



# **United Nations Development Programme**

## **Final Evaluation of the Land Reform and Rural Development Project in South Africa**

### **Final Report**

15 January 2021



## **Preface and acknowledgements**

This is the final report of the Final Project Evaluation of the Land Reform and Rural Development Project. The Project is a collaboration between UNDP in South Africa and the South African Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD, formerly the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, DRDLR). Collaboration between the two entities commenced in 2011 with the objective of supporting DRDLR to operationalise its policies and provide technical support in developing policies and legislation that will promote equitable access to land and sustainable rural development. A Project Document was signed in 2013; and the Project Document period (as extended) concludes in 2020.

The evaluation was commissioned by UNDP South Africa and was conducted between June 2020 and January 2021. Ms Cara Hartley conducted the evaluation, with analytical, editing, and administrative support of Ms Ntina Reiersgord and Ms Anele Msomi. All three are consultants at PDG.

The evaluator thanks the UNDP Resident Representative, Dr Ayodele Odusola, and the Deputy Resident Representative, Mr Gabriel Dava, and the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development former Director-General, Mr Mdu Shabane, for sharing insights from their respective organisations to inform the evaluation. The evaluator thanks those who managed and supported the evaluation, especially Mr Frederick Shikweni, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist at UNDP, Ms Nomagugu Ndlela, Project Manager for the Project under evaluation, Mr Hilton Toolo of DALRRD, and Mr Letsholo Mojanaga, former Programme Manager: Inclusive Growth at UNDP. Thanks also to other management and staff, former and current, of UNDP and DALRRD as well as the outside experts who generously gave of their time to contribute insights in interviews.

## Project and evaluation information details

Project/outcome information	
<b>Project/outcome title</b>	Land Reform and Rural Development Project
<b>Atlas ID</b>	00039371
<b>Corporate outcome and output</b>	Growth and development are inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded
<b>Country</b>	South Africa
<b>Region</b>	Africa
<b>Date project document signed</b>	11 November 2013
<b>Project dates</b>	2011 to 2020
<b>Project budget</b>	\$3 484 744
<b>Project expenditure at the time of evaluation</b>	\$3 387 409
<b>Funding source</b>	Cost-sharing: South African Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development and UNDP South Africa
<b>Implementing party</b>	UNDP South Africa

Evaluation information		
<b>Evaluation type</b>	Project	
<b>Final / midterm review / other</b>	Final	
<b>Period under evaluation</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>End</b>
	2011	2020
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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

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AAPMP	[National] Agriculture and Agro-Processing Master Plan
ANC	African National Congress
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CD	Chief Director
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
CGE	Commission for Gender Equality
CLTB	Communal Land Tenure Bill
COO	Chief Operating Officer
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CPD	Country Programme Document
CRDP	Comprehensive Rural Development Programme
CSA	Cost Sharing Agreement
DALRRD	Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
DDM	District Development Model
DFID	Department for International Development
DG	Director General
DIRCO	Department of International Relations and Cooperation
DPSA	Department of Public Service Administration
DRDLR	Department of Rural Development and Land Reform
ESTA	Extension of Security of Tenure Amendment Act
EWC	Expropriation without Compensation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GLTN	Global Land Tool Network
GMS	General Management Services
HLP	High-Level Panel on the Assessment of Key Legislation and the Acceleration of Fundamental Change
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
ILAS	Integrated Land Administration System
LASES	Land Size and Efficiency Simulation
LRD	Land Redistribution and Development
LTA	Land Tenure and Administration
MDG's	Millennium Development Goals
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTSF	Medium-Term Strategic Framework
NARYSEC	National Rural Youth Service Corps
NDP	National Development Plan
PFMA	Public Finance Management Act
RALHB	Regulation of Agricultural Land Holdings Policy and Bill
RR	Resident Representative
SA	South Africa
SBAA	Standard Basic Assistance Agreement
SCF	Strategic Cooperation Framework
SEIAS	Socio-economic Impact Assessments
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework



## **Executive summary**

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### **Introduction**

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in South Africa has been in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) ('the Department') since January 2011, with the intent of enhancing government capacity to design and implement improved policies on land reform and rural development. With the Project scheduled to end in March 2021, the purpose of the evaluation is to provide information about the project results achieved through its implementation, with the resources allocated.

The Report is divided conceptually into two parts: The first part provides background and a framework for the evaluation. The second part, starting with the section on Findings, answers the key evaluation questions and presents evaluative judgements and implications.

### **Evaluation methodology**

The evaluation was conducted between June 2020 and January 2021. The criteria applied are relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability. Eight key evaluation questions were formulated, unpacking these criteria. A theory-based approach was applied, using the Project theory of change as a basis for evaluative judgements. Key claims which stakeholders were interested in testing were identified in the inception phase and particular attention was paid to addressing them. These included whether the Project had yielded value for money. The methodology involved analysis of Project documentation and conducting of 27 interviews with stakeholders of UNDP, DALRRD, and experts who had undertaken work for the Project.

### **Description of the Project**

The Project has mainly provided upstream policy development technical support. UNDP has a comparative advantage as a repository of strong technical knowledge and expertise in specific areas of relevance to South Africa's development trajectory, including vast international expertise on land reform and rural development. The Project was able to leverage this expertise that resides in the international UN system; and also attracted high calibre international and local technical experts to support South African policy and strategy development in this area. Furthermore, considering the sensitivity of land reform in South Africa, UNDP through this Project offered the comparative advantage of being seen as an impartial development partner. Key project activities included: advisory and policy research and analysis work, technical expertise support, and support to consultations related to the drafting of land reform and rural development policies and international knowledge and information exchange.

### Project contribution highlights

**Seven important policies** which benefited from Project support, are currently in force in South Africa. Project support included: contributions to the Green Paper on Land Reform (2011); informing the Extension of Security of Tenure Amendment Act (2018); and Communal Property Associations Amendment Act. The Project also provided **socio-economic impact assessment (SEIA) support** to inform bills and policies currently under discussion. Highlights of **strategy support** include knowledge support to the Operation Phakisa process (2016) on Agriculture, Land and Rural Development; and a new theory of change that is informing the National Agriculture and Agro-Processing Master Plan (2020). The Project also undertook several initiatives to **increase the exposure of South African policymakers and implementers** to international experience in these policy areas, through study tours (2019) and the participation of international experts in the National Land Tenure Summit (2014) and Land Administration Workshop (2019) and other events.

The Project's ultimate intended impact, aligned to that of the Department, is to contribute to agrarian reform, land reform, and rural development – with the expected societal benefits of reduced poverty, inequality and unemployment. Work was undertaken in line with four overarching outputs: (1) Integrated rural development strategy developed; (2) A coherent strategy and plans to facilitate equitable access to land and development completed; (3) International Information Exchange Programme to share experiences from other countries on equitable access to land; (4) Inclusive multi-stakeholder forum established to discuss how access to land can contribute to poverty reduction.

The Project has been anchored in the Chief Directorate: Policy Research and Development<sup>1</sup> of DALLRD and the Inclusive Growth Programme of the UNDP. It is intended to be governed by a steering committee which, according to the Project Agreement (Prodoc) would meet quarterly, and would be co-chaired by the UNDP Resident Representative (RR) and Department's Director-General (DG) and attended by relevant staff from the Departmental branches and UNDP country office. This committee failed to meet as regularly as intended, only meeting four times between 2016 and 2020. This is attributable partly to insufficient institutionalisation of the steering committee in the Department and high levels of turnover in the Department's executive management.

The Project is implemented on the basis of a Cost-Sharing Agreement between the two entities. The total cost (as of December 2020) is estimated at \$ 3 484 734,40 (R40 889 263,24), of which the UNDP has contributed \$983 069.54 (R10 408 245,24) and the Department \$2 501 664,86 (R30 481 018). This translates to a 75%-25% split in contributions with the Department contributing the larger share.

## Findings

### Relevance

The Project is appropriately designed to enable the Department to leverage the comparative advantages of UNDP described above. The Project design is clear in terms of its intended problem statement, activities, outputs, intended outcomes and contribution to impact. There is consensus that the core intention of the Project is to provide technical support to enable sound policy and strategy in South Africa's land reform and rural development. The Project

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<sup>1</sup> Until 2013, the Chief Directorate: Policy Research and *Legislation* Development. The Legislation function became a separate unit in 2013.

has clear relevance to, and has contributed numerous pieces of research and policy development support to the cross-cutting goals of gender and women's empowerment, the State's agenda of transformation and restorative justice, and accelerating the pace of land reform and rural development. The Project also contributed to several policy processes which could potentially increase access to land and/or economic opportunities.

Project implementation arrangements have made it possible to pick up on, and respond to, changing needs of the Department in a dynamic policy environment, even though the steering committee did not facilitate broad and regular consultation and communication on Project objectives and strategy as it was intended to. The Project has also been able to shape national priorities in some ways, which is in line with its intent, and is further discussed in the following section. Restructuring in both organisations have not required any significant changes from the Project so far. There is some uncertainty as to the response that will be required from the Project in the coming months (and if renewed, the next few years) pertaining to the medium-term effects of COVID-19.

Despite the challenges outlined above, the evaluation found the Project's activities to be responsive to Departmental priorities and in line with the Project's objectives; and funding transfers to the Project were approved by the Accounting Officer and Chief Financial Officer, signalling endorsement. Nevertheless, senior decision makers in both DALRRD and UNDP stressed the importance of institutionalising the steering committee (or similar) in order to improve communication and consultation on Project activities. Such communication and consultation could have clarified why a small number of individuals argue that the choice of activities did not fully optimise the potential benefit of the partnership, while the evaluation does not find instances of irrelevant activities.

In addition to being responsive to changing policy needs, the Project through the calibre of expertise that it secured, has also been able to inform national priorities in some ways, such as by facilitating consensus on a problem statement and strategy for transformation of the structure of the economy, particularly the agricultural sector as expressed in the DALRRD theory of change of the Agriculture and Agro-Processing Master Plan.

## **Effectiveness**

In terms of outputs, the Project has produced over 100 reports, position papers, consultation reports, advisory notes, concept papers, etc, benefiting at least 20 policies, bills and acts that were being developed, drafted, or considered. Most of the areas of work were in direct support of specific policy and strategy processes, and were focused on upstream policy development as per the Project design. Stakeholders from DALRRD, UNDP, representatives of various interest groups and beneficiaries were exposed to the high calibre of expertise, that the Project was able to avail to South African policy and strategy process. Those interviewed expressed appreciation for this high calibre of expertise, as well as the significant exposure to international experience that the Project availed to these processes, and the significant contributions made to the research and evidence base on which policy and strategy is based. There is general satisfaction among all Project stakeholders interviewed with the quality of the content of outputs (be they knowledge products, support to processes, or events such as consultations or study tours).

The main definition of *effectiveness* in this Project is the extent to which it shaped sound land reform and rural development policy and strategy. For this to happen, the Project's research outputs and other products should feed into policies, laws, or strategies that are adopted for

implementation. Based on this understanding, the Project has had mixed success. Eight such pieces have been adopted/enacted, of which one is no longer in force. Five progressed to an advanced stage but were not adopted/enacted, including the Regulation of Agricultural Land Policy and Bill which benefited from extensive Project support. Another six processes are still underway and it is too soon to report on whether they have been adopted/enacted. There is no suggestion that it is the quality of Project outputs that hampered the enactment/adoption of these items. Instead, the internal Project documentation and stakeholder interviews attributed each of these stalled processes to specific shifts in political priorities. The realm of policymaking is inherently complex, and the South African land reform policy environment is particularly contested, given the country's history and divergent interest groups. The Project was also implemented in a context of high turnover in political leadership. Therefore during the life of the Project there have been some changes in policy emphasis and priorities which are largely beyond the control of the Project partners.

However, in the last few years it has also become clear that policy processes may initially stall only to be taken further later, whether in the same or a revised format. The timeframes for this are not always predictable. For this reason, there are grounds to withhold judgment on the effectiveness of Project support for several years after a process appears to have stalled. In such a situation, stakeholders may disagree on the success or effectiveness of the work, if they only consider whether Project support translated into policies that were adopted. Clear communication of what has been achieved and where the process stalled is essential to continued support for the Project. As for the variety of work that was focused on strategy or other processes (not on a single specific policy), it is harder to make cross-cutting judgments on the effectiveness of this work. The full report discusses the outcomes of these pieces of work, noting mostly positive findings on their effectiveness.

In terms of participation, Departmental structures and processes ensured that the relevant officials in the Department participate thoroughly in setting Departmental priorities for policy and strategy development. These officials also participated in the development of policies and strategies relevant to their area of work. Departmental officials outside the Chief Directorate did not participate directly in the planning or monitoring of the UNDP support, however. This seems to have limited the information and understanding that some of them have of the Project. But it has not prevented their ownership of the policies and strategies developed with Project support. As pertains to external stakeholders (other spheres of government, civil/community groups, industry associations etc.), the Project increased the capacity available for stakeholder consultation in policy and strategy development. There is evidence of extensive consultation across all sectors of society on the policy development work of the Department through summits, socio-economic impact assessments, inception/consultative workshops and other activities.

## **Efficiency**

Compared to government or the private sector, the Project was economical in its main area of spending, namely experts. This appears to be a realisation of UNDP's comparative advantage in accessing international experts; experts appear willing to work at reasonable rates because of the reputation of UNDP.

There were some significant delays in moving to full-scale implementation of the project, and further delays at times in the Department transferring funds, which reportedly led to some delays in implementation. Nevertheless, stakeholders by and large considered the project

management efficient. This is a value add for the Department even if it is not UNDP's primary value offering.

Project management may have been further improved if the project had been staffed as per the original design with not just a Project Manager but also a project associate. The evaluation finds that the management systems (financial management, planning, reporting systems etc.) largely facilitated the delivery of the project's outputs, although the use and understanding of these systems by the Department could be improved.

The Project supplemented UNDP's internal technical expertise with Resident Technical Advisors – international experts who were expected to play a broader strategic advisory role in the Project. Still some UNDP stakeholders believe UNDP could have played an even stronger role in shaping how the Project approached its activities, aligned to other institutional knowledge, systems and expertise in the broader UN system, and thereby adding further value in these policy areas.

### **Sustainability**

The Project built government's capacity, first and foremost, by supporting the introduction of policies and strategies. The national policies and strategies that have been adopted / endorsed have the potential to contribute to large-scale, long-lasting changes in the country. In addition, the project offered national stakeholders plenty of exposure to the views and products produced by high calibre technical experts and international experiences. Over time this has shifted stakeholders' understanding of the challenges and possibilities that the sector faces. There may be scope for the Project to support the development of scarce skills through international partnership. There is potential for the Project to foster more formal partnerships between the Department and other entities / institutions (as opposed to only short-term, project-based collaboration). This would contribute to ongoing institutional and individual capacity development and help to sustain the benefits of work already produced going forward.

The project has also generated a considerable body of research, records of consultations, and analysis that has the potential to be used going forward. Recent experience has underscored that the Department is able to use knowledge products to which the Project contributed several years ago, when issues re-emerge as a priority. Earlier, stakeholders were concerned that there is a risk of loss of institutional memory of these products, but this is being addressed by a project to consolidate these knowledge products and also process some of them for dissemination to wider audiences.

It is clear across all stakeholder groups that there are real needs for further policy development and reform, which are crucial to address, even more so in light of the extreme socio-economic vulnerability highlighted by COVID-19. Government has formally committed to a range of policy work in this sector and stands to benefit from continued UN policy support in this regard. In an increasingly fiscally constrained environment, such support depends on prioritisation of not only this Department / sector, but specifically policy research and development work.

## Summary of Recommendations

### Optimising the benefits of work done to date

1. DALRRD and UNDP senior executives should have an engagement to review the work done to date.
2. UNDP should support handover of policy development roles in DALRRD if needed.

### UNDP and DARRLD should enter into a similar Project, with the following recommendations:

3. Ensure adequate Project length.
4. UN agencies should coordinate and streamline support for optimal benefit.
5. Institutionalise technical expertise in Project design.
6. Cost-sharing approach remains appropriate.
7. Retain upstream focus; supplement with downstream work as appropriate.
8. Develop a theory of change which is responsive to DALRRD development priorities on land reform and rural development:
  - a. Include a detailed problem statement.
  - b. Elaborate briefly on each output statement.
  - c. Lay out causal pathways for the main anticipated types of Project support.
  - d. Explicit articulation of risks, as well as assumptions.
  - e. Update the theory of change periodically.
9. Partner entities should ensure clarity on key design aspects:
  - a. Public engagement with knowledge & evidence generated
  - b. Capacity building intent
  - c. Gender mainstreaming
  - d. Partnerships and networks which will outlast the Project.

### Optimising effectiveness in a dynamic policy environment

10. The Project should explore opportunities for engagement with policymakers.

### Cost-effectiveness and leveraging comparative advantage

11. Partners should agree on criteria to guide Project resource allocation.
12. UNDP should continue to prioritise South-South and triangular cooperation.

### Supporting utilisation, knowledge management and evaluability going forward

13. DALRRD staff should be involved in Project areas of work relevant to them.
14. The Project should compile and disseminate knowledge products produced so far.
15. The Project should prioritise careful packaging and communication of future knowledge products.
16. The Project should do basic monitoring of policy and strategy outcomes and impact.

### Communication and generating a shared understanding

17. DALRRD should institutionalise executive engagement with the Project.
18. UNDP should demonstrate the application of its comparative advantage.
19. Partner entities should have a clear, detailed, and documented agreement on financial as well as progress reporting.



## Abridged Report

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### Introduction

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in South Africa has been in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) ('the Department') since January 2011, with the intent of enhancing government capacity to design and implement improved policies on land reform and rural development.

With the Project's implementation period scheduled to end in March 2021, the purpose of the evaluation is to provide information about the project results achieved through its implementation, with the resources allocated.

The Report is divided conceptually into two parts: The first part provides background and a framework for the evaluation. The second part, starting with the section on Findings, presents the answers to the key evaluation questions and presents evaluative judgements and implications.

### Evaluation methodology

The evaluation was conducted between June 2020 and January 2021. The criteria applied are relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability. Eight key evaluation questions were formulated, unpacking these criteria. A theory-based approach was applied, using the Project theory of change as a basis for evaluative judgements. Drawing on contribution analysis principles, key contribution claims which stakeholders were interested in testing were identified in the inception phase and particular attention was paid to addressing them. These included whether the Project had yielded value for money.

The methodology involved analysis of extensive Project documentation and conducting of 27 interviews with stakeholders of UNDP, senior managers at DALRRD, and experts who had undertaken work for the Project. These data sources offered a good foundation for judging results up to the outcome level (adoption of policies or strategies to which the Project contributed). Given limited engagement with implementation staff and communities, the evaluation is tentative in its discussion of whether the Project's benefits have had an impact on the ground.

### Description of the Project

The Project has mainly provided upstream policy development technical support. UNDP has a comparative advantage as a repository of strong technical knowledge and expertise in specific areas of relevance to South Africa's development trajectory (United Nations South Africa, 2013: 20–21), including vast international expertise on land reform and rural development. The Project was able to leverage this expertise that resides in the international UN system; and also attracted high calibre international and local technical experts to support South African policy and strategy development in this area. Furthermore, considering the sensitivity of land reform, UNDP through this Project offered the comparative advantage of being seen as an impartial development partner. Key project activities included: advisory and policy research and analysis work, technical expertise support, and facilitation of activities related to the drafting of land reform and rural development policies and international knowledge and information exchange.

### Project contribution highlights

**Seven important policies** which benefited from Project support, are currently in force in South Africa. Project support included: contributions to the Green Paper on Land Reform (2011) including exchanges on the policies and legislation that built on the foundation of this Green Paper subsequently; informing the Extension of Security of Tenure Amendment Act (2018); Communal Property Associations Amendment Act; and expert advisory support on the Policy on Beneficiary Selection and Land Allocation (2020) as well as the Land Donations Policy (2020). The Project also provided **socio-economic impact assessment (SEIA) support**, that informed bills and policies currently under discussion. Highlights of **strategy support** include high level knowledge support to the Operation Phakisa process (2016) on Agriculture, Land and Rural Development; and a new theory of change for Land Reform and Rural Development in South Africa that is informing the National Agriculture and Agro-Processing Master Plan (2020). The Project also undertook several initiatives to **increase the exposure of South African policymakers and implementers** to international experience in these policy areas, through study tours (2019) as well as participation of international experts in the National Land Tenure Summit (2014), Regulation of Agricultural Land Conference (2016), consultations towards initiating the Land Size and Efficiency Project (2018), and Land Administration Workshop (2019).

The Project's ultimate intended impact, aligned to that of the Department, is to contribute to agrarian reform, land reform, and rural development – with the expected societal benefits of reduced poverty, inequality and unemployment. In order to achieve this, work was undertaken in line with four over-arching outputs: (1) Integrated rural development strategy developed; (2) A coherent strategy and plans to facilitate equitable access to land and development completed; (3) International Information Exchange Programme to share experiences from other countries on equitable access to land; (4) Inclusive multi-stakeholder forum established to discuss how access to land can contribute to poverty reduction.

The Project has been anchored in the Chief Directorate: Policy Research and Development<sup>2</sup> of DALLRD and the Inclusive Growth Programme of the UNDP. The Project is intended to be governed by a steering committee which, according to the Project Agreement (Prodoc) would meet quarterly, and would be co-chaired by the UNDP Resident Representative (RR) and Department's Director-General (DG) and attended by relevant staff from the Departmental branches and UNDP country office. This committee failed to meet as regularly as intended, only meeting four times between 2016 and 2020. This is attributable partly to insufficient institutionalisation of the steering committee in the Department and high levels of turnover in the Department's executive management.

Figure I below offers an overview of key project events (see main report for a timeline situating these within the broader South African and UNDP legal and strategic framework).

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<sup>2</sup> Until 2013, the Chief Directorate: Policy Research and *Legislation* Development. The Legislation function became a separate unit in 2013.



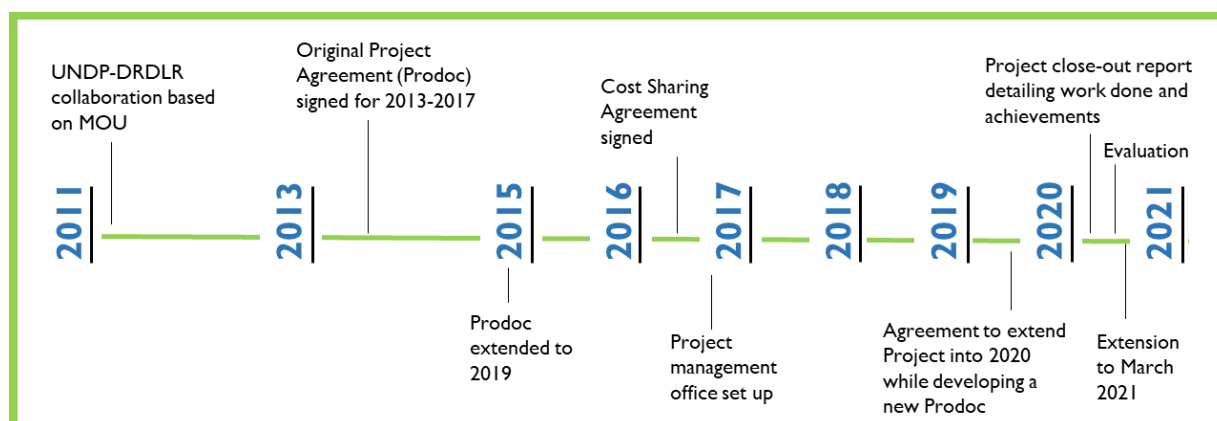


Figure 1. Timeline of key Project events

The Project is implemented on the basis of a Cost-Sharing Agreement between the two entities. The total cost (as of December 2020) is estimated at \$ 3 484 734,40 (R40 889 263,24), of which the UNDP has contributed \$983 069.54 (R10 408 245,24) and the Department \$2 501 664,86 (R30 481 018). This translates to a 75%-25% split in contributions with the Department contributing the larger share.

## Findings

### Relevance

The Project is appropriately designed to enable the Department to leverage the comparative advantages of UNDP described above. The Project design is clear in terms of its intended problem statement, activities, outputs, intended outcomes and contribution to impact. There is no dispute that the core intention of the Project is to provide technical support to enable sound policy and strategy in South Africa's land reform and rural development. This is the primary basis on which the project's results and effectiveness is measured.

The rationale for a partnership around land reform and rural development, as a means of achieving these entities' shared objectives of reducing poverty, inequality and unemployment, was clear to interviewed stakeholders across government, UNDP, and experts. Furthermore, the UNDP's comparative advantage in terms of technical knowledge and expertise came quickly to mind for both Department and UNDP respondents. UNDP's reputation and its vast global footprint allows it to access high-quality international expertise, offering opportunities to learn from international experience; and to ensure that the policies and strategies put forward by the Department are able to withstand scrutiny based on the research and evidence that underpins them. Furthermore, several interviewees noted that the topic of land reform is a contentious and politically sensitive one. In such an environment, UNDP was viewed by several as "an impartial organisation in a highly sensitive space", in line with UNDP's stated comparative advantage.

Where there was a concern of divergence between interviewee views around the rationale for the partnership, is on the project management efficiencies of UNDP in comparison to that of government. Several respondents from the Department and experts mentioned efficiencies such as "turnaround time" and "cost-effectiveness" as part of the rationale for working with

UNDP. While this adds to UNDP's attractiveness as a development partner, senior managers in both DALRRD and UNDP were concerned that the impression might be created that the Department uses UNDP merely, or predominantly, to simplify project management and procurement whereas UNDP should be a strategic partner which co-designs the support that it provides so that South Africa can benefit from UNDP's comparative advantages described above. The more common view was effective project management is one of several benefits of the Project, rather than the primary rationale for the partnership. In a review of all the main areas of work undertaken by the Project, the evaluation found them well aligned to the policy and strategic priorities of the Department as expressed in official plans and reports.

The Project has clear relevance to, and has contributed numerous pieces of research and policy development support to, the cross-cutting goals of gender and women's empowerment, the State's agenda of transformation and restorative justice, and accelerating the pace of land reform and rural development and promoting livelihoods and employment opportunities by promoting access to land and/or economic opportunities.

Project implementation arrangements have made it possible to pick up on, and respond to, changing needs of the Department in a dynamic policy environment, even though the steering committee did not facilitate broad and regular consultation and communication on Project objectives and strategy as it was intended to. The Chief Directorate's policy and strategic priorities were set through Departmental processes. The steering committee was intended to oversee the application of Project resources to support the development of these policies and strategies, but given that it was not meeting as intended the Chief Directorate mostly took on the responsibility for deciding, with UNDP, on the nature and focus of Project support. This allowed the Project to proceed and make valuable contributions despite the weakness of the oversight structure. The evaluation found the Project's activities to be responsive to Departmental priorities and in line with the Project's objectives; and funding transfers to the Project were approved by the Accounting Officer and Chief Financial Officer, signalling endorsement. Nevertheless, senior decision makers in both DALRRD and UNDP stressed the importance of institutionalising the steering committee (or similar) in order to improve communication and consultation on Project activities. Such communication and consultation could have clarified why a small number of individuals argue that the choice of activities did not fully optimise the potential benefit of the partnership, while the evaluation does not find instances of irrelevant activities.

Through the calibre of expertise that it secured, the Project has also been able to inform national priorities in some ways, such as by facilitating consensus on a problem statement and strategy for transformation of the structure of the economy as expressed in the DALRRD theory of change of the Agriculture and Agro-Processing Master Plan.

## **Effectiveness**

In terms of outputs, the Project has produced over 100 reports, position papers, consultation reports, advisory notes, concept papers, progress reports and workshop proceedings and presentations. These can be summarised into five areas of concentration (Figure 2). Much of the work was in the area of Policy Development Support: in this way, the Project contributed to the development, drafting or revision of at least 20 policies, bills and acts. (It should be noted that the type and size of contribution to these policies, bills and acts varied. See further discussion below.)

Most of the areas of work were in direct support of specific policy and strategy processes, and were focused on upstream policy development as per the Project design. Stakeholders<sup>3</sup> from DALRRD, UNDP, representatives of various interest groups and beneficiaries were exposed to the high calibre of expertise, that the Project was able to avail to South African policy and strategy process. Those interviewed expressed appreciation for this, as well as the significant exposure to international experience that the Project availed to these processes, and the significant contributions made to the research and evidence base on which policy and strategy is based. There is general satisfaction among all Project stakeholders interviewed with the quality of the content of outputs (be they knowledge products, support to processes, or events such as consultations or study tours). The interviewed experts and Department officials considered the work to be of good standard.

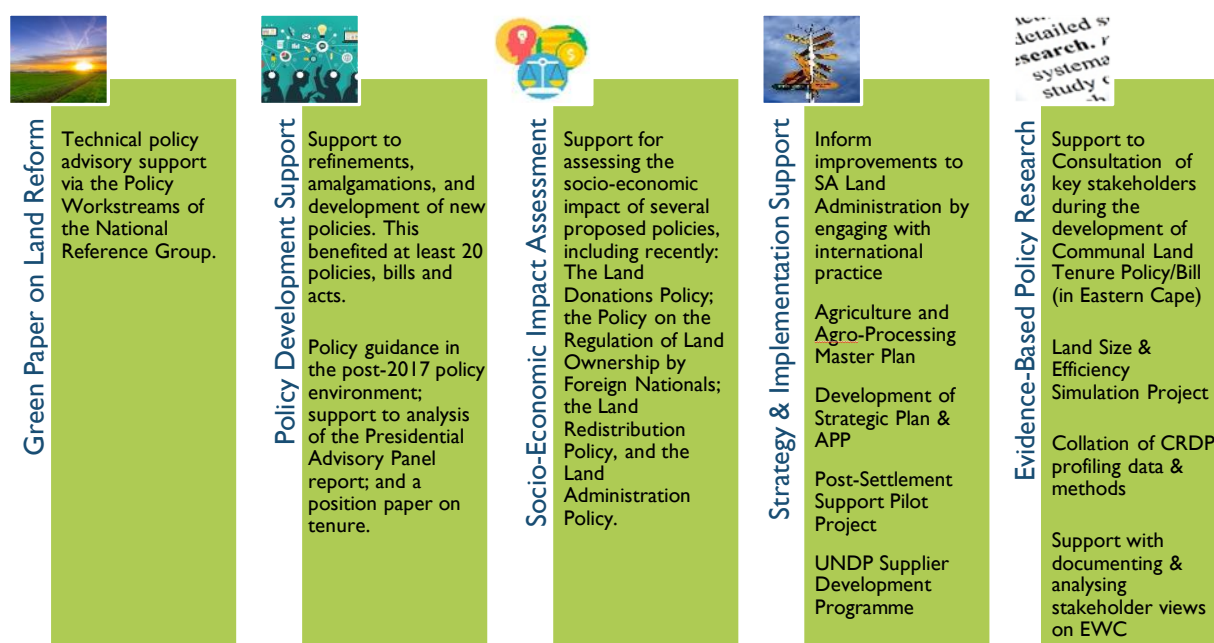


Figure 2. Project Areas of Concentration, 2011-2020

As expressed in the theory of change (and implicit in the discourse of project stakeholders), the main understanding of *effectiveness* in this Project is the extent to which it shaped sound land reform and rural development policy and strategy. For this to happen, the Project's research outputs and other products should feed into policies that are adopted, laws that are enacted, or strategies that are endorsed for implementation. To have an *impact* these should then be implemented and translate into changes in society, as shown in Figure 3.

<sup>3</sup> Stakeholders across the board in UNDP and DALRRD express great appreciation for the quality of experts brought on board through this project. Experts themselves also mentioned their appreciation of other experts that they interacted with. Many interviewees mentioned specific experts by name and discussed how they are held in high esteem, without being prompted by the interviewer.

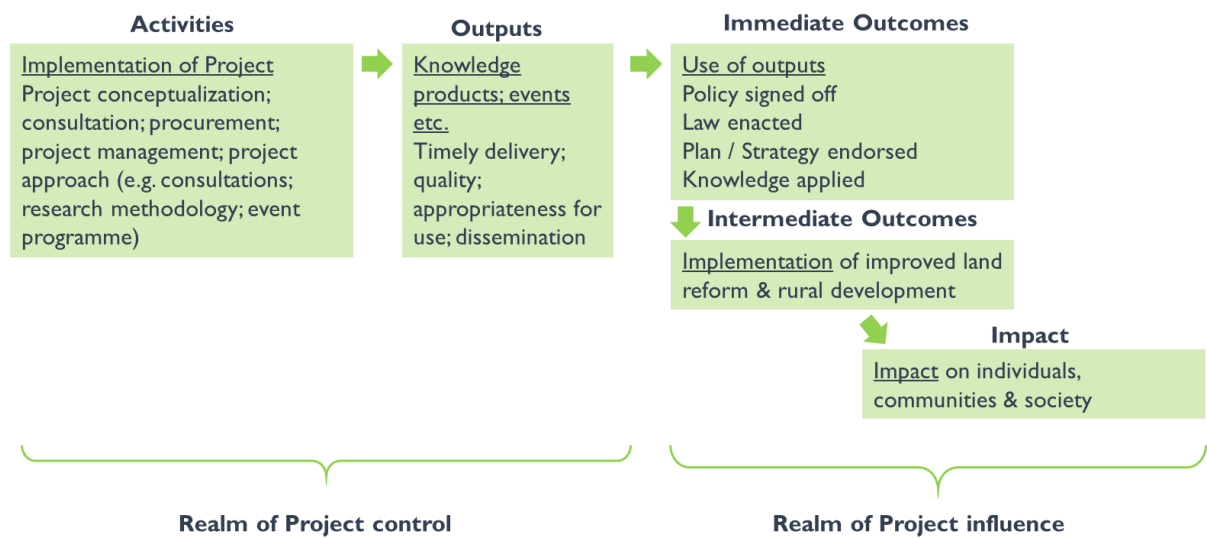


Figure 3. Impact pathway for policy or strategy support

Based on this understanding, the Project has had mixed success so far. **Error! Reference source not found.** shows that eight such pieces have been adopted/enacted, of which seven are in force with the potential to shape implementation, and one is no longer in force. Five progressed to an advanced stage but were not adopted/enacted, including the Regulation of Agricultural Land Policy and Bill which benefited from extensive Project support. Another six policy development processes are currently underway, and it is too soon to report on whether they have been adopted/enacted.

Importantly, **Error! Reference source not found.** lists policies and laws that benefited *in some way* from Project support. The extent of support varied; from a brief set of expert inputs on a proposal, to extensive consultation and collaborative policy drafting. It was however largely weighted towards policy development and, in the case of bills, to support SEIAs and making recommendations for improvement of bills after they were published for public comment. It is important to understand that the Project supported a Department in undertaking its own processes. See Annexure A: Overview of Project activities, for detail on the nature of support in every instance.

**Table 1. Status of policies and laws that benefited from Project support**

Laws/ policies that benefited from Project support & were fully enacted / adopted	Laws / policies that benefited from Project support, progressed to an advanced stage but not enacted / adopted
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Green Paper on Land Reform (2011)</li> <li>2. Property Valuation Act and Office of the Valuer General (2014)<sup>4</sup></li> <li>3. Policy on exceptions to the 19 June 1913 cut-off date and related Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Act (2014)<sup>5</sup></li> <li>4. Land Tenure Security for Commercial Farming Areas Policy, and Extension of Security of Tenure Amendment Act (enacted 2018) (ESTA Amendment)</li> <li>5. Agricultural Landholdings policy framework (2013)</li> <li>6. Electronic Deeds Registration Act (2018)</li> <li>7. Policy on Beneficiary Selection and Land Allocation (2020)</li> <li>8. Land Donations Policy (2020)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Regulation of Agricultural Land Policy and Bill (amalgamating 3 previously separate policies which also benefited from Project support)</li> <li>2. Land Management Commission Bill (2014)</li> <li>3. Communal Land Tenure Policy and Bill (2017)</li> <li>4. Communal Property Associations (CPA) Policy &amp; Amendment Bill<sup>6</sup> (2013; 2018)</li> <li>5. Agri-Parks Policy Framework<sup>7</sup> (2015)</li> </ol>
Recent policies currently proposed or underway and benefiting from Project support	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Input and commentary towards Comprehensive Producer Support Policy</li> <li>2. Land Tenure Reform Policy</li> <li>3. Integrated Land Administration System Policy Framework</li> <li>4. Draft Land Redistribution Policy Framework</li> <li>5. White Paper on Land Reform (Revision)</li> <li>6. Policy to Regulate Landownership by foreign nationals</li> </ol>	

There is no suggestion that it is the quality of Project outputs that hampered the enactment/adoption of the items that stalled. Instead, the internal Project documentation and stakeholder interviews attributed each of these stalled processes to specific shifts in political priorities. The realm of policymaking is inherently complex, and the South African land reform policy environment is particularly contested, given the country's history and the divergent and often opposing interests of different groups. Most policies have important implications for a

<sup>4</sup> An official who participated in the process of developing this policy, has stated that they do not remember UNDP's involvement, while a former UNDP staff member confirmed that this work took place during his time. Successive UNDP documents and steering committee project progress reports mention this contribution and one document describes UNDP's involvement as follows: "Advised on and refined work-stream draft". Unfortunately, detailed records on this work were lost. It seems probable that there was a UNDP contribution, but it was not communicated to all officials as a UNDP contribution and was not such a large role that it is still memorable nearly a decade later. However, more evidence would assist to substantiate the claim.

<sup>5</sup> Implementation was halted following a Constitutional Court judgement as to the quality of consultation in Parliament (outside the control of the Project).

<sup>6</sup> The Annexure to the Close-out report states that "The Communal Property Associations Bill was passed by the Portfolio Committee and the Select Committee but its assenting into law has been delayed."

<sup>7</sup> This is an example of where UNDP Project support was not a significant contribution. It is listed anyway as an international expert provided inputs to this.

wide range of political groups, economic interest groups, leaders of various types, academia, civil society and the individuals and communities who are landless or have insecure access to land. It is not uncommon for the interaction of these many factors to give rise to changes in political strategy. The Project was also implemented in a context of high turnover in political leadership. Therefore, during the life of the Project this has resulted in some changes in policy emphasis and priorities, which were largely beyond the control of the Project partners.

However, in the last few years it has also become clear that policy processes may initially stall only to be taken further later, since the needs that these policies seek to address tend to remain relevant. For instance, the Communal Land Tenure Policy and Bill has been recently re-introduced to the executive in a form that continues to draw extensively on the previous draft that was developed with Project support. The Communal Property Associations Amendment Bill stalled in 2014; then in 2018 was passed by both National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces but has been awaiting Presidential signature over a year. The timeframes for “resuscitating” these processes, and the extent to which they will draw on the elements that previously benefited from Project support, are not always predictable. For this reason, there are grounds to withhold judgment on the effectiveness of Project support for several years after a process appears to have stalled. In such a situation, stakeholders may disagree on the success or effectiveness of the work, if they only consider whether Project support translated into policies that were adopted. Clear communication of what has been achieved and where the process stalled, and appreciation for the fact that policy development is happening in a complex and contested environment, is essential to continued support for the Project.)

This raises the following insights:

1. The Project’s support may be effective in shaping the legal and policy framework in the long run, even if a policy process stalls initially.
2. Wherever the Project can support policies that enjoy sustained political support, it is more likely to be effective in the immediate term.
3. If there are ways to shape political support for policy processes, through the elements within the Project’s control (e.g. through the approach to Project implementation; timing of support; dissemination of knowledge products; participation in events; etc.) this may somewhat enhance the likelihood of adoption. However, as shown in the diagram above, the Project will never have full control of these factors.

Some stakeholders recognising these dynamics, have suggested that the Project may increase its effectiveness if it engages political decision-makers directly to share findings of research conducted or exposes them to international experience on relevant issues.

As for the variety of work that was focused on strategy or other processes (not on a single specific policy), it is harder to make cross-cutting judgments on the effectiveness of this work. Each of these was unique in what it set out to achieve. The full report discusses the outcomes of these pieces of work, noting mostly positive findings on their effectiveness. In terms of successes the Project made a major contribution to researching, developing, and building consensus on the theory of change for agro-economic transformation captured in the National Agriculture and Agro-Processing Master Plan. The support to the Department around



expropriation without compensation (EWC) assisted the senior management of the Department to engage proactively and in a considered way with this policy direction, benefiting from stakeholder perceptions, discussion sessions, and policy position papers.

### **Efficiency**

Compared to government or the private sector, the Project was economical in its main area of spending, namely experts. In 2019 the UNDP maximum daily rate for an expert was less than two-thirds the maximum of the Department of Public Service Administration (DSPA). Furthermore, the Project documentation shows that UNDP did not always set rates at the maximum limit; and several stakeholders are of the view that UNDP also offers access to experts that may not otherwise have been accessible to the Department. This appears to be a realisation of UNDP's comparative advantage in accessing international experts; experts appear willing to work at reasonable rates because of the reputation of UNDP.

In terms of efficient use of time, there were some significant delays in moving to full-scale implementation of the project, with a period of three years elapsing between the signing of the Project Document in 2013 and the signing of the Cost Sharing Agreement in 2016 (see timeline). There were also further delays at times in the Department transferring funds to the Project, which reportedly led to some delays in implementation. However, there have also been instances where UNDP was able to continue with implementation, drawing on its own funds until resources were transferred from the Department. This enabled a degree of implementation “smoothing” which may not have been possible for the Department if undertaking similar work internally. Furthermore, stakeholders by and large considered the project management efficient. This is a value add for the Department even if it is not UNDP's primary value offering.

Project management may have been further improved if the project had been staffed as per the original design with not just a Project Manager but also a project associate. The evaluation finds that the management systems (financial management systems, planning, reporting systems etc.) largely facilitated the delivery of the project's outputs, although the use and understanding of these systems by the Department could be improved.

Although the Project design did not include the appointment of a technical expert alongside the Project Manager, the Project Manager as well as some other staff in UNDP had some technical expertise in the policy areas of the Project. The Project supplemented UNDP's internal technical expertise with Resident Technical Advisors – international experts whose contracts were designed to enable them not only to produce specific deliverables but also to play a broader strategic advisory role in the Project. For instance, in 2018 the Resident Advisor met with the UNDP Resident Coordinator and Resident Representative to give advice beyond the scope of a single focus area to advise on UNDP's overall strategy with the Project. Still some stakeholders believe that UNDP could have played an even stronger role in shaping how the Project approached its activities, aligned to institutional knowledge, systems and expertise in the broader UN system.

### **Sustainability**

The Project built government's capacity, first and foremost, by supporting the introduction of policies and strategies. In addition, the project offered government officials plenty of exposure to the views and products produced by high calibre technical experts and international

experiences. Several projects featured several days of workshoping, discussion and co-creation between international experts and government officials – the LASES workshops and progress meetings, the June 2019 workshop, and Operation Phakisa being good cases in point. A small number of interviewees believed there was scope for the Project to facilitate more opportunities for technical skills development or training, and one of the remaining planned Project activities addresses this with regard to land administration.

The project has also generated a considerable body of research, records of consultations, and analysis that has the potential to be used going forward. Recent experience has underscored that the Department is able to use knowledge products to which the Project contributed several years ago, when issues re-emerge as priority. Earlier, stakeholders were concerned that there is a risk of loss of institutional memory of these products, but this is being addressed by a project to consolidate these knowledge products and also process some of them for dissemination to wider audiences. At the time of writing (December 2020) the Project is in the process of appointing a contractor for this.

There is potential for the Project to foster more formal partnerships between the Department and other entities / institutions (as opposed to only short-term, project-based collaboration). This would contribute to ongoing institutional and individual capacity development and help to sustain the benefits of work already produced going forward.

It is clear across all stakeholder groups that there are real needs for further policy development and reform, which are crucial to address, even more so in light of the extreme socio-economic vulnerability highlighted by COVID-19. Government has formally committed to a range of policy work in this sector and stands to benefit from continued UN policy support in this regard. In an increasingly fiscally constrained environment, such support depends on prioritisation of not only this Department / sector, but specifically policy research and development work.

## **Recommendations**

It is recommended that UNDP and the Department enter into a similar cost-shared Project. It should have a contract term of at least four years, to be able to follow through on processes implemented over the medium term as it has done up to 2020. Box 2 provides a summary of all recommendations; see the full report for elaboration on each. As per UNDP evaluation policy, after the finalisation of the evaluation report, a management response will be produced which provides UNDP and DALRRD the opportunity to accept or reject, with justification, these recommendations.



## Box 2. Summary of Recommendations

### Optimising the benefits of work done to date

1. DALRRD and UNDP senior executives should have an engagement to review the work done to date.
2. UNDP should support handover of policy development roles in DALRRD if needed.

**It is recommended that UNDP and DARRLD enter into a similar Project**, with the following considerations:

3. Ensure adequate Project length.
4. UN agencies should coordinate and streamline support for optimal benefit.
5. Institutionalise technical expertise in Project design.
6. Cost-sharing approach remains appropriate.
7. Retain upstream focus; supplement with downstream work as appropriate.
8. Develop a theory of change which is responsive to DALRRD development priorities on land reform and rural development:
  - a. Include a detailed problem statement.
  - b. Elaborate briefly on each output statement.
  - c. Lay out causal pathways for the main anticipated types of Project support.
  - d. Explicit articulation of risks, as well as assumptions.
  - e. Update the theory of change periodically.
9. Partner entities should ensure clarity on key design aspects:
  - a. Public engagement with knowledge & evidence generated
  - b. Capacity building intent
  - c. Gender mainstreaming
  - d. Partnerships and networks which will outlast the Project.

### Optimising effectiveness in a dynamic policy environment

10. The Project should explore opportunities for engagement with policymakers.

### Cost-effectiveness and leveraging comparative advantage

11. Partners should agree on criteria to guide Project resource allocation.
12. UNDP should continue to prioritise South-South and triangular cooperation.

### Supporting utilisation, knowledge management and evaluability going forward

13. DALRRD staff should be involved in Project areas of work relevant to them.
14. The Project should compile and disseminate knowledge products produced so far.
15. The Project should prioritise careful packaging and communication of future knowledge products.
16. The Project should do basic monitoring of policy and strategy outcomes and impact.

### Communication and generating a shared understanding

17. DALRRD should institutionalise executive engagement with the Project.
18. UNDP should demonstrate the application of its comparative advantage.
19. Partner entities should have a clear, detailed, and documented agreement on financial as well as progress reporting.

## I Introduction and Overview

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The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in South Africa has been in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development<sup>8</sup> (DALRRD) ('the Department') since January 2011, with the intent of enhancing government capacity to design and implement improved policies on land reform and rural development. The Project was jointly conceptualised and titled the "Integrated Comprehensive Rural Development Strategy and Promotion of Access to Land", or in short, the Land Reform and Rural Development Support Project ('the Project'). The Project mainly provided technical assistance support to the Department's policy and strategy processes. Key project activities included: advisory and policy research and analysis work, technical expertise support, and facilitation of activities related to the drafting of land reform and rural development policies and international knowledge and information exchange.

Towards the end of 2019, the Director-General (DG) of DALRRD and the Resident Representative (RR) of UNDP-South Africa agreed to extend the Project by a year and to start developing a new Project Document (ProDoc) in early 2020<sup>9</sup>. They also agreed that a close-out report should be drafted. Subsequently the heads of the two institutions agreed on a further extension to March 2021 to wrap up the remaining Project activities.

With the Project's implementation period scheduled to end in March 2021, the purpose of the evaluation is to provide information about the project results achieved through its implementation, with the resources allocated. The primary audiences are DALRRD and UNDP. It may also provide insights for other stakeholders with a mandate or interest pertaining to this policy area, or international cooperation in South Africa and beyond. The findings and insights gained will be used to inform the remaining period of Project implementation, and any next phase if applicable. With this in mind, the evaluation criteria applied are relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability.

The Report is divided conceptually into two parts: Sections 1 to 5 provide background and a framework for the evaluation. Sections 6 to 10 present the findings, evaluative conclusions, and implications in terms of recommendations and lessons learned.

## 2 Description of Intervention

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### 2.1 Overview of the Project

The Project grew out of collaboration that commenced between the UNDP South Africa and the Department in 2011. As noted above, the Project mainly provided technical assistance to the Department's policy and strategy processes.

The Project was initiated based on the shared recognition that the Department plays a critical role in promoting rural development and equitable access to land (UNDP South Africa, 2013). Poor access to land (lack and/or insecure land rights) by the majority of the population, as a

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<sup>8</sup> Formerly known as the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR), with the name change occurring in 2019 when the Agriculture function moved over from the former Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

<sup>9</sup> Notes of the meeting held on 18 November 2019 between the UNDP RR and the DALRRD.

result of South Africa's history of dispossession, is a driver of rural poverty and major constraint to South Africa's development. Land reform has the potential to stimulate rural development, transform the economy, and address the triple challenge of poverty, unemployment, and inequality. Since land dispossession and discrimination had been entrenched in the legal system of Apartheid South Africa, the Constitution set out the redistributive and transformative aims of the democratic government and extensive policy reform was required to address these challenges. Certain key laws and policies had been put in place since 1994, but much further reform was required, both to address past legacies and dynamics that emerged post-1994.

From 2011 to 2013, UNDP focused on providing technical support to detail the Green Paper on Land Reform and to assist the Department in developing policies and legislation building on it. This was done based on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). A formal Project Document (ProDoc) was signed in 2013. It stated the Project purpose as follows: to “enhance the policies and systems to support the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform in developing an Integrated Development Strategy for Rural Development and facilitate sharing of international experiences on equitable access to land.” (UNDP South Africa, 2013: 7). The Project period, originally 2013-2017, was extended in 2015 up to December 2019; and later further extended to the end of 2020 and then to March 2021 as noted in the introduction.

To give a sense of the type of work implemented, some of the key contributions of the Project are mentioned in Box 1. The Findings section provides more details and evaluative judgments.

#### **Box 1. Project contribution highlights**

**Seven important policies** which benefited from Project support, are currently in force in South Africa. Project support included: contributions to the Green Paper on Land Reform (2011) including exchanges on the policies and legislation that built on the foundation of this Green Paper subsequently; informing the Extension of Security of Tenure Amendment Act (2018); and Communal Property Associations Amendment Act; and expert advisory support on the Policy on Beneficiary Selection and Land Allocation (2020). The Project also provided **socio-economic impact assessment (SEIA) support**, that informed bills and policies currently under discussion. Highlights of **strategy support** include high level knowledge support to the Operation Phakisa process (2016) on Agriculture, Land and Rural Development; and a new theory of change for Land Reform and Rural Development in South Africa that is informing the National Agriculture and Agro-Processing Master Plan (2020). The Project also undertook several initiatives to **increase the exposure of South African policymakers and implementers** to international experience in these policy areas, through study tours (2019) as well as participation of international experts in the National Land Tenure Summit (2014), Regulation of Agricultural Land Conference (2016), consultations towards initiating the Land Size and Efficiency Project (2018), and Land Administration Workshop (2019).

The Project has been anchored in the Chief Directorate: Policy Research and Development<sup>10</sup> of DALLRD and the Inclusive Growth Programme of the UNDP. From mid-2019 and up to December 2020, DALRRD is in the process of being restructured to include the agriculture function (previously under the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries), but until 2019 the Chief Directorate was located within the Office of the Chief Operations Officer (see Annexure B: Institutional Positioning). The Chief Directorate's organisational design provided

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<sup>10</sup> Until 2013, the Chief Directorate: Policy Research and *Legislation* Development. The Legislation function became a separate unit in 2013.

for a Chief Director, two Directors, and a Policy Researcher. The Chief Directorate supported policy research and development across the Department.

Within UNDP, there are four programme priorities for the 2020-2025 period (UNDP, 2020a): Inclusive, just and sustainable growth; effective, efficient and transformative governance; climate resilience and sustainably managed natural resources; and strategic partnerships. The first of these aims, amongst others, to support increased access to land for people living in rural areas; and improved small-scale agriculture. The Project is part of UNDP's contribution to these priorities. The Project has one dedicated staff member, a Project Manager positioned in the UNDP's Inclusive Growth Programme and reporting to the Inclusive Growth Programme Manager (see Annexure B: Institutional Positioning).

In terms of governance, the ProDoc which was signed by both parties stipulated that the Project would be governed by a project steering committee which would meet quarterly. The department's Director-General (DG) and UNDP Resident Representative (RR) were assigned as co-chairs of the committee.

The Project is based on a Cost Sharing Agreement (CSA), which was signed by the Department in 2016 after consultations between the UNDP, the Department, and National Treasury. The CSA stipulated that the Department would contribute most of the project funds, in line with the UNDP Executive Board Decision on Resource Allocation as it pertains to middle income countries like South Africa. In 2016 the project began to be implemented at full scale<sup>11</sup>, with the Project Manager being appointed in December.

In line with the 2013 project document, the Project has focused mainly on upstream policy development rather than on downstream policy implementation. Section 2.3 gives more detail about the specific work that was conducted under this Project.

The Project's total cost<sup>12</sup> is estimated at \$ 3 484 734,40 (R40 889 263,24), of which the UNDP has contributed \$983 069.54 (R10 408 245,24) and the Department \$2 501 664,86 (R30 481 018). This translates to a 75%-25% split in contributions with the Department contributing the larger share.

## **2.2 Legal and strategic foundation**

The Project has been implemented within the international agreement that South Africa entered into as a member state of the United Nations. The Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the UN and South Africa was signed by then President Mandela in October 1994, embodying the basic conditions under which the UNDP and its Executing Agencies shall assist the government. This included (Article V) that government shall "pay, or arrange to pay, to UNDP... sums required, to the extent specified in the Project Budget of the project Document" and that resources will be administered in accordance with the applicable financial rules and regulations of UNDP. South Africa further gave effect to the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations – which binds SA to treaties and conventions that they are signatories on as members of the UN – by promulgating the Diplomatic Immunities and Privileges Act (No. 37 of 2001).

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<sup>11</sup> Evaluation Terms of Reference, p. 3.

<sup>12</sup> As of December 2020.

At the time when collaboration between the two entities started in 2011, the overall strategic document guiding the UN's work in South Africa was the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2007-2010, extended to 2012. South Africa had introduced a system of 5-year Medium Term Strategic Plans (MTSFs) and DRDLR, newly established in 2009, had a 5-year strategic plan aligned to it, both for the period 2009-2014. The original ProDoc period of 2013-2017 aligned to the South Africa-United Nations Strategic Cooperation Framework (SCF), UNDP South Africa Country Programme Document (CPD) and the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) between the Government of South Africa and the UNDP. They were subsequently all extended to June 2020. This would better align the term of UN strategic documents and plans with South Africa's MTSF 2014-2019 and departmental Strategic Plans. As of 2020, the framework for the work of the UN system in South Africa is the South Africa-United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) (2020-2025). Aligned to this, UNDP in South Africa has a new CPD for the period 2020-2025.

The timeline below shows key Project developments within the legal and strategic framework described above. Further discussion on the alignment and contents of these documents is discussed in Section 6.

## Final Evaluation of the Land Reform and Rural Development Project in South Africa

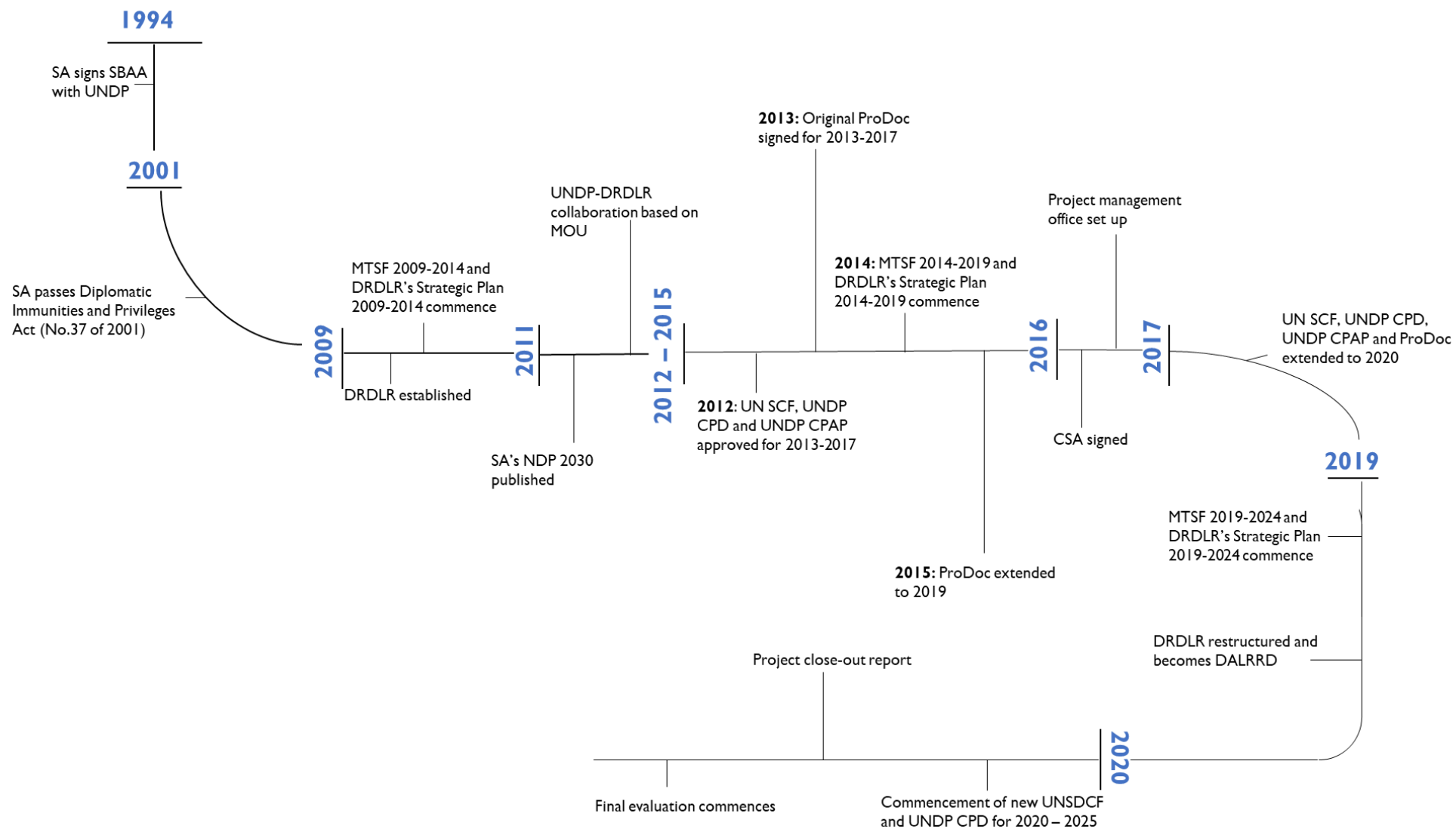


Figure 4. Timeline of development of the SA and UNDP legal and strategic framework, with Project milestones

## 2.3 Overview of work done

As stated in the ProDoc, the Project had four outputs:

1. Integrated rural development strategy developed
2. A coherent strategy and plans to facilitate equitable access to land and development completed.
3. International Information Exchange Programme to share experiences from other countries on equitable access to land.
4. Inclusive multi-stakeholder forum established to discuss how access to land can contribute to poverty reduction

These outputs were to be produced through activities including advisory and policy research and analysis work; technical expertise support; facilitation of activities related to the drafting of land reform and rural development policies and strengthening the capacity of government and non-government actors through international knowledge and information exchange.

In line with the outputs above, the Project has consisted largely of research and analysis in support of policy development and revision, conducted by experts brought in by the UNDP. There has also been a substantial component of international knowledge and information exchanges, national and sub-national summits and consultations, and support for strategic processes relevant to land reform and rural development.

## 3 Evaluation Scope and Objectives

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The Terms of Reference (TOR) for this evaluation states that this evaluation will inform UNDP, as well as the Department, project donors and other stakeholders about the project results achieved through its implementation, with the resources allocated. In order to inform the remainder of this project and its potential next phase, the evaluation aimed:

- To review, evaluate and document the project's achievements, shortcomings, lessons learnt, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, as well as any effects of the project on vulnerable groups especially in rural and previously disadvantaged communities.
- To assess and document effectiveness and efficiency of UNDP support to the project (UNDP, 2020b).

The scope of work is as follows:

- The time frame of the intervention to be evaluated was 2011 to present, with an emphasis on 2016 to present.
- All the activities of the project were within scope to be studied in order to answer the evaluation questions.
- Methodologically, a mixed-methods evaluation was conducted, with extensive document & data review as well as data collection from stakeholders.
- The evaluation was to be undertaken by an individual consultant over 25 days.

Eight key evaluation questions guided the evaluation (Box 2). These speak to four evaluation criteria: Relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability. Sub-questions further guided the content covered under each key evaluation question (see the evaluation matrix in the

annexure for the full list of questions). The findings section of the report is structured according to these criteria.

### Box 2. Evaluation questions & contribution claims

#### Criterion 1. Relevance

1. Was the Project clearly designed, with a clear internal causal logic as well as clear relevance to the South African policy context?
2. To what extent did the Project contribute to cross-cutting national priorities?
3. How has the project contributed to, and been influenced by, national and international priorities and trends?

#### Criterion 2. Effectiveness

4. What were the project results (at the output and outcome level) and what factors contributed to the achievement / non-achievement of these results?
5. How participatory has the project approach been, throughout the project cycle, and what have been benefits and disadvantages of this level of participation?

*The contribution of the Project in terms of accessing expertise was assessed under this criterion.*

#### Criterion 3. Efficiency

6. Were the results produced in an efficient manner, and how did the project's implementation arrangements facilitate this?

*The contribution of the Project in terms of Value for Money was assessed under this criterion.*

#### Criterion 4. Sustainability

7. To what extent did the project contribute to the building of lasting capacity or results?
8. What risks and/or resource constraints may impact on the sustainability of the achieved project results?

*The contribution of the Project in terms of fostering networks of stakeholders to continue to engage on these issues, was addressed under this criterion.*

## 4 Evaluation Approach and Methods

### 4.1 Approach

The evaluation took a theory-based approach, incorporated some contribution analysis principles, and employed utilisation-focused and participatory methods (Figure 5).

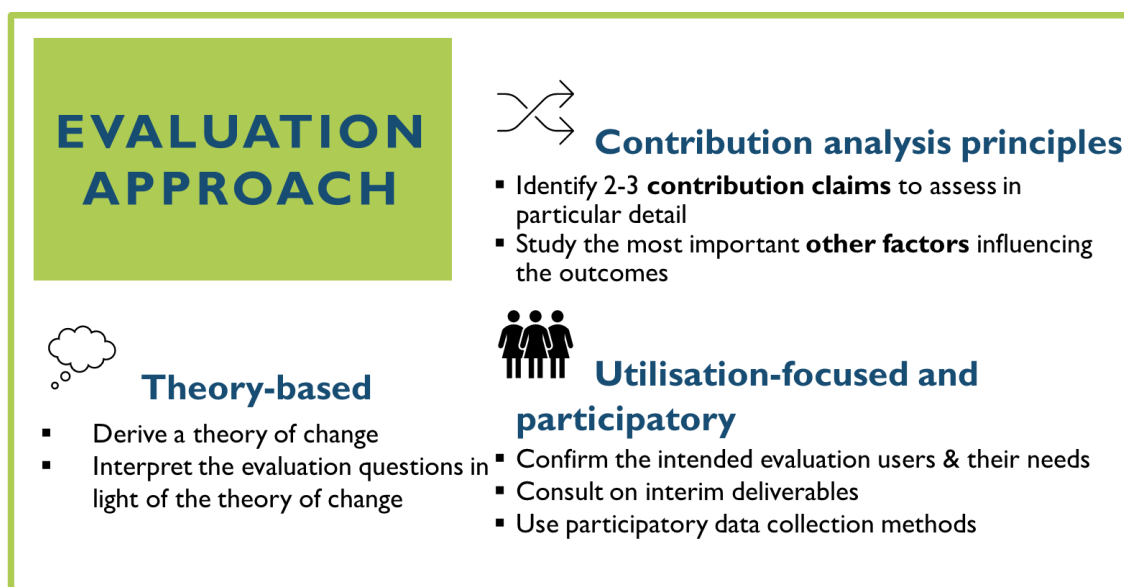


Figure 5. Evaluation approach



In line with UNDP’s (2019) evaluation guidelines, a theory-based evaluation bases its judgment of the project/programme on an articulation of how the project/programme is supposed to work, usually expressed in a theory of change (ToC). A theory of change was retrospectively derived for the evaluation<sup>13</sup> (see appendix). The evaluation questions were then answered with reference to the ToC. For instance, the question, “To what extent were the project’s outputs achieved?” was answered by assessing the achievement of the outputs as per the ToC.

The evaluation also sought to include some principles of contribution analysis<sup>14</sup>. In the introductory phase, three key contribution claims were identified to be tested in the evaluation. These were factored into the evaluation matrix and addressed in the course of answering the evaluation questions. The evaluation also identified external factors, which shaped the achievement of the Project’s objectives either positively or negatively and were important for understanding the Project’s contribution to results.

The evaluation took a utilisation-focused approach by clarifying the information needs of key stakeholders during inception and tailoring the methods and emphasis to meet these needs. A wide range of stakeholders were given the opportunity to participate in interviews (albeit virtually) and there was participation from several stakeholders of both partner organisations in the ToC workshop and in reviewing and giving input on the draft findings.

4.2 Methodology

The evaluation consisted of three broad phases: Inception, Data collection and analysis, and reporting (Figure 6). The reporting phase was extended to enable further Departmental engagement with, and inputs into, the final report.



Figure 6. Evaluation phases, key activities and outputs

Primary data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews. In addition to three introductory interviews, 27 interviews were conducted with three main stakeholder

<sup>13</sup> When the Project was formally conceptualised in 2013, the project design was done based on the UNDP’s project design guidelines at the time. At the time when the ProDoc was signed, theories of change were not emphasised as a standard requirement and no theory of change was developed for the Project. (Theories of change are now emphasised as a UNDP standard requirement, as of approximately 2016.) Nevertheless, most of the elements that would form part of a theory of change were articulated in documentation.

<sup>14</sup> Importantly, the evaluation did not seek to estimate the size of the Project’s contribution to each the observed outcomes, relative to other role players and factors (this principle of contribution analysis methodology was not applied). It is important to understand that the Project supported a Department in undertaking its own processes.

groups: UNDP representatives, DALRRD representatives, and external service providers / experts who provided services as part of this Project (see list of interviews in the appendix). The interviews took place via Zoom and Microsoft Teams. Interview notes were generated using the Otter.ai software<sup>15</sup> package. Over 250 documents, including over 100 knowledge products generated by the Project, were reviewed for the evaluation.

Together, the documentation and interviews provided a good foundation for judging results up to the outcome level of the theory of change, i.e. the point of adoption of policies and strategies which have benefited from Project contributions and support.

In terms of limitations, it should be noted that the evaluation did not include a formal literature review and did not undertake a detailed study of the analyses and critiques by external parties of the various outputs that were developed with the support of the Project. It was also not within the scope of the evaluation to do a comprehensive academic quality assessment of the outputs produced (although they were reviewed to understand their content). The views of Project stakeholders were the main source of the assessment of whether the outputs were of a satisfactory standard and were useful / relevant to the needs of the Department.

Secondly, no site visits or in-person workshops were conducted because of COVID-19 mitigation measures. This, combined with challenges in securing engagements with national Department officials, made it hard to collect primary data from officials responsible for implementation on the ground, or community members who are the ultimate beneficiaries of the Project. Because of this limitation, in the section on effectiveness, the evaluation is tentative in its discussion of whether the Project's benefits have filtered through to communities. The evaluation criterion of "impact" was not in the scope of the evaluation.

Finally, given the stakeholders who participated in the evaluation, the reader should bear in mind the notion of "positivity bias" (UNEG, 2011: 22). There has been limited inclusion of the views of those who may have been excluded or whose situation may have deteriorated due to the Project. It may be helpful to seek out the already documented views of such stakeholders, particularly for work that has led to changes in policy and law, to strengthen the evaluation.

## 5 Data Analysis

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During the inception phase, a preliminary document review was done in order to describe the Project and design a ToC. This was supplemented by introductory interview data, which was imported into a project file using the NVivo<sup>16</sup> software package, and initially analysed for descriptive information and potential causal claims.

Once the inception report was approved, the main evaluative data analysis process commenced concurrently with the interview processes. Interview notes and Project documents were consolidated into NVivo and key descriptive information was coded in a sample of sources. As the interviews began to conclude and the interview transcripts were all

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<sup>15</sup> Otter.ai is a text transcription software that generates written transcriptions of recorded conversations. The use of the software helps to ensure accurate and complete records of interviews for the purpose of analysis in the evaluation.

<sup>16</sup> NVivo is a qualitative data analysis software package that helps researchers to organise, analyse and find insights in qualitative data like interviews. The use of it in this evaluation for specific themes, helped to strengthen the analysis and pick up on relevant statements across interviews, meeting minutes and other sources.

uploaded, qualitative thematic analysis was conducted for certain key evaluation questions. Limited quantitative/structured data analysis was required, with Microsoft Excel used to review basic financial information and to quantify basic features of implementation.

The results were analysed and triangulated to generate findings in relation to the evaluation criteria and questions, and with reference to the causal chains set out in the ToC.

During consultations on drafts of the evaluation report, some further documentary evidence was provided by UNDP and DALRRD and this was analysed to nuance and strengthen findings where appropriate.

## 6 Findings and conclusions

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This section presents the main findings and conclusions of the evaluation. It starts by presenting findings regarding the Project governance, as this is an important backdrop for the rest of the findings. It then discusses each of the eight key evaluation questions in turn.

### 6.1 Project governance

In terms of governance, the ProDoc envisioned that the Project would be managed by a project steering committee. This committee would be a “top management level meeting to define objectives, strategies and validate results” and it would meet quarterly.

After the meeting where the ProDoc was signed and a meeting with the Minister, both in late 2013, there was a period of over 2 years before the steering committee met in 2016. It met four times in total: once in 2016; twice in 2017; and once in 2018, with the latter being adjourned before it could through the agenda. Thus the steering committee did not meet as regularly as intended. Furthermore, it was never attended by branches that were identified as members in the second meeting; and given turnover in the Department, the four meetings were co-chaired on the Department’s side by one Director-General (DG) and two Acting Directors-General (ADGs). See Annexure C: Analysis of the Project Steering Committee for more detail. Evidence suggests that UNDP sought to arrange these meetings and struggled to secure the availability of the Departmental members. The heads of the institutions met in 2019 and 2020 in meetings which did not constitute steering committee meetings but gave direction on some of the activities to be undertaken.

High turnover in the position of the DG may have affected the steering committee, in terms of prioritisation of the committee or institutional memory about its purpose. It is also important to recognise that the steering committee was not institutionalised: it did not link to any other Departmental structures and did not feature in performance planning.

Given these weaknesses in steering committee meeting attendance and frequency, the Chief Directorate: Policy Research and Planning took on the responsibility for much of the Project’s prioritisation, planning, implementation and oversight, along with the Project Manager and others in UNDP. They worked within the clear framework set by the Department’s statutory plans and by the ProDoc, and Departmental DG or ADG and CFO signed off on all funding transfers, signalling endorsement of the Project plans in principle. However, the consultation on Project objectives, strategies, work plans and results did not include as broad a group of Departmental decision-makers as had been intended with the steering committee. Nor did this broader group regularly discuss priorities and resource trade-offs between proposed areas of work. The National Joint Steering Committee (NJSC, the executive committee of the Department) approved the annual work plan for 2016; beyond this, it appears that nobody in

the Department outside of the Chief Directorate engaged with the work plans of the other years. Most officials were effectively dependent on the Chief Directorate for any reporting or awareness of the Project; and the Chief Directorate's reporting focus was on its outputs (e.g. policies), not necessarily on the arrangements/partnerships by which these are produced.

It should be noted that officials in the branches still benefited from the Project support, even if they did not participate in planning and reviewing the Project directly. The Project support ultimately fed into policies or strategies to be used by the branches. There is ample evidence of intra-Departmental engagement on the policies and strategies being developed, from early in the life of the Project (workstreams co-crafting section of the Green Paper and the policies that built on its foundation) to recently (engagement with a position paper on land tenure reform). Departmental officials therefore fully own these products. But some have limited information and understanding of the Project and its contribution to these outputs. They may also have engaged with experts in workstreams, summits and events, without being aware of UNDP's role in securing their involvement. In recent years officials in the relevant branches have also engaged more directly with the implementation of UNDP activities, such as reviewing draft knowledge products from experts. Key projects like the Land Size and Efficiency Simulation (LASES) study (see discussion later), Land Tenure Reform Policy Framework Development, Integrated Land Administration System Development had a technical task team (TTT).

Thus, the failure of the steering committee to operate as intended has resulted in limited consultation and communication about the Project. This, along with some turnover in both institutions, has affected the institutional memory and shared understanding of the Project among stakeholders. Some questions about the Project value-add have not been addressed to the satisfaction of all.

Despite these challenges, the relatively long-standing and constructive working relationship between the individuals closest to the Project – notably the Chief Director and Project Manager – have allowed the Project to proceed and make valuable contributions, in line with both institutions' priorities. Nevertheless, senior decision makers in both DALRRD and UNDP stressed the importance of institutionalising the steering committee (or similar) in order to improve communication and consultation on Project activities.

## **6.2 Relevance of Project design**

The first key evaluation question is, "Was the Project clearly designed, with a clear internal causal logic as well as clear relevance to South Africa's policy context and UNDP's goals?" This section addresses this by first assessing at a high level the alignment of the Project with key strategic goals of the South African government and UNDP. It discusses at a more operational level the planned activities and outputs over successive years, and the alignment of these to the project's goals and results. It then assesses the clarity of the ToC.

### *6.2.1 Alignment between the objectives of the Project, South African government, and UNDP*

The Project is well aligned to both the government's and UNDP's goals and objectives. This is aided by the strong alignment of the strategies of the UNDP to the development challenges and strategic priorities of the South African government. The next few paragraphs discuss this alignment as reflected in key documents and note the views of stakeholders which are also largely confirmatory.

The Standard Basic Assistance Agreement (SBAA) (1994) lays the basis for the collaboration between the South African government and the UNDP, highlighting the roles and

responsibilities of each entity. This agreement makes it clear that the mandate of the UNDP is to support the achievement of national development objectives, in response to requests for assistance from the South African government. The SCF which was developed concurrently to the ProDoc and was applicable for most of the Project period (2013-2017, later extended to 2020) discusses the problems of poverty and unemployment, especially their rural dimensions, and notes that its Key Results Areas of Inclusive Growth and Decent Work, as well as Sustainable Development, respond to the MTSF priority of a comprehensive rural development strategy linked to land and agrarian reform and food security (United Nations, 2013). The 2020-2025 UNSDCF (third draft, May 2020) reflects the land reform problem statement and its relationship to the development challenges of the country particularly clearly.

As for the South African policy framework, the Project's aim aligns with the Constitution's (1996) preamble, which recognizes the "obligation of the state to reverse the effects of apartheid, in a context where all citizens feel part of the country and its programs". In addition, Section 25- property clause, sets out the conditions under which land may be expropriated, expresses the nation's commitment to land reform, promotes secure tenure, and provides for restitution or redress for those dispossessed of property after 1913 as a result of "past racially discriminatory laws or practices". Section 25(5) states that the "state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to foster conditions which enable citizens to gain access to land on an equitable basis".

The National Development Plan (NDP), which is South Africa's long-term development plan, lists a set of five key points for "an integrated and inclusive rural economy" and land reform. It includes access to opportunities and basic services for rural communities, agricultural development that includes land reform and job-creation/livelihood strategies, and improved inter-governmental relations for rural governance (National Planning Commission, 2010). There is also clear alignment to the New Growth Path, which acknowledges that inequalities and joblessness are associated with the legacy of apartheid geography, and despite consistent progress since 1994, more still needed to be done (Department of Economic Development, 2010: 10).

The project, if successfully implemented, also had the potential to directly assist with the achievement of some of the MTSF objectives. Specifically, the 2014-2019 MTSF (2014: 10) aimed to increase the percentage of productive land owned by previously disadvantaged individuals, improve land administration and spatial planning for integrated development in rural areas, and sustainable land reform for agrarian transformation, amongst others. The current MTSF (2019-2024) also prioritises various aspects of land reform and rural development, recognising that lack of access to land and high rates of unemployment in rural areas has knock-on effects for society and the economy as a whole, while stressing that the rural economy holds significant potential for creating decent and productive jobs. It sets its focus on rapid and sustainable land reform and agrarian transformation and sets targets for the total amount of land acquired / allocated (900 000 hectares of land for redistribution and tenure reform; and 600 000 hectares for land redistribution); as well as a target of 100% of land reform projects being sustainable. The interventions linked to the latter suggest that sustainability is defined among others by the extent to which post-settlement support has been provided; and water rights allocated – both critical needs emphasised by various stakeholders including experts secured through this Project.

Thus, the above-mentioned foundational policy and strategic documents reflect the shared understanding which is articulated in the ProDoc as follows: "The basic premise is that an

Integrated Rural Development Strategy and Equitable Access to Land play a critical role in local economic development, poverty reduction and accelerating the realisation of the MDGs” (Millennium Development Goals, now the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)). Elsewhere, the ProDoc states that “rural development and land reform should be viewed from their potential contribution to address poverty, hunger, and reduce inequality”. These are key developmental challenges which are appropriate for both the UNDP and the South African government to address by (support to) land reform and rural development.

Confirming the relevance that is evident in the documentary review above, the relevance of the Project to both entities’ goals was also expressed by key stakeholders interviewed. A UNDP senior manager stated that in terms of “addressing inequality in South Africa... from a development point of view and the impact it could have, [the relevance of the Project] is not contested. It is very strategic.”

The rationale for a partnership between these two entities is also clear. The Department is an appropriate partner for UNDP since the Department has the mandate to give expression, at a policy level, to the national goals for land reform and rural development that were described above. The UNDP has certain value propositions (referred to as comparative advantages in the UN system) which can enhance the Department’s effectiveness. Key to this project is the fact that the UNDP has a repository of strong technical knowledge and expertise in specific areas of relevance to South Africa’s development trajectory (United Nations South Africa, 2013: 20–21), including vast international expertise on land reform and rural development. It is able to facilitate access to such expertise within the international UN system, as well as to attract high calibre international external experts. The ability to attract quality expertise was important given that the Department, although having some experience and qualified staff, has been tasked with developing / reforming a large volume of policies in technically complex areas. The partnership could contribute to the development of sound policies and strategies; it could also provide exposure and capacity building for the Department’s staff. This ability was leveraged well by the partnership: up to 2020, the Project was able to secure the expertise of specialists in a wide range of fields, as demonstrated by the sample in Box 3. An external expert pointed out that international expertise and exposure to international experience is also of particular value to South Africa in the area of land reform policy. The expert explained that South Africa’s historical approach to agriculture land use was at odds with evidence from most of the rest of the world. By providing international exposure, the Project had the potential to contribute to shifting the conventional wisdom in the country.

A good example where UNDP’s ability to secure international expertise was important, is in securing an international expert in land economics. Land economics is a skills gap, i.e., an area of expertise in which South Africa has limited capacity in both research and training (African Economic Research Consortium, 2018: 7). Similarly, land rights records has never been done in South Africa and international expertise was essential in this regard.



**Box 3. Sample of specialist expertise secured by the Project**

- Expertise in Economic Modelling
- Mathematical Economics
- Expertise in land rights recordals
- Expertise in land administration
- Expertise in Land Policy including land value capture and tax
- Agricultural Economics (various specialisations, including intersection of land reform and agriculture)
- Expertise in Agricultural Trade
- Expertise on Gender in land and agrarian reform
- Expertise in blockchain technology for land administration

*Sources: Project close-out report; correspondence with the Project Manager; and resumé of experts.*

Furthermore, considering the sensitivity of land reform, in which certain role players have difficult relationships with each other, UNDP offers the comparative advantage of being seen as an ‘impartial’ and/or ‘neutral’ partner. This makes it possible for UNDP to support government in engaging with stakeholders (to “get people around the table”, as one interviewee put it) to build a more shared understanding and find strategies for a mutually beneficial future.

No interviewees saw significant misalignment between the entities’ goals, although some pointed to areas of tension in terms of some of the policy directions taken over the last few years. This is to be expected in such a complex and contested policy environment and does not detract from the overall relevance of the Project; in fact, it underscores how important it is for policymakers to have access to sound and unbiased research and evidence.

Given UNDP South Africa’s areas of comparative advantage, most interviewed stakeholders believe that an emphasis on upstream support is appropriate for this Project. It is worth noting however that this Project, by focusing on “upstream” work on policies and strategies, relies on these policies and strategies to be implemented in order for the work to have an impact on the ground. This is articulated as an assumption in the theory of change. The evaluation methodology does not allow a judgment as to the extent of implementation of the adopted policies and the impact that they are having or will have on the ground. Most of them are newly adopted and it is too early in the policy cycle to expect implementation results. However, any Project with an upstream focus will benefit from monitoring<sup>17</sup> whether this assumption holds for the policies and strategies that it contributes to; and using this feedback to inform its subsequent decisions.

#### 6.2.2 Alignment of activities and results with Project goals

As part of assessing Relevance, this section assesses the alignment of project activities and results to the Project’s objectives and goals.

The overall objective of the Project was to support the development of sound land reform and rural development policy and strategy in South Africa. In pursuit of this objective, the main activities of the Project can be grouped into five “areas of concentration”<sup>18</sup> (Figure 7). Much

<sup>17</sup> For instance, once policies were adopted, this Project would have benefited from periodically requesting existing Departmental information on implementation progress and/or having periodic engagement with the branch heads or managers to get a qualitative understanding of such progress.

<sup>18</sup> This depiction is based on the categorisation in the Close-out Report, with some amendments to ensure clarity to the audience of the evaluation report. The Policy Development Support area of concentration is extensive, and the diagram

of the work was in the area of Policy Development Support: in this way, the Project contributed to the development, drafting or revision of at least 20 policies, bills and acts – see a list of them in Annexure K. The outcome of each of these processes is discussed further under the section on Effectiveness.



Figure 7. Project Areas of Concentration, 2011-2020

Virtually all the reviewed activities have spoken clearly to the policy and strategy priorities of the Department. The Project has for instance:

- Provided technical policy advisory support for the development of the Green Paper on Land Reform, via reports as well as engagements with departmental workstreams and at senior management meetings.
- Supported systematic consideration of the potential impact of proposed policies and legislation by undertaking several Socio-Economic Impact Assessments (SEIAs) (previously Regulatory Impact Assessments)
- Facilitated the participation of international experts in the National Land Tenure Summit in 2014; and the Operation Phakisa<sup>19</sup> process on Agriculture, Land and Rural Development (2016)
- Supported extensive consultations on the Communal Land Tenure Policy and Bill in the Eastern Cape (2015-2016)<sup>20</sup>

offers only a count of the policies, bills and acts – please see the list of these in a later section; and the Annexure for further details.

<sup>19</sup> An initiative introduced by national government around 2014, aimed at accelerating progress towards key national goals through multi-sectoral planning, implementation and delivery.

<sup>20</sup> Various Project documents (e.g. the evaluation TOR; Close-out report) note that the nature of this project was implemented more at a “grassroots” level. It featured direct engagements with the public at grassroots level. However,



- Hosted a Land Administration workshop (2019) where international experts from UN Habitat Kenya and UNDP Resident Advisor presented to and engaged extensively with South African policy makers on land administration.
- Reviewed and collated Working for Poverty and Household Profiles collected from 2009 and 2015, to further inform rural development strategies of the Department.

The project also undertook a small number of projects more focused on implementation. Two can be described as policy implementation pilots: UNDP partnered with the Department of Environmental Affairs, SANParks, and the Land Claims Commission to pilot post-settlement support to restitution beneficiaries in protected areas (the pilot focused on the Kruger National Park). The Project also contributed to a pilot project for the UNDP Supplier Development Programme for small scale growers / SMMEs. These are in a sense trial runs of more direct implementation support, which is an approach that some stakeholders believe would be beneficial for a future iteration of the Project. Although the nature of work is different from the stated focus of the Project, they may inform policy and therefore be regarded as appropriate. The support to community consultations in the Eastern Cape also contributed not only to communal land tenure policy but to helping the Department develop community consultation methods that can be used again in future.

Thus, the work undertaken by this Project is relevant to its stated objective. It is feasible that these activities, if effectively implemented, would contribute to sound policy and strategy for land reform and rural development.

A more fundamental question is whether the work undertaken by the Project was the most relevant or most appropriate work to do. In other words, **did the Project focus on the most strategic areas of work?** This is harder to answer given that the evaluation methodology and scope did not allow for a detailed assessment of all the potential areas of work that the Project could have focused on. However, the following considerations helped to ensure that the Project prioritise the most strategic work:

1. Much of the work undertaken with the support of the Project, emanated directly from the Green Paper on Land Reform, the foundational policy framework which UNDP supported DRDLR to develop and elaborate.
2. The Chief Directorate prioritised work in line with Departmental priorities. As evidence of this, nearly all of the policies supported by the Project were mentioned by name as priorities in the formal plans of the Department (Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans) or recommended by the Presidential Advisory Panel on Land Reform and Agriculture ('Presidential Advisory Panel Report') (Mahlati *et al.*, 2019)
3. Across over 100 outputs, the evaluation identified only a single project which, although delivering valuable outputs, may not have been optimal use of Project resources<sup>21</sup>.

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facilitation of stakeholder consultations which feed into a proposed policy is clearly in line with the Project intent and is therefore appropriate.

<sup>21</sup> UNDP secured a team to facilitate and develop the Department's Strategic Plan (2020-2025) and Annual Performance Plan (2020-2021). It was certainly aligned to Project outputs 1 and 2, and according to Project stakeholders, the experts through their facilitation helped the Department to integrate a theory of change which UNDP had contributed to, into

4. The Project sought the inputs of its Resident Technical Experts / Resident Advisors to provide inputs on its chosen areas of work. These Advisors' inputs ranged from general (proposing types of work to be undertaken), to specific (giving inputs on draft Terms of Reference for specific projects).
5. Annual Work Plans were developed reflecting how the planned work related to the Project's four outputs. These followed standard review and approval processes within UNDP.

Based on this, the evaluation concludes that virtually all the Project support was towards areas of strategic priority to the Department. Most interviewees (DALRRD, UNDP, as well as external experts) agreed that they considered the UNDP work that they have been involved with / aware of, to be important work, responding to key needs and challenges in the South African land reform and rural development environment.

Despite this, a senior executive in DALRRD was of the view that the Department sometimes relied on the Project to meet its ad hoc needs, knowing that UNDP would be efficient, secure good expertise and deliver good knowledge products. According to this individual, the Project did not always focus on the work that was most strategic to seek UNDP's assistance in. Unfortunately, the interviewee did not elaborate on the specific activities. It does not resonate with the findings of the evaluation noted above. Some UNDP stakeholders also believe that UNDP could have made even more use of its comparative advantage as a repository of international knowledge and expertise, by connecting South Africa to more experts in the UN system, and facilitating exchange with more international centres of excellence on some of the policy areas. In the case of both these critiques, it appears that communication and consultation through the steering committee may have allowed for clarification of the stakeholders' concerns. Minutes of steering committee meetings could also have provided these individuals, most of whom joined the institutions in the last few years, with a record of the considerations informing the Project's choice of work. As noted earlier, the steering committee failed to do this.

It seems that even as the Project wraps up in 2020, there is scope for stakeholders to become better informed about the work that has been done, work that has not been done, and why. This would be a sound basis for agreeing on what is appropriate and feasible for the Project to do going forward, if there is a new partnership agreement.

The question of the extent to which the work proved effective, is discussed in the section on effectiveness further on.

#### 6.2.3 Theory of change

The Evaluation ToR includes the question, "Is the Project theory of change clearly articulated?"

The evaluation finds that most aspects of the theory of change were clearly articulated. Annexure G elaborates on the findings with regard to the clarity of each component of the theory of change, which was compiled retrospectively for this evaluation. It draws on the Project documentation (explicit statement of Project intent and assumptions); and interviews,

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its strategy for the coming years. The only question is whether this work required UNDP's comparative advantage or could have been undertaken equally well by DALRRD (internally, or with a team commissioned through DALRRD).

which allowed for articulation of the implicit understanding of those involved in managing and implementing the Project.

There is a large degree of coherence among stakeholders on the most important components of the theory of change. The following areas of alignment and divergence have a bearing on the Project and are therefore worth elaborating on.

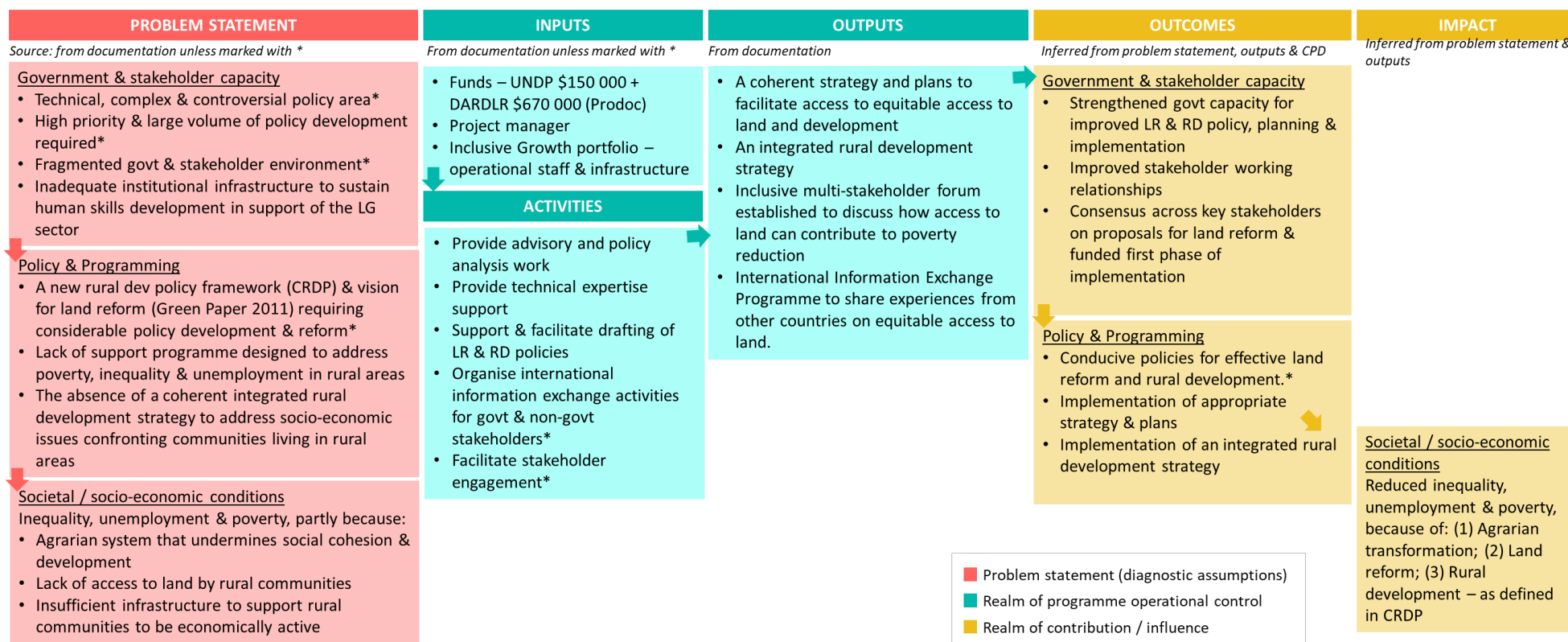
The rationale for a partnership around land reform and rural development, as a means of achieving these entities' shared objectives of reducing poverty, inequality and unemployment, was clear to interviewed stakeholders across government, UNDP, and experts. Furthermore, the UNDP's comparative advantage in terms of technical knowledge and expertise came quickly to mind for both Department and UNDP respondents. Most interviewees had the view that UNDP is better able to access high-quality experts than a national government department such as DALRRD. This was attributed predominantly to UNDP's reputation and its vast global footprint. According to interviewees, this would enable dedicated experts to focus on policy and strategy development; would help ensure that the Department learns from international experience; and that the policies and strategies put forward by the Department would be able to withstand scrutiny based on the research and evidence that underpins them.

Furthermore, several interviewees noted that the topic of land reform is a contentious and politically sensitive one. In such an environment, UNDP was viewed by several as "an impartial organisation in a highly sensitive space", in line with UNDP's stated comparative advantage. UNDP has a role in exposing South Africa to objective research and international evidence on land reform so as to help avoid pitfalls and increase the likelihood of realising the intended development benefits through land reform. The ability to convene and facilitate stakeholder engagements in an environment characterised by a fragmented stakeholder environment/lack of consensus on the most suitable policy direction, was noted by a UNDP interviewee and an international expert.

Where there was a concern of divergence between interviewee views around the rationale for the partnership, is on the project management efficiencies of UNDP in comparison to that of government. Several respondents from the Department and experts mentioned efficiencies such as "turnaround time" and "cost-effectiveness" as part of the rationale for working with UNDP. While this adds to UNDP's attractiveness as a development partner, senior managers in both DALRRD and UNDP were concerned that the impression might be created that the Department uses UNDP merely, or predominantly, to simplify project management and procurement whereas UNDP should be a strategic partner which co-designs the support that it provides so that South Africa can benefit from UNDP's comparative advantages described above. The more common view was effective project management is one of several benefits of the Project, rather than the primary rationale for the partnership. Later sections of this report will also demonstrate that the Project activities were all clearly relevant to the priorities of the Department.

Figure 8 below is a graphical representation of the programme's ToC, adapted mainly from programme documentation. The appendix provides a more detailed discussion of the contents of each element in the diagram.

Figure 8: Programme's intended Theory of Change



To summarise the findings on the relevance of Project design, it is clear that this Project is aligned to the mandate and comparative advantage of UNDP, the mandate and needs of the Department, and the strategic priorities of both entities. The work undertaken was well aligned with the stated Project objectives. The Project design was fairly clear and was aligned to the understanding of key stakeholders.

### 6.3 Relevance in terms of cross-cutting priorities

The second key evaluation question is, “To what extent did the Project contribute to cross-cutting national priorities?” The evaluation ToR required a specific focus on some specific key areas, which are each discussed here in turn. This section discusses whether the work is *relevant* to these priorities; the section on effectiveness elaborates on whether the work has already made contributions at an *outcome* level.

#### 6.3.1 *Contribution to increasing the pace of land reform and rural development; and the state transformation agenda and restorative justice*

The evaluation’s ToR asks whether the Project has contributed to (1) speeding up the slow pace of land reform and rural development and (2) the state transformation agenda and restorative justice in South Africa.

In South Africa with its history of human rights abuses, dispossession and discriminatory laws and practices, land ownership inequalities, land reform and rural development are central to the state’s transformation agenda and restorative justice. In principle therefore, a Project that supports government to develop sound policy and strategy in this regard has the potential to contribute to this agenda via the implementation of these policies and strategies.

As for the pace of progress of land reform and rural development in the country, the Project is well positioned to influence this for two reasons: firstly, its areas of work are determined by both the Department with the relevant mandate (best placed to improve the relevant systems), and the UNDP with its connection to international expertise and experience in land reform and rural development. Secondly, the Project has a research / analytical emphasis, which should enable it to identify / diagnose the policy-level challenges contributing to the slow pace of progress.

The Green Paper on Land Reform was an important contribution to setting a policy framework, providing direction as to the further policies and legal mechanisms that need to be put in place. Building on this, the Property Valuation Act (2014) put in place clear and systematic procedures for aspects of land reform that had been identified as lacking; and led to the establishment of the Valuer-General. This would reduce delays and inefficiencies in transferring land to land reform beneficiaries. Several other policies are also promoting the goals of transformation, restorative justice, and the pace of land reform and rural development.

#### 6.3.2 Gender equality and the empowerment of women

Gender equality refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men, girls and boys. The UN considers equality between women and men to be a human rights issue, as well as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable and people-centred development (UN Women, n.d.). In an upstream project such as this, the evaluation considers whether the Project contributed to high-level changes such as policy decisions which promote the goals of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The first consideration is whether the intervention was designed and implemented to contribute to gender equality. In the ProDoc, the problem statement included reference to limited opportunities for women in rural areas globally; and it noted that the CRDP as well as the Department's tenure programme seek to benefit women among other marginalised groups. This shows an awareness of the gender dimension of these policy areas in the way that the Project was conceptualised. Gender issues are thus reflected in the Project design, but they are "not clearly articulated on how to address them in practice" in implementing the Project. Good practice would include clear activities and reporting mechanisms pertaining to gender (see UNEG, 2011: 18–19).

The work implemented under the Project has sought to support goals of gender equality and women's empowerment in various ways:

- The Project contributed to the Regulation of Agricultural Land Holdings Policy and Bill (RALHB<sup>22</sup>), which would have ensured the disclosure of ownership details in terms of gender. This would support land reform decision making based on evidence as to the gender distribution of ownership.
- The Project commissioned a specific paper on "Gender dynamics in Land Reform" (2018) as input to the RALHB.
- The consultations to support the Communal Land Tenure Bill (CLTB, 2014) included consultations with women's groups, thereby ensuring that women's voices in particular were heard. The draft Bill as introduced to parliament in 2017 included provision for communal land boards and household forums to include at least 50% women; and for gender equality to be considered in specified key decisions.
- A proposed project, which has not yet been implemented, would have seen the UN Habitat and Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) supporting South Africa on Land Administration. The GLTN has expertise on gender issues and a draft concept document (dated May 2019) recognises gender problems in current legislation and outlines a project which would provide "Support to the Establishing an Integrated Land Administration System (ILAS) Framework Policy and Costed Development Strategy for South Africa".
- There are generalized targets for women (amongst other groups) in the Beneficiary Selection and Land Allocation Policy which was recently adopted.

This suggests that the Project has paid attention to the gender aspects of the policy areas in its design and implementation. The Department has also elaborated its understanding of the gender dimension of land reform and rural development in its other work, including a draft Mainstreaming Strategy for Designated Persons.

The second consideration is whether the Project generated results relevant to gender equality. As an international expert pointed out, recognition of gender issues during consultation and in statements of policy intent is only the first step and needs to be followed by specific policy measures and implementation:

*"The public consultation in South Africa is called as some of the best public consultation processes for the continent... civil society in South Africa will bring all those cross-cutting issues*

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<sup>22</sup> Some versions are entitled "Regulation of Agricultural Land", without the word "Holdings".



*on the table all the time. And you'll see a lot of these issues alluded to in the green papers and in the bills and so on. But what happens on the ground, the policy measures to make sure that those things actually come to be is where the whole thing crashes.”*

It is therefore important to note that so far only a small number of the policies and legislation that the Project supported have been adopted. Both the RALHB and the CLTB legislation processes stalled and did not (yet) become law, although they are currently being taken forward in different forms. This means that these policies that the Project supported are not yet in force with the potential to benefit the “rights holders” (women)..

A third consideration is whether the Project itself was shaped by the perspectives of women. This consideration was raised by an interviewee and resonates with the UNEG guidelines on evaluating gender, although it is not a specific criterion<sup>23</sup>. It is notable that among the individual experts and team leaders listed as having worked on this Project, only a single female was included. A UNDP staff member reflected that the Project had struggled to find female experts in the space, although some teams led by men included female members. It is however not possible to judge whether the limited female representation among experts limited the attention of the Project to gender issues.

### 6.3.3 Employment programmes

The evaluation's ToR also asks about the Project's contribution to employment programmes of the country. Within UNDP's CPD (2013-2017, as extended), the Project fell under the inclusive growth and decent work priority. This priority had four outputs: Enhanced social protection framework; Expanded access to employment opportunities; Competitiveness of SME increased through the Supplier Development Programme. Land reform and rural development was categorized under Expanded Access to Employment Opportunities. It is stated that the “UNDP programme support will focus on technical and advisory support to create an enabling environment for inclusive growth, including rural development, land reform, and effective empowerment strategies” (UNDP, 2012: 14). The Project was well positioned to contribute to employment and livelihoods by increasing, safeguarding, and strengthening access to land through various policies and strategies. Specifically, the ESTA Amendment Act, enacted in late 2018, is meant to contribute to safeguarding livelihoods by clarifying and introducing further requirements governing evictions.

There was also potential for the Project to support rural development policies or strategies aimed at increasing formal employment in agriculture or rural industries, and two of the more downstream projects described earlier (Post-Settlement Support; and the Supplier Development Programme) were pilots to address employment issues through implementation of rural development initiatives. According to the annexure to the Project Close-out Report, these two projects are both still underway and it is too early to assess their effectiveness.

In conclusion, the Project has clear relevance in principle to the cross-cutting goals of gender, the State's agenda of transformation and restorative justice, and accelerating the pace of land reform and rural development. The Project also contributed to several policy processes which could potentially increase access to land and/or economic opportunities.

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<sup>23</sup> The guidelines note that evaluation teams are often seen “reproducing the same imbalances and patterns that exist in real life” (UNEG, 2011: 35). The same can be true of teams of experts implementing a project.

## 6.4 Relevance to broader national and international changes and trends

The third key evaluation question is, "How has the project contributed to, and been influenced by, national and international priorities [changes] and trends?"

### 6.4.1 Responsiveness to the national environment

The South African policy environment in which this Project operates, especially in terms of land reform, is a heated one. Over the Project implementation period, there has been significant political emphasis on land reform, especially around the centenary of the 1913 Land Act, the emphasis on expropriation without compensation (EWC) which emanated from the ANC policy conference of 2017, the High-Level Panel on the Assessment of Key Legislation and the Acceleration of Fundamental Change ('the High Level Panel Report') (2017) and the Presidential Advisory Panel Report (2019). There is immense frustration among the landless majority of the population about the pace of land reform, and an often adversarial relationship and distrust between land owners and government on this topic. The system of land ownership is fragmented and there are challenges not only pertaining to privately owned land but also communal land and land under traditional leadership. Land reform is a major topic during elections and can play a determining role in political parties securing the support of specific groupings and factions. The matter of land reform is rooted in a painful history (and therefore motivated for on the basis of justice) and also has the potential to significantly impact the economy, either for good or bad.

As discussed earlier, the Chief Directorate's priorities are based on the Departmental Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans. With the Chief Directorate working with UNDP to translate these priorities into Project activities, the Project has been responsive to the national environment when it comes to statutory processes of planning and prioritisation. It is also acknowledged across the board that there have sometimes been shifts in emphasis or priorities emanating from the political leadership, outside of the normal planning cycle timeframes and therefore not (yet) captured in the Strategic Plan or Annual Performance Plan. (This is not unique to land reform and rural development policy – it is a common tendency in the South African political-administrative interface<sup>24</sup>. This at times has required shifts in the Department's policy and strategy work, and sometimes a request for Project support that was not planned.

When the Chief Directorate made unanticipated requests because of changes in the policy environment, the Project has largely responded by supporting the Department as long as the resources are available, and it falls within the scope of the ProDoc. A good example is the request for Project support on orientation to the new policy environment after 2017 (as described above). This was not reflected in the 2018 workplan but was of obvious value to assist the Department in responding appropriately to the proposed changes in policy. The Project's Resident Technical Advisors were commissioned to analyse the materials, engage with consultations, and make inputs to the Department's executive and the Minister's Coordinating Committee.

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<sup>24</sup> See for instance DPME (2018), Implementation Evaluation of the Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans.

<https://www.dpme.gov.za/publications/Reports%20and%20Other%20Information%20Products/FSAPP%20Final%20Evaluation%20Report%2020180214ml.pdf> (13 December 2020)



The answer to the question, “Was the Project responsive to changes in the political environment?” is therefore clearly “yes”. This responsiveness helped the Project to remain relevant and optimise its chance of positively influencing policy and strategy. A departmental official reiterated this in stating that the UNDP is helpful in obtaining support when policy emphasis or priorities shift unexpectedly. This type of assistance has been noted as handy and aiding to government functioning. However, sometimes as a result of these changes in the policy environment, the work already supported by the Project was not taken up into policy or law as intended at the time. This is discussed further in the section on effectiveness.

During the evaluation inception phase, a stakeholder pointed out that one should also consider the influence that the Project has had on the policy environment (and not just vice versa). Thus, it is worth noting that, in addition to the policies and strategies formally adopted, there are several key messages emanating from the Project which are shaping the thinking of role players in the Department and, reportedly, some political role players. These slowly build buy-in to approaches that may not previously have been considered. For instance:

1. A branch official noted that multiple UNDP experts have reiterated over the years that it is more efficient for an economy with surplus labour to engage in small scale agriculture – and this was prompting his branch to approach policy reform accordingly.
2. The same official discussed the importance of taking land reform lessons primarily from countries with a similar colonial history. This lesson had been underscored for him by a UNDP knowledge product that was produced to inform a policy for his branch.
3. A different official who is involved with a process currently still underway, said that “for me, currently within the negotiations still going on. You just look at the quality of [the technical task teams] discussions that is at play, which already is the direct impact of the research that came from the UNDP.”
4. An expert reported that over time his emphasis on the economic development dimension of land reform is gaining traction (at least in the “middle levels of government”), whereas previously, land reform was almost exclusively couched in terms of “social justice” and pragmatic economic points made by experts like him were not always well received.

Another major change that took place during the life of the Project was the restructuring of DRDLR to become DALRRD. This restructuring was announced in mid-2019 and is still underway as of December 2020. In terms of content, the Project had already undertaken several pieces of work with a significant agricultural focus; and has since the announcement also supported the development of the [National] Agriculture and Agro-Processing Master Plan (AAPMP).

While several interviewees welcomed the integration of the Agriculture function with Land Reform and Rural Development in principle, they also noted that it has created a degree of uncertainty at the administrative level at a time when there is also considerable political pressure to develop policy. From the available evidence, since most of the key senior managers have remained in their positions at least up to December 2020, the Project has not yet needed to adjust its implementation arrangements and key relationships built over time. However, during the evaluation period, a few changes affecting the structure and staffing of key units were ongoing. As these arrangements are confirmed, the Project may need to review its implementation arrangements, but the Project scope and focus would remain relevant.

The leadership structure of the UN system in South Africa was also rearranged in 2018/2019. Whereas the UNDP Resident Representative was previously also the Resident Coordinator

for all the UN agencies in South Africa, these roles have now been de-linked. This does not appear to have affected the Project goals, objectives, and implementation arrangements.

Internationally, a key development during the life of the Project is the introduction of the SDGs. Support to land reform and rural development in South Africa is strongly in line with the SDGs. An interviewee pointed out that the SDGs give further emphasis to robust, multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral platforms to support development. This is in line with Project Output 4, and according to the interviewee may provide a reason to pursue a more permanent national multi-stakeholder forum on land reform and rural development (or the components of land reform and rural development most relevant to the SDGs) in addition to the many topic/process-specific stakeholder consultations that the Project has supported. Operation Phakisa was in line with this emphasis of the SDGs and was supported by the Project.

#### 6.4.2 Influence of COVID-19

COVID-19 and the measures taken to mitigate it, has had a major disruptive effect not only on health systems but also on economies, livelihoods, and productivity around the world. The Project is theoretically relevant to these challenges, as it aims to strengthen the socio-economic resilience of South Africa's most vulnerable populations by strengthening livelihoods in a variety of ways (as discussed earlier). However, the evaluation did not assess the extent to which Project support has translated to changes on the ground. Interviewees did not identify any specific Project benefits that may have alleviated COVID-19 effects on the ground. The effects of the pandemic on the Project itself appear limited thanks to the desktop-based and research-based nature of the much of the Project work, and the use of technology for meetings and communications. The following specific intended outputs of the Project were affected:

- Partial cancellation of Study Tour on Land Administration and Governance (AWP; KI32)
- Postponement of the 2020 Land Summit and Policy Dialogues for which UNDP commissioned a position paper on Land Tenure Reform Framework development<sup>25</sup>
- Delay of consultation with commodity organisations to input into the Agricultural and Agro-Processing Master Plan<sup>26</sup>.
- Delays in concluding strategic research on Financialisation of Agriculture as well delays on Socio-Economic Impact Assessments (SEIAS) for several new land policies and legislation- also commissioned by UNDP.

The need to conclude on some of these activities was part of the considerations prompting the heads of the institutions to extend the project by a further few months, from December 2020 to March 2021.

The broader effects of COVID-19 on the Department's priorities and budgets remain to be seen. There is a concern that the Department may have smaller budgets for policy research going forward. In the immediate term, some interviewees expressed the view that the COVID-19 pandemic reinforced key role players' awareness of the importance of accelerating land reform and rural development, given the extent of the vulnerability of so many South Africans. As an example, the Department is aware of media reports of a significant increase in illegal

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<sup>25</sup> Source: Annexure to the Close-out Report.

<sup>26</sup> Sources: Annexure to the Close-out Report; progress report by technical expert on the Master Plan.

occupations driven by the increased vulnerability of many South Africans in the face of COVID-19. This may add impetus to land reform policy and strategy – or may heighten the political volatility of the environment in which this work is done.

In conclusion, Project implementation arrangements have made it possible to pick up on, and respond to, changing needs of the Department in a dynamic policy environment. The Project has also been able to shape national priorities in some ways, which is in line with its intent, and is further discussed in the following section. Restructuring in both organisations have not required any significant changes from the Project so far. There is some uncertainty as to the response that will be required from the Project in the coming months (and if renewed, the next few years) pertaining to the medium-term effects of COVID-19.

## **6.5 Effectiveness in terms of Project results**

The fourth key evaluation question is, “What were the project results (at the output and outcome level) and what factors contributed to the achievement / non-achievement of these results?” This section discusses the delivery and perceived quality of outputs, as well as what is known about Project effectiveness. It concludes with a brief list of highlights and lowlights, noting that the Project’s effectiveness is often only understood better over time.

### **6.5.1 Achievement of outputs**

As discussed earlier, the phrasing of the Project’s four overarching output statements does not make it easy to assess at what point the outputs should be considered “produced” or “delivered”. During Project planning and reporting, the outputs determine the four ongoing areas of work, under which relevant activities are implemented as and when needed. Therefore, if one looks only at these four outputs, it is hard to give a conclusive answer to the question, “To what extent were the project’s outputs achieved?” While significant progress has been made (see next three sections), stakeholders express the view that more policy and strategy work is required in both these areas, to address the original problem statements to which these intended outputs were a response.

At a more operational level the Project’s AWP’s provide a much more detailed set of outputs to be produced annually. These reflect the specific papers to be produced by experts; the events/engagements to be organised or supported; etc. Based on these and progress reports in line with them, the Project produced over 100<sup>27</sup> reports, position papers, consultation reports, advisory notes, concept papers, progress reports and workshop proceedings and presentations. These can be grouped into approximately 5 areas of concentration as discussed earlier in section 6.2.2. Through these areas of concentration, the Project has implemented activities contributing to the four outputs listed above.

As for whether the work was implemented as planned and was of a good quality, from interviewees’ feedback and a review of a sample of Project AWP’s for 2016 to 2019, it appears that the project has by and large delivered on its annually planned outputs. Furthermore, in terms of those that worked with UNDP to produce these outputs, stakeholders across the board in UNDP and DALRRD express great appreciation for the quality of experts brought on board through this project. Experts themselves also mentioned their appreciation of other

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<sup>27</sup> A document called List of Papers and Experts was shared, which seems comprehensive from about 2015 on and lists 100 products. Other documents and products shared for the evaluation indicate that at least a dozen reports, including inputs on key policies, were produced before 2015.

experts that they interacted with. Many interviewees mentioned specific experts by name and discussed how they are held in high esteem and the impression that they made on stakeholders, without being prompted by the interviewer. There is also general satisfaction among the Project stakeholders interviewed with the quality of the content of outputs (be they knowledge products, support to processes, or events such as consultations or study tours). Most of the interviewed experts were satisfied with the work they were able to produce; so were the two interviewed Department policy unit officials who were interviewed; and so were the two interviewed Department branch officials, who have the least vested interest in the Project among the interviewees. As another point in support of the perceived quality of the Project outputs, the evaluation found no suggestions in the interviews and project / progress reports<sup>28</sup> that the several stalled policy processes stalled because of concerns with the technical quality or evidence-based nature of the draft policies and legislation.

The Project achieved this consistent track record of high quality, satisfactory outputs through close and effective engagement between the two entities during implementation of the agreed technical support. In particular, there was a continued and high level of engagement from the Chief Directorate: Policy Research and Development to identify the need for technical support and to engage with the outputs. On UNDP’s side, the Project Manager has both project management expertise and a technical background in landreform and rural development, which aided the Project to undertake the tasks listed in Box 4 as and when required.

**Box 4. Services rendered by the Project in the production of technical advisory outputs**

In response to a need identified for technical support by the Department, UNDP would undertake the following tasks, depending on the need.

- Discuss with the Department a project approach to ensure efficiency and effectiveness
- Build on the description, outline or draft provided by the Department to develop comprehensive task specifications
- Consult experts (including Resident Technical Advisor, if appropriate) to strengthen the proposed specifications or approach

- Secure expertise in a process consistent with UNDP policies – whether expertise is internal or external to the UN system
- Advise on format of deliverables
- Quality assurance

In UNDP this was the role of the Programme Manager: Inclusive Growth, up to 2016 when the dedicated Project Manager took up these tasks, with the support of the Programme Manager and Operations Team.

By applying the expertise of the Project Manager and seeking expert inputs on the work that was proposed, the UNDP country office ensured that content expertise was applied to the Project content areas. This also underscores the value of the projects that benefited from stakeholder consultation to sharpen draft outputs, or mechanisms by which several experts engaged with each other’s work. Another mechanism that may be considered is peer review by experts in the broader UN system.

<sup>28</sup> The methodological limitation, mentioned earlier, should however be taken into account here: the evaluation did not review analyses and critiques by external parties of the various outputs that were developed with the support of the Project and shared in the public domain.

There were only a few areas of critique. Firstly, an external interviewee expressed disappointment that the outputs produced by the Land Size and Efficiency Simulation (LASES) project Phase I fell far short of what had been hoped for in the Project overall. The LASES project was an exception in many respects: It had a very large budget and ambitious scope; it took exceptionally long to secure a team of experts given the scarce skills (and perhaps the sensitive subject area); and was deliberately conceived of in 4 phases with contractual breaks after each phase in case challenges were encountered. Phase I was beset by insurmountable challenges in accessing data<sup>29</sup>, despite extensive efforts by all concerned. This meant that some of the anticipated work could not be done to the originally intended depth. Another external interviewee believed the project could have been implemented better if it had a dedicated project director – someone entirely dedicated to managing the project and external to the UNDP country office and the organisation which was tasked with playing a coordination role. Nevertheless, most interviewees appeared satisfied that stakeholders have derived as much value as possible from the project under the circumstances.

The evaluation therefore concludes that by and large, the Project has produced the planned outputs, in line with the intended purpose, within the appropriate time and to a good quality standard.

#### 6.5.2 Assessing the Project's effectiveness within a dynamic policy environment

As expressed in the theory of change (and implicit in the discourse of project stakeholders), the main understanding of *effectiveness* in this Project is the extent to which it shaped sound land reform and rural development policy and strategy. For this to happen, the Project's research outputs and other products should feed into policies that are adopted, laws that are enacted, or strategies that are endorsed for implementation. Based on this understanding, the Project has had mixed success.

As shown in

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<sup>29</sup> This was the view held by most interviewees.

Table 2, eight such pieces have been adopted/enacted, of which one is no longer in force. Five progressed to an advanced stage but were not adopted/enacted, including the Regulation of Agricultural Land Policy and Bill which benefited from extensive Project support. For a further six policies, their drafting or processing is still underway.

**Importantly,**

Table 2 **Error! Reference source not found.** lists policies and laws that benefited *in some way* from Project support. The extent of support varied; from a brief set of expert inputs on a proposal, to extensive consultation and collaborative policy drafting. It was however largely weighted towards policy development and, in the case of bills, to support SEIAs and making recommendations for improvement of bills after they were published for public comment. It is important to understand that the Project supported a Department in undertaking its own processes. See Annexure A for detail on the nature of support in every instance.

**Table 2. Status of policies and laws that benefited from Project support**

Laws/ policies that benefited from Project support & were fully enacted / adopted	Laws / policies that benefited from Project support, progressed to an advanced stage but not enacted / adopted
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Green Paper on Land Reform (2011)</li> <li>2. Property Valuation Act and Office of the Valuer General (2014)<sup>30</sup></li> <li>3. Policy on exceptions to the 19 June 1913 cut-off date and related Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Act (2014)<sup>31</sup></li> <li>4. Land Tenure Security for Commercial Farming Areas Policy, and Extension of Security of Tenure Amendment Act (enacted 2018) (ESTA Amendment)</li> <li>5. Agricultural Landholdings policy framework (2013)</li> <li>6. Electronic Deeds Registration Act (2018)</li> <li>7. Policy on Beneficiary Selection and Land Allocation (2020)</li> <li>8. Land Donations Policy (2020)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Regulation of Agricultural Land Policy and Bill (amalgamating 3 previously separate policies which also benefited from Project support)</li> <li>2. Land Management Commission Bill (2014)</li> <li>3. Communal Land Tenure Policy and Bill (2017)</li> <li>4. Communal Property Associations (CPA) Policy &amp; Amendment Bill<sup>32</sup> (2013; 2018)</li> <li>5. Agri-Parks Policy Framework<sup>33</sup> (2015)</li> </ol>
<b>Recent policies currently proposed or underway and benefiting from Project support</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Input and commentary towards Comprehensive Producer Support Policy</li> <li>2. Land Tenure Reform Policy</li> <li>3. Integrated Land Administration System Policy Framework</li> <li>4. Draft Land Redistribution Policy Framework</li> <li>5. White Paper on Land Reform (Revision)</li> <li>6. Policy to Regulate Landownership by foreign nationals</li> </ol>	

While the evaluation was not able to do a comprehensive assessment of the extent of implementation of the adopted/enacted items, the Green Paper is certainly being used as a policy framework; and the Property Valuation Act and Office of the Valuer General are in force. The ESTA Amendment Act is in place as of 2018 although the High-Level Panel report (2017) was critical of ESTA's implementation up to 2017.

<sup>30</sup> An official who participated in the process of developing this policy, has stated that they do not remember UNDP's involvement, while a former UNDP staff member confirmed that this work took place during his time. Successive UNDP documents and steering committee project progress reports mention this contribution and one document describes UNDP's involvement as follows: "Advised on and refined work-stream draft". Unfortunately, detailed records on this work were lost. It seems probable that there was a UNDP contribution, but it was not communicated to all officials as a UNDP contribution and was not such a large role that it is still memorable nearly a decade later. However, more evidence would assist to substantiate the claim.

<sup>31</sup> Implementation was halted following a Constitutional Court judgement as to the quality of consultation in Parliament (outside the control of the Project).

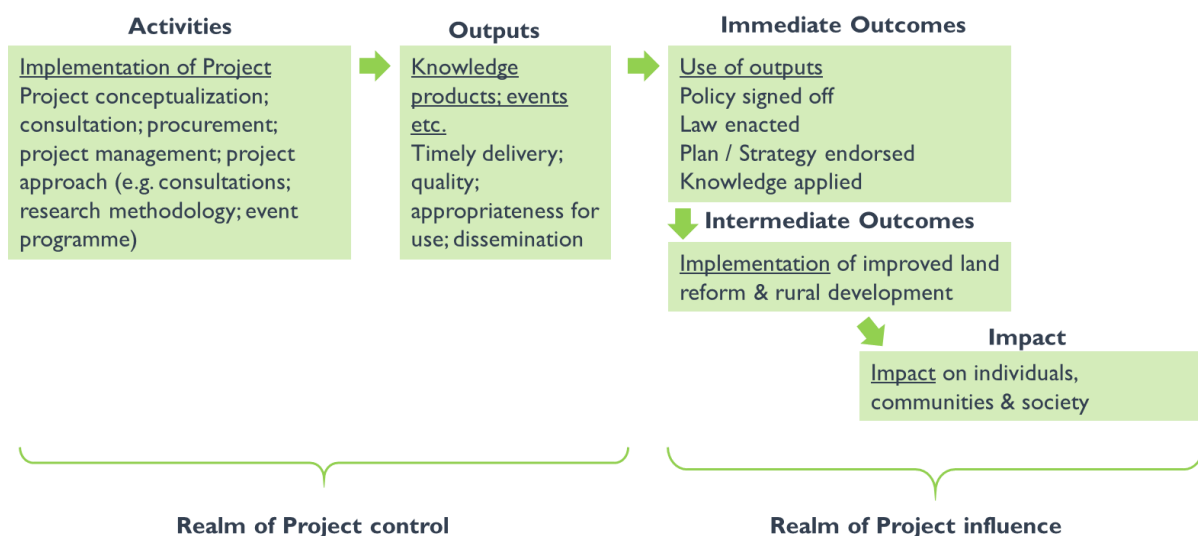
<sup>32</sup> The Annexure to the Close-out report states that "The Communal Property Associations Bill was passed by the Portfolio Committee and the Select Committee but its assenting into law has been delayed."

<sup>33</sup> This is an example of where UNDP Project support was not a significant contribution. It is listed anyway as an international expert provided inputs to this.



The items listed in the column on the right all reportedly stalled. There is no suggestion that it is the quality of Project outputs that hampered the enactment/adoption of the items that stalled. Instead, the internal Project documentation and stakeholder interviews attributed each of these stalled processes to specific shifts in political priorities. The realm of policymaking is inherently complex, and the South African land reform policy environment is particularly contested, given the country's history and the divergent and often opposing interests of different groups. Most policies have important implications for a wide range of political groups, economic interest groups, leaders of various types, academia, civil society and the individuals and communities who are landless or have insecure access to land. With serious social fault lines and deep-set differences of perspective as to the right way forward, policy proposals tend to face heated opposition whether for being too radical or not being radical enough. It is not uncommon for the interaction of these many factors to give rise to changes in political strategy. The Project was also implemented in a context of high turnover in political leadership. Therefore, during the life of the Project this has resulted in some changes in policy emphasis and priorities, which were largely beyond the control of the Project partners.

This begs the question: **What should be considered success in such a dynamic policy environment?** As Figure 3 depicts, the adoption of policies and laws depends on the approval of the Minister, Parliament and other political role players. It is thus beyond the direct control of a Project that supports the administration<sup>34</sup>. Such a Project can merely influence the likelihood of adoption through its approach to implementation and the delivery, quality, appropriateness for use, and dissemination of its outputs.



**Figure 3: Model of Project control and influence (based on the theory of change)**

However, in the last few years it has also become clear that policy processes may initially stall only to be taken further later, since the needs that these policies seek to address tend to remain relevant. A number of the stalled policies and bills are being “resuscitated”, or re-

<sup>34</sup> In this report, “the administration” refers to the public administration, such as government departments. In South Africa, this term is often used to distinguish the domain of public administration from the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government.

packaged as part of new processes. For instance, the Communal Land Tenure Policy and Bill has been recently re-introduced to the executive in a form that continues to draw extensively on the previous draft that was developed with Project support. The Communal Property Associations Amendment Bill stalled in 2014; then in 2018 was passed by both National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces but has been awaiting Presidential signature over a year. See also several other examples in Annexure A, which demonstrates that the tendency is to revisit stalled processes later and draw on the content of those policies, since the challenges they addressed and the research and considerations that they were based on, tend to remain relevant.

The timeframes for “resuscitating” these processes, and the extent to which they will draw on the elements that previously benefited from Project support, are not always predictable. This may lead to a situation where the Project’s value add is questioned. Stakeholders may disagree on the success or effectiveness of the work, if they only consider whether Project support translated into policies that were adopted promptly. For instance, in interviews one Departmental official questioned the effectiveness of the Project because in this official’s view, too few policies and laws have changed despite extensive Project support. On the other hand, another Department official reflected on the nature of the environment as follows:

“[For instance, you may work on a project on land administration.] In 2014, it was left on the shelf, then by... 2017, 18, it becomes a major thing that's required. If you had evaluated in 2014 you would say that was a loss of money and hope you'd be alive today to see how everybody is now interested in these issues... you need to be slightly ahead in thinking; and it will cost you dearly, because some of what you thought was big will not necessarily be taken up at the time. But if you were correct... you can just imagine this as a little archive of things that you just pulled out ... and the research that had been done [much earlier in the Project is] becoming relevant now.”

For this reason there are grounds to withhold judgment on the effectiveness of Project support for several years after a process appears to have stalled. Clear communication of what has been achieved and where the process stalled, and appreciation for the fact that policy development is happening in a complex and contested environment, is essential to continued support for the Project.

This raises the following insights:

1. The Project’s support may be effective in shaping the legal and policy framework in the long run, even if a policy process stalls initially.
2. Three dynamics leading to shifts in policy priorities over the Project implementation period were: (1) political pressure on the eve of elections (unwillingness to alienate constituents); (2) policy decisions of the ruling party; (3) turnover in the position of the Minister. Stakeholders may sometimes be able to anticipate such shifts and factor them into decisions about whether, how, and when to undertake work.
3. Wherever the Project can support policies that enjoy sustained political support, it is more likely to be effective in the immediate term.
4. If there are ways to shape political support for policy processes, through the elements within the Project’s control (e.g. through the approach to Project implementation; timing of support; dissemination of knowledge products; participation in events; etc.)

this may somewhat enhance the likelihood of adoption. However, as shown in the diagram above, the Project will never have full control of these factors.

Some stakeholders recognising these dynamics, have suggested that the Project may increase its effectiveness if it engages political decision-makers directly to share findings of research conducted or exposes them to international experience on relevant issues. UNDP South Africa has done this in other areas of work. In this Project, there have also been two initiatives taking this approach. The first is the study tour to Benin, which included not just administrative but political representatives. The second is a recent decision to have one of the UNDP experts present his research directly to the Minister, rather than for the administration to present the Minister with a synthesised version. One of the Resident Advisors has also built a rapport with certain political decision makers and been invited to play a policy advisory role outside of the Project.

Although it would need to be approached carefully, several interviewees, both in government, in UNDP, and among experts believe that this is an important approach to consider going forward. A UNDP manager suggested that UNDP can even use its “convening power – bring all political actors together”, as opposed to working only with others such as government, civil society, and communities, since political actors are essential to progress. A Departmental official similarly was of the view that UNDP’s institutional position and reputation affords it a degree of influence which could be used to expose not only government but political decision makers to international experience and contextual research.

From an evaluability and Project communication perspective, when a policy process stalls, it is important for the Project to keep a record of: (1) how the process unfolded after the Project’s contribution ended, why it stalled, and any subsequent developments; (2) what the Project support or contribution was, and how this work may still be leveraged in future; and (3) the influence that the work has had in other respects. Stakeholders point to a variety of valuable outcomes that are potentially worth noting in the absence of an adopted policy. For instance, the fact that a proposal is discussed in Parliament can shape the views of a broad audience; and consultations and knowledge sharing towards a particular policy or strategy can yield benefits for the knowledge and relationships of those involved which pave the way for further progress.

#### 6.5.3 Assessing the effectiveness of strategic support

The project also undertook various areas of work that were of strategic value, without the purpose of feeding into the drafting or revision of a single specific policy or piece of legislation. The objectives of these areas of work varied – e.g. undertaking stakeholder consultative processes; developing strategies that may later inform policy; or conducting research to inform strategy – and are therefore harder to make general / cross-cutting judgments on. They largely appear to have been positively received, and positive outcomes are described for most of them in the Project’s internal close-out report. The following general points can be made:

#### Critiques:

- The analysis and report (2017) on Community Profiling for the “War on Poverty” and the Broader Rural Development Programme drew on data collected from households and communities earlier and consolidated them in a useful format, by district and province. It was useful in confirming that some programmes of DALRRD had indeed been informed by, and aligned to, the needs and priorities from this evidence base. It was intended to inform further rural development planning by geographic area, but the

use of it to date is not clear. It seems that this work, like some of the policies discussed above, was produced in support of a process which then stalled. It remains to be seen whether it will be used further. As argued above, in such a case this work may be used again later; and it is best to withhold judgment on effectiveness for some time.

- Related to the point above, a different Departmental official believed that while the majority of the research had informed policy work going forward, there was still plenty of content generated by the Project that the Department had not taken full advantage of.

#### Positive findings:

- The notion of the South African economy being in a “middle income trap” and the potential strategies for breaking out of this trap, have over years of UNDP expert support been introduced and engaged with by the Department and stakeholders. Eventually as of 2020 this problem statement and the chosen strategies for addressing it have found expression in a widely endorsed theory of change for the National Agriculture and Agro-Processing Master Plan, which is also aligned with the broader South African District Development Model (DDM –) which currently enjoys policy priority.
- The study tour to the Songhai Centre in Benin made such an impression on the delegates (including government, the minister, and UN representatives) that they decided to start an initiative in South Africa to replicate the Agroecological Farming Systems and Green Rural Cities/settlement Model. Funds for a feasibility study were secured from FAO<sup>35</sup>.
- Operation Phakisa helped to inform measures in the Donations Policy to improve housing and land ownership for farm dwellers. Some of its recommendations have also informed the Agriculture and Agro-Processing Master Plan.
- The support to the Department around EWC assisted the senior management of the Department to engage proactively and in a considered way with this policy direction, benefiting from stakeholder perceptions, discussion sessions, and policy position papers.

#### 6.5.4 Areas of greatest achievements and fewest achievements

Against the backdrop of the complexities described above, the evaluation can make the following tentative claims as to the Project’s areas of greatest and fewest achievements. It bears in mind that which is most commonly viewed as the greatest achievements by interviewees and stakeholders (as documented), as well as the extent of endorsement / implementation as far as the available evidence suggests. This means there is a bias towards work that has been completed, and there will be grounds for updating this list over the next year or two as the results of current processes become clearer.

- Significant content inputs into the Green Paper on Land Reform (2011).
- Support to the establishment of the Office of the Valuer-General (2013).
- Support to the Department on engaging with EWC.
- Land Administration workshop with international expert and South Africans (2019).

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<sup>35</sup> “Talking points” for the meeting between the RR and DG on 18 November 2019.

- Study tour to Songhai Centre in Benin (2019).

In terms of areas of less achievements, while there are no initiatives that seem to have failed entirely, the LASES project took up significant project management and oversight time and resources, and was not able to fulfil its full intended purpose entirely. It did yield information which was used, amongst others, to develop advisory notes to inform distribution of state land. The rest of the work that was planned, remains needed – underscored again in the Presidential Advisory Panel Report, which calls for the undertaking of further study and an in-depth assessment with regard to the proposal of land ceilings, which should vary by agro-ecological zones.

In sum up the findings on effectiveness of Project results, the Project has performed well in delivering quality outputs against project plans. The Project has succeeded in contributing to several policies that are currently in force, and several others that are currently being developed. Effectiveness was hampered by shifts in policy priorities, and this section has offered some insights which may prompt some changes of approach (see recommendations section). However, as the last few years have demonstrated, there is often the potential for policy processes to be taken further later. It is harder to judge the effectiveness of the variety of work that were not directly in support of specific policies or laws; the report has noted mostly positive findings with regard to these activities.

## **6.6 Effectiveness in terms of the approach to participation**

### **6.6.1 Participation of DALRRD senior management**

It is crucial for UNDP projects to include appropriate participation of key stakeholders throughout the project cycle. It appears that this Project had a fairly participatory start: when there was a decision to formalise the Project and develop a ProDoc, it was reportedly developed with the involvement of both entities, both at the level of leadership as well as those who would be working together to implement the Project activities.

Section 6.1 has described the limited participation of the branches in the *planning*, *monitoring*, and *reviewing results* of the Project; and the impact of high turnover in the executive on the shared understanding and appreciation for the Project. Nevertheless, Project work has been aligned to Departmental priorities. Participation in the *implementation* of Project activities appears to have increased in recent years, by the involvement of branch officials in task teams and direct engagement with experts.

Consultation within the Department in the development of policies and strategies is important, in order to factor in implementation considerations - for instance, by making sure that policies are attuned to the realities and needs of the branches, units, and other spheres of government tasked with policy implementation. As discussed earlier, there is evidence of extensive intra-Departmental consultation during the processes of developing the policies. Questions, requests to rework draft policies, etc. are noted. The SEIAs processes are also aimed at ensuring the practical feasibility of proposed policies and bills and require wide consultation. This gives a strong impression that implementation realities were factored into the development of policies. Furthermore, although it is a small sample, the two branch representatives interviewed for the evaluation affirmed that they had found adequate alignment between policies introduced and implementation realities.

#### 6.6.2 Participation of other stakeholders

As pertains to the participation of external stakeholders (other spheres of government, civil/community groups, industry associations etc.), South African policy as well as UNDP place considerable emphasis on stakeholder participation in the development of government policy and strategy. It appears that the Project increased the capacity available for coordinating and implementing stakeholder consultation in policy and strategy development.

There is evidence of extensive consultation across all sectors of society on the policy development work of the Department. As part of this, the Project involved considerable stakeholder participation across many of its areas of concentration. To name a few:

- Extensive Eastern Cape consultations to feed into the Land Tenure Summit and the Communal Land Tenure Bill
- SEIAs processes
- Operation Phakisa
- Without needing to undertake new consultations, the views and experiences of rural households were amplified and made more useable for the Department by a recent project which analysed over a million household profiles from Working on Poverty and the CRDP Household Surveys conducted between 2009-2015.
- In 2018, a 2-day inception workshop for the LASES study was attended by hundreds of stakeholders (ordinary farmers, unions representatives, sector experts/ academics, officials from key departments and public entities) from the sector.

It is clear that DALRRD's approach has been highly participatory and the Project has supported this in various ways. This has generated a considerable body of information on stakeholder views that can be taken into account in DALRRD's work and by others. In some instances there is evidence of consultations informing subsequent work; for instance, the Land Tenure Summit generated stakeholder inputs that were referred to in the development of the RALHB; and the Presidential Advisory Panel analysed the records from the Summit as part of their analysis.

There are two stakeholders, who were involved around the time of signing the ProDoc, who believed that the Project had initially aimed to set up a single, standing multi-stakeholder forum to bring South African stakeholders together on an ongoing basis to engage on matters of land access. While valuing the extensive consultation described above, and the key role that the Project has played in this regard, the two stakeholders believed that a more permanent structure of some form can still add value – one citing the SDGs (see earlier discussion) and one citing the need to engage more closely with civil society on land reform issues. If as these stakeholders suggest, there was an implicit shift in strategy or approach over time, it would have been helpful to make this explicit and to document the reasons – such as lessons learned, a changing environment, or changing assessment of the feasibility of the original goal. However, the other stakeholders close to the Project do not believe that a single multi-stakeholder forum was intended or would be appropriate.

The Project's methodology does not allow it to judge the *adequacy* of participation as it did not engage widely enough in the sector nor did a literature review that could inform such a judgment. Clearly participation has been extensive, but to judge the adequacy would require consideration of factors such as the coverage and representation of key groups; quality of debate; appropriate timing of consultation in processes; etc.



There were surprisingly few specific discussions in the interviews of where UNDP's comparative advantage as a neutral facilitator of stakeholders came to the fore in the Project. It may be implicit in the successful consultation of diverse stakeholders in the above-mentioned processes but did not seem front of mind for interviewees as a major benefit that played itself out in Project implementation.

In terms of participation, Departmental structures and processes ensured that the relevant officials in the Department participate thoroughly in setting Departmental priorities for policy and strategy development. These officials also participated in the development of policies and strategies relevant to their area of work. Departmental officials outside the Chief Directorate did not participate directly in the planning or monitoring of the UNDP support, however. This seems to have limited the information and understanding that some of them have of the Project. But it has not prevented their ownership of the policies and strategies developed with Project support. As pertains to external stakeholders, the Project increased the capacity available for stakeholder consultation in policy and strategy development. There is evidence of extensive consultation across all sectors of society on the policy development work of the Department through summits, socio-economic impact assessments and other activities.

## **6.7 Efficiency**

Key evaluation question 6 is, "Were the results produced in an efficient manner, and how did the project's implementation arrangements facilitate this?" This section uses the concepts of economy and efficiency (two aspects of value for money; a third aspect, effectiveness, has already been discussed) (DFID, 2011) to reflect on the project's performance, and discusses the reasons for the observed performance with reference to the project management arrangements, staffing structure, Project design, and the contributions of various role players.

### **6.7.1 Project implementation strategy and resource usage**

#### **Economy**

Economy as used here refers to whether the Project bought inputs of the appropriate quality at the right price. One of the key inputs, in terms of budget spend, is the experts secured by the Project.

The UNDP's maximum daily rates for international experts is considerably lower than South Africa's Department of Public Service Administration (DPSA)'s rates. As Table 3 shows, in 2019 UNDP's maximum was less than two-thirds the DPSA maximum. A 2016 comparison done by UNDP showed that even when one factored in UNDP management and administrative costs, the maximum contract value for a 400-day individual contract was R5.6 million as opposed to R11.3 million. Furthermore, the Project documentation shows that UNDP did not always set rates at the maximum limit.

This appears to be a realisation of UNDP's comparative advantage in securing international expertise; even renowned international experts have been willing to work at reasonable rates because of the reputation of UNDP.



**Table 3. Comparison of daily rates - UNDP and DPSA, 2019**

Institution	Maximum daily rate		Example difference on 400-day contract	
	USD	ZAR	USD	ZAR
DPSA 2019*	\$ 2,211.84	R 31,960	\$ 884,736.50	R 12,784,000
UNDP 2019**	\$ 1,350.00	R 19,507	\$ 540,000.00	R 7,802, 730
*Source for DPSA rates, effective from July 2019: <a href="http://www.dpsa.gov.za/dpsa2g/documents/gics/Fees%20July%202019.pdf">http://www.dpsa.gov.za/dpsa2g/documents/gics/Fees%20July%202019.pdf</a> **Source for UNDP rate: UNDP Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures version 24 (effective from 2016). Currency conversion was based on the average 2019 exchange rate of R14.4495 / 1 USD.				

One UNDP official expressed the view that the Project could have made more use of experts within the UN system, where it relied instead on external experts. When using experts in the UN system on detail assignment for a few months, it is possible for a Project only to pay costs such daily subsistence allowance, without needing to pay an honorarium / consulting fee. In this way the Project may have saved further money on expertise. From meeting notes and discussions over the past year, it seems that the UN South Africa office is regularly considering the potential use of expertise in the wider UN system.

The evaluation did not review the Project's economy in terms of other costs which make up a smaller component of overall expenditure, such as event hosting and travel, the Project Manager's salary and benefits, and rates of cost recovery for operational support of other UNDP staff. In interviews, when asked about how Project resources could have been spent better, none of these aspects were raised by any interviewees.

### **Efficient use of time**

The Project was delayed in its fully-fledged implementation because of the delay of two and a half years in signing the CSA. After the ProDoc was signed by the DG, it appears that the department's executive raised concerns about entering into the cost sharing agreement which had been stipulated in the signed ProDoc. However, it was also a broader matter between the relevant South African government entities and the UN in South Africa, which has also been noted in the evaluation of the UNDP CPD (2017). There was disagreement among relevant centre of government departments as to the interpretation of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) on this matter. According to the former RR, it required clarification of the PFMA between the UN, National Treasury, the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), and the Auditor General before the CSA was signed. In terms of efficient use of time and resources, therefore, time was wasted during which the Project could have been supporting the Department more extensively. It is not clear if the issue has been entirely resolved as National Treasury has also reportedly refused to sign off on UNDP's annual work plans in recent years. Meeting notes from November 2019 suggested that Treasury's interpretation of UNDP as a service provider instead of a development partner remained a concern at the time.<sup>36</sup>

The high turnover and failure of the steering committee to meet regularly, also contributed to delays and inefficient use of project management time. For instance, the steering committee meeting of November 2018 was adjourned as the new acting DG (ADG) at the time called for

<sup>36</sup> Meeting between the RR and the DG, November 2019.

a more detailed briefing on the Project, at a later date, before dealing with the steering committee agenda. The subsequent meeting was organised, including agenda, venue, and presentations, but the meeting was never held.

Subsequent to signing of the CSA, there have been several instances where fund transfers from the Department were delayed. This happened amongst others when the CSA was to be revised due to a change in the amount to be contributed by government. Delays in funding transfers are also noted as an ongoing risk in the Project risk register, given that government and UNDP have different annual cycles. The risk register notes that it has at times delayed implementation and led to a rush in the last quarter. However, there have also been instances where UNDP was able to continue with implementation, drawing on its own funds until resources were transferred from the Department. This enabled a degree of implementation “smoothing” which may not have been possible for the Department if undertaking similar work internally.

When asked about other unnecessary delays in implementing the Project, none of the interviewed stakeholders raised any other issues.

Pertaining to the implementation of discrete projects / contracts, the Project has by all accounts been strong in terms of efficient project management. There is a perception among government and external stakeholders that UNDP is quite efficient in project management and in their turnaround times on deliverables. In other words, once the Department and UNDP had agreed on a contract or initiative to undertake as part of this Project, the outputs were generally produced in good time and to standard. This helped the Project to be responsive to tight timeframes which were sometimes set by policymakers. As noted earlier, the close engagement on the process of producing deliverables, from both the Chief Directorate and the UNDP Project Manager, was key to success in this regard.

The fact that UNDP’s efficiency is front of mind for several government stakeholders, is not in itself a problem – it is a good track record and inspires confidence in UNDP as a development partner. The concern is only if government starts to see this as the main rationale for working with UNDP. This inappropriately frames UNDP as a service provider that sub-contracts expertise and may lead to a comparison of UNDP with service providers or consulting companies merely on the basis of efficiency. If the other value adds of working with UNDP are not clear to government – its normative status and role within the international system as a multilateral development agency; its ability to bring high calibre experts in from within and outside the UN system; and its role as an impartial facilitator – then they may not make full use of these benefits and may also not make room for UNDP to provide strategic direction to the project. Contrary to these concerns, the evaluation evidence suggests that virtually all the work undertaken by the Project has been consistently informed by one or more of UNDP’s comparative advantages. See Annexure A: Overview of Project activities. More robust stakeholder engagement with Project workplans may have cleared out these kinds of concerns.

### **Efficient use of human resources**

The Project has used its one dedicated human resource, the Project Manager, mostly efficiently as far as the available evidence suggests. The one inefficiency (in terms of the use of project management time) that the evaluation has picked up on, is that a wide variety of narrative and/or quantitative progress / performance reports have been produced for this Project. Reports were produced in line with UNDP’s internal reporting templates and requirements; and then additional reports were created aimed at Departmental stakeholders. These reports are diverse, suggesting that there was no mutually agreed format which could be efficiently

compiled and regularly shared with Departmental stakeholders. It seems that stakeholders' information needs changed along with turnover in the Department, making it necessary to spend considerable project management time communicating and re-iterating information in different formats. It is appropriate that the Project prioritised meeting these needs as they arose, but it was time consuming and can perhaps be avoided by anticipating diverse needs up front when agreeing to reporting formats in a future iteration of the Project.

In terms of the efficient use of external / contract-based human resources, in a Project which effectively spanned 9 years (2011 to 2020), there were some opportunities to make use of the same external expert for more than one contract / area of work. The Project had to manage trade-offs between (1) having new experts who may need time to orient themselves in the institutional environment and/or country environment; or (2) having the same expert, who needs no introduction to the environment but may become so sympathetic to decision-makers or accustomed to the status quo that they tend to offer less radical / hard-hitting inputs.

To demonstrate this trade-off, one expert acknowledged that it took a few months to understand the environment and start giving appropriate technical advice. On the other hand, two UNDP officials expressed concern over the perception that experts who are repeatedly involved in the processes can be influenced through engagement with political role players and lose the element of impartiality that experts are meant to uphold.

The Project balanced this trade-off by having a mix of “once-off” and “repeat” experts. This included the appointment of Resident Advisors – see the section on human resources, below. Aside from a Resident Advisor, several interviewees believe it would be better that the Project not secure the same experts repeatedly as it has sometimes done. However, the risk register notes that there are limited technical experts specialising in land reform, and some are reluctant to work for government as they perceive reputational risk in such a politicised policy environment. It proposes having a database of experts and also opening opportunities to new service providers that have capacity but not necessarily an extensive track record. In general it appears that the Project has managed these challenges pertaining to the involvement of external experts, as well as possible.

#### 6.7.2 Conduciveness of management systems

The Project was implemented using UNDP's management systems, such as project management systems, monitoring systems, and financial systems. The standard UNDP systems were applied to the Project.

According to external experts, the procurement and payment systems have been clear and predictable. Interviews with UNDP officials also suggest satisfaction with UNDP's financial management systems. There was only one instance where a DALRRD official requested an explanation of the costs recovered by UNDP, apparently because he was concerned as to the charging of General Management Services (GMS) and Direct Project Costs (DPCs). It was then explained to the satisfaction of the official. DPCs in particular were introduced (in UNDP globally) during the life of the Project and may not have been sufficiently communicated to the government partner. A UNDP official suggested that future partnerships would benefit from ensuring that the cost recovery arrangements are clearly stipulated in the CSA contract for government partners to be appraised of and consent to up front; and that major changes in cost recovery rules are reflected in an addendum to the CSA. Written agreements are particularly important in an environment with high staff turnover in either of the partner entities.

In terms of monitoring systems, UNDP has had a clear set of planning documents in place over the life of the Project: The CPD and CPAP set out the medium term strategy; and then annually, the country office's work was guided by annual work plans for UNDP as a whole, for the Inclusive Growth portfolio; and for the Project (shared for 2016-2019). The Project AWP's follow a standardised format and reflect the main outputs to be produced for the year. However, the evaluation found no standardised reporting of the Project performance against these AWP's, which would allow stakeholders to do a one-for-one comparison of what was planned against what was produced. The ProDoc also indicated that quarterly and annual Project performance reports would be produced, which appear not to have been produced in any standardised format (possibly because of the irregularity of the steering committee meetings that were meant to agree on their format and then use them for regular oversight).

However, in reviewing the AWP's against various types of progress reports, spreadsheets with the status of all planned activities and active procurement contracts, presentations, and the repository of knowledge products, it seems that the planned outputs have largely been produced. These combined with the various narrative progress reports that were produced for different occasions, would have allowed managers to be able to learn and adjust accordingly. No critiques of the format of these reports were raised by managers in the Department, although in the absence of the steering committee few managers outside of the Chief Directorate appear to have engaged with such reports.

At the outcome level, the Results-Oriented Annual Reports of UNDP reflected on the Project's outcomes but not in a systematic way, since these reports give an overview of results across all the areas of work of the UNDP country office. Although not a concern raised by stakeholders, an evaluation such as this one would benefit from regular noting / tracking of the outcomes of policy and strategy processes that had benefited from Project support. Such information would also be valuable to bring new stakeholders up to speed or respond to stakeholder questions about effectiveness and value.

As alluded to earlier, while there was information produced in a variety of formats, there were weaknesses in ensuring that the information reaches the key stakeholders in the Department and that they engage with it. This did not happen as well as intended, partly because the steering committee did not meet regularly.

### 6.7.3 Staffing arrangements

In terms of implementation arrangements, until 2016, the Project was implemented by the Inclusive Growth Programme staff without dedicated capacity. The ProDoc, however, made provision for a Project Management Unit, structured as shown in Figure 9. Following the signing of the CSA, the Project Manager was appointed in mid-December 2016. It is clear that the dedicated Project Manager was essential to the delivery of the project.

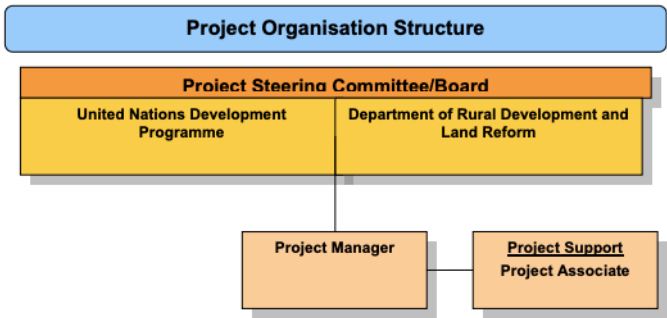


Figure 9. Organisational structure of the Land Reform and Rural Development project management

The figure above suggests that there was also an intention to appoint a dedicated project associate. However, in practice, there was a general arrangement for the Project to draw on the capacity of existing programme associates as and when needed<sup>37</sup>. A few interviewees both inside and outside UNDP were of the view that the project management demands were intense, and the project could have benefited from more administrative / project management capacity.

As the figure also shows, the Project design did not include the appointment of a dedicated technical expert alongside the Project Manager. As described earlier, the Project obtained expertise – either from the Resident Advisor if appropriate, or from elsewhere in the UN system, or from external experts – when conceptualising a piece of work in response to an expressed Departmental need.

Resident Advisors (sometimes referred to as Resident Experts or Resident Technical Advisors) are “international experts which were appointed now and again to provide technical expertise to the department as and when is required”<sup>38</sup>. A Resident Advisor works on a longer-term contract (for instance 10 or 12 months, and can be renewed) with certain predefined deliverables as well as a line item such as “ongoing advisory services and policy research”, which enables the individual to respond to requests from the Department as they arise, already having the benefit of in-depth understanding of the policy and country environment.

The role of the Resident Advisor was determined from contract to contract. It was not institutionalised in the sense of being explicitly noted in the Project design documents, nor were Resident Advisors standing members of the steering committee. There was one Resident Advisor appointed on various contracts from 2011 to 2015, when he unfortunately passed away. A second expert served in this role on various contracts from around that time to present and a third expert also worked with the Project on various contracts over the period 2016 to 2019. In addition to these, a fourth international expert has also been consulted “as and when required”<sup>39</sup>.

The Resident Advisors were intended to be “go-to” technical advisors to ensure that Project work was conceptualised with the benefit of international expertise. The evaluation found

<sup>37</sup> See the UNDP organogram provided earlier for an overview of the staff in the country office.

<sup>38</sup> Close-out Report.

<sup>39</sup> Close-out Report.

instances of Resident Advisors playing this role for several specific pieces of work; for instance, by giving input on task specifications. There is also an example of a Resident Advisor meeting with the UNDP Resident Coordinator and Resident Representative in April 2018 to give advice beyond the scope of a single focus area to advise on UNDP's overall strategy with the Project. The same Resident Advisor also conceptualised the LASES study which became a major area of work under the Project.

Despite the involvement of Resident Advisors and seeking the inputs of other experts on Project work, there is a discomfort expressed by some stakeholders that UNDP did not play enough of a technical strategic advisory role in terms of determining the approach to the work. The concern is that UNDP should have played a stronger role as a development partner, influencing the approach to the Project activities<sup>40</sup>. According to these stakeholders, there is untapped institutional knowledge, systems, and expertise in the UN system that South Africa could benefit from with regard land reform and rural development. UNDP could have identified these opportunities and proposed to the Department how the Project could facilitate access to them.

The evaluation found that some of these types of opportunities were indeed proposed and taken up by the Project. For instance, the Project facilitated access to expertise from the Brazil-based International Poverty Centre (now the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth); UN-Habitat's experiences with records of land rights were shared at the workshops in 2019; the study tour to Benin provided exposure to innovative practices; and other study tours were planned but postponed because of COVID-19. UNDP also made a few other proposals for activities, and tried to introduce DALRRD to other entities and initiatives, which were not followed through on by the Project for reasons which are not clearly documented.

These concerns point to two aspects of the Project that were not utilised as well as intended.

Firstly, a steering committee which functions as intended would have allowed for fuller consideration of the conceptualisation of the proposed Project activities. It would also have allowed more opportunity for UNDP to take the initiative to propose opportunities and linkages which would benefit the Department. Debate by a fully constituted steering committee on such proposals, and would have ensured that the Project's choice of activities benefited from the perspectives of more than just a few individuals in the two institutions.

Secondly, it seems that the approach of drawing on Resident Advisors and other experts to provide strategic advice did not go far enough – or the contributions that they made “as and when required” was not visible enough to those expressing concerns. It is possible that clearer institutionalisation of this role would have aided in its impact and visibility in the Project. One UNDP stakeholder was of view the UNDP South Africa country office should have ideally appointed a technical advisor as part of the Project design, along with the Project Manager, to assist in conceptualising as well as quality assuring outputs. If the latter proposal is taken up in a future iteration of the partnership, the specialisation of the technical advisor would need to be carefully considered, because no individual would have expertise in all areas that the Project has required (see section 6.2.1) or may require in future. Therefore the technical expert would

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<sup>40</sup> Note that there is no dispute that the experts working on individual contracts/projects provided formative inputs on how to undertake their own scope of work and gave strategic policy recommendations and advice to government. There is also no dispute about the quality of work.



nevertheless need to engage other experts, in and/or outside of the UN system, to provide the full range of technical advice needed.

In conclusion, compared to government or the private sector, the Project was economical in its main area of spending, namely experts. There were some significant delays in moving to full-scale implementation of the ProDoc, and further delays in the Department transferring funds, which reportedly led to some delays in implementation. Nevertheless, stakeholders by and large considered the project management efficient. This is a value add for the Department even if it is not UNDP's primary value offering. Project management may have been further improved if the project had been staffed as per the ProDoc. The evaluation finds that the management systems largely facilitated the delivery of the project's outputs, although the use and understanding of these systems by the Department was not as hoped. The Project supplemented UNDP's internal technical expertise with Resident Advisors and linked the Department to some valuable international entities and experiences, but some believe UNDP could have played an even stronger role in influencing the approach to the Project activities, thereby adding further value to the Department.

## **6.8 Sustainability in terms of lasting capacity or results**

Key evaluation question 7 is, "To what extent did the project contribute to the building of lasting capacity or results?" This section responds to this question using UNDP's framework of different types of capacity building.

### **6.8.1 Contribution to policy and strategies**

The clearest mechanism by which this Project sought to contribute to lasting results, is by supporting the Department in putting in place sound, integrated policies and strategies for land reform and rural development. This "institutional capacity building" is in line with UNDP's emphasis on "deep, lasting transformations through policy and institutional reforms" and contributing to an enabling environment for development (Kanni, 2009: 8). Upstream support may take time to filter down to citizens, but it is high leverage in terms of its potential to make large-scale, long-lasting changes. The report has already discussed Project's outcomes so far: some of the policies and strategies are in force, while others have stalled, and others are being revived. There are also several policies and bills in the process of being drafted or prepared. All of them speak to recommendations in the Presidential Advisory Panel Report. Several of them have benefited substantially from Project support (whether in their current or former iterations), currently have strong political support, and have the potential to impact the country significantly. The experience of the last 9 years suggests that it is too soon to claim these as successes at the outcome level, but some of these may well end up forming part of the lasting legacy of this Project.

### **6.8.2 Capacity building of national partners**

The explicit goal of the Project when it comes to individual capacity building was, "strengthening the capacity of government and non-government actors through international knowledge and information exchange". As noted earlier, the benefit of *international* exposure was key. There was an overarching assumption that the South African state and other actors would benefit from understanding the South African situation in light of relevant international experience and evidence. Exposure to concepts and ideas from the rest of the world would broaden South Africans' understanding of what is possible, beyond what has been done conventionally in South Africa.



Most interviewees believe that the Project has contributed considerably in this regard. Several projects featured several days of workshopping, discussion and co-creation between international experts and government officials – the LASES workshops and progress meetings, the June 2019 workshop, and Operation Phakisa being good cases in point. Further general descriptions of learning were volunteered by most Department interviewees<sup>41</sup>. One interviewee highlighted that the Project has also built the understanding of political decision makers (as a previous section argued is important), that the capacity was built “not just through good content in a document” [such as a research piece], but through “real-time policy support”. In a dynamic environment, this is a significant value-add. A few examples of specific lessons and insights that respondents cited, have been noted in the section on effectiveness.

It would have aided the evaluation if the capacity building problem statement around international exposure was stated clearly; and if the activities which were intended as addressing this problem statement had been noted. This would have enabled a more systematic assessment of capacity building intended and achieved. However, the qualitative views of stakeholders are exclusively positive.

Most stakeholders are satisfied with the knowledge and shifts in perspective that officials and others gained through interaction with international experts and engaging with research on international experiences. Other means of capacity building that stakeholders felt could have added value include a more intentional coaching relationship between external experts and Departmental staff and embedding the Project Manager or an expert (perhaps Resident Advisor) in the Department on a more full time basis. However, DALRRD opted for the Project Manager to be based at UNDP. Furthermore, some are of the view that there is scope for the Project to provide further support to South Africa in terms of skill development. The scarce skill of land administration in South Africa has been the subject of recent engagements between the heads of the two institutions. As of the December 2020 the Project is exploring the possibility of linking South Africa to institutions in the rest of the world that have this expertise, through a future partnership/Project.

In conclusion, the evaluation finds that the Project has appropriately focused on building “institutional capacity” (policies and strategies that facilitate development) and has also contributed substantially to the knowledge of South African partners with regard to relevant international experience and evidence.

#### 6.8.3 Contribution to partnerships with other entities

Another means of ensuring lasting results, which are not dependent on the continued involvement of UNDP, is to contribute to partnerships with other entities, such as national institutions, NGOs, and UN agencies. This was not a clear goal of the Project, even though it is an area where UNDP is well positioned to support the Department. Through the Project the Department has certainly been exposed to a wide environment of stakeholders and potential partners. This includes several international entities such as the Songhai Centre in Benin, IFPRI, and UN Habitat. However, the evaluation did not come across any specific partnerships that were created or intended to be created by the Project.

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<sup>41</sup> A few examples of specific lessons that interviewees cited, were given in the section on effectiveness.

A few officials have clearly developed good working relationships with individuals such as technical experts, researchers and UN officials in other countries, from work done under this Project, and may be able to engage each other either ad hoc or formally going forward. However, if there is turnover, these interpersonal relationships will be lost to the Department. If UNDP facilitated an institutional partnership, reference group, network, MOU etc., this would be more likely to remain in place for the Department to draw on for several years to come.

There is scope for the Project to do more in this regard, although it would need to be carefully crafted to ensure it is legally permissible<sup>42</sup>, mutually beneficial to the parties involved and therefore sustainable. Without being prompted on the topic of partnerships, a government official expressed a need to have continued access to experts beyond the lifespan of individual contracts, as stakeholders continue to engage with and analyse the product, raising new questions that the official would have liked to ask.

### 6.8.4 Mechanisms to ensure sustainability

Another mechanism to sustain the benefits from the Project, is effective knowledge management. As the evaluation as discussed, the project has generated a considerable body of research, records of consultations, and analysis that has the potential to be used going forward. Some have already found expression in policy/strategy; others have not. Recent experience has underscored that the Department is able to use knowledge products to which the Project contributed several years ago, when issues re-emerge as priority.

Earlier, stakeholders were concerned that there is a risk of loss of institutional memory of these products, if there was turnover of the small number of officials who worked closely with the Project. But this is being addressed by a project to consolidate these knowledge products and also process some of them for dissemination to wider audiences. At the time of writing (December 2020) the Project is in the process of appointing a contractor for this. This is important, as it will make this work available to staff in the branches (current and future) who may not be aware of the full suite of Project work done and how it relates to their work.

Over the last few years, there was some hesitation on the part of some officials in the Department about putting the knowledge products in the public domain<sup>43</sup>, given the sensitivity of the processes that were underway. But exposure to international experience and evidence may benefit the public discourse and broaden support for appropriate policy reforms. There may be ways to work around concerns or risks, while supporting the important knowledge management purpose of such a product.

As discussed earlier, there is no evidence of any formal partnerships, MOUs etc. that were established through the Project. It is also not clear to what extent staff in the branches have been exposed to and are aware of the wide range of stakeholders that have interacted with the Project and who may be valuable resources going forward. The Department can benefit from widespread awareness of / acquaintance with both those who served as experts / advisors, and those who may support or partner with the Department in other ways (such as NGOs or UN entities in the rest of the world). Again, there is a risk of a loss of institutional

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<sup>42</sup> Taking into account competitive procurement regulations for instance.

<sup>43</sup> Notes from a meeting between DALRRD and UNDP on 27 February 2020.

memory; and in this regard it is not clear whether a mechanism has been put in place to ensure sustainability, such as a stakeholder map, contact list, etc.

In conclusion, the Project built government's capacity both by supporting the introduction of policies and strategies, and by offering government officials plenty of exposure to the views and products produced by high calibre technical experts and international experiences. In terms of sustaining the gains and results, a process is underway to ensure effective knowledge management especially for the products that have not (yet) been absorbed into adopted policies. Finally, while the Project does not appear to have focused on fostering partnerships, there is potential for this to contribute to ongoing institutional and individual capacity development, and to sustain the benefits of work already produced going forward.

## 6.9 Sustainability in terms of risks and/or resource constraints

Key evaluation 8 is, "What risks and/or resource constraints may impact on the sustainability of the achieved project results?"

The achieved project results are the outputs of Project work – over 100 knowledge products, as described earlier – and outcomes: the policies and strategies that benefited from them. Given the knowledge management processes underway (discussed above), it is reasonable to expect that the Department will continue to benefit from the achieved project results.

Looking ahead, government has formally committed to a range of policy work in this sector. While the reports of the High-Level Panel (2017) and Presidential Advisory Panel were controversial and may have added to the politically charged policy environment, they may also have benefited the goals of this Project by demonstrating to a broad audience that there are real concerns at policy level, which are crucial to address. The Department's Annual Performance Plan for 2020 lists 22 planned policies (presumably for the medium term and not a single year). As noted earlier, COVID-19 has also highlighted the vulnerabilities and repercussions of extreme socio-economic vulnerability of the poor, which may give further impetus to this work.

South Africa stands to benefit from continued UN support on land reform and rural development, and continued UNDP support may in itself boost institutional memory and the likelihood of making good use of the investment that has already been made in this Project. There is however a risk that, given the pressure on the South African fiscus, government may not be able to contribute as large a budget. This depends on prioritisation of not only this Department / sector, but specifically policy research and development work in this regard.

## 7 Recommendations

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The recommendations provided below are based on the evaluation findings and have been refined through stakeholder consultation. After the finalisation of the evaluation report, a management response will be produced which provides UNDP and DALRRD the opportunity to accept or reject, with justification, these recommendations<sup>44</sup>.

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<sup>44</sup> See the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines, pages 22-28, here:

[http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/PDF/UNDP\\_Evaluation\\_Guidelines.pdf](http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/PDF/UNDP_Evaluation_Guidelines.pdf). Note that this is similar

## Optimising the benefits of work done to date

1. **DALRRD and UNDP senior executives should have an engagement to review the work done to date.** The two partner entities should have an engagement dedicated to ensuring that the relevant senior executives of both DALRRD and UNDP review a summary of the work done under the Project. The engagement should allow for questions of clarity on the information provided, as well as a facilitated discussion of senior executives' considerations when judging the appropriateness and value for money of the work done. (If there is a subsequent iteration of the Project, this discussion may inform the criteria to guide decisions on the allocation of Project resources, recommended above.)
2. **UNDP should support handover of roles in DALRRD if needed.** If there is a change in staffing or restructuring of the policy development function in DALRRD, the Department and UNDP should support comprehensive handover of the Project (including knowledge products and relationships/stakeholder connections) between outgoing and incoming staff. UNDP should support such a handover process even if the Project is not renewed.

**It is recommended that UNDP and DALRRD enter into a similar Project, with the following considerations:**

3. **Ensure adequate Project length.** The Project should have a contract term of at least four years, to be able to follow through on processes implemented over the medium term as it has done up to 2020.
4. **UN agencies should coordinate and streamline support for optimal benefit.** In light of the merge in the DALRRD, the restructuring of the UN system in South Africa, and the need for UN agencies to deliver as one, the new Project should be designed to draw on the contributions of other UN agencies, especially FAO, IFAD and WFP. In this regard the past experience of working with these agencies on the Project should be reviewed and lessons identified to strengthen cooperation, optimise the synergy between agencies' contributions, and streamline the coordination requirements on DALRRD. Further synergies between this Project and others within the UNDP South Africa country office should also be explored.
5. **Institutionalise technical expertise.** The Project should institutionalise technical expertise into its design. This can be done in a variety of ways, including appointment of a Technical Expert as a project resource alongside the Project Manager; appointment of a Resident Advisor; or appointment of a panel of experts. Regardless of the approach taken, the Project design should be explicit as to the responsibilities of such expert(s) in Project execution.

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to what is required for evaluations commissioned by the South African public sector; see page 37 of the National Evaluation Policy Framework:

<https://www.dpme.gov.za/keyfocusareas/evaluationsSite/Evaluations/National%20Policy%20framework%20Nov%202019.pdf>

6. **Cost-sharing approach remains appropriate.** The Project should again be based on a CSA, as this is appropriate given a Project of this scale and UNDP's international policies on resource allocation.
7. **Retain upstream focus; supplement with downstream work as appropriate.** The Project should continue to focus on upstream policy development support, where UNDP has significant comparative advantage. It should also consider opportunities for downstream implementation related support. Such work should ideally be in support of upstream work (e.g. pilot projects; testing models proposed in policies), to reinforce the policy contribution of the Project. Such work should take into account UNDP South Africa's implementation capacity so as not to dilute the capacity available for upstream support. Where there is a clear rationale for downstream implementation work, an expansion of the dedicated Project staffing should be agreed to, or the work can be undertaken in partnership with other units within UNDP or other UN agencies in South Africa that have more implementation capacity and orientation. This would help to realise the UN South Africa comparative advantage of being able to engage all stages of the policy cycle.
8. **Develop a theory of change which is responsive to DALRRD development priorities on land reform and rural development.** The subsequent iteration of the Project should be based on a theory of change, which should be collaboratively developed and responsive to DALRRD development priorities on land reform and rural development, employing existing DALRRD and UNDP conceptual definitions where appropriate, and this theory of change should be included in the ProDoc. The theory of change should include the following:
  - a. A problem statement which articulates the problems / needs at various levels, including the needs in DALRRD that UNDP is intended to address through the Project.
  - b. In addition to high level output statements (in a similar format as those used in this Project), the theory of change should elaborate briefly on each output statement, how it relates to the problem statement, and how it is meant to contribute to outcomes.
  - c. The theory of change should lay out causal pathways for the main anticipated types of Project support (e.g. support in developing policies; facilitation of multi-stakeholder forums) to create a framework for tracking outcomes.
  - d. Explicit articulation of risks, as well as assumptions.
  - e. The theory of change can be updated periodically to reflect lessons learned; and it should be reviewed whenever there is a change in the Project's design, period of implementation, or main role players' roles and responsibilities.
9. **Partner entities should ensure clarity on key design aspects.** The partner entities should consider and agree on the new Project's intentions for, and mechanisms for achieving:

- a. Public engagement with knowledge & evidence generated (a policy of selective dissemination may be considered)
- b. Capacity building intent, both in terms of the capacity building strategy (types of activities and approach), and the desired outcomes. The UNDP's categorisation of types of capacity should be used.
- c. Gender mainstreaming.
- d. Partnerships and networks for the Department's benefit which will outlast the Project.

### **Optimising effectiveness in a dynamic policy environment**

- 10. The Project should explore opportunities for engagement with policymakers.** As already done in a few instances, UNDP and the Department should identify opportunities to involve the Minister, Deputy Minister or other political role players directly in the Project's work, with the goal of strengthening ownership and building awareness of the evidence being generated.

### **Cost-effectiveness and leveraging comparative advantage**

- 11. Partners should agree on criteria to guide Project resource allocation.** In addition to using the Project's high-level output statements to determine the work undertaken by the Project, the steering committee should agree on a set of criteria to guide decisions on the allocation of Project resources. The criteria may include the extent to which UNDP's comparative advantages will be leveraged; the priority level that the department assigned to the policy or strategy need that the work will address; the likelihood of the policy or strategy process stalling based on current risks in the political environment; existing capacity in the Department for undertaking the work internally; and the likelihood of the project delivering lasting value to the Department. Institutionalise the application of the criteria in the Project's annual planning and reporting; there should also be criteria to guide decision-making with regard to re-allocation of Project resources in response to unanticipated needs / requests. These criteria should be developed in a way that aids in transparency, empowers those managing Project resources to make decisions, and does not unnecessary additional administrative burden.

- 12. UNDP should continue to prioritise South-South and triangular cooperation.** As part of this, the Project should continue to prioritise drawing in expertise that already exists within the UN system in South Africa and globally, as this is part of UNDP's unique value-add.

### **Supporting utilisation, knowledge management and evaluability going forward**

- 13. DALRRD staff should be involved in Project areas of work relevant to them.** In conceptualising and developing task specification for specific areas of work, the Project should obtain the inputs of both the policy staff and the branch staff. Conceptualisation should include agreeing on the type, composition, and purpose of a task team or reference group, which may include an existing group or one specially established for this purpose.



- 14. The Project should compile and disseminate knowledge products produced so far.** The Project should mitigate the significant risk of a loss of institutional memory by prioritising the compilation of the knowledge products that it has produced, into a digital book or repository. It should be shared across the Department. There is also potential value in publishing a subset of products in the public domain to foster broader engagement with the evidence base.
- 15. The Project should prioritise careful packaging and communication of future knowledge products.** When working with experts, the Project should ensure that the knowledge products that are being produced are packaged in a way that is accessible to the intended users. This is key as the ultimate users of knowledge products may not have had the benefit of engaging with the products during their development. Branch stakeholders should shape the strategy in this regard by reflecting with UNDP on what has worked well up until now.
- 16. The Project should do basic monitoring of policy and strategy outcomes and impact.** To allow for easy review of Project influence at the outcome and impact level, a simple template should be developed for noting progress in adopting and implementing each specific policy or strategy process. The template should be based on the causal pathways suggested in the theory of change. Using this template, a brief record of results on each policy or strategy process should be updated periodically using existing Departmental information and/or periodic engagement with branch heads or managers to get a qualitative understanding of such progress. The template should be simple, non-burdensome, and streamlined as far as possible with existing reporting such as DALRRD's Annual Reports and progress reports against the MTSF, and the UNDP Country Office's Results-Oriented Annual Report (ROAR).

### **Communication and generating a shared understanding**

- 17. DALRRD should institutionalise executive engagement with the Project.** The Department's progress on policy and strategy development is already reported on through existing reporting arrangements and this needs not be duplicated; however, there is a need to institutionalise the means by which executive management will be kept apprised of how Project resources are being allocated. This may be achieved by establishing the steering committee in the Department as a subcommittee of either the Exco or the Policy Review Committee; giving it a standing agenda item on one of these structures; or by another means that is deemed sustainable and mutually satisfactory.
- 18. UNDP should demonstrate the application of its comparative advantage.** When given the opportunity to interact with Department stakeholders, UNDP should showcase the Project in a way that demonstrates the application of UNDP's comparative advantage and clarifies its strategic role.
- 19. Partner entities should have a clear, detailed, and documented agreement on financial as well as progress reporting.** Include clear information on UNDP's cost recovery system in the contract; and supplement this, if necessary, with a personal engagement between finance officers of UNDP and DALRRD. The matter of different financial years should be discussed in order to reach an agreement on



how to minimise disruption to the Project. Specify mutually acceptable progress reporting formats in the contract and conditions under which customised reports will be generated.

## 8 Lessons Learned

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South Africa faces extreme levels of poverty, unemployment and inequality. Two and a half decades since the end of Apartheid, these fundamental social challenges are perpetuated by the persistence of inequitable land distribution, fragmented and insecure tenure systems, and an agrarian system that benefits a minority. The frustration of the majority of the electorate, and the concerns of those with vested interest in the status quo, create a politically charged atmosphere within which to do the much needed policy reform work that this UNDP Project is designed to support. This can at times lead to unexpected changes in priorities. The Department, and by extension its partner UNDP, must manage the tension between being responsive to shifts in policy priorities, and being systematic in planning and developing policies and strategies based on a longer-term assessment of national needs.

High quality research is essential to provide a defensible basis for policy. Most policy proposals face intense scrutiny and sometimes opposition from a variety of perspectives. This underscores the need for well-considered policy development processes that are not too rushed and which create ample opportunity to receive and assess concerns and objections in light of the available evidence. The Project consultations and research has supported the Department in this regard, but it has also proven important to manage expectations when unrealistic timeframes are set.

In an environment of high turnover and a weak steering committee, perhaps compounded by communication challenges within the Department, the Project seems not to have been adequately communicated to senior executives, either by DALRRD officials themselves or by UNDP staff. Institutionalisation of Project communication, planning and reporting in the Department is key.

The Project appears to have learned from sometimes working in silos within the Department in initial years, and has in later years has ensured that technical task teams consisting of relevant branch officials inform the work undertaken for those branches.

The Project operates with significant risks to effectiveness in the political / policy decision-making environment; and significant risks to impact in the policy implementation environment. Stakeholders have gained useful insights as to these dynamics and are in a position to craft a Project design and implementation strategy which clearly articulates and mitigates (as far as possible) these risks. In particular, there is a strong sense across types of stakeholders, that there is scope for engaging more directly with political decision makers.

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## Final Evaluation of the Land Reform and Rural Development Project in South Africa

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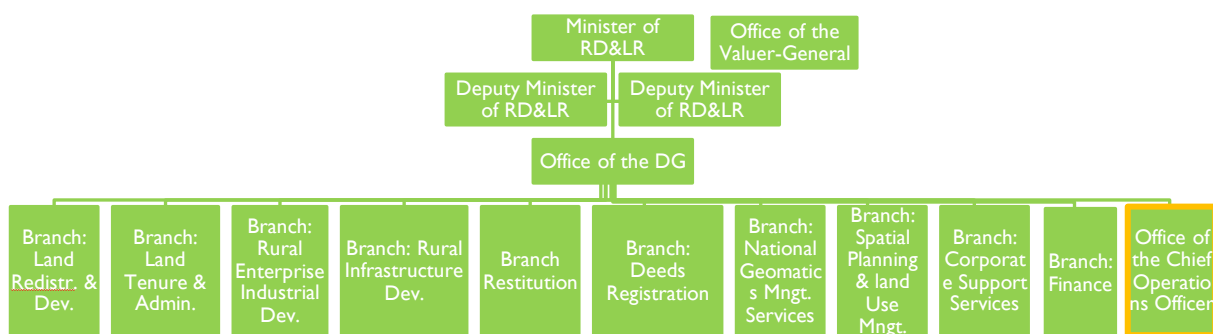
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## 10 Annexes

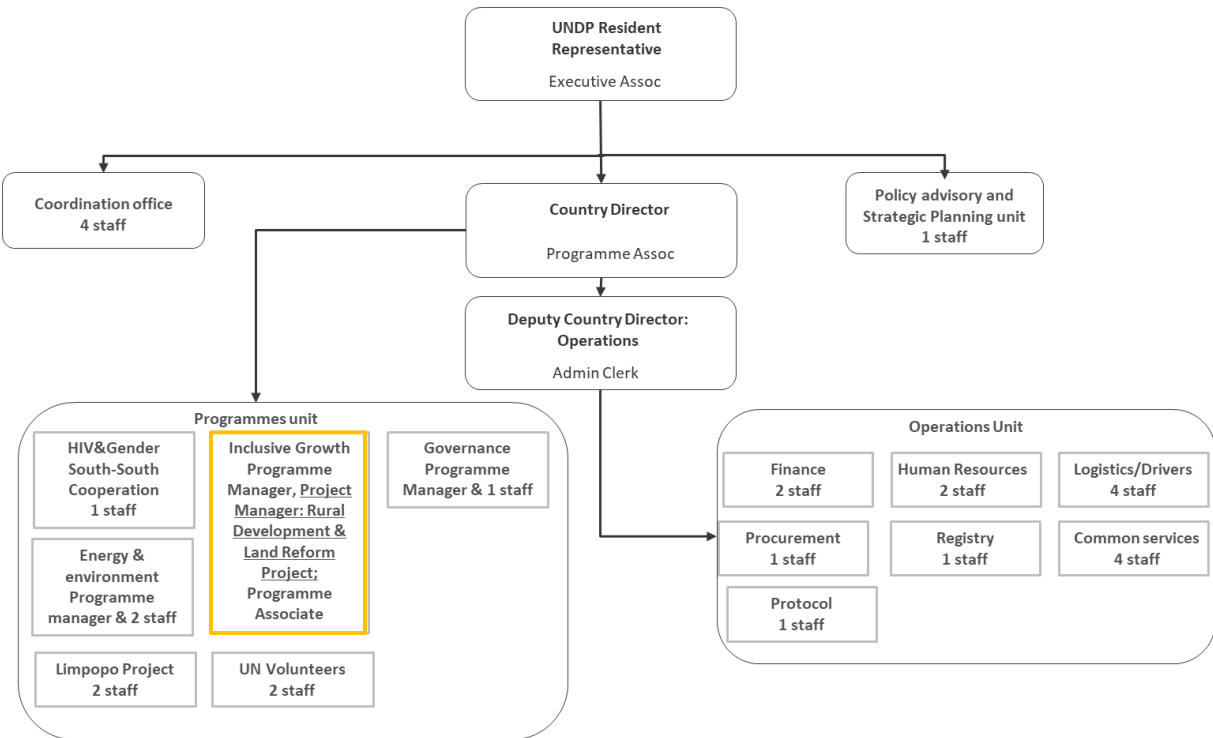
### A. Overview of Project activities

### B. Institutional positioning (Organograms)

The DALRRD is undergoing restructuring. The organogram below shows the macro-design of the former DRDLR as of June 2019, with the yellow box showing the positioning of the Chief Directorate: Policy Research and Development in which the Project was anchored. (Source: DRDLR, 2019)



As shown in the UNDP organogram below (2018), the Project Manager for this Project is positioned in the UNDP’s Inclusive Growth Programme and reporting to the Inclusive Growth Programme Manager (outlined in yellow).



### **C. Analysis of the Project Steering Committee**

In terms of governance, the ProDoc envisioned that the Project would be managed by a project steering committee. This committee would be a “top management level meeting to define objectives, strategies and validate results” and it would meet quarterly. Once a year, this meeting would take the form of an Annual Meeting where they would review and evaluate the performance of the Project based on an Annual Review report; and the Annual Work Plan for the following year. Other interested parties may be involved in the Annual Meeting.

In the 2013, the heads of the two institutions met to discuss formalising the partnership. They met again to sign the ProDoc on 1 November 2013; and the Minister met with the heads of the institutions and key role players in December 2013. Subsequently, although some support activities were implemented in 2014 and 2015, the steering committee only met for the first time in April 2016. The lack of meetings before 2016 can perhaps be explained partly by the fact that the cost-sharing agreement had not yet been signed (even though the ProDoc was already a contractual commitment). But this does not apply to the subsequent years. At the first meeting of the steering committee in 2016, it was agreed that the DG of the Department and the head of the UNDP South Africa would co-chair the steering committee, and that members would also include the Project Manager and the Department’s three relevant DDGs and as well as the Chief Director: Policy Research and Development. The intention to have a broader Annual Meeting was affirmed.

While the 2013 meetings may have given direction to the activities of the newly formalised partnership, there were only four formal meetings of the steering committee: after the first meeting in 2016, it met twice in 2017; and once in 2018, with the latter being adjourned before it could get through the agenda. Evidence suggests that UNDP sought to arrange these meetings and struggled to secure the availability of the Departmental members. The heads of the institutions met in 2019 and 2020 in meetings which did not constitute steering committee meetings but gave direction on some of the activities to be undertaken.

#### **Why did the steering committee fail to meet?**

High turnover in the position of the DG may have affected the steering committee. The four meetings from 2016 to 2018 were co-chaired on the Department’s side by a DG and two different ADGs; and since then the Department has seen two further changes in leadership. It is possible that amid the handovers between these officials, priorities shifted or there was insufficient communication about the Project. High turnover in the executive also has an effect on the continuity of priorities of other senior managers, such as the DDGs. These managers never attended and their apologies were minuted only for the second meeting of 2017. The Department was represented consistently in the meetings the Chief Director and the DG/ADG. In addition the following Department officials attended: Another official from the Chief Directorate: Policy Research and Development (once); a representative of the Chief Directorate: Project Management Unit (once); and sometimes an assistant in the DG’s office.

It is also important to recognise that the steering committee was not institutionalised, i.e. the fact that it did not meet did not affect the ability of any other structures in the Department to fulfil their mandate and did not impact on any unit or official’s scorecard. (The UNDP also has a new RR since 2019, but this turnover does not seem to be the cause of the failure of the steering committee to meet.)

#### **What impact did it have on the Project?**

It is clear from the Project documentation that the steering committee should have served the following purposes:

1. **“Define objectives”** – the steering committee should have given space for managers in both institutions to periodically **consult** and agree on the objectives of the Project. They would jointly give direction to the Project, in line with its original goals and responsive to the priorities of their institutions. This may have included weighing up priorities in light of the Project resources.
2. **“Define... strategies”** – the steering committee should have given space for the institutions to **explore approaches** to the work. This may have included a discussion of how best to draw on the strengths of the two institutions, such as leveraging knowledge within the international UN system, and involving experienced Departmental officials in the design or implementation of Project activities.
3. **“Review... work plans”** – the steering committee should have **signed off** on the planned for the year. They would also have approved any significant interim amendments to it.
4. **“Validate results”** – should have **engaged with reports** on Project performance – quarterly in terms of outputs; and annually in terms of higher-order results. In discussing results, the two organisations would have elaborated on how they judged the value of the Project.

With the steering committee rarely meeting, the Project was impacted as follows.

1. **“Define objectives”**: The Chief Directorate mostly took on the responsibility for translating Departmental priorities into Project planning with UNDP. Since South African Departmental Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans are based on a situational analysis, aligned to national priorities, and developed in consultation with stakeholders, the Chief Directorate had a clear and thoroughly consulted set of Departmental priorities which they could translate into Project objectives. However, the opportunity for the Branch heads to **consult** on the Project objectives was lost. The decisions about trade-offs were also made with limited involvement of Departmental stakeholders and not minuted for later reference or for a newcomer to orient themselves.
2. **“Define... strategies”**: The Chief Director, Project Manager, and at times the Project’s resident technical experts were involved in deciding the most suitable approaches to achieve the agreed objectives<sup>45</sup>. The broader group of Department decision makers who should have debated the options and may have chosen differently, did not do so, despite efforts to convene them through the steering committee. Then from 2019 onwards, in the absence of the steering committee, there were some meetings directly between the RR and the DG and attended by the Chief Director and Project Manager, which did not constitute steering committee meetings but served to direct the Project’s work. This enabled the Project to respond to these key individuals’

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<sup>45</sup> A number of UN system programmes (Global Environment Facility; World Food Programme, United Nations Volunteers, and Supplier Development Programme) presented on their work at the 2017 steering committee and the DG identified some opportunities, but recommended that the presentations be made again to the executive managers since they had not attended. Only the Supplier Development Programme was taken forward.

understanding of the most suitable approaches, but again did not allow for broader consultation in the Department.

3. **“Review... work plans”**: The steering committee engaged with two workplans: 2016 and 2017. As noted, these meetings were attended by the DG/ADG and Chief Director, but did not include the Branch heads. Both times it was agreed that the work plans should also be signed off by the National Joint Steering Committee (NJSC) (Departmental executive committee). Only the 2016 plan was approved by the NJSC. Although the Departmental DG/ADG and CFO signed off on funding transfers, signalling endorsement of the Project plans in principle, it appears that nobody in the Department outside of the Chief Directorate engaged with the work plans of the other years.
4. **“Validate results”** – The steering committee engaged only with the 2016 and 2017 progress reports. As noted, these meetings were attended by the DG/ADG and Chief Director, but did not include the Branch heads. Most officials were effectively dependent on the Chief Directorate for any reporting or awareness of the Project. A few Departmental stakeholders have noted some internal challenges with communication and information sharing, compounded by high turnover and the very busy schedules of those involved. It was pointed out that the Department’s internal reporting and performance management is focused on its outputs (e.g. policies), not necessarily on the arrangements/partnerships by which these are produced.

It should be noted that officials in the branches still benefited from the Project support, even if they did not participate in planning and reviewing the Project directly. The Project support ultimately fed into policies or strategies to be used by the branches. There is ample evidence of intra-Departmental engagement on the policies and strategies being developed, from early in the life of the Project (workstreams co-crafting section of the Green Paper and the policies that built on its foundation) to recently (engagement with a position paper on land tenure reform). Departmental officials therefore fully own these products. But some have limited information and understanding of the Project and its contribution to these outputs. They may also have engaged with experts in workstreams, summits and events, without being aware of UNDP’s role in securing their involvement. In recent years officials in the relevant branches have also engaged more directly with the implementation of UNDP activities, such as reviewing draft knowledge products from experts. Key projects like the LASES study (see discussion later), Land Tenure Reform Policy Framework Development, Integrated Land Administration System Development had a technical task team (TTT).

Thus, the failure of the steering committee to operate as intended has resulted in limited consultation and communication about the Project. This, along with some turnover in both institutions, has affected the institutional memory and shared understanding of the Project among stakeholders. Some questions about the Project value-add have not been addressed to the satisfaction of all.

Despite these challenges, the relatively long-standing and constructive working relationship between the individuals closest to the Project – notably the Chief Director and Project Manager – have allowed the Project to proceed and make valuable contributions, in line with both institutions’ priorities. Nevertheless, senior decision makers in both DALRRD and UNDP stressed the importance of institutionalising the steering committee (or similar) in order to improve communication and consultation on Project activities.



**D. TOR for the evaluation**

See separate file.

### E. Summary of interviews conducted

In the approved inception report, 33 interviews were planned. Another expert / service provider was added to the list of planned interviews shortly after approval of the inception report, bringing the number of planned interviews to 34. Interviews were meant to be conducted between 17 July and 7 August, with two final interviews conducted on 28 August.

For referencing in the report while maintaining anonymity, each interviewee was given a code consisting of “KI” (key informant) plus a random number between 1 and 78. These codes, in parentheses in the text of the draft report, were mainly for cross-referencing during drafting, and were removed in the final report.

<b>Stakeholder group</b>	<b>Respondents identified</b>	<b>Interviews conducted</b>
DALRRD Representatives	11	6
UNDP Representatives	11	10
External experts and partner organisations	12	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>27</b>

## F. Evaluation matrix (as per approved inception report)

KEQ & sub-questions	Data sources & analysis
<p><b>Relevance</b></p> <p><b>1. Was the Project clearly designed, with a clear internal causal logic as well as clear relevance to the South Africa's policy context and UNDP's goals?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent was the Project in line with the national development priorities and goals and with UNDP's country programme and Strategic Plan?</li> <li>Is the Project theory of change clearly articulated?</li> <li>Are the activities and outputs of Project consistent with the overall project's objectives and goals? To what extent have these activities been contributing to the project's results?</li> </ul>	<p>Comparison of MOU, ProDoc &amp; Annual Work plans for internal alignment</p> <p>Comparison of MOU, ProDoc &amp; Annual Work plans with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standard Basic Agreement (1994)</li> <li>UNDP Country Programme Document 2013-2017</li> <li>UNDP-SA Country Programme Action Plan 2013-2017</li> <li>UN-SA Strategic Cooperation Framework, 2013-2017, as extended</li> <li>NDP</li> <li>MTSFs (2009-2014; 2014-2019; 2019 -2024)</li> <li>DRDLR Strategic Plans (2009-2014; 2014-2019, updated 2015-2020; 2019-2024)</li> </ul> <p>Evaluation Report on Strategic Cooperation Framework, and UN Common Country Analysis 2013-2017, and Evaluation Report on CPD 2013 – 2017 as extended.</p> <p>Progress report prepared for the Acting DG (2018, revised early 2019)</p> <p>Assessment of the retrospectively developed theory of change for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarity of causal arguments made in documentation</li> <li>Alignment between elements in the results chain</li> <li>Comprehensiveness of documented assumptions</li> </ul> <p>Interviews with RR, DRR, Inclusive Growth programme manager (former and current); project manager, procurement and finance staff; experts/consultants</p>
<p><b>2. To what extent did the Project contribute to cross-cutting national priorities?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent has the project contributed to the <b>positive change in gender equality and the empowerment of women</b>? Looking at the high-level changes namely policy decision making, resources mobilization, etc.</li> <li>To what extent has the project contributed in <b>addressing the pace of land reform programme issue and rural development?</b></li> <li>To what extent has the project contributed to the <b>state transformation agenda and restorative justice?</b> [human rights]</li> <li>To what extent has the <b>project contributed to employment programmes</b> of the country?</li> </ul>	<p>Comparison of MOU, ProDoc &amp; Annual Work plans with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NDP</li> <li>MTSFs (2009-2014; 2014-2019; 2019 -2024)</li> <li>DRDLR Strategic Plans (2009-2014; 2014-2019, updated 2015-2020; 2019-2024)</li> </ul> <p>Interviews with DALRRD stakeholders, incl. DG; CFO; Branches: COO; LRD; LTA; Restitution</p> <p>Assessment of content of knowledge products for inclusion of gender dimension, human rights, and HIV</p>
<p><b>3. How has the project contributed to, and been influenced by, national and international priorities and trends?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to political, legal, economic, institutional and social changes in the country particularly in relation to Sustainable Development Goals, National Development Plan, UNDP and DALRRD Strategic Plans, respectively as well as other relevant development frameworks and recent policy proposals.</li> <li>What has been the effects or impact of the COVID-19 in the achievement of the project objectives and results?</li> </ul>	<p>Comparison of Project activities over time, with <b>timeline of South African policy level</b> events pertaining to land reform &amp; rural development</p> <p>Interviews with UNDP and DALRRD stakeholders, covering among others –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>extent to which the relevant policies, strategies &amp; plans had been implemented by March 2020. Likely effect on socio-economic vulnerability of South Africans in the face of COVID-19.</li> <li>Perceptions of alignment/misalignment of emphasis between Project and DRDLR priorities over time</li> </ul>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent the results of this project can be a cushion to address Covid-19 outbreak effects during and after the pandemic?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding the process for deciding on annual activities and approaches, and to what extent it allows for course correction and responsiveness to external factors and changes in either departments' priorities</li> <li>Exploring the influence of Project work on national policy formulation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Effectiveness</b></p> <p><b>4. What were the project results (at the output and outcome level) and what factors contributed to the achievement / non-achievement of these results?</b></p> <p><i>Contribution Claim 1 will be addressed under this question: "The Project has enabled DRDLR to access expertise that it would not otherwise have had access to."</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent were the <u>project's outputs achieved</u>?</li> <li>To what extent has the Project contributed to the national development priorities, UNDP's country programme outcome and outputs, and Strategic Plan?</li> <li>Are the intended objectives likely to be achieved by the end of December 2020?</li> <li><u>Are the project's objectives and outputs clear, practical and feasible within its timeframe?</u></li> <li>What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?</li> <li>To what extent has the project's partnership strategy and approach been appropriate and effective?</li> <li><u>In which areas does the project have the greatest achievements?</u> Why and what have been the supporting factors? How can the project build on or expand these achievements?</li> <li>In which areas does the project have the fewest achievements? What have been the constraining factors and why? How can or could they be overcome? What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving the project's objectives?</li> </ul>	<p>Review of evaluation reports produced during the period under evaluation, and identification of themes, achievements &amp; critiques that apply to the Project to be evaluated</p> <p>Comparison of annual Work Plans with project progress reports</p> <p>Assessment of the alignment with activities with the 4 outputs, objectives/outcomes and impacts, including their rationale as per theory of change</p> <p>Interviews with all stakeholders, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DALRRD senior mngt. (for contribution to national development priorities; partnership strategy, ability to access expertise through the Project),</li> <li>UNDP senior mngt. (for UNDP's strategy) and</li> <li>service providers / experts (for outputs achieved; perceptions of UNDP procurement &amp; access to expertise) (a few interviews; emails to a larger sample of them)</li> </ul> <p>Thematic analysis of interviews and documentation to identify achievements &amp; non-achievements, and contributing factors, at the outcome level</p>
<p><b>5. How participatory has the project approach been, throughout the project cycle, and what have been benefits and disadvantages of this level of participation?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent have key stakeholders been involved in project planning and implementation?</li> <li>To what extent were perspectives of those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the attainment of stated results, taken into account during the project design processes and during project implementation?</li> <li>To what extent are project management, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation participatory and is this participation contributing towards achievement of the project objectives?</li> </ul>	<p>Assessment of the frequency of, attendance of, and content discussed at, the steering committee meetings</p> <p>Review of documentation describing the process of UN System and UNDP level stakeholder consultations; notes from Project work plan discussions; Project activity-specific stakeholder consultations and feedback meetings; Project close-out report 2020</p> <p>Interviews with senior managers (UNDP as well as DALRRD, all relevant Chief Directorates); experts / service providers (a few interviews; emails to a larger sample of them)</p>
<p><b>Efficiency</b></p> <p><b>6. Were the results produced in an efficient manner, and how did the project's implementation arrangements facilitate this?</b></p> <p><i>Contribution Claim 3 will be assessed as part of answering this question: "The Project has delivered Value for Money (to be clearly defined for application in the evaluation)."</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent have the project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?</li> <li>To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?</li> <li>To what extent has the Project's procurement modality been efficient and cost-effective? Value for money.</li> <li>To what extent were partnership modalities (e.g. project management, financial systems) conducive to the delivery of the project's outputs?</li> </ul>	<p>Interview with DALRRD CFO and UNDP procurement office and DALRRD legal services (prioritise early on so as to inform definition of "value for money" to be used in this evaluation). <i>Include questions on monies received from other donors.</i></p> <p>Review of a sample of procurement reports</p> <p>Interviews with UNDP project associates &amp; operational staff</p> <p>Timeline of UNDP-DRDLR contractual agreements (to assess efficiency of contracting to enable Project implementation)</p> <p>Assessment of the existence of (and stakeholders' accounts of the use of) the planned monitoring mechanisms (quarterly &amp; annual reports; audits; activity reports)</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent did monitoring systems provide management with a stream of data that allowed it to learn and adjust implementation accordingly?</li> <li>To what extent was the project management and staffing structure as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Sustainability</b></p> <p><b>7. To what extent did the project contribute to the building of lasting capacity or results?</b></p> <p><i>Contribution Claim 2 will be assessed as part of answering this question: “The Project fostered the creation of networks of stakeholders who are able to continue to engage around issues of land reform and rural development.”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent did the project establish mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of the results achieved, both at the output and outcome levels?</li> <li>To what extent has the project contributed to strengthening national partners’ institutional capacities and resources, including sustainability strategies, in place to sustain the outcome level results?</li> <li>To what extent have the project contributed to policy, strategies, and guidelines in place that will ensure sustainability of results?</li> <li>To what extent did the project contribute to partnerships with other national institutions, NGOs, United Nations agencies, the private sector and development partners to achieve or sustain the attained results?</li> </ul>	<p>Review of knowledge products (both content products and project reports/close-out reports) to identify new policies &amp; policy-level influences (likely to have sustained system-level influence); other sustainability elements/strategies &amp; their implementation. (A specific list of recommended documentation has been shared by the CD: Research and Policy)</p> <p>Review of feedback, reports or assessments indicating capacity built in DRDLR / DALRRD (institutionally and/or human resources)</p> <p>Interviews with DALRRD stakeholders; UNDP staff; experts/service providers</p>
<p><b>8. What risks and/or resource constraints may impact on the sustainability of the achieved project results?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of the achieved project outputs?</li> <li>To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?</li> <li>What are the risks that threaten the project or its results sustainability?</li> </ul>	<p>Review of knowledge product reports (both content products and project reports/close-out reports) to identify dependencies influencing continued implementation</p> <p>Interviews with DALRRD, UNDP, and service providers/experts</p> <p>Close-out report</p>

## G. Theory of Change

The theory of change was retrospectively developed at the start of the evaluation. Although the Project itself did not have a theory of change (these were introduced as a planning tool around 2015 when the ProDoc had been finalised) the Project has been strongly aligned to DRDLR/DALRRD's strategic intent. The Department has expressed its overall policy intent in successive documents, including the evolution of a recent theory of change for the Agriculture and Agro-Processing Master Plan. The Project can be seen as being intended to contribute to the overall theory of change of the DALRRD.

The theory of change reflects what was explicitly stated in applicable documentation – for instance, there is a clear problem statement and outputs in the ProDoc – and supplements this with insights from the interviews. The evaluation has not identified any significant shifts in the Project's intent and assumptions over the implementation period; therefore this theory of change can be said to apply to the Project from 2013 through to 2020. Where there appear to have been subtle shifts in emphasis over this period, these will be highlighted in the discussion below.

**Table 4. Clarity of the Theory of Change components in the Project documentation**

Problem statement	The problem statement, as expressed in the ProDoc, was clear in some aspects. It covered the key points pertaining to the societal conditions, their historic origins, and the absence of appropriate policies and strategies. It is clear from the documentation that there is a shared recognition of the development challenges in this policy environment (poverty, unemployment and inequality, driven amongst others by the nature of the agrarian system, rural underdevelopment and lack of / insecure access to land) and that these are important to both the government of South Africa and to UNDP. However, neither the ProDoc nor other Project documentation clearly described the problem statement at the level of government and stakeholder capacity for policy development; nor is there a discussion of how UNDP's "comparative advantage" responds to those problems/needs. In fact, there was (and continues to be) a strong rationale which most stakeholders share. See discussion elsewhere in the report.
Inputs	The inputs (funds through a cost-sharing agreement; a project manager; and UNDP operational support) were clear.
Activities	The types of activities that would feed into the outputs were articulated fairly clearly. There was scope to state more clearly the primary intended contribution of the project as one that builds "institutional capacity" (i.e. supports the adoption of sound policies and legislation that enable development).
Outputs	While the output statements covered the main areas of work of the Project, the phrasing of the first two output statements makes it difficult to assess when the outputs should be considered "produced" or

	<p>“delivered”. Furthermore, the phrasing of the fourth project output could have created the impression of a single, standing, national multi-stakeholder forum; however most stakeholders interpreted it as supporting DALRRD in various stakeholder consultations, forums, summits etc. The theory of change would be clearer if it elaborated on the shape that each output would take and how this would lead to the intended outcomes.</p>
Outcomes	<p>The intended outcomes of improved government and stakeholder capacity, and improved land reform and rural development policy and strategy, could be deduced from the documentation. The CPD included the outcome of consensus across key stakeholders on proposals for land reform and rural development.</p>
Impact	<p>The intended Project impact of agrarian reform, land reform, and rural development – with the expected societal benefits of reduced poverty, inequality and unemployment – was clear from the combined reading of the ProDoc and the Department’s policies and strategies.</p>
Risks	<p>The risks are clearly articulated in documentation shared for the evaluation, including their likely impact and risk response / mitigation. They resonate strongly with the themes and findings of the evaluation.</p>
Assumptions	<p>These were largely implicit and not comprehensive. Documentation is clear on the “prescriptive assumption” of the importance of sound, research-based policy development and policy reform as a means to address the complex development challenges of rural development and land in South Africa. However, it would have been good also to specify the causal assumptions (from one level of results to the next) for the Project as a whole. A crucial assumption between the outcome and impact levels is that policies and strategies, once adopted, will be implemented accordingly. A few key environmental assumptions have emerged through interviews, which if documented up front could have informed a tailored strategy; and are now documented in this evaluation as lessons learned to inform any future partnership of a similar nature.</p>



## Narrative to accompany the diagrammatic theory of change

### Problem statement

The problem statement is divided into three levels.

At the level of South African society, the fundamental challenges to which the Project speaks are inequality, unemployment, and poverty. After three centuries of colonialism and Apartheid, South Africa faces extremely unequal allocation of land and other resources. The ProDoc discusses how land dispossession took place and argues that it is a fundamental driver of poverty and inequality. Against this backdrop, the three core socio-economic problems that the Project seeks to address can be articulated as follows, drawing on the core policy frameworks of the DRDLR at the time of Project conceptualisation.

Firstly, the Green Paper on Land Reform (2011) argues that the current **agrarian (economic) system** produces factors which undermine the creation of conditions which are conducive to fostering social cohesion and development amongst those historically dispossessed of their land. The second problem, as summarised in the ProDoc (2013), is “**lack of access to land by rural communities**”. The CRDP and Green Paper elaborate the nature of the problem, and the types of land reform therefore required. The third problem, as per the ProDoc (2013), is, “**Insufficient infrastructure to support rural communities to be economically active**”. It was subsequently articulated in a discussion of the Rural Economy Transformation Model, as follows: “fragmented development planning, without viable economic, social and cultural linkages to the more economically active and relatively prosperous commercial urban areas of the country (areas with markets, credit facilities, access to public transport, amenities, facilities, etc.)” (this was with reference to the former “homelands” in particular) (DRDLR, 2015).

At the level of policy and programming, despite nearly 20 years of democratic rule, the country had made little progress in rural development and in realising the intentions pertaining to land reform as per the Constitution. While the scale of the challenge is enormous and entrenched, the limited progress in addressing it could also to an extent be attributed to the still nascent character of the policy and programme environment. The DRDLR was established as a Department in 2009; and the CRDP and Green Paper on Land reform only recently developed as comprehensive policy frameworks for these two areas. The DRDLR was tasked with **developing a large volume of policy, and reforming existing policy**, in line with these.

In addition, the ProDoc problem statement indicated the following: “**Lack of support programme designed to address poverty, inequality and unemployment in rural areas**”; and “**The absence of a coherent integrated rural development strategy to address socio-economic issues confronting communities living in rural areas**”. It is notable that these were expressed as problems, yet the CRDP which was already in place was meant to be addressing these needs. Arguably, the CRDP provided a policy framework, but a “support programme” and “coherent integrated rural development strategy” were still needed to build on this.

Government and stakeholders’ capacity shapes their ability to address policy and programme needs, and thereby to improve societal conditions. The ProDoc notes that government has faced implementation challenges but it does not elaborate on government’s *policy development* capacity. In interviews, stakeholders pointed out that the policy areas, especially land reform,

are **technical, complex and controversial**. Government required policy capacity which existed, but to a limited extent, in the Department. Even in South Africa more broadly, there was scope to benefit from international expertise since the country has limited historical experience of land reform and rural development of the type that is needed now, and limited exposure to international experience in this regard (e.g. through dedicated University programmes).

Furthermore, there was a clear need for strengthening stakeholder consensus and collaboration, both among government entities and other stakeholders, as there was a degree of **fragmentation** by virtue of land reform and rural development being a multi-disciplinary area that spans various governmental spheres and sectors as well as sectors of the economy and society. This was not spelled out in the ProDoc, but was implied by the choice of outputs, and it was also implied by the UNDP CPD (2013-2017, extended to 2019) which set a target for “Consensus across key stakeholders on proposals for reform & funded first phase of implementation”.

The ProDoc also claimed that South Africa had “**inadequate institutional infrastructure to sustain human skills development in support of the LG sector**”. While this is indeed a challenge which impacts on rural development and on governance in general, the relevance of this problem statement to the Project is unclear.

## Inputs

The project had three main inputs. The first was funds. Importantly, this was one of the few cost-sharing projects implemented by UNDP at the time. The ProDoc committed UNDP to contribute \$150 000 and DRDLR \$670 000. The second key input was a project manager, who would be appointed by UNDP and dedicated to the project. Thirdly, UNDP would provide the operational support for the project by situating the project within its Inclusive Growth programme and availing this programme’s operational staff and infrastructure as required.

## Activities

As discussed earlier, the activities listed in the ProDoc were to **provide advisory and policy analysis work; provide technical expertise support; and support and facilitate the drafting of land reform and rural development policies**. These activities could theoretically be undertaken internally by UNDP (country office or other UNDP staff around the world), by external experts/service providers secured by UNDP, or – as happened in practice – a combination of both, depending on the content area and type of work required.

In addition, the ProDoc indicated that the outputs would be achieved through international knowledge exchange activities; and it the outputs stated in the ProDoc implied that there would be activities related to **facilitation of stakeholder engagements**.

## Outputs

The outputs were explicit in the ProDoc and have been used consistently to frame the work done under this Project. They are as listed in the diagram:

- I. Integrated rural development strategy developed

2. A coherent strategy and plans to facilitate equitable access to land and development completed.
3. International Information Exchange Programme to share experiences from other countries on equitable access to land.
4. Inclusive multi-stakeholder forum established to discuss how access to land can contribute to poverty reduction

These outputs were to be produced through activities including advisory and policy research and analysis work; technical expertise support; facilitation of activities related to the drafting of land reform and rural development policies and strengthening the capacity of government and non-government actors through international knowledge and information exchange.

## Outcomes

The outcomes were inferred from the ProDoc and CPD, and confirmed with interviewees. They are articulated at the levels of government & stakeholder capacity and policy and programming, to show the relationship between the problem statement and each outcome.

The first capacity-related outcome is “strengthened government capacity for improved land rural and rural development policy, planning and implementation”. The ProDoc mentioned that the international knowledge and information exchanges would build actors’ capacity. This would be “individual capacity” i.e. knowledge and understanding. In fact, one could argue that in fact the main type of capacity building anticipated in this project was what is termed “institutional capacity” according to the UNDP Approach (Kanni, 2009) – i.e. the policies and strategies themselves, which gives government the capacity to implement developmental programmes.

The second outcome is “improved stakeholder working relationships”, responding to the problem of a fragmented stakeholder environment, and it would be achieved through the facilitation of multi-stakeholder forums.

The third outcome is “consensus across key stakeholders on proposals for land reform and a funded first phase of implementation”. This outcome is from the CPD. The consensus could be achieved through the multi-stakeholder forums. (It is less clear what a “funded first phase of implementation” refers to.)

At the level of policy and programming, the first outcome is **conducive policies for effective land reform and rural development**. The advisory and technical expertise support activities would directly feed into such policies; and the programme would also contribute to policy indirectly by strengthening government and stakeholder capacity to develop policy.

The outputs of a “coherent strategy and plans to facilitate access to equitable access to land and development” and “integrated rural development strategy” would lead to **implementation** in terms of programmes and actions.

## Impact

Assuming that policies, strategies and plans are implemented effectively, the Project is intended to contribute to DRDLR/DALRRD’s objectives of agrarian reform, land reform, and rural development.

**Agrarian reform** is defined as “rapid fundamental change in the relations of land, livestock, cropping and community” (CRDP, 2009) and “relations” here pertain to “systems and patterns of ownership and control” (Green Paper, 2011). The Green Paper (2011) elaborates that the goal of agrarian reform is ultimately social cohesion and development.

**Land reform** is about providing access to land to rural communities. The CRDP and Green Paper elaborate on the different types of land reform.

**Rural development** according to the CRDP is about “enabling rural people to take control of their destiny, thereby dealing effectively with rural poverty through the optimal use and management of natural resources”. The strategy for achieving this has evolved over time. The Rural Economy Transformation Model described the intended change; and the recent Agriculture and Agro-Processing Master Plan provides further clarity on how economic transformation may be achieved through investment in high-potential but marginalised areas.

Ultimately the impact of these would be to reduce inequality, unemployment and poverty in South African society.

### **Assumptions**

Assumptions were not a standalone section in any of the Project documentation, but several assumptions were implied. The following assumptions were identified through the document review, introductory interviews, and inputs on the draft from UNDP.

#### **Diagnostic and prescriptive assumptions:**

- Progress on land reform policy, strategy and plans is held back by lack of multi-stakeholder understanding and agreement on way forward.
- Multi-stakeholder forums can address the above and UNDP and DRDLR together are well positioned to initiate such.
- DRDLR needs / can benefit from the support of UNDP in order to achieve its objectives as a department; specifically UNDP’s support in accessing and securing the services of national and international experts, coordinating and facilitating learning sessions and study tours, coordinating and facilitating technical teams progress or workshop meetings, coordinating required technical expertise within UN system e.g. (FAO, UN Habitat).
- The timing of 2013-2017, (with extension up to 2021) is appropriate for the development of IRDS.
- The project is best managed by a steering committee with senior representatives of the two organisations as co-chairs.

#### **External assumptions**

- Enabling political environment for development of and adoption of appropriate land reform & rural development policies. Effect of elections and party political dynamics can be managed without compromising progress in project objectives
- Enabling social environment for adoption & implementation of policies, strategies and plans

#### **Causal assumptions**

- Funding and staffing is adequate to produce outputs.
- Government and non-government actors will learn lessons from international exchange, that they will apply to the benefit of South African policy and implementation processes

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- A multi-stakeholder forum will continue to yield the intended benefits after the project period of 2013-2020
- Policies and strategies, once adopted, will be implemented accordingly, so as to produce impacts on the ground<sup>46</sup>.

### Risks

Risks were not identified initially, but were compiled in a risk register at a later stage. Below is a list of some of the most evident risks combining document review, stakeholders, and some extracts from the risk register.

- Not all policy products will necessarily be used by policymakers/decisionmakers immediately. Policy and strategy are non-linear processes. This risk can be managed but not avoided altogether for all outputs.
- Turnover of executive management in the Department – risk of loss of institutional memory and buy-in
- Organisational changes, such as the effect of merging DAFF and DRDLR on project continuity and the roles of key officials
- Changes at the political level: turnover of ministers (risk of loss of institutional memory and buy-in); major shifts in ruling party policy

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<sup>46</sup> It is important to test this assumption when reflecting on Project results beyond the outcome level. Recent analyses conducted by parties external to the Department – notably the Presidential Advisory Panel on Land Reform and Agriculture (Mahlali, Hall, Karaan, et al., 2019); and the High-Level Panel on the Assessment of Key Legislation and the Acceleration of Fundamental Change (2017) – highlighted both policy-level problems as well as implementation problems.

## H. Comparison of experts' rates

The following compares the DPSA's rates for senior external experts, to those of UNDP. Table 5 was calculated for the evaluation. The two tables below it were calculated in 2018 and 2016, respectively, by UNDP.

Table 5 shows that the maximum mandated rate by DPSA in 2019 was less than two-thirds that of UNDP. This excludes the UNDP project management costs (see Table 7 for calculations including these).

**Table 5. Comparison of daily rates - UNDP and DPSA, 2019**

Institution	Maximum daily rate		Example difference on 400-day contract	
	USD	ZAR	USD	ZAR
DPSA 2019*	\$ 2,211.84	R 31,960	\$ 884,736.50	R 12,784,000
UNDP 2019**	\$ 1,350.00	R 19,507	\$ 540,000.00	R 7,802, 730
*Source for DPSA rates, effective from July 2019: <a href="http://www.dpsa.gov.za/dpsa2g/documents/gics/Fees%20July%202019.pdf">http://www.dpsa.gov.za/dpsa2g/documents/gics/Fees%20July%202019.pdf</a> **Source for UNDP rate: UNDP Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures version 24 (effective from 2016). Currency conversion was based on the average 2019 exchange rate of R14.4495 / 1 USD.				

UNDP shared Table 6 for the evaluation using 2018 rates. It noted further that it had contracted an expert who is internationally considered a top authority on agricultural economics and land reform for an 80-day contract at R14,728.37 per day (i.e. less than the maximum cited in the table), resulting in considerable difference in what he may have been paid at the DPSA rates for the same number of days.

**Table 6. Table: Comparison of rates, 2018 (calculated by UNDP)**

DPSA Hourly Rates with Overheads for Consultants – effect from July 2018					UNDP rates
Salary Band	Hourly rate for Short Term	Daily Rate	Hourly rate for Long Term	Daily Rate	Maximum UN daily rates allowed
16	R 3,787	R 30,296	R 2,763	R 22,104	R 18,630
15/16	R 3,350	R 26,800	R 2,403	R 19,224	
15	R 2,912	R 23,296	R 2,187	R 17,496	

The 2016 comparison (below) also included UNDP project management costs, recognizing that if DALRRD had commissioned the experts directly there would not usually be an additional project management cost. DALRRD's existing staff may have played these roles. The 2016 calculation showed that even with UNDP management costs included, the difference would be substantial. The evaluation did not have the equivalent project management cost to repeat the calculation for 2019.

**Table 7. Table: Comparison of rates, 2016 (calculated by UNDP)**

Name	Daily Rate (US Dollars)	Daily Rate in South African Rands	No of days	Total Costs
Accenture	\$ 1 530	R 21 420	400	R 8 568 000
KPMG	\$3,270	R 45 780	400	R 18 312 000
PWC	\$4 085	R 57 190	400	R 22 876 000
Deloitte	\$4,725	R 66 150	400	R 26 460 000
McKinsey	\$6 625	R 92 750	400	R 37 100 000
DPSA Daily rates (maximum: hourly rate is R3 519)	\$2 010.85	R 28 152	400	R 11 260 800
UNDP Rates for International Expert (maximum)	\$1 000	R 14 000	400	R 5 600 000

UNDP offered the following discussion to its 2016 calculations:

“As illustrated above, UNDP provides value for money for the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR). UNDP provides high quality services at less than the mandated consultancy rates as regulated [by] the Department of Public Services and Administration (DPSA). Excluding management and administrative costs which underpins the UNDP support to the DRDLR, using DPSA rates UNDP has saved DRDLR about R5 660 000 (R11 260 800.00 – R5 600 000.00). Including management costs the total costs for UNDP comes to R7 520 000 far less than R11 260 800.”

Even while noting these economies in experts’ daily rates, one should bear in mind that several stakeholders believe that the UNDP also offers access to experts that may not otherwise have been accessible to the Department; and that the Project offers various other benefits not expressed through these rates alone (as discussed in the main report).



## I. Generic interview guide

### UNDP Land Reform and Rural Development Project Evaluation – semi-structured interview guide

#### For the interviewer

This is a generic semi-structured interview guide. Before the interview, review this guide and mark the questions most relevant to the interviewee's role in the project. Choose about 8 questions per interview; absolute maximum 10.

At the start of the interview:

1. Inform all participants that the session will start with a bit of background and informed consent, and then continue into a semi-structured interview.
2. Introduce Ms Reiersgord and anyone sitting in on the interviewee's side.
3. Confirm interviewee's availability for the full scheduled time of the session.
4. Informed consent: Refer to the introductory letter; give a brief summary of the project if requested; answer any questions posed by the interviewee.
5. Request to record the session.

#### Introductions

For the record, please state your name, position, and when you took up this position.

What is your role with regards to the UNDP Land Reform and Rural Project? *Probe on the role of their unit if not already clear.*

#### Programme relevance & rationale

As you understand it, what was the rationale at the time for UNDP entering into partnership with DRDLR?

What are the potential benefits to the Department; or what Departmental needs is UNDP seeking to meet in this partnership?

Over the years that you have been involved, what kind of alignment has there been between the strategic goals of UNDP and DRDLR/DALRRD? Are there any areas where you see misalignment? *Probe based on emerging findings of the document analysis.*

According to the Project documentation, the Project sought to produce four outputs (*share screen or copy-paste into the chat box*):

1. Integrated rural development strategy developed
2. A coherent strategy and plans to facilitate access to equitable access land and development completed.
3. International Information Exchange Programme to share experiences from other countries on equitable access to land.
4. Inclusive multi-stakeholder forum established to discuss how access to land can contribute to poverty reduction

We will discuss later whether these outputs were achieved, but first I want to know – how appropriate was it for UNDP and DRDLR to be focusing on these particular outputs in their partnership?

How do you think should cross-cutting issues like gender, human rights and HIV be integrated into a project like this? To what extent did you see this happening in the project?

## **Project results**

Now I would like to hear what you thought of the performance of the project. Do you have any initial comments on whether the project produced useful or influential products?

If you were involved with the development of the IRDS and/or strategies & plans (or inputs into these) to facilitate LR&RD:

- Which of these products did you find most useful, or influential, and why? *(For service providers, ask them about their perceptions of the usefulness/influence of the process as well as products.)*
- Which of these products did you find least useful or influential and why?
- Now at the end of the Project, what progress has been made in putting appropriate Policies, Strategies and Plans in place?
- To what extent are these Policies, Strategies and Plans having the desired effects, in terms of implementation on the ground and benefits for rural communities? *Refer to the impact & outcome statements on the TOC as appropriate.*
- What would have been the situation now if UNDP had not been involved in developing these Strategies and Plans? *Probe on access to experts; convening/facilitation power*
- How could things have been done better in developing these Strategies and Plans? *Probe on conceptualization, partnership approaches; timing; resourcing.*

If you were involved in International Knowledge Exchanges:

- What accordingly to you were the purpose of these exchanges? *Probe to ascertain alignment or not with the theory of change.*
- Which exchanges do you think were the most effective and why?
- Which exchanges do you think were the least effective and why?
- How could things have been done better in implementing these exchanges? *Probe on conceptualization, partnership approaches; timing; resourcing.*

## **Participatory approach**

How well did this project include the most important stakeholders? *Probe on strategic decisions, implementation, consultation, and information sharing*

Has this project fostered relationships between stakeholders in the Land Reform and Rural Development space? If yes, please describe. *Probe on the kinds of lasting benefits / potential benefits of these partnerships*

To what extent has the project built stakeholder capacity? *Probe on the means by which this was done.*

## **Efficiency**

We have discussed the project's results to date. Can you think of ways that the same results could have been achieved with fewer resources?

Have you seen unnecessary delays in the implementation of this Project, or its activities? Please elaborate. *Probe on what could have been done differently.*

As you may be aware, the project is implemented based on a cost sharing agreement, with DRDLR/DALRRD funding the larger share of the project. To what extent do you think the project delivered value for money to the Department? Why? *Keep the cost breakdown on hand for reference.*

In terms of value and efficiency, how does this Project compare to other similar ones that you have worked with?

Over the last few years, if someone wanted to understand whether the project was delivering value for money, what sources or evidence could they have used? Do you have any views to share on these sources? *Probe on quarterly & annual reports; audits; activity reports)*

## **National and international priorities and trends**

How has the policy environment changed over the last 5 years and how has that affected the effectiveness of this project?

How did the project pick up on these changes in the environment?

Are there factors in the UN system, UNDP, government system, or DRDLR/DALRRD environment that helped or hindered the project's effectiveness?

Can you think of ways in which the project has assisted in improving South Africa's resilience in the face of COVID-19? *Probe: Socio-economic strengthening; any other?*

Now with the onset of COVID-19, does it change the priorities of the organisations involved when it comes to rural development and land reform? If so, how?

## **Sustainability**

Looking at what has been achieved through the project, what lasting benefits has it delivered? *Probe on what makes them "lasting", e.g. capacity built; policy changes; other*

Do you think this project should be renewed? Why/why not?

If yes, what risks are there to being able to renew the project?

## **Closing**

This is the end of my questions. Please remember to send me *documents/data as discussed.*

Do you have anything else to add?

## **J. Code of conduct**

### **Evaluation Consultants Agreement Form**

To be signed by all consultants as individuals (not by or on behalf of a consultancy company) before a contract can be issued.

### **Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System**

Name of Consultant: Cara Hartley

Name of Consultancy Organisation (where relevant): PDG

**I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.**

Signed at Cape Town on 11 June 2020.

Signature: 

**K. List of policies, bills and acts supported**

See separate document for a list of these items, their current status in terms of formal adoption / sign-off, and the nature of Project support that they benefited from.