestock or game farming, or a combination of both vegetables and citrus crops are grown using mechanised irrigation (Jaricha, 2013:104). In the second area, they receive an average rainfall per year of 600 mm, and it is suitable for the production of maize, wheat, chicory and pineapples (Jaricha, 2013). Makana is one of the main local municipalities within which ECARP operates.

In this context, the balance of the chapter considers ECARP as a DNGO. ECARP's activities are directed towards small-scale farmers on redistributed farms and towards farm workers and dwellers on white commercial farms. Though the thesis focuses on the food security and sovereignty programme on redistributed farms, it is important to provide an overview of ECARP and its diverse programmes in order to contextualise this more specific focus, including the key challenges that ECARP faces as a DNGO.

## 4.5 OVERVIEW OF EAST CAPE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH PROJECT (ECARP)

ECARP is a local based development NGO located in Makana Municipality in the Eastern Cape Province. It was established in 1993 as a DNGO focusing on transforming the agrarian sector in the Eastern Cape Province. ECARP's work focuses on improving the living and working conditions of farm workers and dwellers on white commercial farms and amongst small-scale farmers on redistributed farms. Following the establishment of ECARP in 1993, the organisation has grown remarkably.

Throughout South Africa's political evolution, NGOs have played a vital role in supporting the country's development. In the years prior to 1990, they played a key part in the struggle against apartheid, defending the rights of disadvantaged communities and delivering public services such as education, health care and welfare where the apartheid state had refused to do so. During the apartheid years, NGOs also played a strong adversarial and activist role, one in which they were supported by substantial international development funding. In the post-1994 period, the funding landscape changed, such that NGOs have had to compete for funding from the same donors for the same role. Emerging in such a political and economic terrain, the role, strategies and capacities of ECARP, as well as the resources supporting their work, have shifted over time in response to the prevailing political economy (ECARP, 2001; Naidoo, 2011). Regardless of the likely effects of donor funding, and any internal problems within ECARP, it is evident that ECARP today plays a very important role in the agrarian sector in the Eastern Cape Province. The vision of ECARP centres on social justice, and on transforming the unequal and discriminatory power relations governing the rural economy in South Africa, which continues to marginalise emerging black farmers (ECARP, 2001).

## 4.6 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF ECARP

From its establishment in 1993, ECARP has been conducting its developmental work at a provincial level collaborating with small-scale-farmers, and farm workers and dwellers in different municipalities. From then, it has progressed significantly both in its management of staff and its programmes and it has adapted well to both pressures from its donors, government and beneficiaries (ECARP, 2007; ECARP, 2017). Considering the terrain in which it operates, whereby there are uncertainties in the socio-economic and political context in South Africa especially in the agrarian political economy due to the absence of successful and meaningful land redistribution, its survival up to present is a great indication of its adaptive management and ability to retain flexibility in a constantly shifting context. Besides its main partners, which are small-scale farmers and farm workers and dwellers, ECARP also collaborates with donors – such as MISEREOR which stands out to be one of its long-term funders since the establishment of the organisation (ECARP, 2017). Apart from MISEREOR and other donors, ECARP also collaborates with various government institutions such as the Department of Labour (DoL), Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) and other various departments to ensure effective implementation of its development programmes across its beneficiaries.

In terms of its staff, the organisation has a few long-term staff members, including the director who has been there since 1995 up to present and two female senior programme staff who have been there for almost eighteen years; still others have been there for over ten years (ECARP, 2017). The longevity of staff service has it seems contributed to an overall well-managed, disciplined and smoothly-running organisation. Currently, ECARP has eighteen staff including the director. Of these, there are twelve programme or research staff including trainees, two administrative staff (including a bookkeeper) and three housekeeping or ground staff (ECARP, 2017:9). The increase in the number of ECARP's staff is a sign that the organisation has intentions to continue expanding its organisation. In addition to its staff, ECARP also has board members who support the mission, values, and development work of the organisation. The board has four or five members who meet (sometimes regularly, sometimes not) to discuss key issues affecting the organisation, and outlining what needs to be done in order for the organisation to achieve its mission and goals. Moreover, a representative of the auditor company attends the board meetings (at least annually) and reports in the audits about work carried out on ECARP's accounts (ECARP, 2017:9).

### 4.6.1 Geographical area of ECARP

ECARP collaborates with farm workers and dwellers along with small-scale farmers who have access to land under SLAG, LRAD or PLAS, and these beneficiaries dwell in different local municipalities (including Makana) across the province. ECARP works with farm workers and dwellers on commercial farms and in (citrus) pack-houses and with small-scale farmers on redistributed farms involved in micro-food production. ECARP's work is based in the western part of the Eastern Cape, with the eastern part in the main consisting of former homelands (now communal areas). The main areas covered by ECARP include Makana, Ndlambe, Sundays River Valley (SRV), Kouga and Raymond Mhlaba (ECARP, 2017). All but one of these local municipalities belong to the district municipality of Sarah Baartman (formerly known as Cacadu), while Raymond Mhlaba is under Amathole district (ECARP, 2017: 1). Currently ECARP works with both LRAD and PLAS beneficiaries in the following areas: Yarrow, Rockhurst, Outspan and Clifton Towers (PLAS projects) and eight LRAD project areas including Dekom, Nangkos, Groentuin, Masizakhe, Kamvalethu, Greenhills, Kuduvale and Nonzaliseko (which fall in one of the mentioned municipalities (ECARP, 2013).

### 4.6.2 ECARP Funding

The issue of funding for DNGOs is a national problem in South Africa since 1994 when the NGO sector witnessed a shift to funding arrangements more fully focused on supporting government directly. Thus, funding has been channelled increasingly through the government for delivery on its own reconstruction and development mandate (Habib & Taylor, 1999). In this regard, most NGOs including ECARP had to take considerable initiative to seeking funding for its core infrastructural and staff costs, along with funding more specifically for programmes and projects considered consistent with NGO visions and missions. Although ECARP was established under a difficult political and economic context in terms of the availability of donor funding, it has managed to survive and overcome many obstacles considering the growing size of its organisation. The organisation has been reasonably flexible in terms of the donors with which it has sought funding, with some flexibility potentially relieving some of the implications that usually accompany the processes for receiving and maintaining donor funding – such as relying too heavily of one donor.

One of ECARP's main funders is MISEREOR. The partnership between ECARP and MISEREOR dates back to 2001, when they agreed to fund ECARP, supporting its development work (ECARP, 2017). From 2001, the relationship between ECARP and MISEREOR has grown by collaborating in carrying out a variety of projects, including programmes involving sustainable land use under various government land reform schemes (ECARP, 2017:1). In the past few years, MISEREOR has been assisting ECRAP in implementing its food sovereignty programme among small-scale farmers, Apart from MISEREOR.

OR, some of ECARP's projects are funded by organisations such as the FirstRand Foundation (Westbank), Fastenopfer and the Africa Group of Sweden (AGS) (ECARP, 2017: 1). ECARP has consistently sought to widen its donor portfolio of minimise the risks associated with relying exclusively on only one or two donors – as donor agendas and priorities change along with shifts in global development priorities.

Like all other DNGOs, ECARP has to report to donors on the use of the funds granted, based on a set of criteria established by the donor and according to a particular format. This takes considerable effort on the part of ECARP, though the extensiveness of the criteria differs quite considerably across donors. As well, the intensity of the oversight of donors over ECARP's use of funds varies across the donors. For instance, FirstRand is primarily concerned about fulfilling its corporate responsibility mandate by providing funds to ECARP and others, such that it may be less concerned about tracking ECARP's use of funds. Certainly, ECARP recognises the importance of aligning itself with the conditions set by donors; but, it also seeks to further the cause of agrarian transformation within the broad donor constraints within which it has to operate.

## 4.7 DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES OF ECARP

As a development DNGO working in a complex agrarian terrain, ECARP has over the years focused on fair labour standards and living conditions, food security and sovereignty, research and advocacy, and social mobilisation. These programmes are very connected to each other as they are designed to meet the day-to-day needs of small-scale farmers, farm workers and dwellers while simultaneously supporting them to critically engage with structural poverty and inequalities (ECARP, 2007:3-4). Therefore, in the discussion that follows, there is a close connection between ECARP's different programmes and projects.

### 4.7.1 Fair Labour Standards, Dignified Living Conditions and Economic Justice

The main purpose of this programme is to deal with the practical and day-today issues affecting farm workers, dwellers and small-scale farmers, enforcing the minimum wage and other labour rights on farms, strengthening tenure security rights and improving housing and living conditions on farms and strengthening food sources and networks for small-scale farmers (ECARP, 2007; ECARP, 2010; ECARP, 2012). In the case of farm labourers, this entails ensuring that white farmers pay workers in terms of the minimum wage sectoral determination for agriculture, and also abide by payments for overtime work and payments for weekend and public holiday work. This is all related to trying to change power relations in the labour markets and value chains to enable poorly paid workers, the rural unemployed and weakened small-scale farmers to gain some leverage in a changing agrarian context (ECARP, 2010; Naidoo, 2011).

To ensure proper implementation of the objectives of this programme, including around economic justice, ECARP links it with the social mobilisation programme which allows beneficiaries to form farm and area committees and small-scale farmers' collectives in order to fight for their rights as a collective group (ECARP, 2010; Naidoo, 2011). In this regard, the programme aims to mobilise farm workers, dwellers and small-scale farmers so that they can develop and implement mechanisms of addressing poor or unsatisfactory socio-economic conditions including labour, land, tenure, housing and access to services in order to improve their farming and living conditions (Naidoo, 2011; ECARP, 2010). To date, ECARP has been successful in many ways in fighting for improved living conditions of farm workers and dwellers working on commercial farms.

### 4.7.2 Social Mobilisation

In addition to the first programme, and as indicated above, ECARP also focuses on social mobilisation of farm workers, dwellers and small-scale farmers in the municipalities that they operate. In this context, mobilisation seeks to advance rural democracy through challenging unequal power relations that currently exist within the agrarian sector (ECARP, 2017:22). Active participation of farm workers, dwellers and small-scale farmers on redistributed farms through social mobilisation assist in bringing about transformation within the agrarian sector. Hence, the overall goal of this programme is to support the formation and strengthening of democratic collective structures among farm workers, dwellers and small-scale farmers to advance an emancipatory agrarian transformation agenda (ECARP, 2010; 2012).

Clearly, this programme has had some positive outcomes since it was first implemented by ECARP. For instance, by 2003, farm labourers and dwellers on 65 white commercial farms had managed to establish farm committees through mobilisation (ECARP, 2003). In addition, area committees (comprising a number of farm committees) were established in many areas including Zuney, Grootvlei/Belcrest, Bedford, Fort Beaufort, Adelaide and Addo/Kirkwood (ECARP, 2003).As well, through ECARP's assistance, farm workers, dwellers and small-scale farmers formed a social movement called Phakamani Siyepambhili. Phakamani Siyephambili which is a non-partisan, non-sexist movement that brings together farm workers, farm dwellers and small-scale farmers in and around the districts of Cacadu and Amathole (ECARP, 2011). Its overall goal is to create an enabling environment that advances agrarian transformation and ensures that farm workers, farm dwellers and small-scale farmers are able to reach their human potential and freedoms and positively transform the overall quality of their lives (ECARP, 2013).

### 4.7.3 Research

Furthermore, ECARP also focuses on research as a key part of achieving their mission and goals. In terms of research, they focus primarily on their beneficiaries conducting research across different municipalities. Through conducting research on various issues, this enables ECARP to write comprehensive reports to various government departments about what needs to be done to improve the living conditions of farm workers, farm dwellers and small-scale farmers (ECARP, 2010; ECARP, 2012). In most cases, though, this research (and advocacy) work has not been particularly successful since these government departments are often disinclined to engage fully with ECARP and its beneficiaries, and simply tend to shelve these reports without considering their significance for advancing land reform. Nevertheless, ECARP uses the research findings to devise new strategies that can be used to improve the livelihoods of their beneficiaries (ECARP, 2010; ECARP 2011; ECARP, 2017).

As a small DNGO, it is difficult for ECARP to conduct research in all spatial areas and on all aspects of their work. Therefore, it focuses mainly on issues around the minimum wage sectoral determination, fair labour standards and decent living conditions of their beneficiaries (ECARP, 2008). In doing so, it has accumulated for instance a database of over 1,000 questionnaires which analyses the impact of labour regulations and documents PLAS projects and land reform; and it is more recently researching on value chains, fair trade and economic justice (ECARP, 2010; Naidoo, 20110). This programme is thus closely connected to the other programmes of ECARP.

### 4.7.4 Food security and sovereignty programme

Under its food security and sovereignty programme, ECARP seeks to assist emerging farmers on redistributed farms in terms of agricultural production (ECARP, 2013). The overall goal of ECARP's food sovereignty programme is to give farmers the right to define their own food systems and agriculture (which satisfy their needs), while the formation of independent and collective groups among small-scale farmers and micro-producers so that they can support each other (ECARP, 2017:35). As articulated by the international small-scale farmer network, Via Campesina, food sovereignty is about protecting and regulating domestic agricultural production and trade in order to achieve sustainable development objectives among small-scale farmers (Via Campesina, 1999). Therefore ECARP, in its organisational mission and goals, stipulates that small-scale farmers should pursue and manage the production of organic foods. Hence, for ECARP, implementing a food sovereignty programme serves the purpose of reducing rural poverty through the promotion of economically sustainable and ecologically sound livelihood strategies and agricultural production systems among small-scale farmers (and, where possible, among farm workers and dwellers who might have access to some land) (ECARP, 2010).

In terms of the food sovereignty programme, and together with small-scale farmers, ECARP promotes the use of agro-ecological farming because it sustains micronutrients in the soil, thereby increasing its productive potential. In this regard, it also seeks to debunk the myth which suggests that industrial agriculture is the only way to feed growing populations of people. Much research instead suggests that agro-ecological methodologies of agriculture have the capacity to be as productive and as profitable as industrial agriculture (Rosset, 1999). For ECARP, as well, agro-ecological farming is ecologically sustainable and more resistant to drought and other manifestations of climate change (ECARP, 2013; ECARP, 2015). Consistent with the food sovereignty concept, ECARP promotes low external input small- scale agriculture based on agro-ecological methods. These methods are encompassed in the eight pillars of sustainable agriculture, including localising food systems, building knowledge and skills about environmentally-friendly agriculture and giving local people control over production (Via Campesina, 1999).

When implementing this programme, ECARP works closely with women although there are some men who are also involved. Most women specialise in breeding chickens mainly Isixhosa (traditional) chickens for both subsistence and marketing (ECARP, 2017:36). While chicken production yields positive results, other women focus on producing fresh vegetables for both subsistence and marketing using non-organic fertilisers. The collective basis of these initiatives is in line with local ownership of agricultural production and the food sovereignty model. In these groups, small-scale farmers meet to share and exchange knowledge on how they can become more productive as small-scale farmers. In addition to this, ECARP also organises activities such as the construction of seed-banks and other activities related to open-pollinated seeds; this includes seed fairs to allow farmers to exchange seeds thus also reviving some of the traditional seed varieties (ECARP, 2017:38). For ECARP, the promotion of seed banks and seed fairs is part and parcel of peer learning and exchanges, with women being central to all this. This collectiveness is also related to ECARP's mobilisation of small-scale farmers (and farm labourers) into local committee structures as the basis for a rural social movement (ECARP, 2012). The aim is to build strong committees among small-scale farmers and farm workers in order for them to assist each other in transforming their livelihoods.

## 4.8 CONCLUSION

As a DNGO, ECARP operates in the Eastern Cape Province which, like the rest of the country, is marked by significant racial inequalities around land ownership, possession and access. By seeking and receiving funding from donors over an extended period, ECARP has been able to build up its organisational structures and capacities to enable it to engage in a diverse range of programmes focusing on small-scale farmers on redistributed farms and on labourers (and dwellers) on white commercial farms. Like elsewhere, a diverse range of land redistribution projects under SLAD, LRAD and PLAS exist in the province, and ECARP has supported small-scale farmers under these projects in many ways. One particular way, which is the focus of the next chapter, is the food security and sovereignty programme, which is intimately related to the other programmes.

# CHAPTER FIVE:

# ECARP AND THE FOOD SECURITY AND SOVEREIGNTY PROGRAMME

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter considers ECARP's food security and sovereignty programme amongst small-scale farmers on redistributed farms, with a particular case study of the Masizakhe LRAD project just outside Grahamstown in Makana Municipality. In outlining and discussing the diverse ways in which ECARP engages with small-scale farmers in terms of the food security and sovereignty programme, the main focus is on the extent to which ECARP can be said to engage in participatory methodologies. Insofar as it does, there is evidence of an important degree of downward accountability, despite the fact that ECARP relies on donors for its very organisational existence. In other words, the question becomes the manner in which ECARP seeks to (and is able to) balance the simultaneous demands for both upward and downward accountability

## 5.2 OVERVIEW OF MASIZAKHE FARM

Masizakhe CPA farm is located in Manley Flats area about fifteen kilometres outside Grahamstown (and within Makana Municipality) and off the main road to Port Alfred; it covers a total area of 692.1793 hectares. Masizakhe was part of a broader LRAD redistribution project which includes Masimbabane consisting of ten families (33 individuals) and sold at a value of R608,014; Masizakhe which has ten families (40 individuals) sold at a value of R725,438; Kamvalethu with ten families (36 individuals) at R658,223 and Mlanjeni with eight families (27 individuals) for an amount of R508,326 (Jaricha, 2013:105). Due to the sheer size of the original farm (2.6 hectares), the significant scale of the farming operation and the high market value of the farm, it was considered unfeasible and impractical for the acquisition of the farm to involve one group of potential beneficiaries only (Jaricha, 2013:103). In August 2006, the Masizakhe CPA was officially formed and registered, comprising of forty beneficiaries from 10 households. Of these ten households, eight were formerly employed by the seller of the farm (Mr Long) and they had permanent accommodation on the portion of Trentham Park Farm that they were proposing to purchase (Jaricha, 2013:106). Of the forty beneficiaries, twenty-two were male beneficiaries and eighteen were female beneficiaries (ECARP, 2016; 5). The table below (Table 5.1) shows the total number of beneficiaries of the Masizakhe CPA, including the number of women and men who have become beneficiaries of the project.

**Table 1 Population of Masizakhe**

| **Masizakhe -Manley Flats Area; Municipality – Makana Municipality** | |
|---|---|
| Total Area | 692,1793 hectares |
| Total Number of Households | 10 |
| Total Number of beneficiaries | 40 |
| Number of male beneficiaries | 22 |
| Number of female beneficiaries | 18 |

**Source:** Table prepared by ECARP for EFT (Evaluation for the facilitation team**).**

## 5.3 THE FOOD SECURITY AND SOVEREIGNTY PROGRAMME AMONG MASIZAKHE FARMERS

Masizakhe farmers are involved in a number of agricultural activities including farming different varieties of vegetables and field crops as well as keeping livestock in the form of cattle, goats, pigs and chickens for household consumption and market sales. In terms of growing vegetables and other crops such as maize, cabbages and potatoes they use low-cost organic farming techniques, which utilise natural resources available on the farm, thereby seeking to sustain soil fertility and good quality yields (ECARP, 2010: 2016). In addition, they also practice inter-cropping, crop rotation and the planting of leguminous crops which supply the soil with nitrogen (ECARP, 2017). One of the farmers indicated that "*they would like to continue using organic methods of farming as this helps them to preserve their forefathers' indigenous knowledge*" (ECARP, 2017:13). This statement shows clearly that at least some of the Masizakhe farmers have an intimate knowledge and understanding of agricultural methodologies, which are consistent with ECARPs food security and sovereignty programme. In this sense, the food security and sovereignty initiative seems to tally with agricultural methods used in the distant past. Certainly, indicating that they want to preserve indigenous knowledge implies that they are interested in using organic farming methods as this allows them to produce fresh food that is free from commercial chemicals as well as nutritious (ECARP, 2017; Jaricha, 2013).

In 2016, one of the farmers managed to sell vegetables in Grahamstown and she was able to make some profit for the first time. Another farmer said that "*I managed to sell a lot of cabbages and this helped me in raising enough money to fence my house and I used the other money to pay for my children's school fees"* (ECARP, 2016). Through the assistance of ECARP, two farmers mentioned that they were able to make profits during the seed festival (organised by ECARP) because they had specific varieties of seed of which most farmers did not have during the festival (ECARP, 2016). Both vegetables and crops are sold to neighbouring farms, in Grahamstown, at pension points (where grant system recipients receive their pensions) and along the N2 highway which bypasses Grahamstown (Jaricha, 2013:121).

In addition to growing vegetables, Masizakhe farmers engage in livestock keeping. For Masizakhe farmers, keeping livestock is part of their historical legacy as, in the past, owning livestock (particularly cattle) gave a person a certain degree of status in the community. But the possibility of market sales and profits also exists. One of the farmers stated that: *"If you keep goats and chicken and feed them properly you can sell them for a better price at the market"*. These livestock are fed entirely on a free-range system and, if they are not sold at the market, they are consumed at household level. The livestock are sold in rural areas in Peddie (in the former Ciskei) and in the Grahamstown black township of Rini (Jaricha, 2013).

In most of these activities, the Masizakhe farmers work closely together with ECARP who even assisted them in ensuring the transfer of Trentham Park Farm to land redistribution beneficiaries. Jaricha (2013) notes that, if ECARP was not involved actively in the negotiation of selling Mr Long's farm, it was highly unlikely that the transfer would have taken place. In this sense, ECARP complemented the work of state structures which showed either the unwillingness or incapacity to finalise this particular LRAD project. Further, ECARP has played a crucial role, after the beneficiaries received the land, in assisting the farmers in initiating agricultural activities for both home-consumption and market sales. In doing so, as part of its food security and sovereignty programme, ECARP uses a variety of methods that are meant to be both participatory and empowering for the small-scale farmers.

### 5.3.1 Peer learning sessions

It was discovered that ECARP conducts peer learning sessions with small-scale farmers, as one way of involving them in the food security and sovereignty programme; this involves either the assistance of a member from a relevant government department or ECARP staff members. These peer-learning sessions are designed as well to enable farmers on redistributed farms to exchange knowledge and experience with each other, which ensures the development of collective knowledge in order to maximise the benefits on these farms (ECARP, 2016). Conducting peer sessions helps these farmers to appreciate the value of the knowledge that each of them has in their possession, and how much it can improve agricultural work and yield higher results for the entire collective (ECARP, 2016). Because of this, small-scale farmers benefit from sharing knowledge and experiences from other farmers on other redistributed farms in the area.

During these peer exchange sessions, ECARP sometimes brings farming experts, agro-ecological experts and agriculturalists to teach small-scale farmers about several topics including how to control pests, and water conservation during drought periods. External expertise is also brought in to teach them about technical issues related to farming, for example, livestock and veld management under drought conditions (ECARP, 2017:37-38). One of the ECARP staff indicated that: "*In 2015 a peer learning session was facilitated by an expert in agro-ecological farming. During the session, farmers were asked to share information on strengthening the quality and expanding the quantity of open-pollinated crops and storage*" (ECARP, 2015:2). It became clear that the farmers had their own ways of strengthening the quality and quantity of open-pollinated crops and storage of crops. One way of strengthening the quality of open-pollinated crops was through making sure that, during the growing season, the crops receive sufficient organic manure so that they can grow properly (ECARP: 2015). Because of these sessions, both ECARP and the farmers learnt the importance of ongoing facilitation of such sessions, as they give farmers an opportunity to share, learn and exchange knowledge with both experts and other farmers. In support of this, one of the farmers (when asked by ECARP) said this about this: "*ECARP should organise more of the sessions especially with the agro-ecological expert so that they can learn more about how to improve their farming ways"* (ECARP, 2015:8). In this regard, it is clear that the peer learning sessions are geared towards consolidating the food security and sovereignty model at Masizakhe and on other redistributed farms.

### 5.3.2 Workshops

Conducting workshops amongst the farmers at Masizakhe and elsewhere is part of ECARP's strategy to ensure that they remain sensitive to the current issues facing and affecting the land beneficiaries (including around food security and sovereignty). Since ECARP is implementing its food security and sovereignty programmes with other beneficiaries (of both PLAS and LRAD) and other local municipalities besides just Makana, it is difficult at times to meet with all its beneficiaries. But they try to conduct workshops after every month with farm representatives from each of the municipalities. ECARP also uses workshops to help in establishing new farm committees or area committees and to monitor existing committees, as well as for specific training purposes including the character of the rural political economy in South Africa and different aspects of agro-ecological farming (ECARP, 2017).

### 5.3.3 Training

ECARP provides small-scale farmers at Masizakhe farm with technical skills and knowledge around the use of agro-ecological farming techniques. Importantly, for EACRP's food security sovereignty programme at Masizakhe and beyond, it is crucial to offer information and knowledge on alternative farming (to the agro-industrial model) along with marketing strategies or small-scale farmers so that they can mobilise for – and pursue – alternative configurations of markets and value chains and entry into them (ECARP, 2010: ECARP, 2016). This is part of the broader effort to position small-scale farmers on redistributed farms in the Eastern Cape so that they can become integrated into the agrarian political economy in a more favourable manner (ECARP, 2010; ECARP, 2016).

During these training sessions, ECARP deals with a number of issues including providing training on worm farming, livestock diseases, free-range pig production and water conservation methods (ECARP, 2017). In addition, ECARP seeks to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these training sessions in terms of their practical application on redistributed farms. Through training between January and December 2016, 311 small-scale farmers (comprising 170 women and 141 men) were trained in agro-ecological farming practices (ECARP, 2016). At Masizakhe farm specifically, nine beneficiaries were trained including six female and three men (ECARP, 2016:10). Because of this training, there was said to be improvement in the quality and quantity of their crops, livestock and herbs, in particular by using agro-ecological farming methods (ECARP, 2016). In 2017, ECARP trained 725 people (429 women and 296 men) on agro-ecological farming practices (EACRP, 2017), and this included farm workers and dwellers as well.

### 5.3.4 Conducting yearly seed festival

Together with other small-scale farmers across municipalities, Masizakhe small-scale farmers participate in the seed festival as part of ECARP's food security and sovereignty programme. The seed festival was introduced by ECARP as a means to allow small-scale farmers to meet once per year so that they can exchange open-pollinated seed. The festival also allows them to sell their produce to other farmers from different municipalities and to encourage each farmer to use agro ecological farming methods (ECARP, 2010:6). Most of the farmers that ECARP collaborates with are land reform beneficiaries who received little post-land transfer support for various reasons. This means that these farmers have little resources; but have stores of knowledge passed down from generation to generation on environmentally-friendly and less expensive methods of farming (ECARP, 2010:6-7). Therefore, the open pollinated seed festival becomes a basis for farmers to support one another through agro-ecological farming, about which many of them are familiar and which has been used for generations by their families (ECARP, 2010:7).

In concluding these various dimensions of the food security and sovereignty programme, it is clear that – through receiving support from ECARP-organised events such as the seed festival –small-scale farmers continue to support and teach each other on the important use of agro-ecological farming methods and other new farming skills, in order to enhance their food security (ECARP, 2017). In most of these activities, women are the dominant group although there are some men who are also involved in the programmes. In addition, some farm workers and dwellers who have access to land also participate in the programmes. As so-called emerging farmers, though, farmers such as those Masizakhe are faced with challenges that limits their ability to produce quality and quantity food. Although ECARP assists them in many ways to overcome these challenges, there are problems that continue limiting the performance of these small-scale farmers. The following discussion highlights some of these challenges

## 5.4 FACTORS LIMITING MASIZAKHE FARMERS IN IMPLEMENTING THE FOOD SECUIRTY AND SOVEREIGNTY PROGRAMME

Overall, since it started, the food sovereignty programme has yielded a number of success stories from the onset. These successful stories include an increase in the number of small-scale farmers who are producing food for both consumption and the market place, and farmers now being able to send their children to schools. However, in the reports compiled by ECARP and Jaricha (2013), after conducting interviews with the Masizakhe farmers, a number of problems have been identified which continue to limit some of the farmers from participating in the food sovereignty programme.

### 5.4.1 Lack of support of government

According to the CPA at Masizakhe, the overall involvement of government in the farming activities at Masizakhe is very limited or inadequate. In reports compiled by ECARP and in a study conducted by Jaricha in 2013, it was revealed that the Masizakhe CPA members on many occasions approached the Department of Agriculture land officer to receive proper agricultural support from the state; but they have never received such support (Jaricha, 2013; ECARP, 2016; ECARP, 2017). CPA members, therefore, said that government officials only rarely have been involved in supporting farming operations since the beneficiaries received the land (ECARP, 2016). In fact, currently, only two of the 40 beneficiaries live on the farm and have been farming on the land continuously since it was made a land reform project. Over an extended period now, these two farmers having been making use of the land with no support from the state. The only tangible support received was a tractor and some farming implements which are shared though with the other three projects that make up Trentham Park; as well as some fencing material from the Department of Agriculture and water tanks from Makana Municipality (ECARP, 2016:5).

Farmers at Masizakhe, and in the other three projects, share the same view that land reform officials last visited the farm during the 2008/2009 agricultural season and thus have effectively abandoned them once the transfer was finalised. On one occasion, "*we invited the Minister of Land Affairs and we met because he does not live too far* [away from the farm]" (Jaricha, 2013:111), but nothing materialised from this. Further, no formal visits of any substance have been made since then, such that one of the Masizakhe CPA members said that "*they only come, take pictures, write notes and then leave*" (Jaricha, 2013:101). Overall, the Masizakhe CPA argues that the land redistribution process has been very difficult due to the lack of government support (ECARP, 2016). They had reached out to various state departments for assistance with infrastructural and financial assistance, yet feedback has been relatively non-existent.

### 5.4.2 Lack of access to water for farming purposes

Currently Masizakhe farmers are supplied with water pumped from one solar pump, which is serviced by an Eskom power point. It has the capacity to deliver 3,000 litres per day supplying water for domestic use (Jaricha, 2013). There is also a fixed or immovable irrigation system. The members of the Masizakhe CPA share certain infrastructure with the Masibambane and Mlanjeni CPAs in terms of an agreement negotiated by ECARP. They are for instance currently sharing the main farmhouse that was vandalized before the transfer and needs significant renovation. The Masizakhe farmers also share the dipping and livestock facilities with Kamvalethu CPA as these are closer than other facilities on the other two farm units.

The issue of water is a problem cutting across the province of Eastern Cape and it remains a big challenge especially to emerging farmers who are currently working with ECARP. In 2016, for instance, farmers did not receive enough rains in Eastern Cape, which means that there were negative implications for many of the small-scale farmers working with ECARP, as they largely utilise water-harvesting methods for their fields and gardens (Jaricha, 2013; ECARP, 2016). The implications of this involved a decrease in the micro-farmers' yields from the previous growing cycle (concerning crop production) as well as the dying of livestock. In turn, this negatively affected the marketing rates of the small-scale farmers' food production as well the as their total production value.

### 5.4.3 Lack of various inputs

Some of the Masizakhe farmers have complained to ECARP that they do not have access to various inputs that they need for them to successfully produce enough food for their families, as well as for selling on the market. Beyond the question of water access, they have mentioned seeds and experts who can teach or train them on how to grow certain crops (ECARP, 2016; ECARP, 2017). These inputs are essential because they enable the farmers to produce better food with high quality and quantity. One of the farmers, in referring back to the state, indicated that "*the government is supposed to provide us with infrastructure in order for us to be able to work and manage our farms but the government does not do anything regarding provision of the priority support than can make us productive*' (ECARP, 2016:5). It is impossible for ECARP to replace the state in terms of agricultural support and inputs. In fact, for ECARP, it is quite strenuous to pursue any significant and ongoing support and resources (on an annual basis), if only because it has other programmes that, it needs to support in the context of its own institutional and funding constraints.

## 5.5 CONCLUSION

Through a study of the food security and sovereignty programme in particular, and in relation to the Masizakhe land redistribution project, this chapter has sought to examine the ways in which ECARP seeks to engage in a participatory manner with the beneficiaries of this programme. There is no doubt that ECARP makes significant and sincere efforts to use participatory methodologies, in the ways detailed in this chapter. To a certain extent, there does seem to be meaningful downward accountability, as ECARP goes out of its way to involve its beneficiaries in the different stages or phases of participation in a DNGO programme. The fact that the beneficiaries are not meaningfully involved in the very formulation and overall planning of the programme does not necessarily entail a criticism of ECARP as such. In a very significant manner, the world-wide development system (of which DNGOs are a part) is donor-driven, and this means that beneficiaries of DNGO operations enter into the participatory process subsequent to initial conceptualisation and planning of DNGO programmes and projects.

# CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of the thesis was to examine critically the development programmes of DNGOs using ECARP as a case study with a particular focus on its food security and sovereignty programme among small-scale farmers on redistributed farms (Masizakhe farm) in the Eastern Cape Province. In exploring ECARP's development programmes, the thesis contextualises ECARP as an organisation operating in a world-wide development system funded by international donors (typically, bilateral and multilateral agencies) whereby they have to compete for the same funding with other DNGOs working on improving the livelihoods of its beneficiaries. Operating in such a competitive terrain is sometimes difficult; therefore, ECARP has to find ways to manoeuvre in order to fulfil its mission and goals. This involves negotiating with donors and government on one hand, and on other hand with small-scale farmers in order to its primary goal – that of uplifting the living standards of marginalised groups.

On this basis, the thesis sought to explore the ways in which ECARP seeks to position itself in the face of upward accountability to donors and downward accountability to its beneficiaries, such as small-scale farmers. In addition, the thesis identified the key internal organisational challenges faced by ECARP in pursuing its food security and sovereignty programme. In the following section, I explore the subsidiary objectives of the thesis with the goal of understanding ECARP's food security and sovereignty programme and later address the main objective and how the theory (interface theory) assisted in making conclusions about the programme. Lastly, this concluding chapter highlights some limitations and provides some recommendations for future studies.

## 6.2 ADDRESSING THE SUBSIDIARY OBJECTIVES

As a local based development NGO, ECARP has been conducting its developmental work at a provincial level collaborating with small-scale-farmers, and farm workers and dwellers in different municipalities. From the start of its operations, it has progressed significantly both in its management of staff and its programmes and it has adapted well to pressures from its donors, government and beneficiaries (with reference to the first subsidiary objective). Working in a complex agrarian terrain, ECARP has over the years focused on fair labour standards and living conditions, food security and sovereignty, research and social mobilisation. These programmes are closely connected to each other as they are designed to meet the day-to-day needs of small-scale farmers, farm workers and dwellers while simultaneously supporting them to critically engage with structural poverty and inequalities (ECARP, 2007:3-4). ECARP has geared its programmes towards building the organisational capacities of small-scale farmers, farm workers and dwellers, which involves intensive processes and activities that are relevant, creative and stimulating for participants (ECARP, 2015). Over the past few years, in relation to the scope of ECARP's operations, the number of small-scale farmers, farm workers and dwellers engaged in micro farming and small-scale farming to satisfy household needs and for sale in local markets has increased. Therefore, in the discussion that follows, there is a close connection between ECARP's different programmes and projects.

Under its food security and sovereignty programme, as set out earlier, ECARP strives to meet the needs and interests of small-scale farmers, trying to ensure that each farmer has produced sufficient food security for household consumption and be able to sell some goods at the market. At the same time, it seeks to promote self-reliance and collective action among small-scale farmers and micro-food producers (ECARP, 2017:35). This food security and sovereignty programme is part of the broader programmatic reach of ECARP, and it was shown (in pursuing the first subsidiary objective) how it connects to the other programmes. Operating in a complex agrarian sector filled with uncertainties due to the absence of successful and meaningful land redistribution, ECARP strives to transform the living conditions of small-scale farmers, farm workers and dwellers through its four main programmes. In all its programmes, ECARP ensures that there is a balance between the needs of small-scale farmers, farm workers and dwellers, and this is done through activities such as workshops, training and peer group sessions. Thus, each programme although connected to the others is designed in a way that meets the needs of all their beneficiaries.

In pursuing its food security and sovereignty programme among small-scale farmers, ECARP has to remain accountable to small-scale farmers, and this involves meeting the needs and interests of small-scale farmers. In seeking to promote downward accountability to small-scale farmers, ECARP uses participatory methodologies as a key way of involving its beneficiaries in the food security and sovereignty programme. The central question becomes the extent to which any significant accountability takes place in practice, as per the second subsidiary objective of the thesis. As indicated by Ebrahim (2003; 2012), in order for DNGOs to be accountable to their beneficiaries, it is not enough simply for them to claim to be working on behalf of beneficiaries and meeting their needs; this must be demonstrated as well through seeking to engage with beneficiaries in an ongoing participatory manner. Deep participation, as Kumar (2002) puts it, entails beneficiaries being involved in decision-making, planning and consultation of DNGO programmes, as this will facilitate a sense of beneficiary ownership and empower beneficiaries in the process. In the context of ECARP, it is important to see from the results whether small-scale farmers participated in the food security and sovereignty programme.

This study does shows that beneficiaries of ECARP's food security and sovereignty programme are involved in a range of participatory processes which go some way to ensuring a level of downward accountability. These include community consultations, decision-making and planning of the programmes. Feedback meetings were particularly significant as an accountability mechanism because they focus specifically on how communities view ECARP's food security and sovereignty programme. For ECARP, feedback meetings form an integral part to the organisation because they focus specifically on how communities view ECARP's food security and sovereignty programme. The views of farmers are important to the organisation as they reflect on whether farmers understand the meaning, purpose and the overall objective of the programme. It is through these feedbacks that ECARP gains broader sights about whether the programme is sustainable to farmers and if at all fits into the mission, goal and values of ECARP.

The study showed that, during the feedback meetings, small-scale farmers were given the platform to share their opinions on how they felt about the food security and sovereignty programme thus far, including whether it was helping in improving their livelihoods or not. Several results on the impact of the programme were collected from the farmers. ECARP has produced each year more groups reporting about the improvement in their families' livelihoods through the food security and sovereignty programme. This includes one family highlighting that through the food security and sovereignty they managed to fence their plots and send their children to school. Others have indicated that they have managed to improve their houses. As well, some have managed to expand their markets, selling more crops such as vegetables not only within their geographical area among farm workers and dwellers but to small shops in Grahamstown. Through the involvement of these farmers in the food security and sovereignty programme, building wider social networks with other farmers from different municipalities (therefore increasing social capital) has been possible.

In promoting downward accountability, the study shows that ECARP consulted beneficiaries before the start of their projects, and this involves inviting Masizakhe members both women and men to attend meetings on the food security and sovereignty programme. During these meetings, ECARP staff attempt to assess the needs of beneficiaries including what farmers want to grow during the season. Some of the needs that were highlighted by beneficiaries included to have access to water so that they can be able to grow their crops, as they felt they were going to receive little rain during the season. In addition, they also highlighted the need to fence their fields and others wanted to meet with government officials from the Department of Agriculture (ECARP, 2016).

The other findings revealed that some farmers felt that they were not involved enough in the formulation of the action plan for the project. In this manner, they argued that ECARP came to them with already packaged project goals and objectives. This is because sometimes farmers are not organised; therefore, consulting them might take longer and this derails the whole implementation of the project as argued by ECARP (ECARP, 2016; ECARP, 2017). Therefore, it remains important for ECARP to ensure full participation of farmers in all the processes undertaken during the implementation of the food security and sovereignty programme. Being unable to involve farmers may reduce or withdraw beneficiary-friendly services, which are essential for delivering effective programmes, to reduce costs or increase profitability. ECARP’s position, as articulated above, speaks to the organisational imperative of the DNGO, as it wants to minimise complexity in order to be able to complete projects as fast as possible.

Because of the organisational imperative of wanting to complete projects as fast as possible, sometimes this eliminates the use of participatory methodologies as seen in the findings above. It then promotes upward accountability instead of downward accountability to small-scale farmers. In itself, upward accountability is not problematic given that ECARP needs to be accountable for funds disbursed and used during the implementation of the food security and sovereignty programme and other programmes. ECARP receives funds from its donors such that the very existence of ECARP, as well as the quality, sustainability and effectiveness of the food security and sovereignty programmes, is contingent upon donor funding. The donor funds disbursed towards the food security and sovereignty programme has assisted ECARP in many ways to reach out to many small-scale farmers and farm workers within the geographical areas that ECARP works.

To ensure that the funds disbursed towards the food security and sovereignty programme are not used inappropriately ECARP submits annual and quarterly reports to donors stating the progress of the food security and sovereignty programme throughout the growing season. As argued by Ebrahim (2003:121), such arrangements are not in-themselves problematic as they make sure that DNGOs are using donor funds in a legitimate proper manner. They thus form an integral part of the principle-agent contracting relationship between donors and DNGOs respectively. As highlighted above, the central question becomes the extent to which any significant accountability takes place in practice, as per the third subsidiary objective of the thesis.

The study shows that writing reports to donors was important for ECARP during the implementation of their food security and sovereignty programme because it allows them to alert their donors on the issues that may need urgent attention while farmers are still growing their crops. For instance, in one of their reports to their funders, they indicated that farmers were receiving low rains and as a result the likelihood of producing low food security and at the end of the growing was going to be high (ECARP, 2016). The farmers had already indicated that during their community consultation that they might receive low rains during the season; therefore, they needed access to boreholes for them to farm. Within a short space of time after submitting their report, ECARP received one pump to support farmers at Masizakhe. For ECARP, therefore, the regular reporting is important for them because it means frequent communication between donor and ECARP as highlighted by the director of ECARP: “Regular reporting helps to clarify issues on the food security and sovereignty and to develop good working relationships with donors” (Interview with the director of ECARP on 7 January 2019). Hence, the process of writing reports to donors assist ECARP in implementing successfully its food security and sovereignty programme.

One of the problems that arose regarding the issue of writing annual and quarterly reports is that sometimes it is time consuming. Under its food security and sovereignty programme, ECARP has separate project or grant agreements with different funding partners including; MISEREOR, Fasternopfe and First Rand Foundation. These donors set standards on how the programme should be implemented including the types of indicators that should be used in assessing the overall impact of the programme to small-scale farmers (ECARP, 2017). In this manner, for each report to the donors ECARP has to follow the set standards and use the indicators provided to them by the donors when assessing the overall food security and sovereignty programme.  Completing all the reports for each donors on time sometimes becomes difficult and because of this, it forces them to speed up the project in order to meet deadlines so that they maintain good relationships with their funders.

With reference to the fourth subsidiary objective, the study shows that the organisation lacks technical skills. Among its current staff, there are few staff with technical skills about the food sovereignty programme. They do not have agricultural and agronomy experts as a result of this they rely heavily on external experts mainly from the government. On several occasions when farmers need training or workshops on climatic changes and other related farming matters, ECARP has to hire external experts. Farmers need training on how to control pests and water conservation during drought periods. In addition, experts should teach them about technical issues related to farming; for example, livestock and veld management under drought conditions (ECARP, 2015: ECARP, 2016). The study has shown as outlined before that the relationships between DNGOs and government is sometimes complicated. Regarding the issue of ECARP’s staff, when the organisation needs technical experts and agronomists to respond to emergent requests from ECARP they delay. Lack of well-trained and technical experts hinders ECARP to successfully carry out its programs including the food sovereignty programme.

Connected to this is the issue of lack of support from the government as a result, government limitations inhibit the organisation in carrying out its projects successfully. For instance, with the food security and sovereignty programme, farmers needs technical training from agronomists and agriculturalist on a wide range of topics. In most cases, these experts come from various government departments; however, it is difficult for ECARP sometimes to set up meetings with these experts as they claim to be busy most of the time. In some instances, they postpone meetings and this has a huge impact on ECARP because it also means they are going to delay implementing their projects. It is not only ECARP that is affected but also the farmers because sometimes they end up not producing food in high quantity and quality.

## 6.3 ADDRESSING THE MAIN OBJECTIVE

The main objective of the thesis was to examine ECARP's development programmes focusing on its food security and sovereignty programme on redistributed farms (such as Masizakhe) in Eastern Cape Province. Therefore, in addressing this main objective, the study found out that the food security and sovereignty programme is part of the broader programmatic reach of ECARP, and it was shown how it connects to the other programmes (see chapter 4). Together with the other three programmes, ECARP strives to improve the living conditions of farm workers, dwellers and small-scale farmers in the agrarian sector. It seeks to promote economically sustainable and ecologically sound livelihood strategies and agricultural production system among its beneficiaries. The overall goal of ECARP's food security and sovereignty programme is to give farmers the right to define their own food systems and agriculture (which satisfy their needs), alongside the formation of independent and collective groups among small-scale farmers and micro-producers so that they can support each other (ECARP, 2017:35).

The food security and sovereignty programme in particular has had positive effects and impacts for small-scale farmers. With small-scale farmers, the focus is to be able to produce enough food for their families and to supply local markets with fresh, nutritious produce (ECARP, 2016). The dynamic political and economic context poses an ongoing risk to sustainability and livelihood vulnerabilities to small-scale farmers. This is so because the agro-climatic conditions related to climate change have been particularly unfavourable over the past cropping seasons. There has been extensive drought, which has caused crop failures and livestock deaths and this has caused difficulties in meeting some of the food security and sovereignty indicators.

In addressing the main of objective of the thesis, the study shows that the indicators that ECARP uses for its food security and sovereignty programme do not capture the complexity of ECARP's food security and sovereignty programme with small-scale farmers adequately. The SMART indicators that ECARP uses only talks about quantitative measurements without providing an indication of what has qualitatively changed or improved. In fact, the indicators seem more ambitious given the general farming context including drought, limited access to water and access to quality productive land. As argued by Ebrahim (2003), indicators should be realistic and achievable. For example, one of the indicators said that 70% of 730 food producers (400 small-scale farmers and 330 farm dwellers without reference to households) would have secure livelihoods through small-scale agriculture (ECARP, 2017). These are only numbers with no specific results showing how the programme itself has changed the livelihoods of farmers. Sometimes farmers receive grants or do other paid work in addition to farming their own vegetables or small-scale livestock production as a way of reducing livelihood insecurity and vulnerability. This means the changes in their livelihoods has not only been because of their farm produce; instead, they pursued other alternatives to secure their livelihoods or to supplement what they make from farming. Therefore, if the indicators do not show clearly how the results the food security and sovereignty has shaped or changed the lives of farmers, this affects the final assessment of the impact of the programme on farmers' livelihoods.

In pursuing its food security and sovereignty programme, the study indicated that ECARP seeks to promote downward accountability to small-scale farmers, and uses participatory methodologies as a key way of involving its beneficiaries in the food security and sovereignty programme. For ECARP, the use of participatory methodologies forms an integral part of the organisation as it empowers small-scale farmers, farm workers and dwellers. This involves getting small-scale farmers to participate during feedback meetings, consultations, decision-making, monitoring and evaluation of the food security and sovereignty programme. In addition, ECARP conducts exchange visits with small-scale farmers; these visits included engagement around water conservation methods, open-pollinated seed banking and innovative marketing strategies, sustainable grazing management practices and open-pollinated seed festivals. All these mechanisms, as the study shows, allow for reasonable involvement of small-scale farmers.

Furthermore, under its food security and sovereignty programme, small-scale farmers have committees, which serve the purpose of acting as project steering committees to ensure the timely and successful completion of the food security and sovereignty project. These committees encourage greater solidarity and cooperation among small-scale farmers and micro-food producers in terms of production and marketing. In this regard, as it has been discussed above, that the quality of lives of the small-scale farmers and micro-food producers is being improved through engaging in such strategies. The use of agro-ecological farming methods, which is aimed at thriving in food and seed sovereignty, is also being steadily cemented in the various communities (ECARP, 2016). Concerning the food security and sovereignty programme, committees serve as the feedback loop or complaints procedure through which the ECARP provides feedback to community members. (ECARP, 2016). The beneficiaries in turn use the mechanism to complain to ECARP on issues that are affecting them during the growing season of their crops or other issues related to the food security and sovereignty programme.

In addition, ECARP conducts monitoring and evaluation of the foods security and sovereignty programme which involves collecting quantitative data such as detailed farm production records, and the number of women and men who have attended meetings, trainings and workshops under the programme (ECARP, 2017:9). Through monitoring and evaluation it allows ECARP to see how well the food security and sovereignty programme fits into the values and missions of the organisation and the lives of farmers and workers.  They also monitor and grade farm committees according to their success in settling claims (ECARP, 2017). Both ECARP and small-scale farmers are involved in the process using designed indicators for the programme. These monitoring processes are done either monthly to quarterly, reporting on outputs, activities and resources as a way of ensuring that what has been planned is going forward as intended and within the resources allocated for the programme (ECARP, 2016).

In drawing upon interface theory (see chapter 2), the thesis attempted to offer an innovative way of theorising about and critically analysing the work of DNGOs as a specific organisational forms. The interface theory argues that DNGOs exist in a space characterised by continuities and discontinuities in interests, values and power, and operating in and through negotiations along multiple interfaces (Long & Villarreal, 1993: 143). In this context, the thesis understood ECARP as an organisation operating in a complex and difficult terrain in this case the agrarian sector. The general context of land and agricultural reforms in which ECARP operates produces an overall challenging terrain to work in. Securing inputs for farming, getting access to specific government departments, and assisting small-scale farmers and farm labourers so that they can move beyond precarious livelihoods, have all been a great challenge under the land redistribution programme.

As highlighted previously, the South African agrarian sector has not yet been transformed, the markets are still highly controlled by white commercial farmers as such emerging small-scale farmers including farm workers and dwellers struggle to compete in such terrain. Much power is still vested in the hands of white commercial farmers in the agrarian political economy in comparison to the aforementioned groups. The government on the other hand has failed to assist these emerging farmers to fit into the main agrarian sector. Because of this, ECARP has to constantly negotiate with governments to ensure that the needs and interests in this context producing food sufficient for household consumptions are met for small-scale farmers the same way the government addresses the issues that affects commercial farmers. In some instances, the negotiations are fruitful in other cases they are not because sometimes the government does not respond or delays with responses to ECARP. The inability of the government to be on the forefront in assisting ECARP during its implementation of the food security and sovereignty programme has an overall impact on both the organisation and small-scale farmers. On this basis therefore, it can be argued that the agrarian sector in which ECARP operates implementing its food security and sovereignty and other programme is a place filled with tensions such that ECARP uses negotiations (with government departments) in order to fulfil its mission and goals.

In addition, the issues of power also resonates in the context in which ECARP operates when implementing its food security and sovereignty programme. In this manner, power differentials and the capacity to set agendas certainly complicates the relationship between ECARP and its donors. Donors have the right and responsibility (and thus the authority) to delineate the very character of development interventions as well as to give and restrict financial resources to DNGOs, while beneficiaries are beholden to the wishes and wants of donors (White & Killick, 2001). Under its food sovereignty programme, three donors fund the programme and each funder sets out standards and indicators of how ECARP should implement the project. For this reason, the study has shown that the process of writing reports is time-consuming. On this basis, it means ECARP has little or no voice in questioning some of the standards and indicators that the donors might have designed which later contributes to the long process of writing reports, as they have to report accordingly for each funder. Sometimes they are caught up in bureaucratic systems, which sometimes forces them not to criticise or question their donors because they want to maintain good relationships. As a result, this sometimes undercuts the effectiveness of the entire programme. In this context therefore, it can be argued that the way power manifests itself in the relationship between ECARP and its donors indicates complex struggles and negotiations over authority and resources, with the power to negotiate on the part of ECARP exceedingly limited (Long, 1981).

Though donors possess and enact power vis-à-vis DNGOs, interface theory recognises that interfaces are points or nodes of negotiation. This implies that DNGOs are not mere victims of donor machinations, as they do have some room to manoeuvre. Hence, it involves some degree of negotiated autonomy vis-à-vis donors, as their continued existence is necessary for the international development system. In the case of ECARP, the thesis argues that under its food sovereignty programme the room to manoeuvre and negotiations is minimal.

## 6.4 LIMITATIONS OF STUDY AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The current study sought to contribute to the general body of knowledge about DNGOs and with specific reference to DNGOs in South Africa and their activities in relation to land redistribution. There seems to be less research undertaken with specific reference to development programmes of DNGOS in the agrarian sector. There is vast literature on the development programmes of DNGOs both internationally and within Africa focusing on education and health to mention a few. However, there is limited literature especially in the South African context of the development programmes of DNGOs focusing on issues related to land and agriculture. The most common research that was done includes the one done by Nauta (2001) on advocacy in the agrarian sector. Besides the existing work of Nauta (2001), there was no significant research that was conducted especially with reference to the food security and sovereignty programme. Therefore, there was heavy reliance on ECARP's internal documents and reports to sufficiently contextualise the food sovereignty as a development programme. In addition, there are no sufficient theories to theorise DNGOs. This study recommends for future researchers to look into the development programmes of DNGOs in South Africa with specific reference to food security and sovereignty. In addition, it is also important to devise ways of theorising about DNGOs. It is hoped that this thesis will stimulate other researchers to consider these research endeavours.

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# Appendix 1

Scheduled Interview Questions

1. Are small-scale farmers involved in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating
2. What are the key internal organizational challenges faced by ECARP in pursuing its food security and sovereignty programme?
3. To what extend does donor funding impacts ECARP's food security and sovereignty programme?
4. How effective is the food security and sovereignty programme to the livelihoods of small-scale farmers?
5. What other programs have you initiated to complement the food security and sovereignty programme
6. Does the government (Department of Agriculture) assist you in getting farming equipment's and resources and if so to what extend?