

Rural Development



The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) is committed to ensuring that South Africans in rural areas enjoy the same benefits as those in urban areas regarding the human rights and basic dignity guaranteed by the Constitution.

The DRDLR deals with land reform; access to land use; management and transformation of land relations; and all other matters related to the hopes and lifestyles of those who live on the land and who depend on the land for their livelihoods.

The department's key priorities are to:

- roll-out the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) to all rural municipalities
- improve productivity in land reform projects through effective implementation of the Recapitalisation and Development Programme
- expedite the finalisation of land claims
- improve corporate governance and ensure enhanced service delivery
- implement proper change management and innovation strategies
- enhance the efficiency of information management systems.

The CRDP is aimed specifically at reducing poverty by creating vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities.

To achieve this vision, the department defined its role and mission as being that of facilitating integrated development and social cohesion through partnerships with all sectors of society.

One of the department's most important strategic objectives is agrarian transformation.

The agrarian transformation strategy is aimed at:

- social mobilisation to enable rural communities to take initiative
- sustainable settlements with access to basic services and economic opportunity; the meeting of basic human needs; and infrastructure development
- the establishment of cooperatives and enterprises for economic activities; wealth creation; and productive use of assets
- non-farming activities for strengthening rural livelihoods
- leadership training, social facilitation and familiarity with CRDP objectives; and socio-economic independence
- skills development and employment creation for youth, women and people living with disabilities

- the democratisation of rural development, and participation in and ownership of all processes, projects and programmes by rural communities
- coordination, alignment and cooperative governance by local municipalities, traditional councils, provincial government and rural communities
- participation of non-governmental organisations including faith-based organisations, community-based organisations and other organs of civil society
- social cohesion and access to human and social capital.

Legislation and policies

The Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Act of 2014 extends the deadline for land claims to June 2019.

The amendment also criminalises false and fraudulent claims that have been deemed a waste of taxpayers' money, where people submit land claims, knowing that they do not have a valid historic claim to a piece of land.

The Act reopens the window for persons or communities dispossessed of their land due to past discriminatory laws and policies to lodge claims.

Extending the deadline for the lodging claims was in line with the proposals of the National Development Plan (NDP), the CRDP and other growth strategies intended to promote national reconciliation and social cohesion.

Cabinet also approved the submission of the report on the Audit of Registered State Land and a desktop analysis of private land ownership in South Africa for submission to Parliament.

The audit aims to determine the quantity of state-owned land and what it was used for.

The land audit will be used to enhance the integrity of the land register, which will serve as the basis for enhanced land planning and administration, including other functions relating to property portfolio management and improved delivery of services.

About 1,15 million land parcels have been surveyed. Fourteen per cent of land in South Africa is state owned, 79% is privately owned and 7% has not been registered.

About four million ha of unregistered land in the former Transkei are occupied by citizens and will be transferred either by the State or private owners once the verification process has been concluded.

In August 2013, President Jacob Zuma signed into law the Spatial and Land Use Management Act, 2013 (Act 16 of 2013), which seeks to bridge the racial divide in spatial terms and transform the settlement patterns that put a considerable burden on public resources.

The Act will also ensure that the restructuring of South African cities, towns and settlements is in line with the priorities and principles of the democratic government.

The objectives of the Act are to:

- provide for a uniform, effective and comprehensive system of spatial planning and land-use management
- ensure that the system of spatial planning and land-use management promotes social and economic inclusion
- provide for development principles, norms and standards
- provide for the sustainable and efficient use of land
- provide for the cooperative government and intergovernmental relations among the national, provincial and local spheres of government
- redress the imbalances of the past and ensure that there is equity in the application of spatial development planning and land-use management.

President Zuma also assented to the Cooperatives Amendment Act, 2013 (Act 6 of 2013).

This is an amendment to the Cooperatives Act, 2005 (Act 14 of 2005), which came into effect on 2 May 2007.

This Act provides for the establishment, functions and powers of the Cooperatives Development Agency. Among other things, the amendment provides for associate membership of cooperatives, the annual submission of information to the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC), categories of primary cooperative and the national apex cooperatives.

Besides providing for the establishment, composition and functions of the Cooperative Tribunal, the Act provides for a cooperative to apply for a declaratory order in respect of the liquidation process, and for the registrar of the tribunal to order the winding-up of a cooperative.

In 1995, the United Nations resolved to celebrate International Day of Cooperatives to recognise the role that cooperatives play in social and economic development and in creating a conducive environment for the development of this form of business. International Day of Cooperatives was celebrated in South Africa in July 2013.

The legislation amends the accounting practices by providing for the audit and independent review of cooperatives, the payment of fees by the cooperative for the amalgamation, division and conservation, including the transfer of cooperatives.

The Cooperatives Amendment Act of 2013 states that the provincial departments of economic development, under which cooperatives in South Africa fall, will be responsible for coordinating and reporting all cooperative activities in the provinces involving other departments and stakeholders, while the municipalities will be responsible for coordinating activities within their area of jurisdiction.

Budget and funding

In the 2013/14 financial year, the department earmarked R240 million to revitalise irrigation schemes on 5 000 ha of land in Valhaarts, Taung; and five schemes in uMkhanyakude, Uthungulu, Mzinyathi and Zululand districts in KwaZulu-Natal; and three schemes in the Eastern Cape including the Keiskama and Ncora irrigation schemes to increase food production in the country.

The department allocated R220 million to improve animal and veld management across the country.

Some R70 million was budgeted for roads and bridges across the country, including bridges in Pniel, and in Wuperthal, Western Cape, as well as a bridge and road in Diyatalawa, Free State.

In the agricultural value-chain, budgets were made available for R60 million in poultry, R32 million in dairy, R100 million in the fruit and vegetable industry, and R300 million in grains.

To recapitalise 552 farms and acquiring 170 000 hectares, R2,7 billion was set aside.

The Commission received about R3 billion, in settling 438 claims across the country.

For the formulation of spatial plans in municipalities, which will focus on rural and poor municipalities, and drafting the National Spatial Framework, which is a requirement of the NDP, R68 million was budgeted.

A budget of R25,2 million was allocated to formulating the Integrated Information Systems.

An amount of R448 million was budgeted in the development of the e-Cadastre system, which will enable a holistic view of land ownership, and to answer the question of who owns South Africa.

Role players

National Reference Group

The National Reference Group is an inclusive structure that represents varied interest groups ranging from beneficiaries, organised agriculture and civil society to academics and experts on land and agrarian issues. National reference groups constitute five working groups in respect of policy proposals made by the department in the Green Paper, namely the Land Management Commission; Land Rights Management Board and committees; Office of the Land Valuer-General; Three-Tier Tenure System; and Legislative Amendments and communal tenure.

Geospatial and cadastral services

The national geospatial information component is responsible for the national control survey network, the national mapping and aerial imagery programmes and the provision of geospatial information services.

The Braille atlas for the visually impaired who can read Braille is a first in South Africa and is primarily intended to give visually impaired people access to geospatial information (maps).

This component will continue its map literacy and map awareness training for adults, and support to educators and learners to promote the use of geospatial information. Priority will be given to rural communities.

Aerial imagery is a significant source of geospatial information and a record of the land at a given time. National geospatial information acquires aerial imagery annually. The CRDP sites have been prioritised. The branch will also assist in creating orderly and sustainable rural settlements by ensuring alignment and harmonisation of rural development plans with existing planning frameworks, including provincial growth and development strategies and integrated development plans.

The department has considered the adverse affect disasters have on rural areas and the lives of rural people and included in its strategy a disaster management component, which, together with other sector departments, will coordinate responses to rural disasters.

During 2012/13, the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform created nearly 35 000 jobs and further provided 17 279 people with various skills.

The enterprise development arm of the rural development branch generated 16 044 of these jobs, while infrastructure development created 5 838 jobs.

Cadastral surveys management

Cadastral surveying is the survey and demarcation of land for the purpose of defining parcels of land for registration in a land registry.

Cadastral surveying in South Africa is undertaken exclusively by or under the control of professional land surveyors.

South Africa not only allows the private ownership of property but also, in the case of land, actively encourages it. Initially all land derives from the State but, should the State wish to give or lend a piece of land to one or more of its citizens for that person to develop and to enjoy its use, cadastral surveying becomes necessary.

Cadastral surveying is used to define the land to be granted. Later, should the owner wish to sell off part of that land, the cadastral surveyor is again called in to partition the land to be sold. Furthermore, the services of the cadastral surveyor are required whenever a boundary beacon must be found or replaced.

Once the positions of the boundaries have been marked and recorded, the cadastral surveyor and the conveyancer work together to record ownership in a public register. This action ensures that the rights of the owner can be upheld against false claims and that all persons may know who owns what.

Deeds registration

There are 10 deeds registries in South Africa whose core responsibility is to:

- register real rights in land
- maintain a public land register
- provide registration information
- maintain an archive of registration records.

The deeds registries are in Pretoria, Cape Town, Johannesburg, Bloemfontein, Nelspruit, Pietermaritzburg, Kimberley, Vryburg, Mthatha and King William's Town.

These offices register deeds and documents relating to real rights in more than eight million registered land parcels consisting of township erven, farms, agricultural holdings, sectional title units and sectional title exclusive-use areas in terms of the Deeds Registries Act, 1937 (Act 47 of 1937), and the Sectional Titles Act, 1986 (Act 95 of 1986).

To take deeds-registry services to the people, the department aims to establish a deeds registry in every province. The Deeds Registry is open to any member of the public for them to access information regarding:

- the registered owner of a property
- the conditions affecting such property
- interdicts and contracts in respect of the property
- the purchase price of the property
- rules of a sectional title scheme
- a copy of an antenuptial contract, deeds of servitude and mortgage bonds
- a copy of a sectional title plan
- township-establishment conditions
- information relating to a property or deed.

Deeds registration has progressively introduced e-Cadastre, which is aimed at improving cadastral surveys management and deeds registration as well as the consolidation of data stores.

As far as the e-Cadastre Project is concerned, the enterprise architecture investigation, which is aimed at consolidating cadastral surveys and deeds registration data stores, has been concluded. Digital scanning of the microfilm records has commenced.

Commission on the Restitution of Land Rights (CRLR)

In September 2013, Parliament's Ad Hoc Committee on Land Reform and Redistribution embarked on a nationwide public consultation programme as part of the reopening of the land reform and redistribution process. The week-long consultations formed part of the coordinated oversight activities by Parliament to reverse the legacy of the Native Land Act (1913). The consultations took place in Limpopo, North West and KwaZulu-Natal. During the visits, parliamentarians were joined by members of the provincial legislatures, the public, traditional leaders and other stakeholders to enquire about the systems put in place and to monitor processes for the reopening of the lodgement of land claims to enable the CRLR to implement a fair and transparent programme.

Several projects were visited to get input and feedback from those who benefited during the first phase of lodgement. The oversight assisted parliamentarians in relation to land restitution. At the end of the consultation process recommendations were made on the removal of blockages preventing the restitution of land. The recommendations were tabled before the National Assembly in September 2013. In September 2013, Cabinet approved the Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Bill, which proposes the deadline for all land claims be extended to 2018.

Programmes and projects

Animal and Veld Management Programme (AVMP)

In September 2013, the Ministry of Rural Development and Land Reform unveiled the AVMP.

It is aimed at providing relief for farmers in rural areas operating under challenging circumstances made worse by spatial congestion and environmental degradation owing to overgrazing.

The programme will also help with soil rehabilitation, spatial decongestion and greening of the environment. It is part of government's intervention towards reversing the legacy of the 1913 Natives' Land Act, which led to the majority of black people being confined to 13% of the land, resulting in challenges of overcrowding and overgrazing in communal areas.

The department will identify farmers in communal areas who have showed potential for successful farming. Based on their track record, such farmers will be moved into some of the state-owned farms to enable them to expand their farming operations.

The AVMP is expected to reach the country's 24 poorest district municipality areas.

Comprehensive Rural Development Programme

The CRDP is focused on enabling rural people to take control of their lives, with support from government. The programme aims to deal with rural poverty effectively through the optimal use and management of natural resources through an integrated broad-based agrarian transformation and the strategic investment in economic and social infrastructure that will benefit rural communities.

By January 2013, 2 656 CRDP-beneficiaries had been skilled and capacitated in technical enterprise development trade; 52 councils of stakeholders had been established as representative community forums; the CRDP had been rolled out to 157 rural wards, 143 698 poor households had been profiled to assess their needs; 692 km of fencing had been erected in the CRDP wards; and 96 km of roads had been upgraded.

In February 2012, President Zuma announced that government would pursue the "just and equitable" principle for compensation, as set out in the Constitution instead of the "willing buyer, willing seller" principle, which forces the State to pay more for land than the actual value.

The Best Female Entrepreneur Award is an annual competition which recognise, celebrates, honours and rewards the continuous contributions made by women in the fight against hunger, poverty and unemployment among rural communities.

In August 2013, the North West Department of Agriculture and Rural Development planted a variety of vegetables and fruit trees for 70 families in Marikana, Segwaelane, Wonderkop and at the local home-based care centre near Rustenburg.

This is aimed at encouraging backyard gardening in rural communities. Garden tools, rakes, spades, forks, watering cans, fertiliser and spray bottles were also handed over.

This project forms part of the department's One Family, One Food Garden Campaign, which aims to combat vitamin and mineral deficiency, which is the leading cause of malnutrition in many rural areas.

Rural Enterprise Infrastructure Development (REID)

REID aims to create an enabling institutional environment for vibrant and sustainable rural communities.

The Social Organisation and Mobilisation Unit is primarily responsible for the promotion of a participatory approach to rural development to ensure that rural communities are able to take full charge of their collective destinies.

The approach is predicated on social mobilisation of rural communities, so that there can be ownership of rural development projects and programmes.

The participatory approach is used to assess the needs of the rural areas through the profiling of households and communities.

The needs assessments are conducted through participatory rural appraisal methods, which also offers communities the opportunity to prioritise their needs.

The Technical Support, Skills Development and Nurturing Unit provides technical support to the institutions and structures established in rural communities, through skills development and capacity building. The unit determines skills levels of rural communities through household profiles, and develops training programmes aligned to interventions and economic opportunities. It is also responsible for the implementation of the job creation model, which is aimed at improving households' basic needs, as well as promoting economic livelihoods.

The job-creation model further entails the empowerment of rural communities through skills transfer, developing artisans and enabling communities to start their own enterprises.

The Rural Livelihoods and Food Security Unit forms strategic partnerships that are important to the improvement of rural livelihoods, by promoting both economic development and the development of rural enterprises.

These strategic partnerships also facilitate value added services such as agriprocessing and the establishment of village industries and enterprises.

The strategic partners involved are from the private sector, state-owned enterprises and international organisations.

The Institutional Building and Mentoring unit is responsible for facilitating, building and mentoring institutions in rural communities.

This function involves the identification of existing institutions and the assessment of needs, including building new institutions to ensure sustainable development.

The unit is responsible for the establishment and facilitation of community structures such as the Council of Stakeholders. It is also responsible for establishing and building the capacities of cooperatives.

Communal Property Association (CPA)

The CPA Act 28 of 1996 is aimed at enabling communities "to form juristic persons, to be known as CPAs, to acquire, hold and manage property on a basis agreed upon by members of a community in terms of a written constitution; and to provide for matters connected therewith."

In November 2012, government held a two-day CPA workshop to discuss the Act and explore ways in which communal land located in rural areas could benefit those who live on it by unlocking the underlying mineral wealth. The workshop formed part of the department's ongoing consultation process with all its stakeholders to create a deeper understanding of one of government's key priority areas – rural development. The department used the platform to establish various national reference groups, with the first meeting held early in January 2013.

National Rural Youth Service Corps (Narysec)

During 2013, 12 881 rural youth enrolled for the skills training programme.

Narysec youths between the ages of 18 and 35 are recruited from the 3 000 rural wards, irrespective of gender and disability.

These youths are trained in various skills such as wastewater management, water purification, construction, electricity and agriculture so that they are marketable and can open their own businesses.

Government's aim for the youth is to enable them to develop their own rural areas once they are fully skilled.

After completion of the two-year training programme, they are redeployed in their communities.

The long-term strategic objectives of the programme are to:

- reduce youth unemployment in rural areas
- increase literacy and skills among rural youth
- increase the disposable income of youth in rural areas through employment and entrepreneurial opportunities
- reduce dependence on transfers from family members working in urban areas.

The youth benefited from agriculture programmes introduced by the department.

The Eastern Cape benefited from 2 603 enterprise development jobs, including 1 971 infrastructure jobs and an intake of 2 400 Narysec youths, while KwaZulu-Natal scooped a total of 5 047 jobs. The Free State had 1 613 rural development jobs, Gauteng 3 993, Limpopo 4 274, Mpumalanga 2 635, Northern Cape 2 275, North West 3 048 and the Western Cape 4 405.

Land Reform Programme

The principles which underpin the new approach to sustainable land reform are:

- deracialisation of the rural economy
- democratic and equitable land allocation and use across gender, race and class
- strict production discipline for guaranteed national food security.

In the Eastern Cape, the Rural Development Agency, as established in terms of the Rural Development Strategy, was in place by June 2013. Through the Siyazonzila programme 25 540 households have been supported in the stimulation of food security at household level in rural and peri-urban areas. Over 8 951 hectares of land were cultivated as part of the Government's robust intervention to revitalise agriculture in rural areas. This included both mass production for food security as well as commercialisation to boost primary production. On the revitalisation of irrigation schemes, Shiloh, Ncora, Kieskammahoeke and Zanyokwe, significant improvements were also made towards becoming fully operational.

The year 2013 was the centenary of the Natives' Land Act of 1913 (Act No. 27 of 1913) promulgated on 19 June 1913, which is seen as providing the cornerstone of laws that followed, for a systematic process of land dispossession by the State.

By the end of January 2013, 77 979 claims had been settled which was 97% of the total claims, translating to 1,443 million ha and benefiting 13 968 female-headed households and 672 persons with a disability.

Strategic support was provided to 416 new emerging farmers through recapitalisation in addition to the existing 595 farms that were supported at a cost of R1,2 billion. Work on revitalising eight irrigation schemes, namely Ncora and Keiskamma Hoek in the Eastern Cape; Taung in North West; Vaalharts in the Northern Cape; Nkomazi in Mpumalanga; and Tugela Ferry, Nsuze and Bululwane in KwaZulu-Natal commenced.

The department also revived the Butterworth abattoir and tannery to assist local communal livestock farmers to become part of the red meat value chain.

A total of 823 300 ha had been acquired and redistributed since 2009. Of this, 7 000 ha were allocated to provide the core estate for the Cradock Bio-ethanol Project in the Eastern Cape. The project will be implemented in partnership with the departments of trade and industry, economic development, rural development and land reform, agriculture, forestry and fisheries, energy and the provincial departments of agriculture.

Smallholder support programmes are being reviewed and a smallholder plan is being developed. These plans are supported by some agro-processing programmes, including soya bean processing, canning, biofuels, furniture, and food processing industries, as well as small-scale maize milling in rural areas.

Other developments include the launch of the Zero Hunger Programme and the Aquaculture Programme. Zero Hunger creates opportunities for the smallholder sector to grow by opening up institutional markets for their benefit, such as the School Nutrition Programme, hospitals and clinics.

As part of the implementation of the National Climate Change Response Policy, long-term adaptation scenarios are developed to determine which sectors may be climate sensitive and to develop response strategies.

Recapitalisation and development

During the past four years, another 7 000 jobs have been created during the department's implementation of the Recapitalisation and Development Programme, which saw 1 269 farms that had been lying fallow being converted into 100% productive farms.

The department's service-delivery programmes have created over 40 000 jobs.

Various rural development jobs have come about because of such initiatives as constructing bridges, schools, health facilities, roads and other infrastructure-related activities.

Infrastructure jobs were created during the first phase of rural development at identified rural development pilot sites and the CRDP sites in all nine provinces.

The introduction of the second phase of rural enterprises saw a huge jump in the number of jobs created in rural areas between 2009 and June 2012.

During the implementation of these infrastructure and enterprise projects several rural villagers, especially youths and women, benefited from the accompanying skills development.

This initiative culminated in 17 279 people gaining skills in various trades such brick-making, road paving, and the construction of houses and bridges.

Though the effect of the international economic downturn has depressed the property market, activities related to registering deeds are buoyant and continue to play a major role in the economy, as evidenced by the monetary value of transactions amounting to trillions of rand each year.

During July and August 2013, the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, in partnership with the Gauteng Provincial Government, hosted the 1913 Natives' Land Act Exhibition at the Nasrec Expo Centre near Soweto.

