EFFICACY OF DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT MODEL IN COORDINATION OF SUPPORT TO LAND REDISTRIBUTION PROJECTS: A CASE OF MAKHADO LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, SOUTH AFRICA

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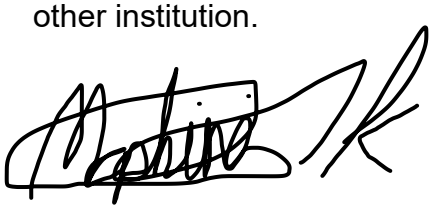
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DECLARATION OF PLAGIARISM

I Maphiri Khuliso (11627739) hereby declare that this dissertation for Master of Urban and Regional Planning degree at the University of Venda titled the **"Efficacy of district development model in coordination of support to land redistribution projects: a case of Makhado local municipality, South Africa"** is my work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references and that this work has not been submitted before for any other degree at any other institution.



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DEDICATION

This mini dissertation is dedicated to God Almighty gave me the strength to complete this study. I also dedicate this mini dissertation to my parents, family and friends for the support they gave me in my life.

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I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my research supervisor, Dr. Frank Moffat, for his invaluable assistance and guidance throughout this research journey. His expertise, patience, and unwavering support have been instrumental in shaping this study. Dr. Moffat's insightful feedback, constructive criticism, and encouragement provided the foundation upon which this research was built. More than anyone else, he played a pivotal role in ensuring that this work was thorough, well-structured, and academically sound. His mentorship has not only enriched my academic experience but has also inspired me to strive for excellence in my future endeavours.

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ABSTRACT

The efficacy of the District Development Model (DDM) in coordinating support for land reform in South Africa is uncertain. This study sought to examine the efficacy of the DDM in coordinating support for land reform projects in Makhado local municipality, South Africa. Specifically, the study was guided by the following objectives: to outline and describe the institutional arrangement for the provision of support to land reform projects; to identify challenges that prohibited institutional coordination; to evaluate measures provided by the DDM to address inadequate institutional coordination against these challenges; and to recommend suggestions on how the DDM could improve coordination in land reform support. The study employed a qualitative research methodology, including document analysis and key informant interviews with officials from national and provincial Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD), Vhembe district, Makhado local municipality and the land reform beneficiaries from Mulelu, Muananzhele and Tshivhazwaulu farm projects. Findings revealed that the DDM had not effectively resolved coordination challenges, as sector departments continued to operate in silos despite its introduction. Furthermore, the absence of clear legislative frameworks defining the role of local governments in land reform, coupled with inadequate financial and human resources, hindered meaningful collaboration. The study underscored that without structural reforms and enhanced accountability mechanisms, the DDM would remain an ineffective tool for intergovernmental coordination in land reform. Key recommendations included establishing structured engagement platforms to foster intergovernmental collaboration; introducing legislative amendments to clearly define and fund local government's role in land reform; enhancing collaboration between national and provincial DALRRD to prevent siloed operations and strengthen municipal involvement; implementing performance monitoring mechanisms to track commitments and ensure accountability; and integrating land reform initiatives into municipal Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) and budgets. Future research should explore strategies to improve collaboration, assess potential legislative reforms, and investigate mechanisms for strengthening intergovernmental coordination.

Key concepts: Integrated Development Plan, Land reform, Land reform beneficiaries

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ACRONYMS

ABP – Area-Based Planning

AGSA – Auditor-General of South Africa

CASP – Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme

CoGTA – Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs

CPA – Communal Property Association

DALRRD – Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Reform

DDM – District Development Model

DFID – Department for International Development

DoA – Department of Agriculture

DRDLR – Department of Rural Development and Land Reform

EIA – Environmental Impact Assessment

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

GIS – Geographic Information System

IDP – Integrated Development Plan

LED – Local Economic Development

M&E – Monitoring and Evaluation

MFMA – Municipal Finance Management Act

NDP – National Development Plan

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

PLAS – Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy

PMG – Parliamentary Monitoring Group

PPP – Public-Private Partnership

PSS – Post Settlement Support

RECAP – Recapitalisation and Development Programme

SDF – Spatial Development Framework

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SLAG – Settlement and Land Acquisition Grant

SLF – Sustainable Livelihood Framework

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

WHO – World Health Organization

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The degree of coordination and efficacy of land reform programmes at the international level remains uneven, largely due to varying governance capacities and institutional arrangements (Ruso Lopes & Bastos Lima, 2022). This lack of coherence not only hampers the success of land reform efforts but also poses a significant threat to achieving global development targets, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Agenda 21, and South Africa's National Development Plan (NDP) 2030. Land reform is particularly crucial for realizing SDG 1 (ending poverty in all its forms), and SDG 2 (achieving food security, improved nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture), all of which rely on equitable access to land as a foundation for shelter, income, and sustainable livelihoods (Tirumala & Tiwari, 2022). Similarly, Agenda 21 emphasizes combating poverty through sustainable land management, while the NDP 2030 identifies land reform as essential for eliminating poverty and reducing inequality. While countries like South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan have implemented well-coordinated effective reform programmes that boosted agricultural productivity and industrialization, others, including Zimbabwe, the Philippines, and South Africa, continue to struggle with fragmented policies and weak institutional frameworks (Ngcukaitobi, 2021; Nolte & Väth, 2015). Without effective coordination and harmonization of policy frameworks, land reform programmes risk failing their intended goals, ultimately undermining efforts toward sustainable development and social equity (Deininger & Goyal, 2024).

After the collapse of apartheid government in 1994, the Department of Land Affairs (DLA) introduced the Settlement and Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG**)** as part of South Africa's land reform programme (Rusenga, 2022). However, poor coordination with local municipalities and sector departments led to its replacement by the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) programme in 2001 (Rusenga, 2022). Recognizing the shortcomings of the SLAG, particularly its lack of collaboration with essential sector departments, the DLA restructured its approach. This led to the joint launch of the LRAD programme in 2001 and other programmes such as the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) in 2004, Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS) and Area Base Planning in 2006, and Recapitalization

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and Development Programme (RECAP) in 2010 by the Department of Agriculture (DoA) and the DLA (Zantsi & Greyling, 2021). According to the studies conducted by Shattuck, Grajales, Jacobs, Sauer, Galvin, & Hall (2023); Mfune (2022); Zantsi & Greyling (2021); Hall (2019); Hall, Scoones, & Tsikata (2017) and Cousins (2016) the above South African land reform initiatives encountered significant challenges due to the exclusion of the local government from the land reform programme. The same findings were echoed in studies focused on land reform in Limpopo Province (Maesela, Senyolo, & Belete, 2023; Waeterloos, 2021; Mabasa, 2019). This lack of local government involvement led to poor implementation and inadequate support for land reform beneficiaries, ultimately contributing to the programme's failure (Zantsi & Greyling, 2021; Cousins, 2016).

The current strategies aimed at ensuring effective coordination of services at the local level include the District Development Model (DDM) which was established in 2019 by the Department of Corporative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) (CoGTA, 2020). The DDM is designed to enhance multi-sectorial planning and implementation at the district level, promoting better alignment of resources, improved governance, and streamlined service delivery (Presidency, 2020). CoGTA is optimistic that the DDM will improve coordination in service delivery and national projects across government spheres, but DALRRD remains cautious (DALRRD, 2020). While its Strategic Plan (2020-2025) recognizes the DDM as an opportunity, it lacks a clear roadmap for addressing previous land reform challenges, particularly in integrating municipalities into the institutional framework. A key concern is the uncertainty about the DDM's effectiveness in enhancing coordination between sector departments across the National and Provincial sphere of government and the local government. Moreover, there is limited research on the DDM's efficacy in improving institutional coordination for land reform, particularly in local contexts such as Makhado. Its implementation and impact remain largely untested, creating a knowledge gap in assessing its ability to enhance governance, planning, and execution in the region.

Building on this background, the study seeks to evaluate the efficacy of the DDM in coordinating support for land redistribution projects within Makhado Local Municipality, in response to the lack of effective mechanisms for coordinating the land reform programme at the local government level. This study examines the structure and delivery of institutional support for land reform programme in Makhado Local

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Municipality, focusing on the existing frameworks and challenges. It examines the role of the DDM in enhancing institutional synergy and addressing coordination gaps and provide recommendations for leveraging the DDM to improve the involvement of the local government.

1.2 Background

Studies conducted by Nel (2023); Mtero, Gumede and Ramantsima (2021); Atuahene (2020); Hornby, Kingwill, Royston, and Cousin (2018); Lahiff and Li (2017); Cousins (2016) and Hall (2015) argue that there is an unclear role for the local government in provision of support towards land reform projects. The DDM represents an approach where the three spheres of government and state entities collaborate in unison in order to achieve their goals. However, there is a scarcity of studies examining the efficacy of the DDM in addressing the poor coordination between the three spheres of government in planning and implementation of the land reform programme. The following table indicates the previous research studies which were conducted to assess the efficacy of the DDM model on local government's role:

Table 1.1: Research gaps in relation to DDM influence on local government's role in land reform programme

Author	**Focus of the study**	**Research gaps related to land reform**
Sausi, Morudu, Ndevu, & Khambule (2023)	Challenges of service delivery and the introduction of the DDM in three pilot districts.	Limited focus on land reform; more emphasis on general governance and service delivery.
Khambule (2021)	Examines the DDM's potential to enhance local governance and development.	Does not explicitly address land reform
Teti, Nzewi, & Lungisa (2023)	Assesses how DDM can improve integrated development planning (IDP).	Does not specifically analyse land reform integration into IDP processes.
Nel & Minnie (2022)	Analyses DDM's potential and challenges in local government development.	Lack of detailed discussion on land reform as part of local development under DDM.

Source: Author (2025)

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As indicated in the table, the DDM in South Africa has been studied for its implementation and potential in governance, service delivery, and development planning. However, there is a significant gap in understanding how land reform is integrated into the DDM framework. Studies have focused on general governance and service delivery, but have not addressed the integration of the land reform in local government sphere. Khambule (2021) evaluated the DDM's ability to enhance local governance and development, but did not explicitly address land reform. Teti, Nzewi, and Lungisa (2023) explored how the DDM could improve integrated development planning, but did not specifically consider land reform integration. Nel and Minnie (2022) assessed the DDM's potential and challenges within local government development, but did not provide a detailed discussion on land reform's role in local development.

The Parliamentary Monitoring Group (2021); Auditor General (2021); Auditor General (2020); Auditor General (2020); Du Plessis (2017); the Presidency (2014) and the Department of Provincial and Local Government (2004) debate that the local government is faced with poor financial control and management, a lack of clarity on the roles of councillors vis-à-vis the administration and political interference in the administration, corruption, and the lack of accountability which leads to the provincial government's reluctance to collaborate with local government in the planning and implementation of land reform.

“You cannot have a good solution until you fully understand the root cause behind the municipalities which are dysfunctional, the DDM assumes that all the local government challenges are caused by lack of coordination between the three spheres of government” (eNCA, 2022). This perspective highlights a critical concern—while the District Development Model emphasizes intergovernmental coordination, it may oversimplify the complex, systemic issues that underpin municipal dysfunction. While joint planning and investment may solve duplications and irrational development (Kabutey & Osei-Bonsu, 2021), can the DDM solve all the fundamental flaws that underlie most of the local government’s failures? The integration of national and provincial Department of Rural Development and Land Reform strategies with local government planning relies on addressing the aforementioned challenges. There is a need to assess the efficacy of the DDM in overcoming these obstacles, which hinder collaboration between provincial departments and local municipalities in supporting

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land reform projects. This research aims to contribute to the body of knowledge by evaluating the effectiveness of land reform programme initiatives within this framework.

1.3 Problem statement

The South African land reform programme lacks an effective mechanism to integrate local municipalities into the planning and implementation processes (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2023). There is no clear framework defining the roles and responsibilities of municipal governments in land redistribution initiatives, leading to ambiguity in their participation (UNDP, 2023). Furthermore, communication between national agencies and local municipalities remains inconsistent, with limited formal platforms for ongoing consultation and feedback (Dawood, 2018). These challenges hinder the successful execution of land reform projects, limiting their intended socio-economic impact.

The exclusion of local municipalities has contributed to the unsustainability of land reform projects, with many redistributed farms falling into disuse. According to the DALRRD (2022), only about 30% of land reform farms are fully functional, while the remaining 70% are either underperforming or completely abandoned. This inefficiency has exacerbated food insecurity and rural poverty, as failed agricultural projects reduce local employment and food production (Hall & Kepe, 2017). The lack of municipal involvement has also led to poor post-settlement support, such as inadequate access to infrastructure and markets (Aliber & Cousins, 2013). The absence of these crucial components limits emerging farmers' ability to efficiently produce, process, and transport their agricultural products, hampering their income potential (Funke, & Van Zyl, 2020). As a result, many beneficiaries lack the resources to maintain productive farming operations, leading to increased hunger and economic stagnation in rural areas (World Bank, 2020).

Given these ongoing challenges, the need for improved institutional coordination and strategic planning in South Africa’s land reform programme cannot be ignored or overstated (UNDP, 2023; Aliber & Cousins, 2013). Integrating national and provincial development initiatives with local government planning frameworks is crucial to ensuring the success of land redistribution efforts (DALRRD, 2022; World Bank, 2020). This research is vital in identifying strategic interventions that can enhance the efficacy

and sustainability of land reform projects across the country, particularly as the persistent underperformance of many redistributed farms remains a pressing concern (Hall & Kepe, 2017; Ntsebeza, 2018). If these structural challenges persist, land reform beneficiaries will continue to face inadequate post-settlement support, restricting their ability to establish viable agricultural enterprises and achieve economic self-sufficiency (Jacobs et al., 2021). The lack of proper integration between different tiers of government may lead to stalled rural development, worsening poverty levels, and deepening socio-economic inequalities in affected regions (World Bank, 2020; Lahiff, 2008). Without systemic improvements in governance and support systems, South Africa's land reform programme risks perpetuating cycles of farm failures, food insecurity, and economic marginalization among rural communities (DALRRD, 2022; UNDP, 2023).

To prevent the perpetuating cycles of farm failures in Makhado municipality, the DDM must be optimised to address systemic challenges hindering municipal integration. The DDM presents a critical opportunity to enhance collaboration between local municipalities and sector departments, thereby improving the planning and implementation of land reform projects (Presidency, 2019; DPME, 2021). If the DDM fails to address systemic barriers hindering collaboration between sector departments and local governments in land reform, it will be ineffective. Without mechanisms to tackle issues like intergovernmental mistrust, misaligned planning, and competing priorities, the model may become an added bureaucratic layer rather than a solution. This could weaken land reform efforts, worsen implementation failures, and further diminish confidence in the land reform initiatives.

The DDM must align land reform initiatives with key local planning frameworks, including the Makhado Spatial Development Framework, the Makhado Local Municipality IDP, and the Makhado LED Strategy. Integrating these frameworks will ensure that land reform efforts are not implemented in isolation but rather contribute to broader economic and spatial planning objectives. A well-coordinated approach will create market opportunities for emerging farmers, allowing them to participate in commercial agriculture and integrate into value chains. This will help increase employment opportunities in the Makhado region, particularly in agro-processing, logistics, and related industries. Moreover, improved agricultural production will contribute to enhanced food security in South Africa by increasing the supply of locally

produced food. Beyond local markets, aligning land reform with economic planning will also enable emerging farmers to participate in export markets, positioning Makhado as a key player in the international agricultural trade. By tapping into foreign markets, farmers and agribusinesses in the region can generate profits in foreign currency, strengthening the local economy and ensuring long-term sustainability. Therefore, a critical evaluation of the DDM's effectiveness is necessary to determine whether it can serve as a viable mechanism for fostering institutional coordination and ensuring the success of land reform initiatives in Makhado and beyond.

1.4 Aims and objectives.

1.4.1 This study seeks to examine the efficacy of the District Development Model in coordination of support to land reform projects in Makhado local municipality, South Africa

1.4.2 Objectives

i. To outline and describe the current institutional arrangement for provision of support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality.
ii. To identify the challenges prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality.
iii. To evaluate measures provided by the DDM to address inadequate institutional coordination against the challenges prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality.
iv. To recommend suggestions on how the DDM can address the challenges which are prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to land reform projects in Makhado local municipality.

1.5. Research questions

This section provides research questions guiding this study to attain the stated study objectives.

1.5.1 What are the current institutional arrangements for providing support to land reform projects in Makhado Local Municipality?

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1.5.2 What challenges hinder effective institutional coordination in providing support to land reform projects in Makhado Local Municipality?

1.5.3 How effective are the measures provided by the District Development Model (DDM) in addressing the challenges that hinder institutional coordination for supporting land reform projects in Makhado Local Municipality?

1.5.4 What recommendations can strengthen the DDM's capacity to overcome the challenges impeding institutional coordination for land reform project support in Makhado Local Municipality?

1.6. Significance of the study

The study will evaluate the efficacy of the DDM instruments against the challenges which are on the forefront of preventing integration of sector departments and local municipalities' plans and budget. The study will reveal the reasons behind DRDLR working in silos and not in partnership with local municipalities to provide informed recommendations. The study will reveal reasons behind Makhado local municipality not integrating land reform projects into IDP and other municipal planning instruments and provide informed recommendations. The study will also review proposals made by other scholars on how the DDM can be amended to resolve the challenges which are preventing the possibility of integration of sector departments and municipal planning. According to the CoGTA (2021), the DDM is different because it's instituted in terms of the Constitution and the Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) Framework Act (No. 13 of 2005). In terms of the IGR, the Minister of CoGTA has the power to regulate the alignment or regulation of plans across the three spheres of government (Currie, 2021). According to the webinar hosted by CoGTA and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) on the 27th of January 2021, there are four key points which the DDM should focus on to ensure that integration between the three spheres of local government to support land reform programme occurs (Currie, 2021). First it needs to find solutions to redesign the powers and functions of the local government. Secondly, it should provide solution for the current cultures of all role players, their priorities, and political commitments. Thirdly, it should have the ability to ensure an ongoing commitment of the budget to the objectives of the DDM, fighting corruption, appointment of ethical leaders, improve financial management, and lack of accountability of local government senior officials. Lastly, there should be a clear

linkage between the DDM, Land reform and the IDP of local municipalities. This study will evaluate the DDM against the above four crucial points to determine its efficacy.

Historically, South African national departments have focused too much on the plan and only started to look at implementation capabilities when things begin unravelling. This research will provide the policy makers at the national departments and Limpopo provincial departments (Cooperative Government and Traditional Affairs, Rural Development and Land Reform, and Agriculture), Vhembe District, and Makhado local municipality with recommendations on how the DDM may be enhanced to overcome the gaps which can possibly hinder its success. While political commitment is important at the national and provincial government, the implementation responsibility lies with the local government. In 2008, the World Bank has identified land reform policies as key strategies in addressing growing food insecurity, inequality, and alleviating poverty in developing countries of the Global South (World Bank, 2013). Land reform related benefits to the poor are crucial for meeting the commitments made by various countries for achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs) (Tirumala and Tiwari, 2022). The importance of land reform is noted to be much more crucial in many SDGs such as the SDG 1 (removing poverty in all its forms everywhere), and SDG 2 (end hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture) (Tirumala & Tiwari, 2022). While the NDP 2030 goals are principally targeted at addressing economic growth, poverty reduction, economic transformation, and job creation, in former colonies such challenges depend on the success of implementation of land reform programmes by the three spheres of government. The World Bank has identified land reform policies as key strategies in addressing growing food insecurity, inequality, and alleviating poverty in former colonies (World Bank, 2013). The South African agricultural economy is shrinking without meeting the expectations of the government in terms of economic growth, job creation, and improving farmers' livelihoods (DRDLR, 2016). Production in Makhado Municipality's land reform farms has also declined (Tjale, Mwale, and Kilonzo, 2021). From 1995 to 2015, most of the land reform farms in Makhado lacked market for their products due to poor institutional arrangement, and lack of participation in municipal area-based planning (Manenzhe, 2007; Matukane, 2011; Manenzhe, Zwane, and van Niekerk, 2016; Tjale, 2019; and Tjale et.al, 2021). This research is significance on the sense that it will contribute on how the DDM may be improved to encounter the

challenges which have been preventing coordination between the three spheres of government in the past.

1.7 Scope of study

1.7.1 Conceptual scope

This study seeks assess the following concepts:

District Development Model (DDM): The study explores the fundamental principles, objectives, and operational framework of the DDM. It aims to understand how the DDM is designed to facilitate coordinated decision-making, planning, and implementation of various development initiatives within a Makhado municipality.

Land Reform Programme: The study delves into the land reform programme, encompassing policies, legislation, and strategies aimed at addressing historical injustices related to commercial agricultural reforms to improve the livelihoods of the previously disadvantage communities in Makhado. It examines the goals and targets of the land reform programme and its significance in achieving equitable land distribution for agricultural and non-agricultural production purposes and socioeconomic development.

Coordinating Mechanisms: The study examines the mechanisms put in place to coordinate the land reform program within the DDM framework. This includes analysing the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders involved, such as government agencies, local authorities, community organizations, and private sector actors. The study investigates the effectiveness of these coordinating mechanisms in ensuring collaboration, synergy, and accountability in the implementation of land reform initiatives.

Efficacy Assessment: The primary focus of the study is to assess the efficacy of the DDM in coordinating the land reform programme. It involves evaluating the extent to which the DDM enhances the efficiency, effectiveness, and impact of land reform efforts. This assessment may consider various dimensions, including policy coherence, institutional capacity, resource allocation, community engagement, and monitoring and evaluation systems.

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Challenges and Opportunities: The study aims to identify the challenges and opportunities encountered during the implementation of the DDM in coordinating the land reform program. This involves examining potential barriers, such as bureaucratic hurdles, political resistance, inadequate resources, or limited community participation. It also explores opportunities for improvement, such as innovative approaches, best practices, or lessons learned from successful case studies within the DDM.

Policy Recommendations: Based on the findings, the study provides policy recommendations to enhance the efficacy of the DDM in coordinating the land reform program. These recommendations may encompass adjustments to the DDM framework, modifications to land reform policies or legislation, strengthening of coordination mechanisms, capacity building initiatives, or community empowerment strategies. By exploring these key elements within the conceptual scope, the study aims to contribute to the understanding of how the District Development Model can effectively coordinate land reform programs, ultimately promoting social justice, sustainable development, and inclusive growth.

1.7.2 Theoretical scope

1.7.2.1 Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF) (DFID, 2000)

The SLF is a conceptual tool used to analyse and understand the complex interactions between individuals, households, communities, and institutions in the context of sustainable development. It provides a comprehensive approach to examining the various dimensions of people's livelihoods and their relationships with the social, economic, and environmental factors that influence their well-being. The SLF highlights the importance of livelihood strategies, which are the diverse and dynamic activities that people undertake to, generate income and meet their basic needs. These strategies can include agriculture, employment in formal or informal sectors, entrepreneurship, migration, and various forms of social support. The framework recognizes that livelihood strategies are influenced by a range of factors, including market conditions, access to resources, social norms, and policies.

The DDM is an integrated and coordinated approach to local development that aims to address the challenges faced by district municipalities in achieving sustainable and inclusive growth in local municipalities. The SLF is highly relevant for research aimed

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at addressing the challenge of inadequate coordination of land reform support at the local government level because it offers a holistic and structured way to analyse the interplay of factors affecting livelihoods. The SLF emphasizes the importance of understanding the diverse and dynamic livelihood strategies that individuals and communities adopt, considering their social, economic, and environmental contexts. This makes it an ideal tool for examining how land reform initiatives interact with these strategies and identifying gaps in coordination that may hinder sustainable development outcomes. By recognising the influence of institutional policies, resource access, and market conditions, the SLF provides insights into how land reform support can be more effectively aligned with the needs and capabilities of local communities. When combined with the DDM, which focuses on integrated and coordinated local development, the SLF enhances the capacity to address complex challenges in land reform by aligning interventions with the broader goal of sustainable and inclusive growth at the municipal level.

1.7.2.2 Collaborative planning theory (Patsey Healy, 1990s)

Patsy Healey's Collaboration Theory is based on communicative planning and emphasises the importance of inclusive, deliberative, and consensus-building procedures in governance and policymaking. This theory holds that good governance necessitates the active participation of a wide range of stakeholders in policy formation and execution, including government bodies, business sector actors, civil society organisations, and affected communities. Rather of using hierarchical decision-making frameworks, Healey promotes dialogue-based interaction in which varied interests, experiences, and knowledge systems are recognised, negotiated, and accommodated. The approach emphasises that successful planning and development result from collaborative solutions in which stakeholders establish objectives, pool resources, and build collective ownership of policy initiatives. This method produces more durable, context-specific, and widely accepted development outcomes because policies reflect the lived realities and aspirations of individuals engaged. This is especially important in complicated governance systems because diverse players must coordinate their activities across several levels of government and institutions.

The DDM's success depends on its ability to facilitate meaningful engagement among stakeholders, including government, traditional authorities, private investors, and

communities. Patsy Healey's Collaboration Theory can be used to assess the DDM's effectiveness. Key aspects include stakeholder engagement, decision-making processes, and implementation effectiveness. The DDM should be evaluated for its impact on land reform projects, including land allocation, tenure security, and agricultural support. The research can identify weaknesses in intergovernmental coordination and propose recommendations to strengthen cooperative governance, stakeholder inclusivity, and integrated land reform planning.

1.7.3 Physical scope

The objectives of this study required the researcher to collect data from all three spheres of government. At National sphere of government, the researcher visited the National Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and the National Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Reform which are all located at Pretoria. At provincial sphere, the researcher visited the Limpopo provincial department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and the Limpopo provincial department of Land Reform and Land Reform which are located in Polokwane Central. At the local sphere of governance, the researcher will visit Vhembe District Municipality, which is in Thohoyandou and Makhado local municipality which is in Louis Trichardt.

1.8 Location of the study area.

Makhado local municipality is in the northern parts of Limpopo Province (coordinates 23° 00′ 00′′ S 29° 45′ 00′′ E) approximately 100km from the Zimbabwean border along the N1 Route (Makhado Spatial Development Framework, 2011) (See Map 1). Makhado local municipality is located about 119,3 kilo metres (1 hour and 21 minutes) away from Polokwane CBD on the Southwestern direction (Makhado Spatial Development Framework, 2011). This suggests that the Limpopo provincial government offices are located more than an hour drive from the Makhado local municipality. Vhembe district municipality is located about 59,5 kilo metres (48 minutes) away from Makhado local municipality (Makhado Spatial Development Framework, 2011). The municipal area is 7605,06 km² (or 760506 Hectares) in size and strategically located on a macro scale along a major passage between South Africa and the rest of the African continent (Makhado local municipality draft IDP, 2022). Approximately 416 728 people currently reside within the Municipality and

based on the vastness of the rural populace the municipality can be classified as predominately rural (Census, 2016). According to the Makhado local municipality IDP (2016), the municipal's jurisdiction climate has an average of 25, 5 ℃ but ranges between 18 ℃ in the mountainous areas to 28 ℃ in the rest of the rest of the area. The highest rainfall period is between Januarys to Februarys with yearly precipitation of 450 mm in the low-lying plains to 2300mm in the Soutpansberg (Makhado local municipality IDP, 2016). In general, the municipal area has less than 40% of the soils of the total that is suitable to support agricultural activities where the climate allows (Makhado local municipality IDP 2016). Makhado local municipality offices are generally surrounded by land redistributed commercial farms and undistributed commercial (See map 2).

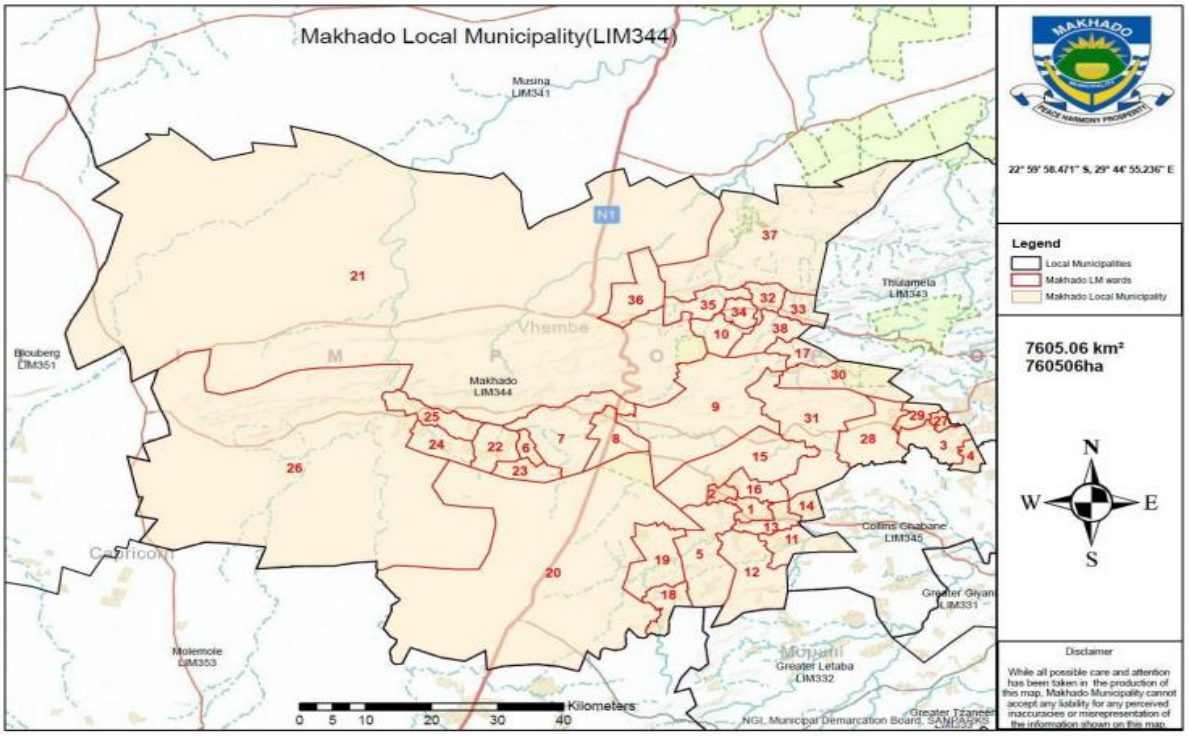


Figure 1.1: Makhado local municipality demarcation

Source: Makhado local Municipality IDP review (2022)

1.9 Definition of key terms

Land reform: In South African perspective land reform is defined as a process of restoring land ownership inequalities by racially discriminatory legislation and practices (Matukane, 2011).

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Land reform beneficiaries: In South African perspective land restitution beneficiaries are defined as people who were afforded land for productive activities through Land Reform programme.

Integrated Development Plan: In South Africa, Integrated Development Plan is defined as a local government planning and implementation tool.

Indigenous communities/Native communities: Communities that are attached to geographically distinct traditional habitats and who identify themselves as being part of a distinct cultural group, descended from groups present in the area before modern states were created and current borders defined (World Health Organization (WHO), 2017).

Post Settlement Support (PSS): After care support provided by the government to the new farmers after resettling them, it could be in the form of financial support, extension services and maintenance of infrastructure as well as training services for the farmers.

Land dispossession: Forced removal of true landowners from their place of birth, fields for cultivation and grazing for other proposed land uses by the perpetrators (Manenzhe, 2007).

1.10 Dissertation outline

This dissertation is structured as follows:

Chapter 1

This chapter outlined the overview of what the research report involved, emphasized the background of poor institutional coordination between the institutions supporting the land reform programme, and introduced the DDM as a highly anticipated solution for poor institutional coordination in South Africa. The chapter also discussed the problem statement, significance of the study, aim and objectives, research questions, and scope of the study.

Chapter 2

This chapter focused on the review of existing literature in relation to the institutional arrangement for providing support to land reform projects in South African

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municipalities and other international countries. It also examined the challenges that hindered institutional coordination in supporting land reform projects in these municipalities. The chapter evaluated the measures provided by the DDM to address inadequate institutional coordination, considering the challenges faced in other local municipalities' DDM pilot studies, as well as the recommendations made by scholars based on the findings of these pilot studies in South African municipalities. Additionally, this chapter included theoretical concepts of coordination, challenges in policy implementation, approaches to coordination, case studies, and a conceptual framework.

Chapter 3

This chapter details the various techniques and procedures used for data collection, presentation, and analysis to achieve the study's objectives and address the research questions outlined in Chapter One.

Chapter 4

This chapter described the historical and cultural settings in Makhado Local Municipality and their impact on human settlement planning, physical characteristics, and the performance of land reform projects in the municipality. It also examined the relationship between the Vhembe District Municipality and Makhado Local Municipality, including how they conducted their day-to-day affairs in engaging with stakeholders and the communities they served. Furthermore, the chapter analysed Makhado Local Municipality’s compliance with municipal legislation related to structures and systems, financial regulations, and its capacity to perform its municipal functions in accordance with Section 84 and Section 85 of the Municipal Structures Act, which governs the division of functions and powers between district and local municipalities.

Chapter 5

This chapter presented the findings and analysis based on the research questions and responses from all research participants from various selected government institutions. It outlined the experiences and perceptions of officials from selected national departments, Limpopo provincial departments, Vhembe District Municipality, and Makhado Local Municipality regarding the measures provided by the DDM to

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address inadequate institutional coordination in relation to the identified challenges hindering coordination in local municipalities. The chapter also presented the recommendations provided by all research participants.

Chapter 6

This chapter triangulated the research findings from Chapter Two, Chapter Four, and Chapter Five, drew conclusions, and provided informed recommendations regarding the problem statement and study objectives. It also outlined areas for future research or investigation.

1.11 Chapter summary

This chapter demonstrated that one key factor contributing to unsustainable land reform programme is the lack of a comprehensive global framework that guides and coordinates land reform efforts among countries and is a global issue that requires attention. The chapter further demonstrated that the lack of comprehensive framework that guides and coordinates land reform efforts among national departments, Limpopo provincial departments and Makhado local municipality has resulted into production decline of land redistributed farms. National department of Cooperative governance has introduced the DDM as a solution for lack of effective institutional coordination in land reform programme is mainly caused by the lack of common objectives among the various government departments and agencies in South Africa. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the efficacy of the DDM as a recommended strategy in coordination of support to land reform projects in Makhado local municipality. This chapter also highlighted the significance of this study as it will provide informed recommendations on how the DDM may be improved to encounter the challenges which have been preventing coordination between the three spheres of government.

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CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to discuss existing international and South African literature on the efficacy of the DDM in addressing the lack of coordination of land reform at the local sphere of government. The literature will be presented in alignment with the objectives outlined in Chapter 1, specifically focusing on outlining and describing the current institutional arrangements for providing support to land reform projects in local government. It will also identify the challenges that hinder institutional coordination for the provision of support to these projects. Furthermore, the chapter will evaluate the measures provided by the DDM to address inadequate institutional coordination, particularly in relation to the challenges affecting land reform support in local government. Lastly, it will recommend possible strategies for improving the effectiveness of the DDM in addressing the challenges that hinder institutional coordination for supporting land reform projects in local government. Through this review, the chapter aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of the DDM in improving coordination and support for land reform initiatives at the local government level.

Local government, which plays an important role in the land reform programme, are responsible for guaranteeing beneficiaries' integration into municipal economies, providing access to vital services, and controlling spatial planning to promote sustainable development (Masoka, 2014). Despite their strategic importance, municipalities have frequently been overlooked in land reform programme. This exclusion is due to imprecise mandates governing their tasks and responsibilities, as well as ineffective intergovernmental coordination channels. The South African Constitution (1996) designates land reform programme as a national and provincial competency, leaving local governments without a clear mandate to participate in the process. As a result, while the national government develops policies and allocates money, local governments are frequently excluded from planning meetings and decision-making processes. This divergence has produced a huge gap between legislative aims and the practical reality faced by municipalities on the ground (Rugege, 2004; Walker, 2015). The absence of local government involvement has resulted in a series of cascading issues. Beneficiaries frequently acquire land without

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access to crucial infrastructure, technical assistance, or the economic possibilities they require to sustain their lives. Local government is unable to align IDPs with land reform projects without sufficient coordination, exacerbating the gap between national policy and local implementation (Lahiff, 2007; Binswanger-Mkhize et al., 2009; Masoka, 2014; Cousins, 2016; Madumo, 2019; PARI, 2023). These support gaps undercut land reform's revolutionary potential, leaving many beneficiaries worse off than before.

This chapter will look at the policy frameworks that have been implemented in South Africa to assist land reform projects, providing a critical analysis of their impact, flaws, and outcomes. It will investigate long-standing issues that previous policies have failed to address, such as a lack of intergovernmental coordination, limited institutional capacity, and municipal marginalisation. These flaws have led to the limited success of measures aimed at correcting historical injustices and promoting equitable development. This chapter examines the DDM, a policy framework created in 2019 to solve South Africa's ongoing coordination issues. The analysis will look at the DDM's suggested strategies for resolving gaps found in previous programs, as well as its ability to overcome historical hurdles. Finally, the chapter will assess the DDM's techniques, contrasting their design and implementation with the limits of earlier approaches. This assessment will look at whether the DDM provides a long-term solution to the lingering challenges in South Africa's land reform project, as well as its ability to overcome significant gaps in local-level support.

2.2 Conceptual framework

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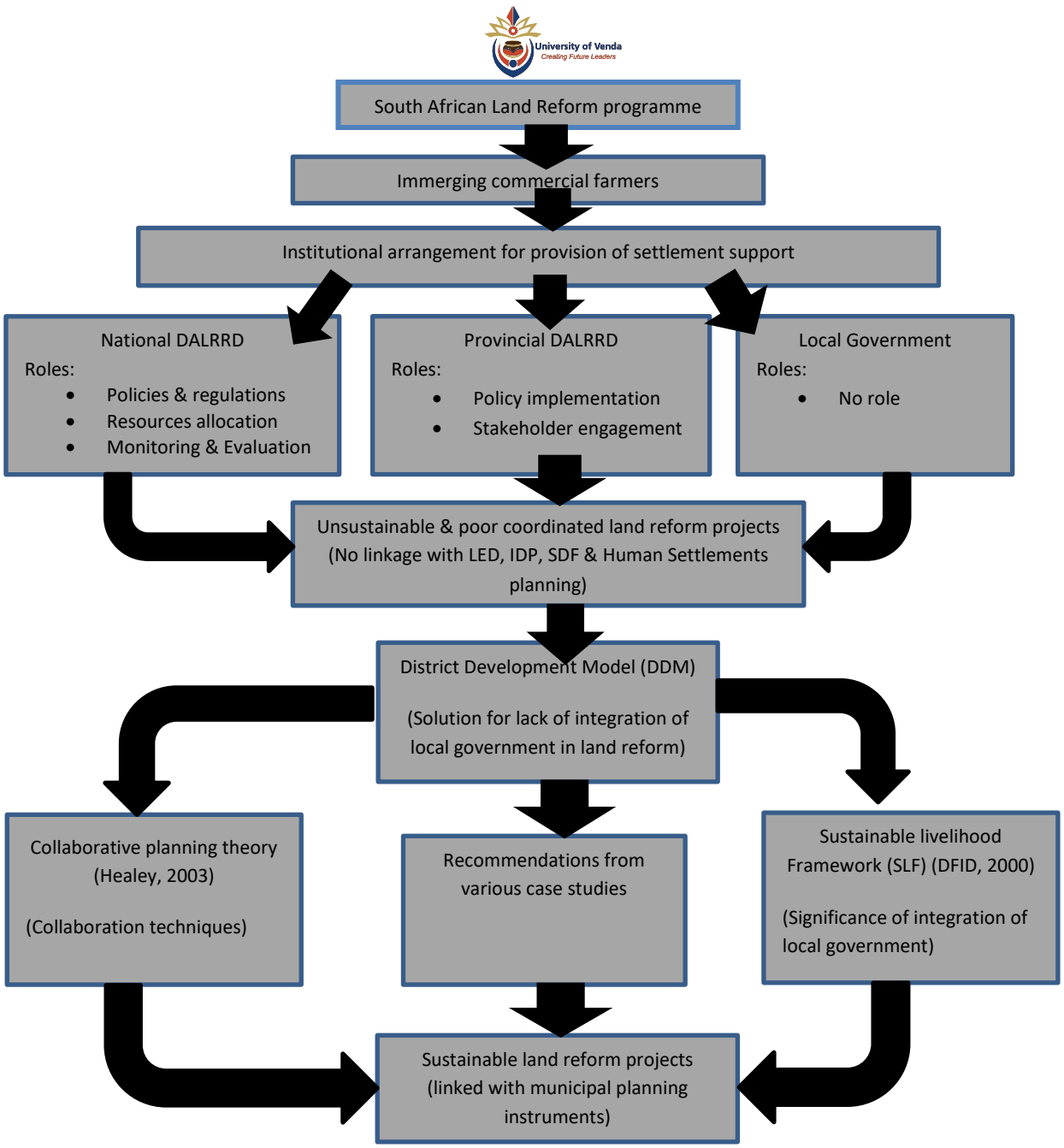


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author (2024)

This study is framed within the broader context of the South African Land Reform Programme, which has historically been implemented in isolation, without the active involvement of local government structures. This soloed approach has resulted in poorly coordinated and unsustainable land reform projects that lack integration with key municipal planning instruments such as Local Economic Development (LED), Integrated Development Plans (IDP), Spatial Development Frameworks (SDF), and human settlement planning. To address these challenges, the South African

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government has introduced the District Development Model (DDM), which aims to foster collaboration between the three spheres of government—local, provincial, and national.

The DDM is positioned as a solution to the historical exclusion of local government from land reform processes and seeks to ensure that land reform projects are better integrated within municipal planning frameworks. This study argues that for the DDM to effectively facilitate collaboration among the three spheres of government in the land reform programme, it must address the key challenges that have historically hindered cooperative governance. To guide this analysis, the study will draw on the Collaborative Planning Theory (Healey, 2003), which provides insights into effective collaboration techniques, as well as the Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF) (DFID, 2000), which underscores the importance of integrating local government in land reform efforts. Additionally, recommendations from various case studies will be reviewed to identify critical focus areas for the DDM. Ultimately, this study aims to contribute towards the development of a sustainable land reform programme that is well-coordinated, inclusive of local government, and aligned with municipal planning instruments. By addressing the historical gaps in collaboration, the study seeks to enhance the effectiveness of land reform in South Africa, ensuring that it contributes meaningfully to economic development and sustainable livelihoods.

2.3 Land reform in South Africa

South Africa's land reform programme is a cornerstone of its democratic transition, aimed at addressing the historical injustices of land dispossession under colonialism and apartheid. For decades, land dispossession has systematically barred the majority of South Africans from land ownership and economic opportunity, entrenching socioeconomic disparities that continue to this day. The land reform programme is based on Section 25 of the Republic of South Africa's Constitution (1996), also known as the "property clause," which requires the state to adopt reasonable legislative and other steps to facilitate fair land access and address past injustices. Its goals are numerous, including promoting social justice, fostering economic development, and ensuring sustainable livelihoods. The programme is organised around three major pillars: land restitution, land redistribution, and land tenure reform, each of which addresses a different facet of land-related injustices. Despite its lofty aims, the

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programme has had severe implementation obstacles, limiting its transformative potential and raising concerns about its effectiveness in addressing deeply embedded inequities (Cousins, 2022; Ntsebeza, 2022).

2.3.1 Land restitution

Land restitution focusses on rectifying the displacement of individuals and communities that lost their land due to racially discriminatory legislation and practices enacted after 1913. This pillar is governed by the Restitution of Land Rights Act of 1994, which authorises aggrieved individuals or communities to file claims with the Commission on Restitution of Land Rights. Restitution can be in three forms: the restoration of the original land, cash recompense, or the giving of substitute land. Although the restitution program has helped to resolve thousands of claims, it has been criticised for its slow pace and inefficiencies. The procedure has been beset with bureaucratic delays, limited financial and human resources, and conflicts about who the rightful recipients are. In many situations, the preference for financial compensation over land restoration has undercut the program's overarching goals, such as allowing recipients to rebuild livelihoods based on land use. Scholars contend that this method frequently perpetuates poverty by neglecting to encourage sustainable agricultural or economic activity (Hall & Kepe, 2017; Cousins, 2022). Furthermore, arguments over overlapping claims and intracommunity tensions hamper restitution case resolution, leaving many groups dissatisfied with the results.

2.3.2 Land redistribution

The redistribution component of the programme is to transfer land from white landowners to black South Africans in order to promote fair ownership patterns and allow for agricultural and residential growth. Initially, this was accomplished via the "willing buyer, willing seller" paradigm, which relied on market-based transactions. However, this concept has been criticised for its inefficiency, high costs, and reliance on voluntary landowner participation, which severely hampered the scale and speed of redistribution. To address these concerns, the government implemented the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) initiative and the Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS). The LRAD gave payments to individuals and groups wishing to establish themselves as commercial farmers, whereas PLAS changed to

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state-led land acquisition, in which the government purchased land and leased it to beneficiaries. Despite these efforts, redistributed farms have struggled due to a lack of post-settlement support, technical training, and bureaucratic inefficiency. As a result, many of these farms are underutilised or have failed entirely, emphasising the importance of coordinated support systems for ensuring sustainable land use and productivity (Ntsebeza, 2022; Hall & Kepe, 2017).

2.3.3 Land tenure reform

Land tenure reform aims to guarantee land rights for vulnerable populations such as farmworkers, labour tenants, and communal area dwellers. This pillar seeks to safeguard vulnerable groups from eviction, advocate for legal acknowledgement of their rights, and enable them to participate in economic activity. Key legislative measures, such as the 1997 Extension of Security of Tenure Act (ESTA) and the 1996 Communal Property Associations Act, were enacted to protect tenure rights and enhance legal recognition. Despite these steps, tenure reform has experienced major hurdles, including limited enforcement, landowner opposition, and complications in communal land governance. Traditional authorities frequently have enormous power over communal land, resulting in contradictions between customary practices and official legal structures. These contradictions have made it difficult for rural people to successfully exercise their land rights, compounding their economic marginalisation (Ntsebeza, 2022; Cousins, 2022). The failure to obtain tenure rights has also hampered beneficiaries' access to loans, infrastructure, and markets, limiting their capacity to use land as a valuable asset.

2.3.4 Policies which are aligned with the land reform programme in South Africa

(A) Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with 17 global goals aimed at addressing key challenges such as poverty, inequality, and environmental sustainability. Among these, SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) are directly relevant to sustainable land reform.

- SDG 1 (No Poverty) seeks to eradicate extreme poverty and reduce inequalities by ensuring that marginalized and disadvantaged populations have access to

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essential resources, including land. Sustainable land reform contributes to this goal by redistributing land to historically dispossessed communities, improving tenure security, and enabling land-based economic activities that support livelihoods.

- SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) focuses on ending hunger, achieving food security, and promoting sustainable agriculture. Land reform plays a crucial role in achieving this goal by facilitating access to arable land for small-scale farmers, enhancing agricultural productivity, and supporting rural economies. By ensuring that land is equitably distributed and effectively utilized, sustainable land reform helps to address food insecurity and promote long-term rural development.

Additionally, SDG 15 (Life on Land), which promotes sustainable land management and the restoration of degraded ecosystems, also aligns with land reform efforts that prioritize environmental sustainability and responsible land use.

(B) Agenda 21

Agenda 21 is a comprehensive global action plan for sustainable development, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The agenda provides a framework for integrating environmental sustainability with socio-economic development, emphasizing the need for responsible land use, conservation, and equitable access to resources. Agenda 21 recognizes that land is a fundamental resource for development, and it calls for policies that promote sustainable land use planning, improve land tenure systems, and support land reform programs that enhance social equity and economic opportunities. Key principles of Agenda 21 related to land reform include:

- Land use planning to prevent environmental degradation and promote sustainable agricultural practices.
- Community participation in land management decisions to ensure that local needs and traditional knowledge are integrated into development strategies.
- Poverty eradication through improved access to land and resources, particularly for marginalized and indigenous communities.

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- Environmental protection through sustainable land management practices, afforestation, and soil conservation.

In South Africa, the principles of Agenda 21 align with national land reform policies that seek to redress historical land dispossession, promote equitable land ownership, and ensure that land use supports economic development while protecting natural ecosystems.

(C) The African Union's Agenda 2063

Agenda 2063 is the African Union's (AU) long-term strategic framework for the social, economic, and political transformation of Africa over a 50-year period, adopted in 2013. It envisions an integrated, prosperous, and peaceful Africa that prioritizes sustainable development, economic inclusion, and environmental sustainability. Within this framework, sustainable land management, food security, and rural development are identified as key priorities for achieving inclusive growth and poverty eradication. Land reform is a central component of this vision, as equitable access to land is essential for economic empowerment, particularly in rural areas where agriculture remains a primary livelihood source.

Key aspirations of Agenda 2063 related to land reform include:

- Aspiration 1: A Prosperous Africa, Based on Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development – Calls for sustainable land use, increased agricultural productivity, and secure land tenure systems that benefit local communities.

- Aspiration 6: An Africa Whose Development is People-Driven, Relying on the Potential of its People, Especially Women and Youth – Emphasizes land ownership rights for women and youth, recognizing that secure land tenure is vital for economic participation and social empowerment.

- Aspiration 7: Africa as a Strong, United, and Influential Global Player – Encourages the adoption of land policies that align with global sustainability frameworks such as the SDGs and Agenda 21.

South Africa's land reform agenda aligns with Agenda 2063's goals by promoting land redistribution, tenure security, and sustainable agricultural practices to support

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economic growth, rural development, and food security. Additionally, the framework calls for harmonized policies on land governance across African nations, promoting regional cooperation in addressing land-related challenges. By aligning with SDGs, Agenda 21, and Agenda 2063, South Africa's land reform policies contribute to broader international and continental efforts to achieve sustainable development, equitable economic participation, and environmental resilience.

(D) National Development Plan (NDP) 2030

The National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 is South Africa's long-term socio-economic roadmap, developed by the National Planning Commission and adopted in 2012. It provides a strategic framework to eliminate poverty, reduce inequality, and promote sustainable economic growth by the year 2030 (National Planning Commission, 2012). The NDP acknowledges that land reform, agricultural development, and rural transformation are critical to addressing historical injustices and economic disparities that stem from past land dispossession and exclusionary policies (Hall & Kepe, 2017). The NDP emphasizes equitable access to land as a means to redress past injustices and promote social and economic inclusion. It advocates for a balanced approach to land redistribution, ensuring that previously disadvantaged individuals gain access to land without compromising food security or economic productivity (Lahiff, 2014). The plan also highlights the importance of secure land tenure, particularly in communal areas, to provide certainty for landowners and promote investment in rural areas (Cousins, 2016).

The NDP recognizes agriculture as a key driver of economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction in rural areas. It proposes measures to enhance agricultural productivity, particularly among small-scale farmers, by expanding access to financial support, training, and extension services to help emerging farmers improve their agricultural practices (Aliber & Cousins, 2013). It promotes public-private partnerships to facilitate skills transfer and investment in rural farming enterprises. Additionally, it emphasizes the need to ensure that redistributed land is productively utilized by equipping beneficiaries with the necessary skills and resources to maintain sustainable farming operations (Department of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, 2018). Rural development is a core pillar of the NDP, recognizing that many land reform beneficiaries reside in underdeveloped areas with limited access to

infrastructure, markets, and economic opportunities (Dodson, 2013). To ensure sustainable rural development, the NDP advocates for integrated rural planning to improve access to education, healthcare, roads, and basic services in land reform areas. It supports agribusiness and agro-processing industries to create value-added opportunities in rural economies, ensuring that agricultural products contribute to broader economic growth (National Planning Commission, 2012).

Furthermore, the plan promotes investment in climate-smart agricultural practices to ensure environmental sustainability and resilience to climate change, which is crucial for the long-term viability of land reform initiatives (Department of Environmental Affairs, 2019). By promoting equitable land access, improved agricultural productivity, and sustainable rural development, the NDP 2030 aims to address historical land injustices while fostering economic prosperity and social stability in South Africa.

2.4 Current institutional arrangements of the implementation and coordination provision of support to the land reform projects at local government sphere in South Africa

South Africa's land reform programme is implemented through a multi-sphere governance framework that incorporates the functions of national, provincial, and local government. This institutional framework is directed by the cooperative governance ideals enshrined in Chapter 3 of the Republic of South Africa's Constitution (1996), which are supported by a variety of policies and strategies. The three spheres of government have unique but interconnected duties in executing and supporting land reform to rectify historical land dispossession, promote equal access, and assure sustainable development (Masoka, 2014).

2.4.1 The role of national government

The national government is responsible for developing policies and regulations, providing implementation directions, and guaranteeing the overall coordination and monitoring of the land reform process. The national programme is led by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development (DALRRD), which is in charge of policy creation, oversight, and resource distribution. However, according to Venter (2001), the National DRDLR is not empowered to implement land

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redistribution but rather to verify that approved policies are correctly implemented by provincial and local governments (Van der Elst, 2008).

The national government has the following key responsibilities:

- **Policy development and oversight**: Policy formulation, intergovernmental cooperation frameworks, and database development for post-settlement support (Van der Elst, 2007).
- **Resource allocation**: Facilitating finances for land redistribution initiatives through the National Treasury and ensuring that provincial governments receive adequate financial support (Masoka, 2014).
- **Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)**: Reviewing processes and outcomes to improve consistency and address systemic issues (DALRRD Strategic Plan 2020-2025).
- **Support through agencies**: The Commission on Restitution of Land Rights and the Land Claims Court assist with restitution claims and judicial proceedings (Restitution of Land Rights Act of 1994).

These tasks ensure that national policies conform to constitutional mandates and that the program runs consistently across the other realms of government.

2.4.2 Role of provincial government

Provincial governments serve as intermediates, translating national objectives into regional strategies and overseeing the successful execution of land redistribution and settlement support programs. They collaborate with relevant provincial sector departments to provide comprehensive support to recipients and are the major tools for planning and piloting post-settlement support (DLA, 1997; Masoka, 2014).

The following are the key roles and phases of provincial government responsibilities:

- **Policy implementation**: Ensure that national policies are converted into concrete strategies and implemented within the local government framework (Van der Elst, 2007).

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- **Stakeholder engagement**: Working with traditional institutions, civil society, and other organisations to arbitrate disputes and develop partnerships for successful land reform (National Development Plan, 2012).
- **Development support phases** (Van der Elst, 2007):
    - Phase 1: Feasibility studies.
    - Phase 2: Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA).
    - Phase 3: Land use planning.
    - Phase 4: Business planning.
    - Phase 5: Capacity building and technical advice.
    - Phase 6: Stakeholder participation.

Provincial governments also distribute resources and ensure the productivity of redistributed land, allowing for additional help from provincial ministries (Framework for Implementing Land Reform, 2005).

2.4.3 Coordination of support to the land reform programme at local government sphere

Although it is currently not mandated to play a clear role in land reform settlement support, the local government is the closest sphere of government to communities and play an important role in integrating land reform recipients into local economies. In ad-hoc arrangements, municipalities as the primary point of contact with communities must create settings that support long-term livelihoods and economic participation. They ensure service delivery using a variety of planning tools that coordinate national, provincial, and local initiatives to improve community livelihoods (Masoka, 2014). These instruments include Integrated IDPs, SDFs, LUS, and LED plans (not currently included in the actual settlement support strategy), each with a unique but interrelated role in promoting sustainable and equitable growth. Municipalities have the capacity to guarantee that land reform activities provide concrete benefits for individuals and communities as a whole by addressing historical imbalances and encouraging participatory governance (Pieterse & Van Donk, 2013).

2.4.3.1 Integrated Development Plans (IDPs)

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The IDP forms the foundation of municipal planning and service delivery. It is a detailed five-year strategic plan outlining a municipality's development strategy, goals, and priorities. The IDP brings together input from multiple levels of government and community stakeholders, providing a framework for coordinating resource allocation and service delivery. For land reform beneficiaries, the IDP is critical in identifying their needs and ensuring that they are addressed in larger municipal development programs. This integration links land reform activities to infrastructure development, basic service delivery (e.g. water, electricity, roads, etc.), and housing initiatives. IDPs also include poverty alleviation and empowerment programs, which ensure that marginalised populations, such as women and youth among land reform recipients, receive targeted assistance (Harrison, 2006; De Visser, 2009; Everatt & Smith, 2008). They also promote access to education, healthcare, and skill development programmes, which improve beneficiaries' ability to engage in the local economy. IDPs mandated a participatory strategy in which land reform beneficiaries may voice their concerns and help to setting the development agenda. This participatory governance is crucial for encouraging local ownership of development programs and ensuring service delivery accountability (Davids, Theron, & Maphunye, 2009). Successful examples include incorporating agricultural cooperatives and subsistence farming assistance into municipal programs to boost food security and household incomes (Aliber & Cousins, 2013).

2.4.3.2 Spatial Development Framework (SDF)

The SDF, a formal component of the IDP, offers spatial advice for municipal growth and decision-making. The SDF specifies the planned spatial shape and structure of development within a municipality, with an emphasis on land use patterns, infrastructure networks, environmental conservation, and socioeconomic development goals. The SDF guarantees that land reform beneficiaries integrate into the local economy in an equitable and spatially sustainable manner. The SDF permits strategic interventions that enhance resource access, eliminate spatial disparities, and rectify imbalances left over from apartheid-era planning by identifying viable sites for residential, agricultural, or industrial use (Turok, 2012; Harrison & Todes, 2015). The SDF also includes climatic resilience and environmental sustainability principles, which ensure that land reform beneficiaries follow methods that are compatible with ecological restrictions and opportunities. Promoting agro-ecological zones and

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renewable energy projects on redistributed lands, for example, contributes to the balance of economic and environmental aims. Furthermore, SDFs can prioritise the protection of valuable agricultural land and the development of irrigation schemes for rural beneficiaries, assuring long-term agricultural productivity (van der Ploeg, 2014).

2.4.3.3 Land Use Schemes

The Land Use Scheme is a legally enforceable tool for regulating land use and development within a municipality. It establishes authorised land uses, zoning categories, and development regulations to ensure that urban and rural development proceeds in an orderly and coordinated manner. For land reform recipients, the Land Use Scheme clarifies and secures land tenure by limiting how redistributed land can be used. This clarity is critical for attracting investment and accessing financial services, as secure land use rights are frequently used as collateral for loans (Cousins, 2007). Land Use Schemes also promote infrastructure development, such as farm-to-market highways, allowing beneficiaries to effectively participate in local and regional markets. Furthermore, these programs include land reform projects into larger spatial and economic frameworks, allowing beneficiaries to successfully harness local infrastructure and support networks (Harrison, Todes, & Watson, 2008). Land use schemes promote inclusion and mitigate the hazards associated with informal settlements by ensuring that land reform zones are neither marginalised nor excluded from municipal services.

2.4.3.4 Local Economic Development (LED) plans

LED plans are strategies developed by municipalities to encourage economic growth and employment creation at the local level. These strategies prioritise utilising local resources, identifying economic strengths, and developing collaboration among municipalities, communities, and private sector stakeholders. LED plans are critical for land reform recipients since they facilitate access to local markets while also offering training and support for entrepreneurial endeavours. Municipalities frequently work with agricultural extension agencies, cooperatives, and financial institutions to provide targeted assistance such as skill development, financing, and access to value chains (Rogerson, 2009; Nel & Rogerson, 2016). Municipalities can also assist value-added agriculture enterprises such as food processing and packaging, which would increase beneficiaries' incomes. LED Plans also emphasise economic diversification, such as

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agro-processing, eco-tourism, and renewable energy initiatives, to ensure that recipients can support themselves financially in the long run. The incorporation of community-based tourism programs, in which land reform recipients operate cultural villages or eco-lodges, generates additional income while promoting local history (Nel, Hill, & Binns, 2020). Furthermore, LED projects frequently incorporate mentorship programs and incubation hubs for small firms.

2.4.4 Institutional arrangements of the previous initiatives introduced to support land reform programmes in South Africa

South Africa has implemented a number of initiatives to assist beneficiaries of land reform programme in addressing historical injustices, promoting equitable land ownership, and fostering sustainable development. These measures include financial aid, capacity building programs, and development support to ensure that land reform beneficiaries have the tools they need to succeed. The following provides an in-depth look at important initiatives implemented over the years. The table below summarizes studies conducted on these land reform initiatives, highlighting their focus and the gaps identified in linking municipal planning with the land reform programme.

Table 2.1: Previous land reform programme initiatives

Land Reform Initiative	Author(s)	Focus of the Paper	Gap Identified (Failure to Link Municipal Planning with Land Reform)
Settlement and Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG)	Hall (2009)	Provided grants for low-income households to collectively purchase land.	No provision for post-acquisition support, leading to ineffective land use and lack of municipal integration.
Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD)	Lahiff (2007)	Facilitated land access for individual and group applicants through grants.	Lack of post-settlement support, agricultural training, and municipal involvement, resulting in low productivity.
Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP)	Cousins (2016)	Aimed to provide post-settlement infrastructure and market access support.	Implementation inconsistencies across provinces and weak coordination with municipal planning structures.
Recapitalization and Development Programme (RECAP)	Walker (2015)	Provided funding and mentorship to improve	Created dependency on external mentors rather than integrating

		land reform farm productivity.	municipalities into long-term planning and support.
Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS)	Hall (2009)	Shifted land acquisition to a state-driven model with a leasing system.	Lack of permanent land ownership discouraged long-term investment, and municipalities were not given mandates for land reform execution.
Area-Based Planning under PLAS	-	Intended to align land reform with municipal and district planning.	Municipalities were not provided with a direct budget or formal authority to execute land reform tasks, limiting integration.
Agrarian Transformation and Rural Development Framework	Lahiff (2007)	Sought to integrate land reform with broader rural development strategies.	Fragmented intergovernmental coordination and poor local government implementation due to inadequate resources.
Green Paper on Land Reform (2011)	Cousins (2013), Ntsebeza (2013), Hall (2011)	Proposed a new framework for equitable land redistribution and tenure security.	Overlooked local government coordination, lacked clear mandates for municipalities, and failed to integrate area-based planning with municipal IDPs.

Source: Author (2025)

2.4.4.1 Settlement and Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG)

The Settlement and Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG) was one of the first financial mechanisms developed to support land reform after apartheid ended in 1995. This initiative targeted low-income households by providing funds to acquire land collectively, frequently as part of restitution claims. SLAG prioritised the speedy acquisition of land for redistribution. However, the common ownership model frequently resulted in inadequate management due to unclear roles and duties among beneficiaries. Furthermore, the emphasis on land acquisition without post-acquisition support resulted in underutilised land, perpetuating the cycle of poverty and limiting the programme's transformative potential (Hall, 2009).

2.4.4.2 Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD)

LRAD, introduced in 2001, was intended to remedy SLAG's weaknesses by providing awards suited to individual and group applications. Its goal was to advance agricultural growth and empower aspiring black farmers. LRAD tied the grant's magnitude to the beneficiaries' contributions, instilling a sense of ownership and commitment. While the initiative improved land access for individuals and small groups, its implementation

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showed inadequacies in post-settlement support, such as insufficient agricultural training, limited market access, and insufficient financial resources. These obstacles resulted to low productivity and high failure rates among LRAD recipients (Lahiff, 2007).

2.4.4.3 Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP)

The Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP), which began in 2004, sought to provide comprehensive post-settlement support to land reform beneficiaries. CASP focused on important areas such as infrastructure development, technical advice services, and market integration. Its purpose was to make sure that land reform beneficiaries could use their land profitably. Despite its comprehensive strategy, CASP has been criticised for inconsistent implementation across provinces and a restricted reach due to fiscal restrictions and bureaucratic inefficiencies. Many recipients continued to face limited access to resources, reducing the programme's overall efficacy (Cousins, 2016).

2.4.4.4 Recapitalization and Development Programme (RECAP)

In 2010, the government launched the Recapitalisation and Development Program (RECAP) to revitalise underperforming farms acquired through land reform. RECAP provides beneficiaries with financing and mentorship, connecting them with experienced private-sector mentors. This effort sought to increase productivity, boost skills, and promote financial stability. However, the plan has been heavily criticised for encouraging reliance on external mentors while failing to address systemic concerns such as secure land tenure and beneficiary integration into value chains. Concerns regarding favouritism in mentor selection and fund allocation harmed its credibility (Walker, 2015).

2.4.4.5 Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS)

The Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS) indicated a shift away from beneficiary-driven land reform towards a more state-led approach. PLAS, which was implemented in 2006, allows the government to purchase land ahead of time and lease it to specific beneficiaries. This concept attempted to speed up the redistribution process while providing beneficiaries with continual state oversight. However, the leasing approach instilled instability in recipients, inhibiting long-term investment and

agricultural development. Critics contend that the lack of permanent land ownership weakens the program's ability to empower recipients in the long run (Hall, 2009).

2.4.4.6 Area Based Planning (ABP)

PLAS implemented area-based planning to boost the efficiency and efficacy of land reform programme. This strategy combines land acquisition activities with local and district-level IDPs to coincide with larger development goals. Under this paradigm, the DLA takes a proactive approach to land acquisition, rather than waiting on local structures to make demands. The DLA actively discovers land needs, chooses qualified beneficiaries, and locates available land for acquisition. Collaboration with towns, district, or local agriculture departments is an important component of this approach. These organisations play an important role in determining land requirements, possible beneficiaries, and appropriate parcels for acquisition. Once identified, they can approach the DLA for financial support to help with planning and purchasing.

In addition to assisting local entities, the DLA may lead efforts to identify needs, land, and beneficiaries while collaborating with municipalities, district councils, or agricultural departments. This proactive approach is consistent with the District Level Delivery (DLD) strategy, which seeks to improve land reform by streamlining planning, decision-making, and implementation at the district level. A proactive land reform plan implemented by the DLD guarantees that land delivery processes are responsive, structured, and in line with local development aspirations. By incorporating the PLAS program into area-based planning, land acquisition and reform programs become both demand-driven and strategic. This integration facilitates equitable land redistribution while addressing the specific needs of communities at the district level.

Although Area-Based Planning was introduced under the PLAS to enhance the efficiency of land reform programme by integrating local government and district planning with national and provincial government efforts, a significant critique arises regarding its implementation. Local governments were never given a mandated function to execute land reform tasks. Additionally, they were not provided with a direct budget to carry out these responsibilities effectively. Also PLAS allows the provincial government to execute the same roles that the local government is allocated to do under PLAS. This lack of formal authority and financial resources undermined the

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intended integration of local-level planning into broader land reform strategies. While the approach encouraged collaboration between the DLA, municipalities, and agricultural departments to identify land needs, beneficiaries, and suitable parcels, the absence of a direct mandate and budget for local governments limited their capacity to perform these roles. As a result, despite the proactive measures introduced by PLAS and its alignment with IDPs and the DLD process, the full potential of area-based planning to drive equitable and strategic land reform has been hindered by these structural limitations.

2.4.4.7 Agrarian Transformation and Rural Development Framework

The framework was introduced in 2009 as part of South Africa's broader rural development strategy under the administration of the DRDLR. It's part of South Africa's NDP, emphasises the integration of land reform with broader rural development goals. It seeks to create vibrant and equitable rural communities by addressing systemic issues such as infrastructure deficits, access to markets, and rural poverty. While this framework offers a holistic vision, its success has been limited by fragmented intergovernmental coordination and inadequate funding. The disconnect between policy formulation at the national level and implementation at the local level continues to hinder its effectiveness (Walker, 2015).

2.4.4.8 Green Paper on Land Reform in South Africa (2011)

The South African government issued the Green Paper on Land Reform (2011) to address historical injustices in land dispossession and establish a new framework for land reform. It sought to address issues of unequal land ownership, poverty alleviation, and rural development. Key elements included a four-tier land tenure system that attempted to differentiate ownership based on property size and function, as well as the development of institutions such as the Land Claims Commission (LCC) and the Office of the Valuer-General to promote fairness and transparency in land transactions. The primary purpose was to promote equitable land transfer, increase tenure security, and safeguard long-term rural livelihoods. However, the Green Paper received substantial criticism for failing to address the weak coordination of the land reform plan at the local government level. Critics noted that the Green Paper underestimated the problems of local implementation, as municipalities frequently lack clear mandates, technical skills, and appropriate mandated finances to carry out land

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reform activities efficiently (Cousins, 2013; Ntsebeza, 2013). Furthermore, the Green Paper failed to integrate area-based planning with local government institutions, resulting in increased fragmentation between national, provincial, and municipal efforts. Scholars emphasised how the absence of connection between land reform programs and municipal IDPs hampered efforts to serve local demands completely (Hall, 2011). The reliance on centralised systems and the lack of tangible measures to empower local governments were identified as major flaws impeding significant progress in land redistribution and rural development.

2.4.5 Critique of literature on the current institutional arrangements of the implementation and coordination provision of support to the land reform projects at local government sphere in South Africa

2.4.5.1 Critical gaps and weaknesses

(A) Fragmentation in coordination between spheres of government

Despite the cooperative governance structure, land reform in South Africa is frequently hampered by ineffective coordination across national, provincial, and municipal governments. While the DALRRD is in charge of policy formulation and funding, it's little direct engagement in implementation results in a gap between strategy and execution. Provincial administrations, which serve as intermediaries, frequently struggle to integrate their land reform programmes with municipal-level development goals. Municipalities, on the other hand, struggle to carry out land reform plans successfully due to resource constraints and competing agendas. The lack of a centralised accountability mechanism leads to inconsistent land reform outcomes across areas. This fragmentation not only slows down land transfer initiatives, but it also undermines the overall impact of land reform programs, limiting their effectiveness in resolving historical injustices.

(B) Challenges in post-settlement support implementation

Despite being a recognised part of land reform, post-settlement support is frequently not implemented well enough because of technical and budgetary limitations. To effectively support land reform beneficiaries, many municipalities lack the resources and know-how needed to operationalise SDFs, LED Plans, and IDPs. Inadequate post-acquisition support caused previous programs, such the SLAG, to fail, and

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comparable issues now exist in contemporary land reform initiatives. Many land reform initiatives are abandoned or become ineffective in the absence of sufficient financial support, infrastructural investment, and mentoring. The effectiveness of post-settlement programs is further constrained by the absence of coordination between land reform and agricultural extension services.

(C) Limited economic viability of land reform projects

Due to inadequate connections between land redistribution and commercial markets, many land reform initiatives are not economically viable. Beneficiaries of land reform have been less productive as a result of the focus on land ownership alone, without supplementary assistance for company growth or agricultural production. Although SDFs offer agro-ecological zoning mechanisms, their application is frequently inadequate, resulting in underutilised farms and inefficient land use. Due to a lack of financial services, limited infrastructure, and inadequate business training, beneficiaries usually have difficulty accessing markets. Despite their potential, LED projects frequently lack long-term support systems and receive inadequate funding, which results in unsustainable economic activity. Because of this, a lot of land reform initiatives fall short of producing steady revenue, which makes poverty and inequality in rural regions even worse.

(D) Institutional and bureaucratic challenges

The complicated regulatory framework that oversees land reform frequently prevents it from being implemented effectively. Project execution is delayed by the stringent requirements for environmental evaluations, land use clearances, and compliance with many legal frameworks. Ineffective enforcement of land use schemes by many municipalities results in unofficial land use practices and legal ambiguity for recipients of land reform. Land distribution and tenure security are further complicated by disputes between traditional leaders, rural populations, and municipal planning agencies. Ineffective decision-making procedures and lost chances for cooperative land development are the results of inadequate stakeholder cooperation. The implementation of land reform programs is hampered by these institutional and administrative obstacles, which postpones the development of fair land ownership and economic inclusion.

2.4.5.2 Research gap areas

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The impact of the DDM's introduction on these dynamics is not well understood. Through the promotion of an integrated service delivery approach, the DDM was created to enhance coordination and collaboration between the three branches of government. But important questions still exist: Has the DDM enhanced intergovernmental cooperation in the execution of land reform? Has it addressed the issues of weak post-settlement support, low economic ties, and fragmentation that have been identified? Does the DDM need to be amended to properly reflect the reality of implementing land reform? Despite the DDM's implementation, are there still issues with the institutional structure that need to be fixed? In light of these shortcomings, more investigation is necessary to determine whether the DDM has significantly influenced land reform governance and whether more institutional changes are necessary to increase its efficacy.

2.5 Challenges prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to the land reform projects

2.5.1 Policy and legislative misalignment

Local government operate in a complicated and fragmented policy environment in which multiple s[spheres of government frequently pursue misaligned agendas. The absence of a unified legislative framework leads to conflicting mandates, which cause inefficiencies and impede the execution of land reform projects (Pieterse & Van Donk, 2013). For example, national policy may emphasise large-scale land redistribution, whilst provincial and local governments focus on immediate service delivery difficulties, resulting in disjointed activities. Furthermore, the ambiguity in roles and responsibilities among these government levels causes overlaps and gaps in project implementation. This uncertainty impedes coordinated action and frequently leaves towns without the power or resources to handle the unique difficulties confronting land reform beneficiaries (De Visser, 2009). Overlapping regulations, such as those governing land use planning and environmental management, compound these problems by causing administrative bottlenecks that slow approval and implementation processes (Tapscott, 2004). The local government's activities and purposes are governed by the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) (Act No. 56 of 2003), the Municipal Structures Act (Act No. 117 of 1998), and Chapter 7, Section 152 of the Constitution, which establishes the objects of local government. These legal

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frameworks do not include land reform programme among the objectives and primary functions of local and district municipalities. As a result, municipalities are not required to fulfil land reform functions, which come beyond the purview of the national and provincial government. Furthermore, the Auditor-General of South Africa does not audit land reform functions at local sphere of government.

2.5.2 Institutional and capacity constraints

Institutional capacity restrictions are one of the most serious problems municipalities confront when coordinating land reform activities. Many municipalities lack the trained personnel required to successfully manage and support major land reform projects. These human resource gaps are especially noticeable in rural towns, where technical knowledge in planning, project management, and community participation is frequently lacking (Rogerson, 2009). Additionally, municipalities face ongoing funding constraints. Budgets for land reform programme are frequently insufficient, resulting in poor infrastructure development, limited beneficiary support, and project delays (Masoka, 2014). Weak intergovernmental coordination exacerbates these issues, as poor communication and scattered efforts across government levels and departments impair the success of land reform programme. For example, insufficient coordination between the DALRRD and municipalities frequently results in a mismatch between national policy and local implementation strategies (Harrison & Todes, 2015). The PLAS (2006) tasked both local and provincial governments with acquiring land for land reform goals. According to Section 152 of the Constitution, the provincial government has the mandate and the budget to carry out land reform initiatives, whereas local governments do not. As a result, municipalities are unable to engage qualified specialists to properly manage and implement land reform projects (Rogerson, 2009). This lack of financial and human resources exacerbates the institutional capacity limits that municipalities face in achieving land reform objectives.

2.5.3 Operational and administrative inefficiencies

South African municipalities are facing increasing backlogs as a result of ongoing in-migration and the fast emergence of smaller families that outnumber their ability to provide serviced land (DALRRD, 2019). Local government's financial viability has long been a source of worry (van Donk, Pieterse 2006). By the third stage of the transition,

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the vision of developmental local government had been marred by "hard political and economic realities, overwhelmed by the scale of institutional changes involved and the distance between the ideal and delivering practical change" (Powell, 2012). By 2004, the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) had to step in and provide technical assistance to municipalities so that they could carry out their tasks (DPLG, 2004). However, this did not help the issue (Powell 2012). Over time, assessments of local government revealed serious issues, prompting the National Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) to intervene; however, these interventions have had little success in preventing deterioration (CoGTA, 2009; 2020b; 2021a; The Presidency 2014).

Recent audit findings confirm the worsening situation. According to the Auditor General (2020), many municipalities are crippled by debt and are unable to pay for water and electricity; revenue collection is inaccurate and lacking; expenditure is unauthorised, irregular, fruitless, and wasteful; and there is a high reliance on grants and assistance from the national government. Most troubling are municipalities that are unable to create credible financial statements despite paying millions to consultants and receiving significant support from the national and provincial governments. These municipalities financial statements are either inaccurate or unreliable, leaving their residents, creditors, and present and potential investors in the dark. In August 2021, 64 municipalities were considered dysfunctional and 26 were under provincial administration, which implied that they could not fulfil their functions (CoGTA 2021a, PMG 2021).

According to the Minister of Finance, 63% of South African municipalities were in financial difficulties, 102 had adopted budgets that they couldn't afford for the fiscal year 2021/22, and 40 were experiencing a "financial and service delivery crisis" (Mboweni 2021, p. 10). The deteriorating ability of municipalities to address the requirements of local communities has resulted in numerous ‘service delivery' protests (Chigwata et al. 2017). Communities have sued municipalities and provincial governments to force them to deliver services and meet their duties (Stevens, 2019; Businesstech, 2021a). The provincial government is cautious to identify land reform as a duty of local government because municipalities already confront major obstacles in meeting their current aims and obligations. Additionally, there are negative repercussions on local economy (Sihlobo, 2021). Adding the complex and resource-

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intensive task of land reform to their mandates may intensify these conflicts, jeopardising their capacity to achieve current duties. This hesitation highlights the need for a more strategic approach to ensuring that land reform projects are managed successfully while not overburdening local government organisations.

2.5.4 Socio-economic and community challenges

Socioeconomic problems at the community level frequently impede the successful coordination of land reform initiatives. Land reform beneficiaries, traditional authority, and local people frequently disagree on land allocation and land use, which can cause delays in project execution (Cousins, 2007). These disputes are frequently caused by imprecise tenure arrangements or competing interests, which municipalities find difficult to resolve. Furthermore, little interaction with the private sector limits access to essential resources like finance, technology, and experience, which could improve the outcomes of land reform programme (Nel & Rogerson, 2016). Market access constraints jeopardise the viability of land reform efforts. Many beneficiaries struggle to access local and regional markets, value chains, and financial services, all of which are necessary for long-term economic success (Nel et al., 2020). Without tackling these socioeconomic issues, towns risk perpetuating the cycles of poverty and inequality that land reform seeks to end.

2.5.5 Critique of literature on challenges prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to the land reform projects

2.5.5.1 Lack of a unified legislative framework

Implementation is inconsistent due to the lack of an integrated framework that unifies national, provincial, and local land reform mandates. Uncertain obligations and a lack of accountability arise when local governments' roles in land reform are not well defined. Intergovernmental cooperation is further complicated by municipalities' difficulties managing overlapping policies. Local governments continue to be excluded from land reform initiatives in the absence of a legislative framework that expressly requires their involvement. Legislative changes are necessary to close this gap and formally include municipalities in land-related initiatives.

2.5.5.2 Limited institutional support for local governments

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Inadequate funding and a lack of qualified personnel to spearhead land reform programs are major obstacles for municipalities. Notwithstanding these limitations, there isn't a specific plan in place to deal with the capacity shortages in local government systems. Municipalities are deterred from actively participating in land reform due to the cost burden, as they do not have adequate budgetary resources for its execution. Municipalities' capacities in land planning and administration are further weakened by the lack of organised training and capacity-building initiatives. Municipalities' capacity to assist land reform goals can be enhanced by the establishment of specialised support programs.

2.5.5.3 Weak intergovernmental coordination mechanisms

The absence of a centralised platform for land reform coordination across several government branches reduces effectiveness and results in dispersed implementation. Project delays and duplication of effort are the results of poor communication between national agencies, provincial ministries, and municipalities. Municipalities find it challenging to obtain money for land projects since the current funding models for land reform do not take into account the needs of local implementation. Municipalities find it difficult to incorporate land reform into larger development plans in the absence of defined coordinating structures. Collaboration and project execution can be enhanced by fortifying intergovernmental forums and establishing cooperative planning procedures.

2.5.5.4 Community-level conflicts and exclusion of the private sector

The advancement of land reform is hampered by protracted land conflicts brought on by a lack of stakeholder interaction between municipalities, traditional authority, and land beneficiaries. Resistance and administrative snags result from traditional leaders' exclusion from official land planning procedures. Furthermore, squandered chances for financial and technical assistance arise from the private sector's limited participation in land reform programs. The effectiveness of land reform initiatives can be increased and funding options can be expanded by creating platforms for private sector engagement. Easier land distribution and management can also be achieved by incorporating traditional leadership structures and bolstering community participation procedures.

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2.5.6 Research gap areas on challenges prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to the land reform projects

Although the DDM provides a framework for enhancing intergovernmental coordination in land reform, it is unclear if it will be successful in averting previous mistakes. Can the DDM effectively tackle the main issues that hampered earlier attempts at land reform? First, will it spur legislative changes to remove jurisdictional issues and provide municipalities explicit legal mandates? secondly, by encouraging communication, harmonising policies, and expediting decision-making across government domains, will it enhance intergovernmental relations? Lastly, by effectively incorporating local communities, traditional leaders, and the commercial sector into land reform initiatives, can it increase stakeholder involvement? How well the DDM addresses these urgent issues will determine how well it transforms South Africa's land reform environment.

2.6 Overview of DDM measures to address inadequate institutional coordination challenges in local government's support for land reform programme

2.6.1 Overview of the DDM

The DDM, often known as the "One Plan," is a transformational approach to governance in South Africa. It is a realistic and results-oriented framework intended to increase collaboration and cohesiveness among the three levels of government: national, provincial, and local. The DDM aims to solve the issues created by fragmented government by focussing on spatial integration, which would enable unified service delivery across South Africa's 52 district and metropolitan areas. Patel (2021) describes the DDM as a strategic method for breaking down "silos" within government organisations. This technique improves coherence in service delivery while reaching measurable development goals. The strategy is based on compacts, which serve as agreements amongst government stakeholders outlining their commitments and responsibilities. These agreements place a premium on long-term planning and sustained action initiatives. Furthermore, the DDM seeks to improve marginalised communities, develop social cohesion, and promote inclusive growth by tackling systemic disparities and personalising interventions to local needs.

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2.6.2 Objectives of the DDM

The DDM's principal goal is to achieve alignment and coordination across government initiatives by creating district-wide plans. These plans are adapted to the specific characteristics and problems of each municipal region. The implementation is led by the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA), with the national CoGTA serving as the principal accountability body (PMG, 2020; CoGTA, 2020d). The concept emphasises moving away from siloed governance structures and towards integrated planning procedures that promote collaboration and capacity growth. By focussing on locally appropriate solutions, the DDM ensures that all developmental interventions maximise their impact while also encouraging active community participation.

2.6.3 Key features and goals

The DDM sets out several overarching goals, including:

- **Enhancing intergovernmental relations:** Strengthening coordination across the three spheres of government to provide more accountability and better service delivery.
- **Addressing local needs:** Recognising that each area faces unique challenges, the DDM tailors its actions to address specific local issues.
- **Reprioritizing government spending:** To obtain the best possible developmental results, redirect resources towards high-impact programs.
- **Spatial targeting:** Correcting past imbalances in spatial planning by maximising the geographic focus of development activities (PMG, 2020; CoGTA, 2020d).

2.6.4 Role of district hubs

The DDM is built on district and metropolitan hubs, which serve as the model's operational backbone. The national and provincial CoGTA agencies have established these hubs, which are in charge of planning, coordinating, and promoting intergovernmental collaboration. Their major goal is to guarantee that government programs and finances are geographically matched with the requirements of local

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communities. These hubs, while functioning under municipal governments, report directly to CoGTA. Instead of focussing simply on local concerns, this accountability assures alignment with greater national and provincial goals. These hubs, which serve as facilitation mechanisms, are crucial in coordinating stakeholders' efforts and guaranteeing the DDM's effective implementation (CoGTA, 2019; CoGTA, 2020d).

2.6.5 Governance structure

The DDM has a dual governance system consisting of political control and technical administration.

(A) Political oversight: A committee comprising

I. A cabinet minister,

II. A provincial executive committee member,

III. The executive mayor of the relevant metropolitan or district municipality, and

IV. The mayors of local municipalities within the district.

(B) Technical steering committee: This group, made up of representatives from CoGTA, state-owned businesses, civil society, and the private sector, collects data, consults with stakeholders, and drafts the "One Plan" for submission to the political committee (CoGTA, 2020d). The collaboration between district hubs and these committees guarantees that the DDM receives both strong political leadership and technical knowledge.

2.6.6 Long-term planning and monitoring

The DDM distinguishes itself by emphasising long-term strategic planning. Unlike traditional IDPs, which are limited by a five-year electoral cycle, the DDM's "One Plan" spans several council periods. Long-term planning ensures stability and continuity in development initiatives.

The "One Plan" includes:

(A) A shared vision for the district.
(B) A detailed analysis of the area's needs and opportunities.

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(C) Realistic and credible long-term implementation strategies.

(D) Robust accountability and reporting mechanisms to track progress and provide feedback to both government and communities.

To address the inadequacies of prior developmental models, the DDM includes rigorous monitoring and evaluation methods. These processes ensure that progress is constantly evaluated, difficulties are handled quickly, and corrective actions are put in place to maintain alignment with strategy goals (CoGTA, 2020d; PSA, 2020).

2.6.7 The promises of the DDM

The DDM is one of the most ambitious measures implemented by South Africa's government since 2000, with the goal of addressing persistent problems in local governance. Its primary promise is a collaborative "whole-of-government" approach that will result in unified plans for each district and metropolitan area. This strategy attempts to eliminate the fragmented nature of planning, budgeting, and implementation within government, which has historically hampered service delivery. (COGTA, 2019). Minister Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma (2020) emphasised the DDM's role in breaking down silos and strengthening the local government realm, citing the integration of planning and budgeting as a critical component. The approach also aims to promote consensus among national, provincial, and municipal governments on budget priorities and development goals, transcending limited sectoral interests through collaborative political and technical steering committees (CoGTA, 2020d).

2.6.8 Assumptions underpinning the DDM

(A) The DDM rests on several critical assumptions

(I) Integration and collaboration: It assumes that integration and desire to work will overcome developmental problems. Nkuna and Nemutanzhela (2012) observed that service delivery relies on complementing efforts from all levels of government, yet local governments frequently face disproportionate responsibility for failures.

(II) Shared budgets and priorities: The concept assumes that national and provincial sector departments will pool money and align their goals, shifting away from autonomous operations. To agree on reprioritising projects, resources, and political commitments, stakeholders must undergo a profound culture shift (Currie, 2021).

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(III) Political stability and commitment: The DDM implies continuing political and institutional commitment throughout electoral cycles. However, recent local government election results in which the African National Congress lost its majority in numerous municipalities calls this notion into question (Mashinini, 2021).

(B) Addressing historical flaws in local governance

The DDM aims to resolve longstanding challenges in local government, including:

(I) Capacity constraints: Many local governments lack trained workers, especially in rural areas, resulting in inadequate service delivery. Cadre deployment and nepotism further reduce institutional capacity (De Visser, 2009; Koeble & Kroukamp, 2014).

(II) Financial mismanagement: Weak financial controls, limited tax collection, and insufficient economic foundation all impede effective governance. Addressing these difficulties requires the hiring of experienced financial managers and specialists (Auditor General, 2020, 2021).

(III) Administrative challenges: Large municipalities fail to address localised concerns due to their size, resulting in peripheral neglect and increased service delivery costs for dispersed populations (De Visser, 2009). To overcome these difficulties, the DDM recommends district hub-based capacity-building activities. However, these measures are more facilitative than interventionist, which limits their direct impact on underperforming towns (CoGTA, 2020d).

(C) Potential for development and investment

If efficiently implemented, the DDM has the potential to drive strategic investments and infrastructure development in neglected areas, hence encouraging private sector participation. Extending vital facilities such as roads, water, sewage, and electricity may attract additional investment. However, a lack of infrastructure upkeep remains a serious concern, affecting both service delivery quality and public trust (Mashego, 2021). Improved invoicing and revenue collection practices could boost municipal revenue streams. However, these gains are contingent on political will, correct data, and citizens' ability to pay for services. Such difficulties remain outside the DDM's direct purview.

(D) Monitoring, data management, and corruption

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The effective implementation of the DDM necessitates strong monitoring and dependable data systems. Many municipalities lack up-to-date infrastructure and financial records, which makes it difficult to formulate realistic maintenance and investment plans (Municipal Demarcation Board, 2018; Auditor General, 2020). Furthermore, political and administrative disagreements over consolidated budgets may aggravate corruption and marginalise weaker stakeholders (Sihlongonyane, 2015).

(E) Complexity and relationship challenges

Adding DDM hubs to existing systems may complicate ties between municipal, provincial, and national administrations. This could result in the exclusion of weaker municipalities or stakeholders, eroding inclusion and cooperation. Questions persist about the relationship between the DDM's "One Plan" and existing IDPs and SDFs (CoGTA, 2020d).

2.6.9 Pitfalls of the DDM as a strategy for solving poor coordination of land reform programme in local government level

This section aims to assess the effectiveness of the measures implemented by the DDM in addressing the issue of inadequate institutional coordination. The evaluation specifically focuses on the challenges that hinder effective institutional collaboration in providing support for land reform projects within Makhado Local Municipality. This analysis is directly linked to Objective 3 of the study, as outlined in Chapter One, which seeks to examine the strategies employed to enhance coordination among institutions involved in land reform initiatives.

(A) Presupposition of integration as the core issue

The DDM assumes that the fundamental impediment to attaining developmental local government is a lack of integration between government realms. This assumption is reflected in CoGTA's report (2019) and Minister Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma's 2020 speech, in which she emphasised the need to shift away from "silo planning, budgeting, and implementation." However, while integration is critical, this limited focus risks neglecting the larger systemic and structural concerns that undermine local government effectiveness. Assuming that local government is not fully engaged due to insufficient integration is an oversimplification and, in many situations, incorrect.

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Other major challenges, such as corruption, political meddling, a lack of accountability, and inadequate financial management, significantly undermine effective local governance (DPLG, 2004; CoGTA 2009, 2020a, e; Auditor General, 2020, 2021). For example, the Auditor General's reports have continuously revealed widespread mismanagement and irregular expenditure inside municipalities, despite the implementation of integrative models such as the DDM. These systemic challenges, rather than a lack of integration, limit local government's ability to participate actively in land reform programme.

(B) Overestimation of cross-sectoral collaboration

The concept is primarily reliant on national and provincial ministries deciding to share finances, plans, and strategies. CoGTA (2020d) expresses this premise, claiming that collaborative planning will go beyond "narrow, sectoral, and personal interests." However, the historical trend of departments to operate autonomously raises serious concerns about the viability of such a strategy. Provincial and national agencies have continually shown a reluctance to share finances with local governments, typically prioritising their own departmental mandates and interests over collaborative governance. Furthermore, local governments confront considerable budgetary limits when shifting funds towards mandated land reform programme. Doing so risks violating established financial regulations and bringing criticism or negative findings from the AGSA. According to AGSA studies (2020, 2021), any misallocation of municipal funds for operations beyond their core responsibilities, such as those overseen by provincial or national departments, is likely to result in financial misconduct charges. This prevents local governments from making meaningful contributions to land reform programme, even when they recognise the critical need for such measures. Without legal methods to ensure that national and provincial budgets coincide with local interests, the DDM's integrative goals are highly unlikely to succeed.

(C) Political commitment over electoral cycles

The DDM's effectiveness demands continual political and institutional commitment, independent of election results. Recent local government election results, which saw the African National Congress lose its majority in numerous municipalities (Mashinini 2021), call into question the long-term viability of such commitment. Political instability,

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particularly in metropolitan areas, tests the model's ability to withstand shifts in leadership and governance agendas. For example, municipalities such as Ekurhuleni, the City of Johannesburg, the City of Tshwane, and Sol Plaatje have suffered severe political unrest following the 2021 local government elections (PMG, 2022). Council cabinets and coalition administrations have frequently changed, making it difficult for these municipalities to make consistent choices. Political infighting has hampered service delivery in Ekurhuleni, while Johannesburg's mayoral leadership has changed frequently, weakening governance continuity and long-term planning (PMG, 2022). Similarly, Tshwane has faced protracted administrative battles, including court interventions, which have delayed important decisions required for the DDM's proper implementation (AGSA, 2021). Sol Plaatje Municipality, while not a metro, has faced serious governance issues and political infighting, which have stifled decision-making procedures (DFA, 2024). This political instability makes it difficult for these municipalities to adopt the DDM's collaborative and integrated strategy. Without a stable political climate, the model's efficacy in resolving structural difficulties within local government remains uncertain.

(D) Fundamental local government challenges

Joint planning and investment may address difficulties like duplicated development and irrational planning, the DDM does not intrinsically eliminate the entrenched problems afflicting local government, including::

I. **Lack of capacity:** Many local governments lack the human resources to implement complex models.

II. **Poor financial control and management:** Mismanagement and corruption remain endemic (Auditor General 2020, 2021).

III. **Revenue collection challenges:** Inadequate economic bases limit revenue generation.

IV. **Role confusion and political interference:** Ongoing clashes between councillors and administrators undermine governance.

V. **Corruption and accountability deficits:** Persistent corruption and a lack of accountability exacerbate inefficiencies (DPLG 2004; CoGTA 2009, 2020a, 2020e; The Presidency 2014; Du Plessis 2017).

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(E) Complexity of relationships and decision-making

The addition of DDM hubs adds another degree of complication to the already complicated interactions between stakeholders. This could result in the marginalisation of weaker stakeholders, such as local municipalities and communities. Simplification of decision-making processes may exclude land reform beneficiaries; exacerbate imbalances in service delivery (CoGTA 2020e).

2.6.10 Case studies on the implementation of the DDM in other countries

This section tries to provide a comprehensive overview of activities that are consistent with the DDM's objectives. The selected case studies are divided into two categories: international and South African. Because the DDM is unique to South Africa, the overseas case studies were chosen to explore comparable policy strategies in other countries that shared similar objectives rather than explicitly focussing on its implementation or influence on the land reform programme. These case studies showcase worldwide methods to integrated service delivery, cooperative governance, and strategic land use planning, and offer useful insights and lessons for the DDM framework. In contrast, the South African case studies focus on municipalities where the DDM has previously been piloted. These specific studies draw on assessments completed by other scholars to analyse the DDM's implementation, obstacles, and outcomes in specific settings. They offer a localised perspective that reflects the specific dynamics of South African governance and land reform. In all, this part examines two worldwide case studies and two South African case studies, providing a fair comparison of global and local practices. This dual approach serves to contextualise the DDM within larger governance and development frameworks while also evaluating its actual applicability in South Africa.

(A) China's County Development Model

China's County Development Model is a transformative governance structure that empowers counties to solve rural development requirements through planning, resource allocation, and service delivery. This paradigm is critical in closing the urban-rural gap, encouraging economic growth, and assuring equal distribution of public resources. Below is a detailed study of its essential characteristics, difficulties, and suggestions for development.

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(I) Decentralization and localized governance

The County Development Model's decentralised governance structure reflects the notion of empowering local governments to manage land resources efficiently. China's counties have extensive autonomy in making decisions about resource allocation, land-use planning, and development policies. This strategy is consistent with land reform projects in that it prioritises localised decision-making to address community-specific issues. Scholars contend that decentralisation guarantees that policies are context-sensitive and successful in satisfying local demands (Zhang & Liu, 2019). Similarly, land reform initiatives frequently argue for the transfer of land rights and governance to local governments or communities to improve equity and efficiency.

(II) Integration of urban and rural development

China's model emphasises integrated urban and rural development, which aligns with land reform initiatives aimed at closing the socioeconomic gap. The County Development Model invests in rural infrastructure, including as roads and irrigation systems, while also encouraging agricultural modernisation. These strategies ensure that rural areas can compete economically with urban centres while also improving rural inhabitants' livelihoods (Li et al., 2020). Land reform programs strive to integrate rural development into larger national objectives by giving rural people access to land and resources that will boost productivity and economic stability.

(III) Land allocation and equitable resource distribution

The County Development Model prioritises equitable allocation of resources, including land, which is a key component of land reform initiatives. In China, counties employ policies to allot land for agricultural, industrial, and residential purposes, ensuring that development gains are evenly dispersed among stakeholders. Scholars emphasise that resource disparities between wealthy and poorer countries remain an issue, needing redistributive strategies to assist undeveloped areas (Chen & Lin, 2018). This method is similar to land reform goals that aim to redistribute land from wealthy landowners to marginalised populations in order to achieve social justice and reduce inequality.

(IV) Environmental sustainability and land use management

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Environmental sustainability is another crucial area where the County Development Model overlaps with land reform concepts. China's counties are tasked with developing sustainable land use methods that balance development and environmental preservation. However, increased industrialisation and urbanisation have occasionally resulted in environmental damage, highlighting the need for tougher land use restrictions and green development initiatives (Li et al., 2020). Land reform programme also emphasise sustainable land management to guarantee that land use does not jeopardise environmental health or future production.

(V) Public service delivery and social welfare

The County Development Model seeks to improve public service delivery, particularly in rural areas, by increasing access to education, healthcare, and social services. This focus is consistent with land reform objectives, which strive to improve rural inhabitants' socioeconomic conditions by providing not only land but also needed services to sustain their livelihoods. Scholars suggest that county governments invest in capacity building and infrastructure to alleviate gaps in public service delivery (Wang et al., 2021).

(VI) Challenges and recommendations for land reform alignment

Despite its successes, the County Development Model confronts obstacles similar to land reform projects. These include resource inequities, poor local capacity, and an excessive reliance on external subsidies. Scholars advocate improving local government, promoting equitable resource distribution, implementing sustainable practices, and stimulating local innovation (Zhang & Liu, 2019). Similarly, land reform programme must address governance and capacity concerns in order to ensure fair and sustainable land usage.

(B) Rwanda decentralization model

Rwanda's decentralisation model, implemented in the early 2000s, is regarded as one of the most effective government frameworks in Africa. Following the 1994 genocide, the approach was applied to strengthen local governments, improve service delivery, and promote participatory governance (Nkurunziza, 2017). The decentralisation approach is based on three pillars: administrative, fiscal, and political decentralisation.

(I) Administrative decentralization

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This entails the delegation of decision-making authority from the central government to local government entities. Local governments have the authority to design and implement development projects, including land management initiatives (Uwizeyimana & Toperesu, 2019).

(II) Fiscal decentralization

Rwanda's model ensures that local governments have control over financial resources, which are allocated according to performance measures. This helps to fund land reform programme and ensures accountability (Niringiye & Douglason, 2018).

(III) Political decentralization

Citizens actively participate in local governance through elected councils and community service (umuganda). This participation has made a substantial contribution to the success of land-related programs by increasing transparency and community involvement (Huggins, 2012).

(IV) Impact on land reform programmes

Rwanda's decentralisation model has had a significant impact on land reform, especially with the execution of the Land Tenure Regularisation Programme (LTRP).

(V) Efficient land registration

The decentralised governance structure enabled local governments to lead land registration processes, culminating in the registration of more over 11 million pieces of land by 2013 (Ali et al., 2014).

- **Enhanced equity**

  Decentralised institutions ensured that disadvantaged groups, including as women and orphans, received priority in land allocation and registration, thereby resolving past disparities (Dushimimana, 2020).

- **Conflict resolution**

  Local mediation committees, which are integrated into the decentralisation framework, have handled land conflicts more efficiently, lowering litigation and promoting social cohesion (Huggins, 2012).

(VI) Challenges identified by scholars

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Despite its successes, several challenges have been identified in the implementation of the decentralization model in relation to land reform:

- **Capacity constraints**

  Local governments frequently experience a lack of competent personnel and resources to properly manage land reform projects (Uwizeyimana and Toperesu, 2019).

- **Unequal implementation**

  While decentralisation has empowered many, there are still discrepancies in resource distribution and implementation capacity between districts (Niringiye & Douglason, 2018).

- **Resistance to change**

  Resistance from traditional authorities and elites who used to control land resources has occasionally slowed progress (Dushimimana, 2020).

- **Land disputes**

  Although decentralised mediation procedures exist, complicated land disputes can exceed their capabilities, necessitating intervention by higher authorities (Huggins, 2012).

(VII) Recommendations by scholars

- **Capacity building**

  Training local government officials and providing them with necessary resources are critical for increasing the effectiveness of land reform programs (Uwizeyimana & Toperesu, 2019).

- **Monitoring and evaluation**

  Establishing comprehensive monitoring systems at the local level would guarantee that resources are used efficiently and program objectives are attained (Nkurunziza, 2017).

- **Inclusive decision-making**

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Increasing community engagement through umuganda and other venues can boost transparency and lessen resistance from traditional authority (Huggins, 2012).

- **Policy harmonization**

  It is critical to align national and local policies to remove anomalies and guarantee that land reform projects are implemented consistently throughout districts (Dushimimana, 2020).

(C) South Africa (Waterberg and Harry Gwala District DDMs)

(I) Waterberg District DDM policy strategy review (CoGTA, 2020)

The Waterberg District Municipality is situated in the southwestern region of Limpopo Province, South Africa's northernmost province. The district shares provincial borders with Botswana to the northwest, the North West and Gauteng provinces to the south, and the Sekhukhune and Capricorn district municipalities to the east. The municipality consists of a combination of urban hubs, rural communities, and huge agricultural and conservation regions. It is known for its critical natural and cultural assets, notably the UNESCO-designated Waterberg Biosphere Reserve, which contains ancient mountains, a diverse ecosystem, and significant cultural heritage sites. Modimolle (previously Nylstroom) serves as the district's administrative seat. Its diversified geography promotes mining, agriculture, and tourism as its key economic sectors.

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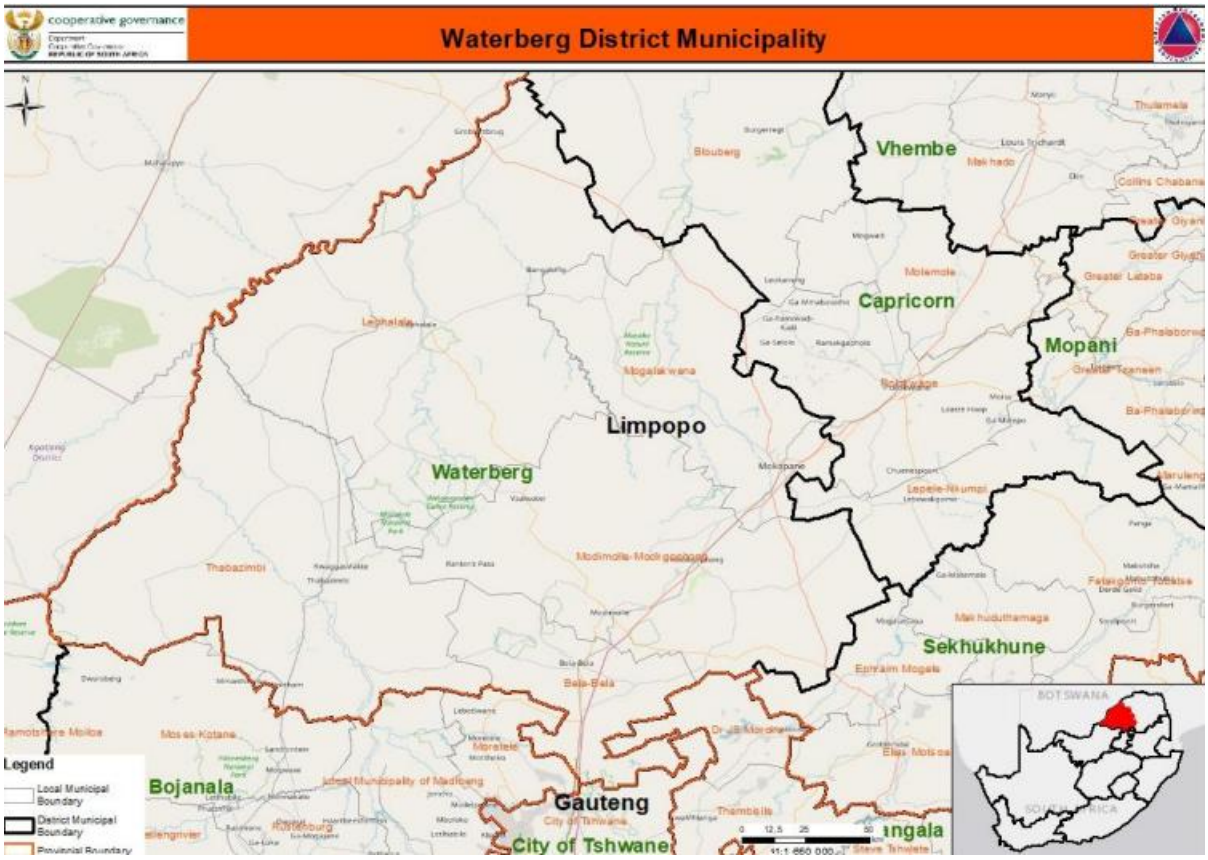


Figure 2.2: Location map for Waterberg District Municipality

Source: CoGTA (2020)

The Waterberg District DDM strategy specifies economic development targets for mining, agriculture, and tourism. It identifies mining as the largest economic engine (56% of GVA), followed by community services (12%) and trade (9%). Despite these priorities, agriculture and land reform, which are critical to the district's character, are not fully addressed. While the document mentions the land reform programme progress (e.g., settling 380 of 539 land claims), it lacks comprehensive plans for linking land reform projects to economic growth or addressing the issues posed by unresolved land claims.

- **Examination of the Waterberg DDM Strategy**

The DDM seeks to lessen reliance on mining, improve housing, energy, and water infrastructure, match skill development with local economic sectors, and promote tourism and historical preservation. In order to handle population expansion and resource limitations, its strategic plans involve significant infrastructure projects including the Medupi Power Plant, the Moloko water project, and housing

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developments. Additionally, while skills development programs aim to create artisans and professionals in the fields of agriculture, mining, and hospitality, tourism policies concentrate on enhancing wildlife reserves and growing ecotourism prospects. Nonetheless, there are a number of shortcomings in the DDM's coordination strategy for land reform. Although it emphasises the purchase of 176 farms and the resolution of land disputes, it is devoid of specific measures for assisting recipients in using the property in a productive manner. Additionally, it fails to provide methods for settling 159 outstanding land claims, lacks specific strategic support for small-scale farmers and growing agribusinesses, and fails to link existing land reform projects into larger economic objectives.

(II) Harry Gwala District DDM Policy Strategy review (CoGTA, 2020)

Harry Gwala District is in the southern region of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. It shares borders with the Eastern Cape Province to the south, Lesotho to the west, and other KwaZulu-Natal districts, such as uMgungundlovu to the north and Ugu to the east. The district is named after Harry Gwala, a notable anti-apartheid activist, and is recognised for its rural setting, complete with rolling hills, lush sceneries, and tiny settlements. The district's main towns include Ixopo, which acts as the administrative headquarters, as well as Kokstad, Umzimkhulu, and Bulwer. The area is strategically located along major transport routes that connect KwaZulu-Natal to the Eastern Cape and Lesotho, making it an important region for interprovincial trade and connection. It also includes a varied range of cultural and natural elements, such as agricultural operations and eco-tourism attractions.

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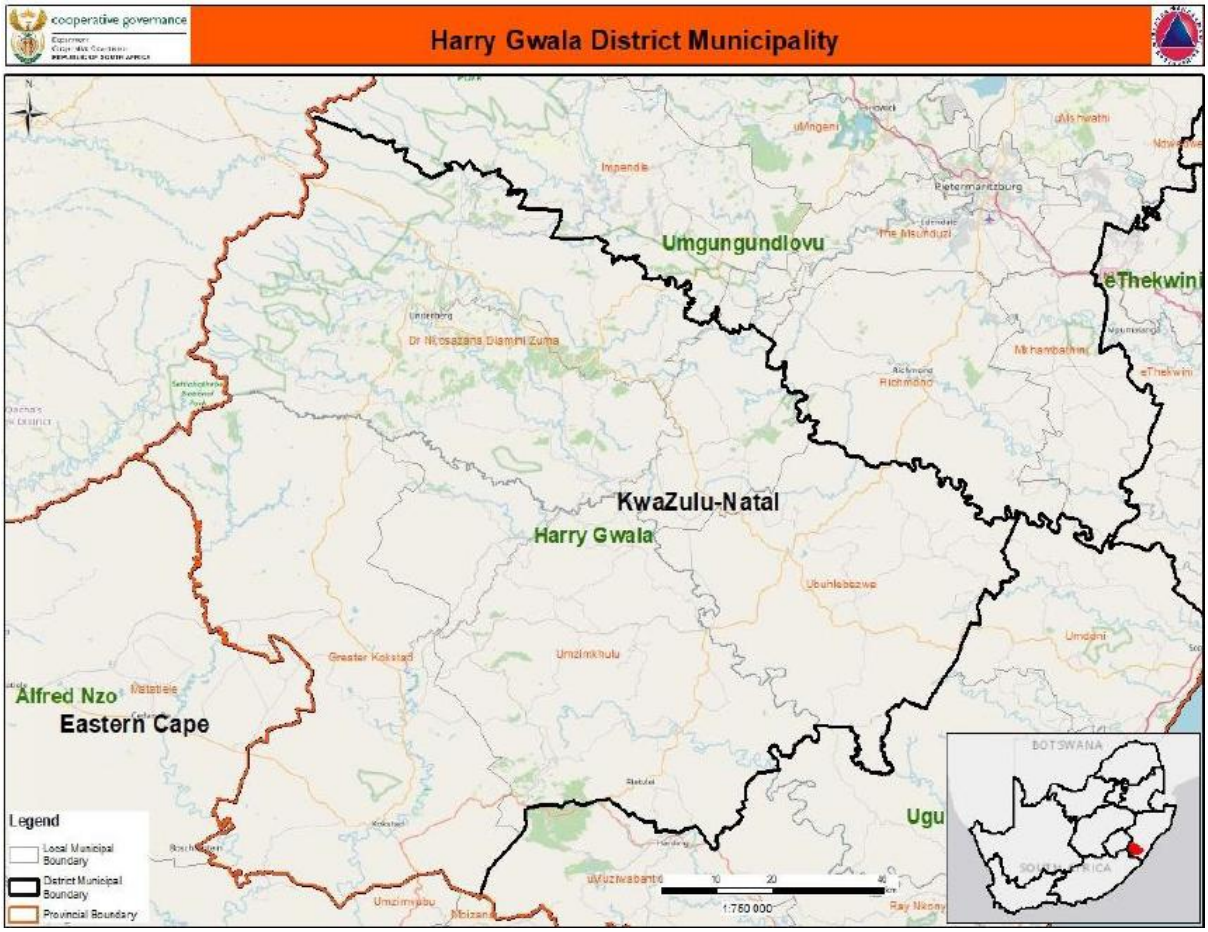


Figure 2.3: Harry Gwala District Municipality location map

Source: CoGTA (2020)

The Harry Gwala District Municipality's DDM Strategy paper offers valuable insights into the district's spatial, economic, and social development priorities. However, there are crucial concerns to examine, such as whether it successfully integrates land reform with local government duties and assigns clear roles to municipalities in supporting land reform efforts. The strategy acknowledges land reform, discussing tenure reform, redistribution, and reparation. It emphasizes the expansion of traditional regions into state and privately owned land and the need for local government involvement in land management. However, it lacks clear role of local government and their alignment with specific land reform objectives. Concerns include lack of skills among beneficiaries and underdevelopment in traditional authority areas. The municipality's responsibility is unclear, and integration with municipal planning tools is minimal, limiting local government effectiveness.

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2.6.11 Critique of literature on measures provided by the DDM to address inadequate institutional coordination against the challenges prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to the land reform project in local government.

2.6.11.1 Policy and legislative misalignment

By encouraging cooperative planning and execution, the DDM seeks to dismantle government silos. The core problem of legislative misalignment, which limits municipal participation in land reform, is not addressed, though. The Municipal Structures Act, the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA), and the Constitution do not give municipalities the power to enact tenure reform or land redistribution. Because of this, local governments are still constitutionally prohibited from actively participating in land reform initiatives. The question of whether the DDM can override current laws or whether municipalities will continue to lack the mandates and enforcement powers necessary to support land reform projects is brought up by this. The efficacy of the DDM in addressing land governance concerns is still unknown given the absence of a legislative framework that clearly delegated land reform duties to municipalities.

2.6.11.2 Institutional and capacity constraints

Building capacity is one of the DDM's main goals, and it is accomplished through intergovernmental cooperation and district hubs. However, a lack of qualified staff, poor training, and financial limitations within municipalities were major factors in the failure of previous land reform programs. While DDM programs place a strong emphasis on economic growth and infrastructure development, case studies from Waterberg and Harry Gwala show that they lack specific plans for enhancing municipal ability to support land reform. Municipalities will continue to be underfunded and unable to carry out successful land redistribution initiatives in the absence of committed financial support, transparent hiring procedures, and skills training. The DDM's ability to provide municipalities with direct funding and guarantee that they have the know-how required for land administration and governance will determine how well it addresses these institutional flaws.

2.6.11.3 Operational and administrative inefficiencies

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The DDM's implementation in Waterberg and Harry Gwala brings to light persistent issues with inadequate revenue collection and poor financial management, two issues that have historically impeded the provision of municipal services. The model makes the assumption that administrative efficiency will increase when planning initiatives are integrated across government domains. But it doesn't provide clear ways to deal with ingrained problems like financial mismanagement, bureaucratic inefficiency, and corruption. The Auditor General's reports have continuously highlighted irregular municipal spending and poor management, which begs the question of whether the DDM can set up efficient accountability systems to stop these mistakes. Furthermore, it's still unclear if national authorities will continue to oversee implementation or if municipalities will be given more decision-making authority in land reformed district hubs run the potential of adding still another layer of bureaucracy, making governance systems even more complex rather than simpler. If the model doesn't solve these persistent operational issues, municipalities might find it difficult to fulfil their reform pledges.

2.6.11.4 Stakeholder involvement and land reform integration

The DDM does not offer a clear structure for including traditional leaders, land beneficiaries, and the private sector in land reform activities, although acknowledging the significance of community involvement. The DDM in Harry Gwala makes mention to the cooperative farming and "One Household One Hectare" concepts; however it doesn't explain how towns would fund these initiatives, leaving roles unclear and execution inadequate. Game farming and ecotourism are given priority in Waterberg's approach, but small-scale land reform farming is ignored, so land redistribution is still not linked to economic opportunities.

2.6.12 Gaps on the literature on measures provided by the DDM to address inadequate institutional coordination against the challenges prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to the land reform project in local government.

The DDM for Waterberg and Harry Gwala in South Africa is a compilation of IDPs and existing municipal projects, rather than a transformative strategy for economic, social, and infrastructural development. The strategy lacks clear separation between land reform and agriculture, with no mechanisms in place to integrate beneficiaries into

agricultural markets, provide technical assistance, or establish value-chain participation. Local governments are not adequately integrated into the DDM strategy, which undermines economic development by failing to align land reform objectives with municipal services. The Waterberg case study overemphasizes game farming and eco-tourism, sidelining small-scale farming and food security initiatives essential for rural livelihoods. The Harry Gwala case study highlights the lack of stakeholder participation in land-related governance and ambiguous municipal responsibilities for securing land tenure, assisting land claimants, and monitoring land use. This calls into question the DDM's methodology: Does it give municipalities a well-organised framework to actively assist land reform recipients, or does it only recognise land reform without providing workable solutions? Is the Vhembe District DDM a genuine framework for intergovernmental cooperation or is it just a compilation of IDPs? In order to ascertain whether the issues noted in other DDMs—such as the lack of connection between land reform and agriculture, poor municipal coordination, and low stakeholder engagement—are regionally specific or systemic throughout South Africa, this question is crucial. By analysing the Vhembe District DDM's strategy, especially its ambitions for land reform in the Makhado area, Chapter 5 of this study will offer a thorough response to this query.

2.7 Recommendations for improving coordination of support for land reform programme at local level under the DDM strategy.

2.7.1 Strengthening intergovernmental relations structures

Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) institutions are critical to encouraging collaboration and guaranteeing synergy among national, provincial, and municipal governments. Reinforcing these frameworks can help to reduce the fragmentation that often occurs in planning and implementation procedures (Munzhedzi, 2020). This reinforcement should involve the establishment of well-defined and consistent IGR forums in which varied stakeholders, including traditional leaders, civil society organisations, and commercial sector representatives, can participate actively. Such inclusion guarantees that all perspectives are considered, resulting in more comprehensive and representative decision-making. To track progress and address issues quickly, stakeholders must hold regular, structured meetings with standardised agendas and clear reporting procedures (Munzhedzi, 2020). Furthermore, effective conflict

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resolution procedures, such as mediation or arbitration panels within IGR forums, can quickly resolve issues, keeping developmental priorities on track. Building mutual trust and cultivating a collaborative culture across all levels of government will considerably improve DDM implementation (Munzhedzi, 2020).

2.7.2 Capacity building and training for municipal officials

The DDM's effectiveness is primarily reliant on municipal authorities' ability to coordinate and successfully implement projects. However, a large skills gap undercuts these attempts (Mpehle, 2021).Tailored capacity-building programs are required to provide officials with skills in crucial areas such as project management, stakeholder involvement, and integrated planning. Training should also emphasise the value of flexible leadership, strategic thinking, and crisis management (Mpehle, 2021). Specialised training on the use of digital tools and platforms, such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and centralised dashboards are essential for increasing project monitoring efficiency and accountability. Furthermore, mentorship programs led by experienced practitioners can provide practical insights into good governance (Mpehle, 2021). Building capacity in this manner will guarantee that officials are adequately prepared to negotiate the intricacies of intergovernmental coordination under the DDM.

2.7.3 Institutionalizing clear roles and responsibilities

A lack of clarity in the functions and responsibilities of the three branches of government remains a recurrent challenge, resulting in inefficiencies and overlaps in service delivery (Koma, 2020). Scholars urge for a legislative framework that properly defines each sphere's obligations, ensuring that activities are assigned appropriately and carried out successfully. This framework should be supplemented with precise operational instructions and resource allocation models to facilitate role differentiation. Accountability mechanisms must also be built into this framework to hold each sphere accountable for its performance (Koma, 2020). Clear role definitions will reduce misunderstanding, eliminate redundancies, and improve the DDM's overall efficiency by encouraging better consistency in planning and execution.

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2.7.4 Adopting technology-driven solutions

Technology has the potential to significantly improve governance coordination and transparency. Scholars recommend using centralised digital platforms to design, monitor, and evaluate DDM programs (Peters, 2021). These systems should enable real-time data exchange and seamless communication among stakeholders, resulting in more informed decision-making (Peters, 2021). For example, a unified project management system can give stakeholders with up-to-date information on project status, timeframes, and resource utilisation. The use of GIS helps improve spatial planning and resource management by providing precise and actionable data on land use, infrastructure, and service delivery requirements. Furthermore, automation systems can improve administrative operations, decrease manual errors, and free up resources for more important tasks (Peters, 2021).

2.7.5 Enhancing stakeholder engagement

Effective stakeholder engagement is critical to the success of the DDM. However, excluding local communities and important stakeholders frequently leads to development programs that do not satisfy actual needs (Govender, 2020). Implementing engagement tools such as town hall meetings, participatory budgeting sessions, and community forums will guarantee that citizens have a say in planning decisions (Govender, 2020). Empowering communities through these channels not only builds trust, but also reinforces the legitimacy of government activities. Furthermore, regular feedback loops should be established to communicate progress and resolve stakeholder concerns, ensuring that initiatives stay on track with community goals (Govender, 2020).

2.7.6 Improving resource allocation

Disparities in resource distribution between municipalities worsen development inequities, especially in smaller or rural municipalities (Ngcobo, 2022). Scholars suggest creating equitable funding methods that take into account each municipality's specific requirements and capacities. Such models should ensure that resources are allocated in support of developmental agendas while also reducing service delivery gaps (Ngcobo, 2022). Public-private collaborations can help to diversify funding and improve financial sustainability (Ngcobo, 2022). Encouraging private sector

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involvement in infrastructure and service delivery projects can help to reduce financial restrictions while also stimulating local economic development.

2.7.7 Integrating land reform and spatial planning

The DDM's fragmented approach to land reform and spatial planning restricts its ability to address spatial inequality and promote equitable development (Mahlangu, 2021). Municipalities must incorporate land reform programs into their IDPs to ensure that they are consistent with overall development objectives. Collaborative planning including traditional authorities, land reform beneficiaries, and other stakeholders can improve land use management and solve concerns such as tenure security and land productivity (Mahlangu, 2021). This integration would also help to enhance infrastructure and services in areas undergoing land reform, resulting in more sustainable livelihoods and less poverty in rural communities (Mahlangu, 2021).

2.7.8 Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms

Robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks are required to assess the performance of the DDM and identify areas for improvement. Scholars emphasise the need of standardised indicators and benchmarks that are consistent with developmental goals (Madumo, 2020). These benchmarks should be examined and revised on a regular basis to account for shifting priorities and challenges. Independent audits and reviews should be done on a regular basis to maintain transparency and accountability (Madumo, 2020). A feedback process that incorporates lessons learnt into future planning promotes a culture of continual improvement and increases the DDM's impact.

2.8 Theoretical underpinnings

2.8.1 Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF) (DFID, 2000)

This study adopts the SLF as one of the guiding frameworks for the research. The SLF provides a comprehensive approach to understanding the various factors that influence livelihoods, particularly in the context of land reform projects. By utilizing this framework, the study examines how institutional coordination, resource allocation, and policy implementation impact the sustainability and effectiveness of land reform initiatives in Makhado Local Municipality. The SLF helps to analyse the challenges

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and opportunities within the land reform process, ensuring a holistic perspective that considers economic, social, and environmental dimensions.

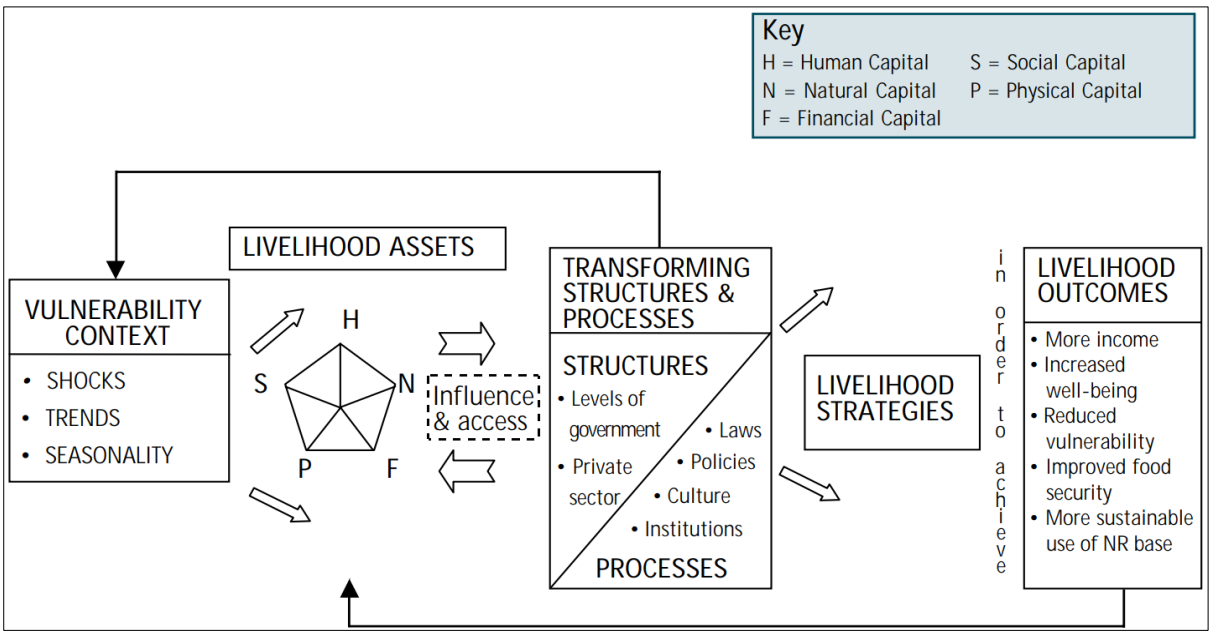


Figure 2.4: Diagrammatic expression of the SLF model

Source: DFID (2000)

The SLF is a conceptual tool for analysing and improving the livelihoods of underprivileged people by addressing the elements that influence their well-being. It was created by the Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Advisory Committee, based on prior research by the Institute of Development Studies, and modified by the Department for International Development (DFID) in 1999. The framework emphasises that for rural livelihoods to be sustainable, five key assets: human capital, social capital, natural capital, financial capital, and physical capital, must be supported by appropriate structures (such as government agencies, NGOs, and private entities) and processes (such as policies and regulations).According to Moser (1998), ensuring access to these supportive structures and processes is crucial for increasing individual and community resilience and lowering vulnerability to external shocks and environmental change.

Moser (1996) defines vulnerability as the unpredictability and instability that comes with maintaining a livelihood in the face of obstacles like economic swings or climate change. According to Ellis (2000), combining all five livelihood assets, along with proper institutional support and policy coordination, decreases vulnerability, improves

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food security, amplifies community voices, and supports sustainable natural resource use. The framework's graphic portrayal emphasises the necessity of good coordination at the local government level, where assistance policies come together to serve the linked needs of community members.

The framework's graphic portrayal emphasises the necessity of good coordination at the local government level, where assistance policies come together to serve the linked needs of community members. In this regard, the SLF particularly states that full engagement by local governments and other sectors of government is critical to the success and sustainability of land reform projects. Without the active participation and commitment of local government organisations, these projects will face considerable obstacles and remain vulnerable. Local governments provide as a vital link between national policy and community-level implementation, providing the infrastructure, resources, and facilitation required for these initiatives to succeed. Their responsibilities include mediating access to livelihood assets, encouraging participatory decision-making processes, and ensuring that community aspirations are aligned with the developmental objectives of the larger land reform initiative. As a result, any lack of involvement from local government would jeopardise the resilience and viability of land reform programmes, leaving communities more vulnerable to risks and uncertainties.

Table 2.2: Key elements of the SLF used in the study

Key elements of SLF	**Applications on research objectives**
Transforming structures and processes	Objective 1: to understand the current institutional framework
Influences and access	Objective 4: To recommend suggestions on how the DDM can address the challenges which are prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to land reform projects in Makhado local municipality

Source: Author (2025)

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The SLF was used as a tool to assess the effectiveness of the DDM on how it has influenced the institutional structures and policies around the human, social, natural, financial, and physical capital, to improve livelihoods, reduce vulnerability, and enhance resilience. The SLF suggests that local governments play a crucial role in facilitating access to livelihood assets, coordinating land use planning, providing infrastructure, and supporting agricultural productivity. However, evidence from case studies suggests that local governments are often sidelined, leading to fragmented implementation and limited impact. The SLF emphasizes the importance of policy coherence and institutional coordination, which aligns with the DDM's core objectives. If municipalities are not meaningfully included in decision-making, land reform projects remain vulnerable to policy misalignment, resource misallocation, and inefficiencies. The SLF can help assess the resources, mandates, and institutional support provided to local municipalities in land reform. The findings will inform recommendations for restructuring the DDM to enhance municipal participation, including strengthening intergovernmental relations, improving capacity-building, integrating land reform into local planning processes, and ensuring equitable resource distribution.

2.8.2 Collaborative planning (Healey, 2003)

Collaborative planning theory has been introduced into urban government philosophy to address the lack of coherence between initiatives by various sector departments and the communities they serve. To overcome this issue, every government ministry must produce strategic plans aligned with its spatial development objectives. Healey (1997) discovered fragmented coordination among sector departments and suggested that planning between ministries lacks flexibility. Drawing on Giddens (1984) and Habermas' (1984) communication theory, Healey recommends collaboration within sector departments to create platforms for discussing strategies, plans, and tasks. Strategies for effective collaboration include acknowledging stakeholder diversity, recognizing that significant governance efforts occur outside formal institutions, enabling informal initiatives, fostering inclusion of diverse groups, and maintaining openness and accountability.

Healey also offers tactics for involving communities, such as recognizing their rights and duties, viewing them as resourceful groups, valuing their experiences, knowledge, and talents, and turning their obstacles into possibilities. The communicative theory is

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critical when assessing solutions to ensure local municipalities are properly incorporated into the land reform plan, with clearly defined tasks mandated and funded by the National Treasury. It emphasizes shared information, mutual learning, and collaborative decision-making in establishing a coherent course of action, especially for local municipalities that must navigate complex institutional arrangements and policies. Practical measures for fostering collaboration and inclusiveness include recognizing stakeholder diversity and facilitating both official and informal governance initiatives.

A collaborative planning framework for community empowerment in urban government is depicted in the accompanying figure 2.3. It is based on Zanudin, Ngah, and Misnan's (2018) idea of collaboration. It emphasises a cooperative strategy that involves communities, government agencies, and stakeholders in the field of urban governance, where planning and policymaking are done. Decision-making is facilitated by participation and influence, which calls for responsive government, equitable access to rights, and inclusivity in the political process. Stakeholder involvement should be incorporated into decision-making to balance a range of interests and guarantee that community views are heard. Community empowerment is the ultimate aim, and it can be attained through information availability, active involvement, decision-makers' responsibility, and capacity building. Clear ground rules, adaptable and responsible procedures, well-represented material, and knowledgeable facilitators are all necessary for successful collaborative planning. Strong local governance capabilities, influence on decision-making, and good community impact are all signs of effective community empowerment. Patsy Healey's collaborative planning theory, which promotes communication, involvement, and shared governance to support sustainable urban development, is consistent with this approach.

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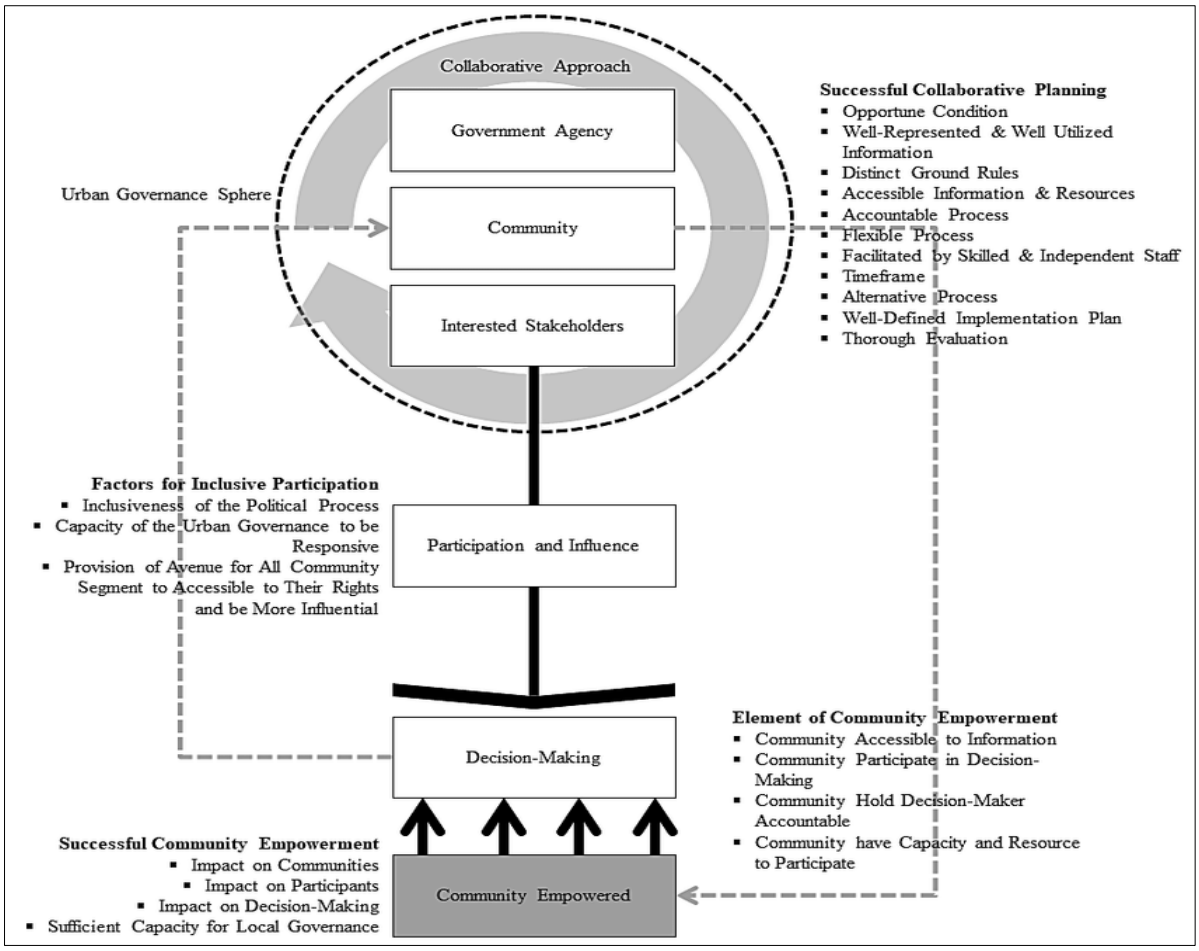


Figure 2.5: Collaboration Theory diagram

Source: Zanudin, Ngah and Misnan (2018)

Patsy Healey's Collaborative Planning Theory (2003) is a framework that emphasizes participatory governance, consensus-building, and the integration of multiple stakeholders in decision-making processes. It is particularly useful for evaluating the DDM in South Africa's governance and service delivery. The DDM aims to break down fragmented planning by fostering collaboration between government levels. The effectiveness of the DDM can be assessed by evaluating the integration of planning processes, the facilitation of joint decision-making, and the alignment of national and provincial policies with local government priorities. The DDM's success depends on the degree of municipal participation, the reflection of local knowledge and land reform beneficiaries needs in higher-level planning, and the transparency of engagement processes. It also requires policy coherence and resource coordination, as well as consensus-building and conflict resolution. The DDM's effectiveness depends on the presence of feedback mechanisms, the ability to adapt strategies to localized

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challenges, and the dynamic nature of intergovernmental collaboration. If these elements are effectively implemented, the DDM can serve as a transformative model for intergovernmental collaboration.

2.9 Chapter summary

The chapter examined South Africa's land reform programme in detail, identifying major issues that stem from historical, structural, and operational inefficiencies. It emphasises the critical but underutilised role of municipalities in integrating beneficiaries into local economy and overseeing spatial planning. Key barriers, such as poor international cooperation, low institutional capacity, and inadequate settlement support, greatly restrict these programme's transformative potential. The DDM is investigated as a potentially effective framework for addressing these systemic difficulties, providing a more collaborative and integrated approach. However, its emphasis on integration and political stability rather than addressing basic issues like as corruption and resource mismanagement limits its effectiveness. The chapter emphasises the importance of specific ideas for increasing the DDM's impact, such as improving intergovernmental ties, defining defined roles, implementing technology-driven solutions, and combining land reform with spatial planning. Effective monitoring and stakeholder involvement are seen as crucial to closing the gap between national policies and local implementation. While the DDM and comparable frameworks have great potential, its success is dependent on tackling structural inefficiencies, promoting diversity, and strengthening local governments. Through such focused actions, land reform can better achieve its goals of redressing historical injustices and supporting inclusive, long-term development in South Africa.

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CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The methodology of this study is structured to systematically address the research objectives outlined in Chapter One. It provides a clear procedure for data collection, analysis, and interpretation to ensure a comprehensive understanding of institutional coordination in land reform projects within Makhado Local Municipality. The study first seeks to outline and describe the existing institutional arrangements for supporting land reform initiatives by identifying key institutions, their roles, and their interactions within the land reform framework. Additionally, it aims to identify the challenges that hinder effective institutional coordination, including structural, policy-related, and operational barriers. Furthermore, the study evaluates the measures implemented by the DDM to address inadequate institutional coordination, particularly in relation to the identified challenges. This assessment helps determine the effectiveness of these interventions in improving coordination efforts. Lastly, the study provides recommendations on how the DDM can enhance institutional coordination by addressing the existing challenges, thereby strengthening collaborative efforts and improving the overall success of land reform initiatives. By adopting a systematic methodological approach, this study ensures that the research objectives are met through rigorous analysis, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of institutional support in land reform projects. The methodology, research design, and sampling techniques utilised for data collecting and analysis in this study are the main topics of this chapter. It describes the methodical strategy used to guarantee the quality and dependability of the study's conclusions. According to Creswell (2003), methodology is the process by which a researcher uses different tools, instruments, or approaches to gather, analyse, and interpret research data. To increase the study's credibility, this entails choosing reliable data sources, defending the methodology, and outlining how potential biases were reduced.

3.2 Research design approach

According to Kothari (2004), most researchers utilise one of two fundamental approaches to research design: the qualitative research design or the quantitative research design. To have a more thorough grasp of the study subject, researchers may also use a mixed-methods strategy, integrating qualitative and quantitative

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techniques. However, this study adopts a qualitative research design to broaden the understanding of the efficacy of the DDM in addressing the poor coordination of land reform in Makhado local Municipality. Rajasekar (2006) further elaborates that a qualitative research design is a subjective approach that is used when the researcher wants to describe lifetime experiences of the participants and offer them meanings.

3.2.1 Qualitative research design

A qualitative research design was used for this study because it allows for an in-depth exploration of the complexities surrounding institutional coordination in the implementation of the DDM for land reform projects in Makhado Local Municipality. Given the study's focus on understanding institutional arrangements, identifying challenges, and evaluating coordination measures, a qualitative approach is appropriate as it provides rich, detailed insights into the perceptions, experiences, and interactions of stakeholders involved in land reform. The study uses qualitative methods to collect non-numerical data through interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis to understand institutional coordination dynamics. It aims to assess the effectiveness of the DDM in addressing coordination challenges, gathering perspectives from key stakeholders like government officials, traditional leaders, and land reform beneficiaries. By employing a qualitative research design, the study ensures that the voices of stakeholders are considered, facilitating a more comprehensive evaluation of policy implementation and institutional coordination. The findings will provide valuable recommendations tailored to the specific challenges faced by Makhado Local Municipality, ultimately contributing to improved coordination and support for land reform projects.

Furthermore, the methodological strategies employed by researchers who have examined institutional barriers in land reform served as a guidance for the choice to conduct qualitative research in this study. Prior studies have shown that qualitative approaches are useful for examining the intricacies of land reform, especially when it comes to comprehending institutional frameworks, socioeconomic effects, and geographical dynamics (Greenberg, 2010: "Land Reform, Space, and Power in Makhado Municipality, Limpopo, South Africa"; Manenzhe, 2017: "Post-Settlement Challenges for Land Reform Beneficiaries: Three Case Studies from Limpopo Province" This study adopted a multiple case study design to investigate post-

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settlement experiences of land reform beneficiaries, including cases in Makhado"; Nthai, 2017: "Effectiveness of Land Redistribution Programme in Improving Livelihoods: A Case of Selected Farms in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province"; Matukane, 2021: "The Land Restitution Claim Model: Towards a Sustainable Socio-Economic Development Framework"). These studies all successfully employed qualitative research techniques to offer comprehensive insights into the difficulties facing Makhado Municipality's land reform. They were able to capture the intricacies of governance concerns, socioeconomic effects, and institutional frameworks through case studies, interviews, and participatory research. The design of this study was influenced by these methodological techniques, guaranteeing a thorough examination of the institutional difficulties in land reform. Without a doubt, this study will succeed in doing the same.

3.2.1.1 Case study research method

This study adopts a case study research method. Case study methodology is a qualitative research approach that involves an in-depth examination of a particular case or a small number of cases within their real-life context (Leonard, 2018). This approach is used to explore complex phenomena, often in their natural settings, providing a deep understanding of the subject. It typically uses multiple data sources such as interviews, observations, and documents to create a comprehensive picture of the case. The advantages of case study methodology include providing in-depth exploration, allowing for a better contextual understanding of real-life situations, and offering rich data from diverse sources (Stake, 1995). It is particularly useful for exploring new or under-researched topics and is flexible, allowing researchers to adjust their methods as new insights emerge.

This qualitative research method is used when the researcher wants to understand a particular subject in details within a bounded town, village, village, organization or a family (Stake, 1995) and (Leonard, 2018). The method is used in scenarios where the researcher is expected to select certain places and study their impacts on each other within a provide boundary to avoid being too generic (Leonard, 2018). In the end, case study research method is expected to provide the readers with information which is about certain location (Stake, 1995). The study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the DDM policy strategy in coordinating land reform initiatives at the local government

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level, focusing on Makhado Local Municipality. The DDM aims to improve collaboration and streamline development efforts across different government spheres, but its effectiveness at the municipal level remains unclear, especially in regions with significant land reform challenges. Makhado was chosen as a case study due to its numerous land reform projects, many of which have been identified as problematic in the municipality's IDP (Makhado local municipality, 2024). These projects often face challenges such as delays, lack of coordination, and inadequate engagement with local communities and stakeholders. The study aimed to evaluate the successes and shortcomings of the DDM and land reform efforts in Makhado, providing recommendations for improving coordination and effectiveness of land reform initiatives in other municipalities facing similar challenges. The findings are expected to contribute to a better understanding of the DDM's impact on local government coordination and provide insights into more effective land reform management and implementation in South Africa's complex socio-political landscape.

3.3 Sampling Research Design

Sampling research design is defined as a strategy that the researcher uses in order sample his or her study population from the general population of his or her study area (Polit and Hungler, 1995). In simple terms it is can be defined as procedure that the researcher adopts when selecting the research study participants.

(A) Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling is defined as a judgmental research sampling procedure where only people who are considered to be relevant for the problem which is under investigation by the researcher are invited to be part of the study (William, 2006). In this study the most relevant participants were the Municipal managers (MM) for Vhembe district municipality and Makhado local municipality and the Director General (DG) of the National Department of Agriculture. Based on a number of important factors, the Director-General and two Municipal Managers were carefully chosen. The highest ranked position in local government is that of the Municipal Manager, who has significant control over every department. The MM can order the heads of the relevant sub directorates to help with the research as the head of the municipality, guaranteeing the study gets the assistance it needs. The Municipal Manager was a logical point of contact for supporting the research because of this hierarchical structure, which allows

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them to efficiently manage and distribute resources. In a similar vein, the DG is the highest ranked official in the provincial government. To guarantee their collaboration with the research, the DG has the power to give directives to the leaders of the government's numerous sub directorates. This role is essential to guaranteeing that the required staff members are involved in the research.

The protocols and procedures that government institutions adhere to are the foundation of this approach's significance. Officials are typically prohibited from answering outside questions without first obtaining permission or direction from their superiors. Consistent, accurate, and compliant communication with the organization's policies was guaranteed by this approach. The procedure becomes more streamlined and efficient when officials receive orders from their seniors, which enables them to react to requests promptly. The Municipal Manager of Makhado Local Municipality and the Municipal Manager of Vhembe District Municipality received two letters requesting authorisation to undertake research from the researcher. The goal of the research endeavour was spelt out in detail in both letters. Since they are the leaders of their respective municipalities and are acquainted with all the sub directorates that report to them, as well as the proper staff for each area, the Municipal Managers were determined to be the most appropriate individuals to contact. Given their responsibilities, it was clear that both municipal managers would direct the researcher to the right people or divisions, instructing them to offer the support they required. The purpose of the supplied letters was to guarantee appropriate referral and collaboration throughout the study process (see to Annexure 1 for the submitted letter). A letter was also sent to the Director-General's office at the National Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, and Land Reform. It was expected that the Director-General, who is in charge of all departments and divisions within the provincial government, would direct the researcher to the appropriate staff members and provide them with instructions on how to help (see annexure 3).

(B) Snowball sampling

Snowball sampling is defined as a sampling procedure whereby the researchers begins by purposefully identifying research participants for his or her study then ask them to recommend other participants who might be key to the study (William, 2006). William (2006) further illustrates that snowball sampling is used when the researcher

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is trying to reach out to the group of people which is not easy to find. The DG and the two MM were specifically chosen since they were essential in connecting the researcher with the right people. As seen in the figure below, they made it easier to reach the appropriate staff members by using their authority.

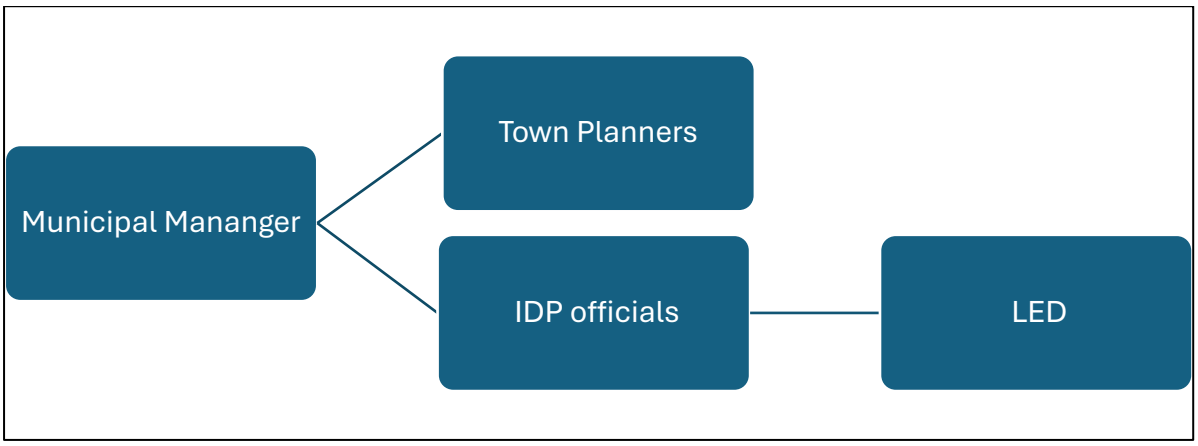


Figure 3.1: Snowball Diagram for Makhado local municipality

Source: Author (2025)

The snowball diagram shows the step-by-step procedure that led the researcher to the appropriate Makhado Municipality officials. The Office of the MM first provided input in the form of a formal letter. After that, the researcher met with the Municipal Manager, who helped with the referral process by pointing the researcher in the direction of the IDP Office and the Town Planning Office. Some important information required for the research was supplied by the IDP Office and the Town Planning Office. Further pertinent data was also found by the IDP Office, which then directed the researcher to the LED Office. The researcher received the final information needed at the LED Office, guaranteeing a thorough data gathering procedure in Makhado Municipality. Access to vital information was expedited by this organised referral procedure, which was made possible by the Municipal Manager's power and guaranteed that the relevant municipal departments supported the study.

The following map provides a detailed illustration of the location of the Makhado LED, Town Planning, and IDP offices, which played a pivotal role in the study primary data interviews. All three offices were identified through a snowballing process initiated by the MM, which proved beneficial in streamlining the selection of interview venues. Notably, these offices are conveniently located within the same premises, a factor that

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significantly contributed to the efficiency of the research process. Their close proximity minimized logistical challenges, reduced travel time between interviews, and allowed the researcher to conduct discussions seamlessly within a centralized location. This arrangement not only enhanced the accessibility of key informants but also ensured a smooth and time-efficient data collection process.

By offering a visual representation of these office locations, the map serves as a valuable reference tool for understanding the spatial distribution of the departments where the interviews took place. It helps stakeholders, researchers, and other interested parties to pinpoint the exact venues, ensuring clarity and ease of navigation. Furthermore, this visual aid reinforces the transparency of the research process, providing contextual insight into the setting in which data was gathered and analysed.

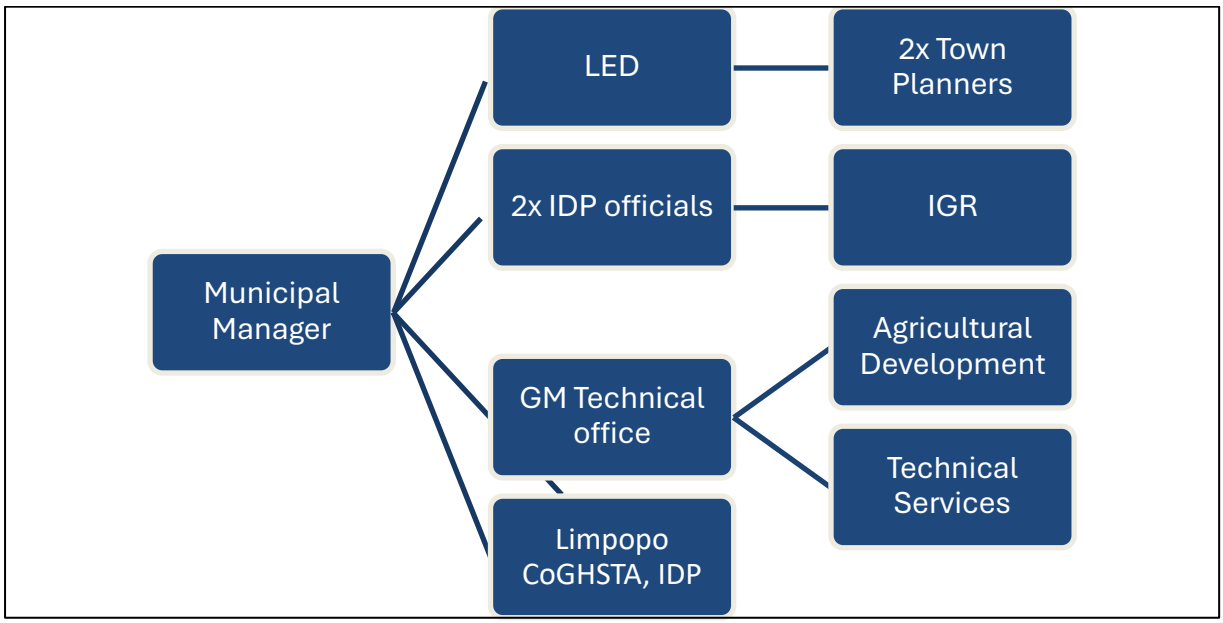


Figure 3.2: Snowball diagram for Vhembe district municipality

Source: Author (2025)

The Vhembe District Municipality's snowball diagram shows how the organised referral procedure made it easier to gather data for the study. An official letter granting permission to perform the study was issued (see annexure 2). In addition to granting authorisation, this letter contained recommendations for important municipal officials, including the Acting General Manager, IDP officials, and the LED Manager, along with their contact information. The office of the MM also referred the researcher to the Limpopo CoGHSTA, IDP section for DDM related first-hand information since the

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province is responsible for implementation and overseeing of the DDM within the district municipalities. The researcher contacted the three selected authorities and interviewed them after getting the letter. The referral procedure proceeded as each official pointed the researcher in the direction of other pertinent departments during these interviews. Some of the necessary data was supplied by the Town Planning office after the researcher was sent there by the LED Manager. Similarly, the researcher was sent by the IDP Office to the IGR office, where further data was acquired. Last but not least, the Technical Services Office supplied the additional data required for the study when the Acting General Manager sent the researcher there. This methodical referral procedure made that the researcher was directed to the best information sources, enabling thorough and effective data gathering in the Vhembe District Municipality.

The map provided below offers a detailed representation of the various office locations within the Vhembe District Municipality, where the researcher conducted interviews as part of the study. These offices play a crucial role in municipal governance and service delivery, covering a range of functions essential for the district's development. The specific offices included in the interviews are the Local LED office; the Town Planning; the IDP office; and IGR office, which facilitates collaboration between different government spheres and agencies. Furthermore, the Acting General Manager's office, Agricultural Development office, and Technical Services office were also part of the research, contributing insights into infrastructure and agricultural initiatives. In addition to these in-person interviews, the engagement with the official from the Limpopo CoGHSTA had to be conducted via a phone call. This arrangement was necessary due to the unavailability of the CoGHSTA official for a face-to-face meeting at the time of the research. Despite the remote nature of the conversation, the official provided valuable information that contributed to the study's findings. Moreover, the following picture visually captures an important moment from the discussion between the researcher and the Limpopo CoGHSTA official.

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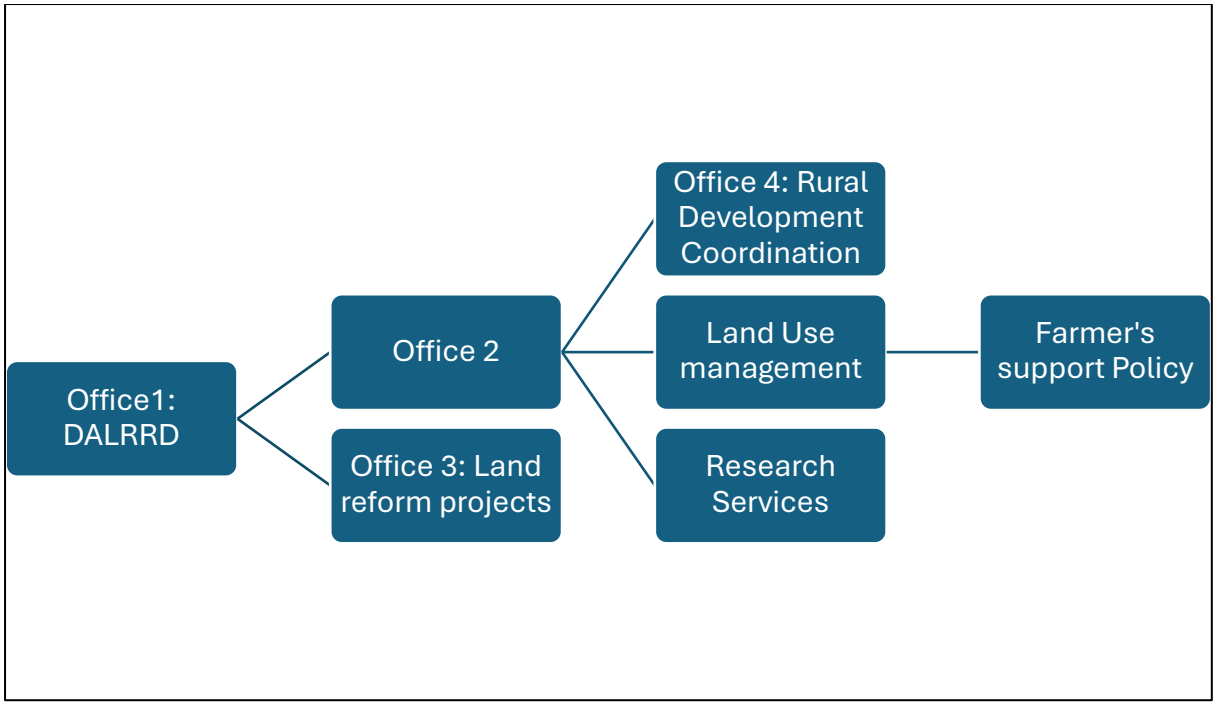


Figure 3.3: DALRRD snowball diagram

Source: Author (2025)

The DALRRD's snowball diagram shows how the research was made easier by an organised referral mechanism. The Office of the DG formally issued the letter granting authorisation to undertake the research. After receiving clearance, the researcher went to the DG's national office, where the Limpopo Provincial HOD and the official responsible for compilation of the database of land reform projects were referred. The researcher contacted the beneficiaries within Makhado local municipality using the details provided by the official responsible for database compilation and set up sessions to do focus group interviews at each agricultural project. The researcher was then led by the HOD to three important provincial department offices: the Research Services Office, the Land Use Management Office, and the Rural Development Coordination Office. The researcher received the data needed for the study from each of these offices. A thorough data collecting procedure inside the DALRRD was made possible by this hierarchical referral method, which guaranteed the researcher access to pertinent information from the right departmental units. Additionally, an official from the land use management unit gave the researcher the contact information of the official from policy section. This official's remote provision of more information was really helpful to the researcher. WhatsApp was used to facilitate communication, enabling prompt and effective data exchange, as seen in the image below. This

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engagement strategy significantly streamlined the data collecting process by guaranteeing that the researcher could obtain the required documentation and insights without needing to hold extra in-person encounters.

The map provided indicates the location of the Limpopo DALRRD, where the researcher conducted interviews. The interviews took place within the offices of the HOD, the Rural Development Coordination office, the Land Use Management office, the Research Services office, and the Farmer Support Policy office. All these offices are situated on the same premises, which facilitated seamless data collection. This centralized setup allowed the researcher to efficiently access key personnel and gather relevant information without logistical challenges. The study uses the DALRRD snowball diagram (figure 3.3) to identify three farms as land reform beneficiaries, guided by a referral network. The maps (figure 3.6, 37 and 3.9) visually represent the farms' locations and geographic distribution within the study area.

(C) Reconnaissance Survey

Reconnaissance survey is described as operations that are undertaken by the visual observation in order to gain the information about the resources and activities which might be useful from your study area at a later stage when collecting data (Oxford University Press, 2024). It is important for the researcher to conduct the reconnaissance survey before conducting the study in order to be familiar with the research participants and places which the research study is going to be undertaken at. The reconnaissance survey was conducted during the submission of letters which were drafted submitted to the office of the DALRRD, MM in Makhado local municipality and Vhembe District municipality in order to ask for permissions to collect data. The researcher created a good relationship with the DALRRD and the MMs of Vhembe district municipality and Makhado local municipality who later assisted him with the snowballing the relevant officials for required data.

3.4 Sampling unit of analysis

Sampling unit of analysis refers to the total population of the study are which was selected by the researcher. According to Makhado Local Municipality IDP Review (2018-2019), the population of Makhado Local Municipality is estimated to be about 502 397 (Census, 2022), however majority of the people from the overall sampling unit

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were not relevant for the research aim and objectives so the researcher only sampled the participants who were deemed compulsory for the research aim and objectives. The population group which was important for the study are the officials from Makhado Local Municipality and the officials from Vhembe District Municipality.

3.4.1 Determining the sample size

Sample size refers to the number of the participants or objects which were selected by the researcher to be part of the study (Polit and Hungler, 1995). Because the study had multiple participant groups with varying proportions, each serving distinct research aims, it was not possible to determine the sample unit using Raosoft or the usual rule of thumb (10% of population). In contrast to studies with a homogeneous population, this study needed a more customised selection strategy to guarantee sufficient representation of every participant group and to successfully capture the nuanced nature of their viewpoints. By examining other studies of a similar kind, the ideal sample size for this investigation was established. To determine the average sample size utilised by researchers that produced trustworthy and significant results, a comparison study was carried out. This strategy preserved the study's credibility and scientific rigour while guaranteeing that the sample size chosen was suitable for generating solid results. The studies had a minimum of 10 participants and a maximum of 31 participants, as the table below shows. This range suggests that the research employed mixed-method or concentrated qualitative methodologies, guaranteeing in-depth understanding of land reform concerns. Additionally, because these studies have been published in a number of scholarly publications and have been cited several times by other academics, they are seen to be trustworthy and legitimate. Their acknowledgement in academic literature demonstrates how they have contributed to the current discussion on land reform, the application of policies, and the difficulties facing South Africa after settlement.

Table 3.1: Previous studies' sample sizes comparison

Title	Author	Research Sample
An Evaluation of Post-Settlement Support to Beneficiaries of Land Reform: A Case Study of Mole-Mole Local Municipality in Limpopo Province	Anseeuw and Mathebula (2008)	15 participants

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Assessing the Impact of Land Restitution on Livelihoods: A Case Study of the Makuleke Community in Limpopo Province	Stickler (2012)	20 participants
Land Reform and Agricultural Development in South Africa	D. Bailley (undated)	15 participants
Challenges in Land Redistribution Policies: A Case Study in Free State	Mosela (2008)	10 participants
Evaluating Land Reform Success: The Case of Rural Farmers in Limpopo	Manenzhe, Zwane, and van Niekerk (2016)	31 participants
Post-Settlement Challenges in South African Land Reform Projects	Masemola (2021)	16 participants

Source: Author (2025)

Instead than emphasising the sheer volume of participants, all of the aforementioned research appear to place more emphasis on making sure that people with important, pertinent information are participating. This illustrates a typical methodology in qualitative research, particularly with regard to South Africa's land reform. A methodical technique was used to sample people who may offer insightful information in order to guarantee that all participants with pertinent data for the study are included. Because of their pertinent experience, expertise, or traits that support the study's goals, the following volunteers were chosen to participate in the research:

Table 3.2: Sample size

Institution	Directorate	Number of officials selected
Makhado Local Municipality	Town Planning	2
	IDP	2
	LED	2
Vhembe District Municipality	LED	1
	Acting General Manager	1
	IDP	2
	IGR	1
	Town Planning	2
	Agricultural Development	1
	Technical Services	1
Limpopo Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Reform	Rural Development Coordination	1
	Land Use Management	1
	Farmer's Support Policy	1
	Research Services	1
National Department of Cooperative Governance	Policy	1
Limpopo Department of Cooperative Governance,	IDP	1

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Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs		
Mulelu CPA	N/A	3
Muananzhele	N/A	7
Tshivhazwaulu	N/A	7
Total	**N/A**	**38**

Source: Author (2024)

With 38 participants chosen from different institutions and directorates, the study is more thorough and reliable. In addition to delegates from Mulelu CPA, Muananzhele, and Tshivhazwaulu, the selection includes officials from Makhado Local Municipality, Vhembe District Municipality, the Limpopo Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, and Land Reform. A well-rounded viewpoint on the topic being studied is ensured by this diversified representation. Two representatives were chosen from the Town Planning, IDP, and LED directorates of Makhado Local Municipality, respectively. Likewise, representatives from LED (1), the Acting General Manager (1), IDP (2), IGR (Intergovernmental Relations) (1), Town Planning (2), Agricultural Development (1), and Technical Services (1) were selected for the Vhembe District Municipality. The participation of important decision-makers and experts who have direct control over policy and execution is highlighted by this distribution.

Four officials from the Limpopo Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, and Land Reform participated, representing the following: (1) Research Services; (2) Land Use Management; (1) Farmer's Support Policy; and (1) Rural Development Coordination. These authorities guarantee that the research includes professional viewpoints in these areas by offering crucial insights into agriculture and rural development strategies. In addition, three local CPA representatives were present: Mulelu CPA provided three participants, Muananzhele provided seven, and Tshivhazwaulu provided seven. These individuals' involvement guarantees that grassroots experiences and community viewpoints are fairly reflected, giving the study more depth and real-world application. The fact that there were 38 participants in total exceeds the sample sizes of other research done in comparable settings, confirming the validity of the results. By guaranteeing a range of viewpoints and mitigating potential biases, a bigger sample size boosts the study's credibility. The broad selection of officials and representatives from many institutions enhances the research findings' overall validity and relevance.

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3.4 Data collection methods

This study used both primary and secondary data to provide a comprehensive analysis. Primary data, collected directly by the researcher, offers fresh insights and is specific to the study's objectives (Kothari, 2004). It allows for tailoring questions and methods to suit the study's needs, ensuring the information is relevant. Secondary data, on the other hand, is collected, analysed, and stored by other researchers, institutions, or organizations (Kothari, 2004). It is documented in reports, publications, databases, and archival records, making it accessible for scholars. Secondary data sources include government reports, academic articles, census data, books, and previous research studies. This combination of primary and secondary data enhances the study's credibility by ensuring the findings are original and grounded in established research. This comprehensive approach to research enhances the reliability and validity of the findings.

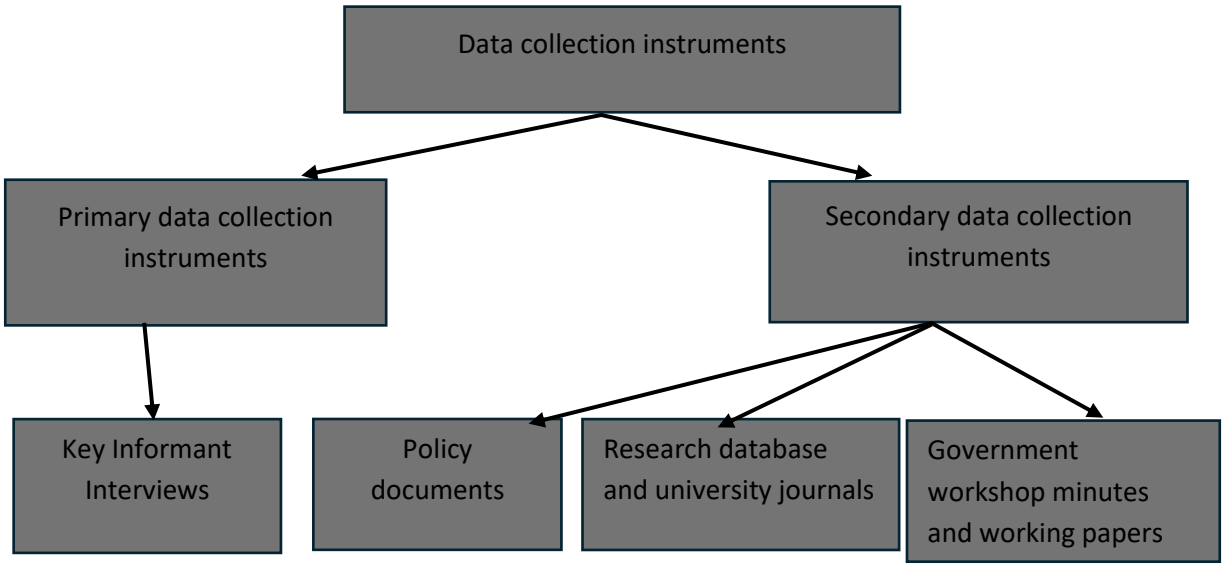


Figure 3.4: Data collection instruments

Source: Author (2025)

3.4.1 Collection of primary data

Primary data was collected from selected municipal officials through key informant interviews.

3.4.1.1 Key informant interviews (KIIs)

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CPA members and government officials (Kothari, 2004). This study has identified the following participants as its key informants:

(A) Makhado local municipality

In order to evaluate how well the DDM coordinated assistance for the land reform initiative, this municipality deployed representatives from three directorates. Two representatives from the Town Planning directorate took part in the study, which concentrated on land use management and spatial planning in relation to land reform. To investigate the integration of land reform measures into municipal development planning, two officials from the IDP directorate also collaborated. Two officials from the LED department were also chosen to investigate how economic development tactics may help land reform recipients.

(B) Vhembe district municipality

In order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how district-level coordination affects support for land reform, participants were chosen from a variety of directorates within this district municipality. One representative from the LED directorate submitted information about land reform-related economic potential for the entire area. One person spoke on behalf of the Acting General Manager, who provided a broad administrative viewpoint on how to coordinate municipal activities. Two representatives from the IDP directorate were chosen to evaluate how district-level planning complies with land reform regulations. Furthermore, the IGR directorate only had one official, which made sure that viewpoints on collaborative governance were included in the research. Two representatives from the Town Planning directorate participated, concentrating on land redistribution and spatial development frameworks. One representative was chosen from each of the directorates of Agricultural Development and Technical Services to discuss the technical assistance given to new farmers and recipients of land reform.

(C) Limpopo Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, and Land Reform

To investigate the role of the province government in promoting land reform through the DDM, representatives from four distinct directorates within this department were chosen. One representative from the Rural Development Coordination directorate participated, providing information on policies and tactics for rural development. There

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was also one delegate from the Land Use Management directorate, which dealt with the legal frameworks controlling the distribution and use of land. One official was also provided by the Farmer's Support Policy directorate to assess the efficacy of provincial agricultural assistance programs for recipients of land reform. One representative from the Research Services directorate was chosen to offer an analytical viewpoint on the results of land reform and the effectiveness of support systems.

(D) CPAs

To learn more about the experiences of land reform beneficiaries at the local level, three certified public accountants participated in the study. Three participants spoke on behalf of Mulelu CPA, stressing the difficulties and methods of community-led land management. With seven delegates, Muananzhele CPA offered a thorough analysis of community property systems, agricultural production, and local government frameworks. Seven participants were also provided by Tshivhazwaulu CPA, who shared their knowledge of infrastructure development, land tenure security, and government assistance program accessibility. The following Map indicates the location of the research participants.

3.4.2 Secondary Data Collection

The secondary data was collected through government policy documents, published research papers, published research journals, and government meeting minutes and working papers. The above secondary data sources were mainly used to investigate and elaborate the following:

(A) Government policy documents

To evaluate how well the District Development Model (DDM) coordinated support for the land reform program in Makhado Local Municipality, the researcher used a variety of government policy papers.

(I) Vhembe district DDM strategic document

The Vhembe DDM Strategic Document was reviewed in order to assess the tools and strategies the DDM has put in place to improve intergovernmental cooperation at the local government level.

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(II) Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) for Makhado and Vhembe Municipalities:

To find strategies pertaining to the land reform initiative in the research region, the IDPs were examined. In order to identify institutional inadequacies that can affect the efficacy of land reform programs, the researcher also evaluated the responsibilities, authorities, and functions of the two municipalities.

(III) Policy Documents for Land Reform:

To find gaps in these policies and their implications for the implementation of land reform, the researcher examined policy frameworks like the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Program (CASP), Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS), Settlement and Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG), and Recapitalisation and Development Program (RECAP).

(IV) Government Meeting Minutes:

To evaluate the difficulties the DDM encountered, especially those pertaining to international land reform and intergovernmental cooperation, minutes of pertinent government meetings were examined.

(B) Research database and university journals

The researcher looked through university research databases and scholarly publications to provide a solid theoretical and empirical basis for the investigation. These resources provide perspectives from earlier research on related subjects carried out outside the study area. Contextualising the results and making comparisons with land reform initiatives carried out in other geographic locations were made easier by the literature research.

3.5 Data presentation and analysis

The study has employed the following four procedures as outlined by Turkey (1977) in order to analyse, interpret and analyse its data:

(A) Coding based on the study objectives and thematic analysis

Following data collection, the results were methodically coded in accordance with the study's goals to guarantee insightful analysis and interpretation. Data organisation was

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the first step in the process, which involved transcribing and methodically organising the information gathered from several sources, including surveys, interviews, and documents. This stage made it easier to find important themes and patterns and helped match the data with the study's goals. Following organisation, a coding system based on the goals of the study was created. This framework ensured an organised approach to analysis by breaking down each aim into major themes and sub-themes that directed the data categorisation. After that, assigning codes required examining the data and marking pertinent sections with particular codes that matched the themes found. For example, tags like "Policy Gaps," "Regulatory Compliance," and "Institutional Challenges" were applied to pertinent data snippets if the research target was municipal policy alignment. Deeper thematic analysis was made possible by the way the data was arranged using these codes. The coding procedure made sure that the research findings were methodically categorised by adhering to this organised methodology, which made it simpler to understand the data and derive significant conclusions that supported the goals of the study.

(B) Interpretation of the thematic analysis generated

Following a comprehensive analysis and theme-based data classification, the next stage was to interpret the results and draw important conclusions about the goals of the research. In order to determine how well the DDM coordinated the land reform program in the Makhado Local Municipality, interpretation required a critical analysis of the patterns, connections, and trends that surfaced from the data. In order to determine if the DDM promoted better intergovernmental cooperation, resource distribution, and policy execution for land reform, the results had to be compared to previous research, government policy frameworks, and theoretical viewpoints. Interpretation also entailed determining the shortcomings, difficulties, and achievements of the existing coordinating systems.

(C) Data triangulation

The following two methods of data triangulation were employed in this study:

(I) Co-relating

Vhembe District and Makhado Local Municipal officials were presented with interrelated questions during their separate key informant interviews. The data which

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was gathered through interviews with the municipal officials was compared to note the similarities and differences between the responses provided by the two municipalities.

(II) Triangulation from different data sources

The data which was collected through primary instrument (key informant interviews) and the data which was collected through secondary instruments (published research papers, government policy documents, published research journals, government meetings minutes and working papers were compared in order to note the similarities and differences to provide in-depth analysis. The findings from the interviews were compared with the findings from the literature in order to presents the new developments from the ground which were not covered in the previous studies.

(D) Presentation of qualitative data through texts, tables, maps and pictures

Key findings under each theme were paraphrased and explained in paragraph format and also in verbatim quotes then linked with the existing published research papers, published journals, government policies, government's meeting minutes and theories. Microsoft excel word, diagrams, tables, and images were used to aid the findings which were presented by the study.

3.6 Encountered study limitations and reliability of data

Some of the sampled municipal officials were frequently busy with office work, site visits and meetings. In order to counter the above limitation, the researcher requested for a permission to interview the officials at their homes during weekends. The request to interview the officials at their respective homes was accepted, since the researcher was not regarded as an outsider since some of the officials live in the same neighbourhood as him. Gibson (2003), reasons that interviewees may be afraid to be fully open during research interviews due to the presence of their co-workers within the office. Being able to interview the officials at their respective homes safeguarded the interviewees with privacy from other co-workers. Gibson (2003), reasons that some of the sampled respondents may give same or withhold information if they are interviewed in presence of their colleagues. The data which was gathered from the sampled beneficiaries was triangulated to ensure validity.

3.7 Ethical Concerns

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3.7.1 Obtained permission to collect data

The researcher made sure that all required clearances were obtained from the appropriate authorities prior to starting data collecting. As important participants in the project, the towns of Makhado and Vhembe both legally granted permission. In order to guarantee adherence to academic research rules, the University of Venda Ethical Clearance Committee also requested and granted clearance. In order to preserve openness and compliance with institutional and local procedures, this step was essential. The researcher applied for ethical clearance and submitted a thorough study proposal to the appropriate authorities in accordance with the formal procedures for seeking approval. The data gathering procedure only started when official authorisation was obtained, guaranteeing that all research activities were carried out legally and ethically while adhering to institutional rules and local governance frameworks.

3.7.2 Obtained ethical clearance from the university

By receiving ethical approval from the University of Venda Ethical approval Committee, the study's ethical integrity was protected. A formal application outlining the study's goals, data gathering techniques, and ethical issues had to be submitted by the researcher. An ethical clearance certificate, which detailed all ethical guidelines to be followed during the study procedure, was granted upon approval. The municipal authorities and other participants were reassured by this paper that their participation in the study was only for scholarly objectives. Additionally, it affirmed that confidentiality and the highest ethical standards will always be upheld. The researcher's dedication to maintaining the highest ethical standards in accordance with academic research criteria was further strengthened by the ethical clearance procedure.

3.7.3 Informed consent

Each prospective participant received a participation information sheet from the researcher outlining the goals, purpose, and scope of the study in order to guarantee voluntary participation. There was enough time for participants to read the information and make up their minds about participating. No one was provided incentives, blackmailed, or forced to take part. Participants were given the freedom to choose the time and place of the interview that worked best for them if they were worried about

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their privacy. This latitude made it possible for anyone who favoured privacy to express their opinions without worrying about being scrutinised by coworkers, relatives, or other authorities. Prior to each interview, participants signed a permission form attesting to their desire to participate in the study, and their informed consent was acquired.

3.7.4 Use of Sub directorates instead of actual names

Actual names were not noted or included in the findings reporting in order to protect the participants' confidentiality and anonymity. To avoid direct identification, individuals were instead referred to using generic categories or sub-directorates. The purpose of this approach was to safeguard the identity of the study's stakeholders, including municipal authorities. Furthermore, when the research was finished, all raw data—including field notes and interview recordings—were safely preserved and eventually destroyed. By taking this action, the risk of data leaks and unauthorised use of private information was eliminated. Participants were emailed the completed study paper so they could check it and verify that their names had been protected prior to submission, further assuring them of their privacy.

3.7.5 Respect towards participants

According to the ethical guidelines presented in the Belmont Report (1974), the study was carried out with regard for humans in particular. Throughout the study, the researcher made sure that each participant received fair, professional, and dignified treatment. To promote candid and open replies, special attention was paid to establishing a welcoming and courteous atmosphere during interviews. The researcher avoided prejudice and pressure on participants by being impartial and nonjudgmental. By placing a high importance on respect, the research sought to promote cooperation and trust while making sure that participants felt heard and appreciated. Additionally, this method reduced the likelihood of disputes and miscommunications throughout the data gathering process.

3.8 Research Objective Achievement Matrix

The Research Objective Achievement Matrix is a tool for research planning and evaluation that assesses how well certain research activities contribute to meeting stated research objectives (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). It links the research objectives

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with the tasks, techniques, and outcomes to ensure that the study goals are addressed in a coherent and effective manner (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

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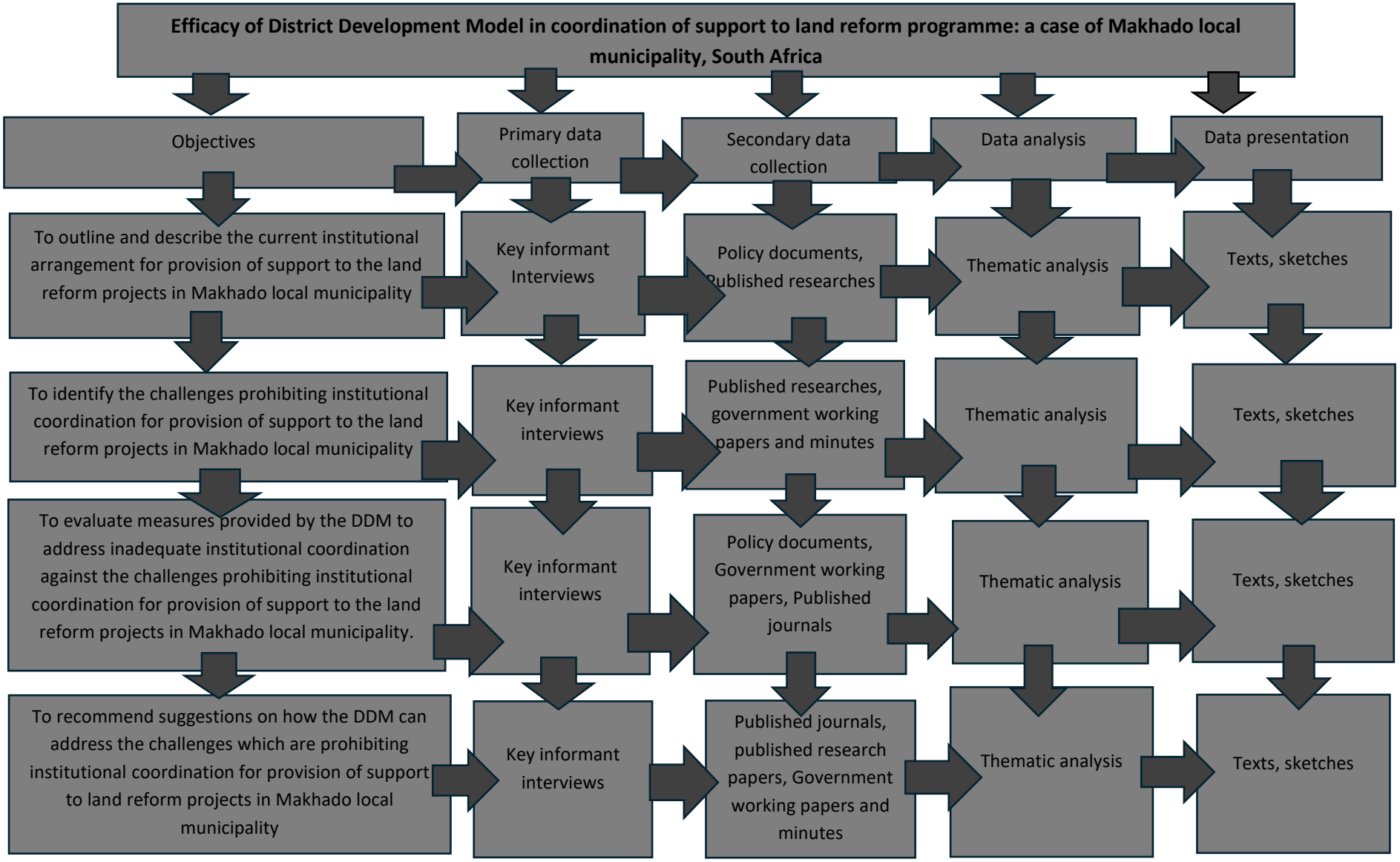


Figure 3.5: Research objective achievement matrix

Source : Author (2025)

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3.8.1 Objective 1: To outline and describe the current institutional arrangement for provision of support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality. This was accomplished through a combination of extensive literature review and exploratory qualitative interviews. By synthesising ideas from previous studies and collecting primary data, the study developed a thorough understanding of the problem's fundamental causes, as defined by Creswell & Creswell (2018), ensuring that theoretical viewpoints and real-world observations were consistent. The findings of this objective were presented through texts with the aid of diagrams.

3.8.2 Objective 2: To identify the challenges prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality. The study accomplished this by combining findings from previous research with emergent trends discovered during initial data collecting. This iterative procedure ensured that the framework was theoretically sound and practically applicable. Creswell and Creswell (2018) emphasise the relevance of theory as a lens for evaluating results, as seen in this stage. The analysis of this objective was presented through texts and diagrams.

3.8.3 Objective 3: To evaluate measures provided by the DDM to address inadequate institutional coordination against the challenges prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality. This was accomplished using a mixed-methods strategy that combined quantitative surveys and qualitative case studies. These methodologies gave a full picture of the data, allowing for triangulation and assuring that the conclusions were reliable and legitimate. Both primary and secondary data collection instruments were used to collect the data for this objective. The analysis of this objective was presented through texts and diagrams.

3.8.4 Objective 4: To recommend suggestions on how the DDM can address the challenges which are prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to land reform projects in Makhado local municipality. This was accomplished by combining findings from the empirical research with stakeholder feedback acquired during focus groups. This method guaranteed that the suggestions were not only evidence-based, but also targeted to the practical needs of the target audience, as indicated by Creswell and Creswell (2018). Both secondary data and secondary data

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instruments were employed to attain the data for this objective. The analysis of this objective was presented through texts and diagrams.

3.9 Chapter Summary

The research methodology used a qualitative design approach, with a focus on a case study method, to examine the DDM's effectiveness in coordinating land reform activities in Makhado Local Municipality. Sampling procedures such as purposive and snowball sampling allowed the participation of municipal officials with relevant experience, allowing for in-depth investigation of institutional coordination. Primary methods for data gathering were key informant interviews, which were supplemented by secondary sources such as government papers and scholarly research. To connect findings with research aims, analysis used thematic coding, triangulation, and theoretical frameworks. The chapter methodically defined strategies for assuring ethical integrity and data veracity, laying the groundwork for assessing the DDM's impact and making concrete recommendations for policy change. By carefully tying procedures to objectives, the study provided a thorough and reliable way to overcoming gaps in land reform coordination.

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CHAPTER 4: CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction and background

This section aims to highlight the linkages between the central topic of the study, which focuses on the efficacy of the District Development Model (DDM) in coordinating support for land reform projects in Makhado Local Municipality, and the local government powers and functions. These linkages are particularly relevant to Objective 2 of the study, which seeks to identify the challenges that hinder institutional coordination in providing support to these land reform projects. By examining the powers and functions of local government, this section will explore how institutional responsibilities and authority at the local level interact with the DDM's role in coordinating land reform efforts. It will analyse how these powers and functions either facilitate or hinder effective collaboration among various institutions involved in land reform, shedding light on the barriers that prevent seamless coordination. Understanding these connections is crucial for identifying the specific challenges that obstruct institutional cooperation and, ultimately, the successful implementation of land reform initiatives in Makhado Local Municipality.

Makhado Local Municipality, located in Louis Trichardt, Limpopo Province, South Africa, has a rich historical past that combines indigenous, colonial, and post-apartheid influences. The location is named after Chief Makhado, a 19th-century Venda leader known for his resistance to colonial invaders. Before European colonisation, the area was mostly populated by the Venda people, whose ancestors migrated from Central Africa during the Bantu expansions. The Venda developed themselves as expert farmers and craftsmen, with a unique cultural history that included spiritual activities, ironwork, and agriculture (Loubser, 1995). Their villages were built around sacred sites, and leadership was centralised under chiefs like Makhado, who played critical roles in maintaining social and political order. During the late nineteenth century, the region faced colonial expansion by the South African Republic (ZAR) and Boer settlers. Chief Makhado is widely recognised for his leadership during this period, when he successfully resisted colonial inroads into his area from 1864 until 1895. His fortress in the Soutpansberg Mountains became a symbol of resistance to the ZAR, gaining him the nickname "Lion of the North" (Van Warmelo, 1935).However, after Makhado's death, the Venda's resistance dwindled, eventually leading to surrender

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under colonial administration. Voortrekker leader Louis Trichardt built the town of Louis Trichardt, which is now the administrative centre of Makhado Municipality, in 1899.It was a strategic settlement for the Boers because of its lush territory and accessibility to trade routes leading to the Zimbabwean border (Makhado IDP, 2022).

Under apartheid, the region experienced substantial social and spatial segregation. Many black groups were forced to relocate to homelands or underdeveloped rural areas as a result of land expropriation legislation. These practices exacerbated poverty and inequality, particularly among the Venda people, whose traditional lands were confiscated for white commercial farming (Hall, 2009).The spatial development framework of the area followed apartheid design, with infrastructure and resources focused in urban areas mostly inhabited by white settlers (Makhado SDF, 2011).Makhado was founded as a local municipality in 1994 to remedy historical injustices and foster equal development. The municipality is part of the Vhembe District and plays an important role in linking land reform projects with local economic development. Despite constraints like as inadequate infrastructure and economic prospects, Makhado has made progress in enhancing service access and supporting inclusive development (Makhado IDP, 2022). Makhado remains a primarily rural municipality, with agriculture serving as its economic backbone. The DDM is intended to improve collaboration between national, provincial, and local administrations in order to address long-standing difficulties such as land reform and economic development. Chief Makhado's legacy continues to inspire community-driven initiatives and a spirit of resilience among Venda residents (Mabunda and Makhado, 2019).

4.2 Municipal powers and functions

4.2.1 Makhado municipality’s powers and functions

According to the provisions of Schedules 4 (B) and 5 (B) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996), Makhado Local Municipality is allocated certain powers and tasks. The following is a list of the Municipality's duties and authority:

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• Building regulations • Local tourism • Municipal planning • Municipal airports • Electricity and gas reticulation • Municipal public works	• Cemeteries, funeral parlours and crematoria • Storm water management systems in built-up areas • Trading regulations • Amusement facilities • Billboards and the display of advertisements in public places	• Cleansing • Fencing and fences • Local amenities • Licensing of dogs • Control of public nuisances • Facilities for the accommodation , care and burial of animals • Control of undertakings that sell liquor to the public • Licensing and control of undertakings that sell food to the public	• Traffic and parking • Refuse removal, refuse dumps and solid waste disposal • Street lighting • Municipal roads • Street trading • Public places • Noise pollution • Pounds • Local sport facilities • • Municipal parks and recreation • Municipal abattoirs • Markets

Table 4.1: Powers and functions of Makhado Local Municipality

Source: Makhado Local Municipality Integrated Development Plan (2022)

The above municipal powers and functions are funded by the National Treasury. Municipal budgets must be approved by National Treasury, which also makes sure they comply with national budgetary rules and regulations. As part of this process, revenue estimates, spending plans, and adherence to financial regulations are evaluated (Republic of South Africa, 2020). Municipalities receive financial aid from the National Treasury in the form of grants and allocations. The Municipal Finance Management Act of 2003 states that the purpose of these funds is to help municipalities satisfy their service delivery duties, improve their infrastructure, and deal with their financial difficulties (Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003). National Treasury oversees and controls local finances using a regulatory framework made available by the local Finance Management Act (MFMA). According to the Republic of

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South Africa (2003), this covers specifications for financial reporting, auditing, and intervention procedures in the event of financial hardship or mismanagement.

In the context of South African local government there are mandatory functions and non-mandatory functions. Mandatory functions, as used under the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) to manage municipalities in South Africa, relate to duties and vital services that municipalities are required by law to perform (Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003). These comprise necessities for public health and safety, such as waste management, energy, water, and sanitation (Republic of South Africa, 2003). On the other side, voluntary functions are services that the municipalities may decide to provide in addition to those that are required by law. In order to improve community well-being and local economic growth, they can include cultural facilities, leisure activities, and economic development projects (Municipal Systems Act, 2000). In the process of allocating funds and managing local finances, National Treasury makes a crucial difference between mandatory and voluntary responsibilities. Municipalities are expected to make use of the budget provided by the National Treasury to fund mandatory functions. Voluntary functions or non-mandatory functions can be funded through municipal revenue and taxes. All the powers and functions of Makhado Local Municipality stated in the IDP are shown in Table 1 above. The table presented makes it evident that land reform initiatives are not included in the Makhado local municipality's mandatory or non-mandatory duties. This runs counter to the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform's policy explaining the function of local government in the land reform programme as presented in chapter two. Since land reform programme is not included in the Makhado Local Municipality IDP (2020) list of mandatory and non-mandatory functions, the study has a legitimate basis for examining the municipality's involvement in land reform initiatives through the DDM strategy.

4.2.2 Vhembe District Municipality powers and functions

The powers and functions assigned to Vhembe district municipality are clearly shown in the table below. It enumerates all items covered in Schedules 4B and 5B of the Constitution as well as the division between local and district municipalities in compliance with sections 84 (1) and 2 of the Structures Act (Vhembe District Municipality Integrated Development Plan, 2020). The powers and functions listed in

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Schedules 4B and 5B are listed in the table's first column, and the distribution of that expertise between district and local municipalities is indicated in the second and third columns:

Constitution: Competency Schedule 4B	**The division in section 84(1) and (2) of the Municipal Structures Act**	
	District municipality –s 84(1)	**Local municipality – s 84(2)**
Child Care Facilities	No Powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Air Pollution	No Powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Child Care Facilities	No Powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Building regulations	No Powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Fire Fighting Services	Firefighting services serving the area of the district municipality as a whole, which includes – (i) planning, co-ordination and regulation of fire services (ii) specialised fire firefighting services such as mountain, veld and chemical fire services (iii) (co-ordination of the standardisation of infrastructure, vehicles, equipment and procedures training of fire officers	Remaining Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Electricity and Gas Reticulation	Bulk Supply of electricity, which includes for the purposes of such supply, the transmission, distribution, and where applicable the generation of electricity	Reticulation of Electricity
Municipal Airports	Municipal airports serving the area of the district municipality as a whole. Establishment, regulation, operation and control of airport facility that serves the area of the district municipality	Airports that serve only the local Municipality
Local Tourism	Promotion of local tourism for the area of the district municipality (Does not include regulation and control of tourism industry)	Remaining Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Municipal Health Services	Full powers	No powers
Municipal Planning	Integrated development planning for the district municipality as a whole, including a framework for integrated development plans	Integrated Planning for the Area of the Local Municipality

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	of all municipalities in the area of the district municipality	
Storm-water management systems	No powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Municipal Public Transport	Regulation of passenger transport services	Establishment, operation, management and control of a municipal public transport service over- or underground for the area of the local municipality subject to district municipality' s regulation.
Municipal Public Works	Municipal public works relating to any of the above functions or any other functions assigned to the district municipality	Municipal public works relating to any of the above functions or any other functions assigned to the district municipality
Water and Sanitations Services limited to potable water supply systems and domestic waste-water and sewage disposal systems	Potable Water Supply Systems, Domestic Waste-Water Disposal Systems	No powers
Trading Regulations	No powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Cemeteries, Funeral Parlours and Crematoria	The Establishment, Conduct and Control of Cemeteries and Crematoria serving the Area of a major proportion of municipalities in the district	Remaining Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Billboards and Display of Advertisements in Public Places	No powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Control of Public Nuisances	No powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Cleansing	No powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Traffic and Parking	No powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Facilities for the Accommodation, Care and Burial of Animals	No powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Control of Undertakings that Sells Liquor to the Public	No powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Licensing and Control of Undertakings that Sell Food to the Public	No powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Fencing and Fences	No powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction

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Refuse Removal, Refuse Dumps and Solid Waste Disposal	Solid waste disposal sites, insofar as it relates to – (i) the determination of a waste disposal strategy (ii) the regulation of waste disposal the establishment, operation and control of waste disposal sites, bulk waste transfer facilities and waste disposal facilities for more than one local municipality in the district (iii) the determination of a waste disposal strategy (iv) the regulation of waste disposal (v) the establishment, operation and control of waste disposal sites, bulk waste transfer facilities and waste disposal facilities for more than one local municipality in the district	Remaining powers in the area of jurisdiction, including the establishment, operation, management, control and regulation of refuse dumps and of solid waste disposal sites that serve the area.
Licensing of Dogs	No powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Markets	Establishment, operation, management, control and regulation of fresh produce markets serving the area of a major proportion of municipalities in the district Restricted to markets that sell fresh products, such as vegetables, flowers and meat and excluding car markets, utensils, souvenirs	Remaining Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Local Amenities	No powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Municipal Abattoirs	Establishment, operation, management, control and regulation of abattoirs...serving the area of a major proportion of municipalities in the district	Establishment, operation, management, control and regulation of abattoirs that serve the area of the local municipality only
Local Sport Facilities	No powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Municipal Roads	Municipal roads which form an integral part of a road transport system for the area of the district municipality as a whole The establishment, operation, management, control and regulation of roads that link local municipalities within the district, fall under the authority of the district municipality	The establishment, operation, management, control and regulation of roads that serve the area of the local municipality

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municipal Parks and Recreation	No powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Traffic and Parking	No powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Pounds	No powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Street Trading	No powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction
Street Lighting	No powers	Full Powers in the Area of Jurisdiction

Table 4.2: Powers and functions of Vhembe District Municipality

Source: Vhembe District Municipality IDP (2020)

The table above shows that, like Makhado Local Municipality, the district municipality has the authority to execute land reform. This means that the district municipality's budget from the National Treasury is expressly linked to its specified functions as outlined in legislation and policy framework. These budgets are not discretionary and must be aligned with the municipality's specific obligations, such as service delivery, infrastructure development, etc. If Vhembe District Municipality use of its own budget for duties outside its authority, such as land reform projects, would be considered unauthorised expenditure. Unauthorised expenditure happens when monies are spent on activities that do not fall within the municipality's approved scope of duty or budgeted plans. This is a severe governance concern since it violates the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) and reduces fiscal responsibility. This indicates a key deficiency in the DDM policy plan. The DDM seeks to integrate land reform into local government strategy and execution. By coordinating mandates, funding channels, and policy goals, the DDM hopes to ensure that land reform projects are successfully coordinated across all levels of government, eliminating unauthorised spending while supporting long-term land use planning and development. Bridging this gap will allow municipalities like Makhado to contribute substantially to land reform while remaining within their financial and operational constraints. This strategic alignment is critical for developing cohesive, effective governance and ensuring that land reform is included into local government planning, preventing fragmented or uncoordinated activities.

4.3 Vhembe District Municipality DDM strategy

The Vhembe District Municipality has adopted the DDM, which is a policy framework introduced by the South African government to improve service delivery through

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integrated and coordinated governance across all levels of government. This initiative aims to eradicate the segmented approach to development by promoting a uniform development plan, known as a "One Plan," for each district. This framework combines national, provincial, and municipal government initiatives to address local socioeconomic and service delivery issues.

4.3.1 Key features of Vhembe District Municipality's DDM

4.3.1.1 IDP

The VDM's implementation of the DDM focusses on the integration of development plans and budgets across all levels of government. The framework supports strategic alignment with Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) and Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs), providing consistent service delivery and resource allocation (Vhembe IDP, 2022).

4.3.1.2 LED

LED plans within the DDM framework aim to achieve long-term economic growth and employment creation. This involves using local resources and encouraging public-private partnerships to boost economic activity (Vhembe LED Plan, 2022).

4.3.1.3 Collaboration among Stakeholders

The DDM promotes collaboration among stakeholders, such as government agencies, traditional authority, and local communities. Such collaborations seek to improve accountability and efficiency in implementing development projects (CoGTA, 2020).

4.3.1.4 Single Joined-Up Plans

The "One Plan" brings together sectoral plans to address concerns including infrastructure development, land reform, and service delivery. This strategy aims to avoid duplication of effort and optimise resource utilisation (Vhembe IDP, 2022).

4.3.1.5 Addressing Historical Inequalities

By focusing on rural and marginalised populations, the DDM hopes to alleviate socioeconomic inequities rooted in historical injustices. In Vhembe, this involves increasing access to basic services and assisting land reform beneficiaries (Mabunda & Makhado, 2019).

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4.3.2 Challenges

Despite its potential, the DDM confronts numerous problems, including:

(A) There is limited capacity and resources in Vhembe District and Makhado Local Municipality (Vhembe District Municipality IDP, 2020).

(B) Bureaucratic inefficiencies impede implementation (CoGTA, 2020).

(C) The requirement for ongoing stakeholder involvement to maintain momentum (CoGTA, 2020).

4.3.3 Implications for the DDM policy strategy

The DDM emphasizes collaborative governance to enhance service delivery and resource allocation across all government spheres. However, the persistent challenges faced by Vhembe and Makhado municipalities hinder the realization of this vision. Addressing these issues requires a multi-faceted approach. Strengthening financial management is critical, with the introduction of stringent financial controls and accountability mechanisms to mitigate unauthorized and wasteful expenditures. Capacity-building initiatives are equally important, equipping municipal staff with the necessary skills to manage complex responsibilities such as land reform. Enhancing legislative compliance is another priority, necessitating the development of compliance monitoring frameworks to ensure adherence to the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) and other regulatory requirements. Furthermore, improving performance reporting is vital, with standardized mechanisms needed to align reported outcomes with actual performance, supported by verifiable evidence. Integrating land reform into local government planning will also require specific guidelines to ensure alignment with municipal mandates and budgets.

The AGSA findings for the 2022/2023 financial year underscore significant gaps in governance, financial management, and service delivery in both municipalities. These challenges, particularly in Makhado Municipality, present a significant stumbling block to fostering collaboration between the provincial government and local governments. For the DDM to bring about meaningful change in Makhado's land reform programme, it must prioritize addressing these systemic issues. Strengthening governance structures, improving financial accountability, and enhancing service delivery

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mechanisms are critical to building the trust and capacity needed for the provincial government to confidently transfer additional responsibilities, such as land reform, to local governments. Furthermore, the DDM must tackle issues like unauthorized expenditures, inefficient revenue collection, non-compliance with legislation, and inconsistencies in performance reporting, as these undermine the credibility and operational effectiveness of local governments. Failure to resolve these challenges will not only perpetuate inefficiencies but also impede the realization of integrated governance and sustainable development, hindering progress on critical programs like land reform. By aligning efforts to address these issues, the DDM can create a robust framework for collaboration, ensuring that local governments are equipped to fulfil their mandates effectively.

4.5 Interpretation of gaps from Vhembe DDM Strategy, Makhado local municipality IDP, and Vhembe district municipality IDP

In terms of administration and service delivery, the authorities and roles of Makhado Local Municipality and Vhembe District Municipality are complementary. Nonetheless, there is a notable disconnect between the region's land reform initiatives and the Vhembe District DDM Strategy. How municipal and provincial governments should work together to carry out land reform projects is not specifically outlined in the DDM. It also ignores the main obstacles that stand in the way of sector departments and the local government working together effectively. At the municipal level, these omissions make it more difficult to implement integrated and coordinated land reform initiatives. One significant flaw in the Vhembe DDM Strategy is that it fails to acknowledge that land reform is outside the purview of the respective IDPs of Makhado Local Municipality and Vhembe District Municipality. No procedures for adjusting or amending the legislation governing municipal powers and functions to support land reform are suggested in the DDM approach. Rather of developing a new strategy to tackle the financial and governance issues that impede coordination, the DDM primarily concentrates on compilation of IDPs. This restricted emphasis hinders local government's ability to actively participate in land redistribution and restitution initiatives and reduces its efficacy in promoting genuine land reform coordination.

4.6 Linking Findings to Patsy Healey’s Collaboration Theory (Healey, 1997)

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The Collaboration Theory highlights the necessity of inclusive and coordinated governance to promote successful policy implementation, is consistent with the deficiencies found in the DDM Strategy, Vhembe District Municipality IDP, and Makhado Local Municipality IDP. According to Healey (1997), effective cooperation necessitates a common goal, responsibilities that are well-defined, and robust institutional structures that facilitate interstate cooperation. The absence of coordination in land reform initiatives, however, in the Makhado and Vhembe cases exposes a serious flaw in the governance frameworks that ought to support cooperative decision-making. In addition, the theory emphasises how crucial it is to identify institutional constraints and modify policies appropriately in order to develop a governance model that takes into account the interests of many stakeholders. A lack of adaptive policy-making, which is necessary for successful intergovernmental cooperation, is seen in the DDM's inability to suggest changes to local authorities and functions. Through shared duties, legislative changes, and integrated planning procedures, the DDM would give local and provincial governments a systematic way to participate in land reform activities if it were in line with collaborative planning principles. The DDM must change from a passive IDP coordinating instrument to an active framework for intergovernmental collaboration that recognises municipal constraints and promotes legislative changes that allow municipalities to successfully assist land reform initiatives in order to close these gaps.

4.7 Chapter summary

With an emphasis on their governance systems, historical background, and function in land reform under the DDM, this chapter offered a contextual examination of the Makhado Local Municipality and Vhembe District Municipality. It traced Makhado's evolution from pre-colonial origins through apartheid to its current local administration framework, highlighting historical and socioeconomic trends. The chapter further described the duties and authority granted to both municipalities by the South African Constitution, stressing that land reform is outside the purview of their mission. This imbalance poses a significant governance difficulty since municipalities are expected to implement land reform even though they lack the necessary funding and legal framework. To determine how well the Vhembe DDM Strategy coordinated land reform efforts, it was examined. The misalignment between the DDM strategy and municipal

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IDPs has been noted as a significant issue. Instead of creating a novel strategy for land reform cooperation, the DDM mainly concentrates on integrating IDPs. Furthermore, the plan ignores important obstacles that stand in the way of productive cooperation between the provincial and municipal governments. Patsy Healey's Collaboration Theory, which emphasises the value of inclusive and coordinated governance, was connected to these governance inadequacies in this chapter. According to the findings, the DDM needs to evolve from an IDP coordination tool to a comprehensive intergovernmental framework that promotes financial alignment, policy changes, and capacity building to guarantee that municipal involvement in land reform is both lawful and successful.

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CHAPTER 5: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents research data on the efficacy of the District Development Model in coordinating land reform projects in Makhado, South Africa. The aim of the study is to examine the efficacy of the District Development Model in coordination of support to land reform projects in Makhado local municipality, South Africa. The analysis and interpretation follow several key objectives.

- Firstly, it aims to outline and describe the current institutional arrangement for providing support to land reform projects in Makhado Local Municipality.
- Secondly, it seeks to identify the challenges that hinder institutional coordination in delivering this support.
- Furthermore, the study evaluates the measures implemented by the District DDM to address the issue of inadequate institutional coordination in light of these challenges. The analysis of this objective is subdivided into two sections. The first part assesses the efficacy of the DDM's measures in comparison to the challenges that hinder collaboration among the three spheres of government. The second part examines the impact of the DDM's introduction at the ground level to determine whether any changes have occurred in land reform projects since its implementation. This dual approach ensures a comprehensive evaluation of the DDM's effectiveness in improving institutional coordination for land reform support in Makhado Local Municipality.
- Lastly, it provides recommendations on how the DDM can effectively address the barriers that prevent efficient institutional coordination in supporting land reform projects within Makhado Local Municipality.

5.2 Description of the research participants

The table below summarizes the research participants who contributed to the study.

Table 5.1: Research Participants

Institution	Directorate	Work Experience	pseudonym	Number of officials selected
	Town Planning	More than 15 years	MTP	2

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Makhado Local Municipality	IDP	More than 10	MIDP	2
	LED	More than 10 years	MLED	2
Vhembe District Municipality	LED	More than 10 years	VLED	1
	Manager	More than 20 years	VGM	1
	IDP	More than 10 years	VIDP	2
	IGR	More than 7 years	VIGR	1
	Town Planning	More than 10 years	VTP	2
	Agricultural Development	More than 7 years	VAD	1
	Technical Services	More than 25 years	VTS	1
Limpopo Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Reform	Rural Development Coordination	More than 5 years	LRDC	1
	Land Use Management	More than 6 years	LLUM	1
	Farmer's Support Policy	More than 20 years	LFSP	1
	Research Services	Not indicated	LRS	1
National Department Cooperative Governance and traditional Affaires	Policy	More than 7 years	NCoGTA	1
Limpopo Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs	IDP	More than 10 years	LCoGHSTA	1
Mulelu CPA	N/A	N/A	MCPA	3
Muananzhele CPA	N/A	N/A	2MCPA	7
Tshivhazwaulu CPA	N/A	N/A	TCPA	7
Total	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**38**

Source: Author (2025)

38 participants in all, selected from various spheres of government and CPAs, participated in the study. Two representatives from the Town Planning department with over 15 years of experience, two from IDP with over 10 years of experience, and two from Local Economic Development with over 10 years of experience were among the six officials that took part from Makhado Local Municipality. Nine officials participated from Vhembe District Municipality: one from LED with over ten years of experience, the Acting General Manager with over twenty years, two from IDP with over ten years, one from Intergovernmental Relations with over seven years, two from Town Planning

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with over ten years, one from Agricultural Development with over seven years, and one from Technical Services with over twenty-five years. Four officials were provided by the Limpopo Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, and Land Reform: one from the Rural Development Coordination department, who had over five years of experience; one from the Land Use Management department, who had over six years; one from the Farmer's Support Policy department, who had over twenty years; and one from Research Services, whose work experience was not specified.

Additionally, the Limpopo Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements, and Traditional Affairs contributed one official from Integrated Development Planning with over ten years of experience, and the National Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs contributed one official in the Policy division with over seven years of experience. Finally, 17 CPA beneficiaries were included in the study: three from Mulelu CPA, seven from Muananzhele CPA, and seven from Tshivhazwaulu CPA. All things considered, the participants cover a wide variety of positions, from economic development and strategic planning to technical services and policy creation, and most have more than five to twenty-five years of work experience. To ensure confidentiality, each participant group was anonymised using a distinct pseudonym.

5.2.1 Age range of the sampled land reform beneficiaries

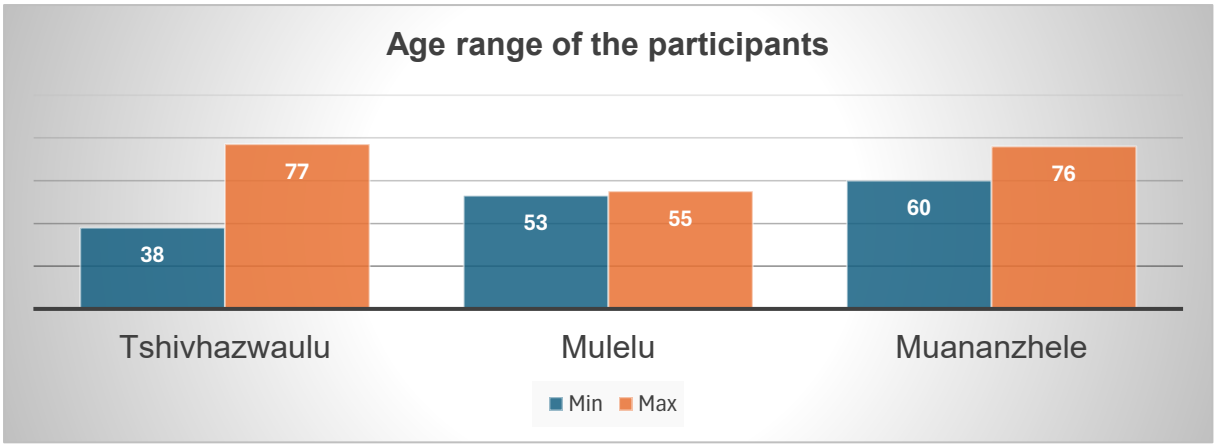


Figure 5.1: Age range of the sampled land reform beneficiaries

Source: Author (2025)

The three CPAs exhibit different demographic characteristics based on the age ranges of the land reform recipients in the sample. The age range of Tshivhazwaulu CPA is

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the widest, ranging from 38 to 77. This implies a rather heterogeneous mix of beneficiaries, including both younger middle-aged people and elderly ones. The range for Mulelu CPA is significantly smaller, ranging from 53 to 55, suggesting that the sampled recipients are mostly in their early to mid-50s. Participants in Muananzhele CPA range in age from 60 to 76, which is indicative of an older beneficiary population. Because younger members may bring new needs and views, while older members may draw from more extensive life and agricultural experience, these differences in age distribution might affect each CPA's opinions on land usage, decision-making, and development objectives. The SLF reveals demographic differences among CPAs in terms of their livelihood assets, vulnerability contexts, and potential development strategies. Tshivhazwaulu CPA has a broad age range, incorporating a mix of younger and middle-aged members with modern skills and a readiness to adopt innovative farming methods. This diversity can enrich decision-making but may also lead to conflicting views on priorities and risk management. Mulelu CPA's narrow age range suggests a relatively homogeneous group, with recipients sharing similar physical capacities, experiences, and attitudes towards innovation and risk. Muananzhele CPA, with its older population, may have substantial agricultural experience and traditional knowledge but may also entail limitations in physical labour capacity and adaptability to rapid technological or market changes.

5.2.2 Gender of the sampled land reform beneficiaries

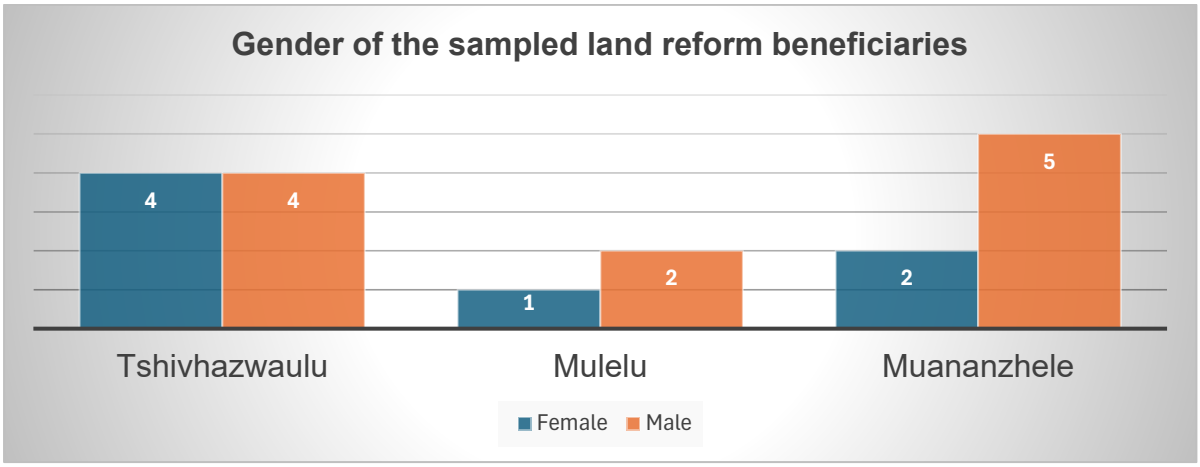


Figure 5.2: Gender of the sampled land reform beneficiaries

Source: Author (2025)

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The three CPAs have a total of 18 dependents, including 7 female beneficiaries (4 + 1 + 2) and 11 male beneficiaries (4 + 2 + 5). Mulelu and Muananzhele have a higher proportion of male participants than female participants, whilst Tshivhazwaulu has an equal gender split.

5.2 Data Presentations

The purpose of this section is to provide direct quotes that each relate to the study's goal. From the comments obtained from the focus interviews with government representatives and land reform beneficiaries, these quotes were chosen with the purposes of providing the readers with the tone of the participants during the interviews. Every citation offers personal knowledge, capturing the viewpoints and experiences of the respondents in connection to the objectives of the research. The study research questions were presented firstly and then followed by the respondents' direct quotes. Readers can use the pseudonyms or abbreviations included in Table 5.1 as a guide to determine which sector each respondent is affiliated with. These identifiers show whether the interviewers are from local government offices, sector departments, or CPAs. The study maintains anonymity while ensuring clarity by employing these pseudonyms or acronyms, which enables readers to comprehend the viewpoints of many parties engaged in the land reform process.

5.2.1 What are the current institutional arrangements for providing support to land reform projects in Makhado Local Municipality?

LRS: *"The institutional framework is structured in a way that ensures each level of government plays a distinct role. At the national level, we focus on setting policies, allocating resources, and ensuring accountability. The provincial government, in turn, takes these policies and translates them into practical programs, while Agricultural Extension Officers bridge the gap between policy and community implementation."*

LRDC and LFSP: *"Municipalities are not formally part of the land reform framework because their involvement would slow down project implementation. Many local governments lack the technical expertise, and their priorities do not always align with provincial strategies. If we were to involve them, we would face more delays, mismanagement, and unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles."*

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LLUM: *"While municipalities have local knowledge that could benefit land reform, the existing policy framework does not support their participation. This exclusion was intentional because, in the past, municipalities did not have the necessary capacity to contribute effectively. However, as their capacity improves, we need to reconsider this approach and explore ways to integrate them more strategically into land reform processes."*

LRS and LRDC: *"Municipalities are only involved in land reform matters when technical input is required, such as land use applications. Often, these engagements are uncoordinated and inconsistent, with decisions being made at the provincial level without municipal consultation. This lack of collaboration creates inefficiencies and missed opportunities for aligning land reform with local development goals."*

MIDP: *"The municipality has very little direct control over land, as most of it is owned by the national and provincial governments or traditional leaders. This limits our ability to influence land reform programmes in a meaningful way. Without land ownership, we cannot ensure that these initiatives align with our broader development strategies, which leads to fragmentation in governance."*

LFSP: *"Agricultural Extension Officers are the ones who bring land reform policies to life on the ground. We work closely with beneficiaries, offering technical support, training, and guidance to help them manage their land effectively. Without our involvement, many beneficiaries would struggle to navigate the complex policies and agricultural practices necessary for success."*

5.2.2 What challenges hinder effective institutional coordination in providing support to land reform projects in Makhado Local Municipality?

LRS: *"The policy was designed to allow flexibility in how land reform projects are coordinated. Instead of requiring municipalities to be involved at every stage, the framework enables them to step in when necessary. This approach helps prevent duplication of responsibilities, but it can also cause delays when urgent support is needed."*

LRS: *"One of the biggest issues we face in land reform is the lack of accountability within municipalities. There are no strong monitoring systems in place, which means*

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decision-making is often inconsistent and unreliable. Without proper oversight, corruption and inefficiencies continue to hinder the success of these projects."

LRS: *"Many municipalities simply do not have the technical skills required to implement land reform projects effectively. On top of that, political interference often disrupts project timelines, as decisions are influenced by personal or political agendas rather than technical priorities."*

MTP, MLED and MIDP: *"There is no clear legislative mandate that requires national and provincial departments to work with municipalities on land reform. As a result, we are often excluded from critical planning and implementation stages. This makes it difficult to integrate land reform projects into broader development plans like IDPs and LED strategies."*

MIDP and MLED: *"Municipalities are reluctant to engage in land reform projects because we have been penalised by the Auditor-General for exceeding our constitutional mandate. Even when a project aligns with local development goals, we hesitate to allocate resources because of the risk of audit penalties. This fear prevents us from fully participating in land reform and supporting the beneficiaries."*

VIDP and VTP: *"Many land reform projects take place on land owned by traditional leaders or the state, making it difficult for municipalities to support them. We also face serious budget constraints and receive little financial assistance from higher levels of government. Without funding, we cannot provide essential services to new land reform beneficiaries, making it hard for these projects to succeed."*

VIDP and MIDP*: "Provincial and national departments rarely consult municipalities before implementing land reform projects. We often find out about these projects after they have already started, leaving us with no opportunity to align them with our development plans. This lack of communication creates inefficiencies and prevents us from properly engaging with key stakeholders like traditional leaders."*

5.2.3 How effective are the measures provided by the District Development Model (DDM) in addressing the challenges that hinder institutional coordination for supporting land reform projects in Makhado Local Municipality?

LCoGHSTA: *"The idea of aligning IDPs with provincial priorities looks good on paper, but in reality, departments are not working together as they should. Each department*

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still operates in isolation, making it difficult to integrate efforts effectively. The biggest challenge is that CoGHSTA does not have the authority to enforce alignment, so every department continues to focus on its own mandate without considering the broader vision of institutional coordination."

LCoGHSTA: *"We can approve municipal IDPs, but we have no control over the financial resources needed to implement them. Municipalities make their own budgetary decisions, and often, they prioritize projects that do not align with provincial priorities. This weakens the effectiveness of the DDM because without financial oversight, even the best-aligned plans can remain unimplemented due to a lack of funding or delays in resource allocation."*

LCoGSTA: *"One of the biggest weaknesses in the current system is the lack of strong oversight in municipal financial management. Unlike the National Treasury, CoGHSTA does not have mechanisms to track spending effectively, which leaves room for inefficiencies and, in some cases, corruption. Without enforcement tools to hold municipalities accountable, we continue to see funds mismanaged, and projects, including those related to land reform, either delayed or completely abandoned."*

NCoGTA: *"The governance structure we have in place does not fully integrate local municipalities into land reform planning and decision-making. Instead of collaborating with those who have direct knowledge of local conditions, national and provincial departments tend to develop plans on their own, leading to inefficiencies and implementation challenges. If we truly want to achieve integrated governance, we need a framework that ensures municipalities are actively involved from the planning stage through to implementation."*

NCoGTA: *"The success of the DDM depends on voluntary collaboration, but the reality is that different departments have conflicting priorities and are not always willing to work together. Without enforceable accountability measures, many departments revert to their old ways, operating in silos instead of pursuing collective goals. This is particularly problematic for land reform initiatives, which require multiple departments to work together in a coordinated manner to ensure meaningful impact."*

LCoGHSTA: *"When the officials who originally designed and implemented the DDM left, they took a lot of critical institutional knowledge with them. Unfortunately, there was no structured process to transfer this knowledge to new staff, leaving us with gaps*

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in understanding and implementation. As a result, instead of innovating and improving the model, we are simply repackaging old processes, which limits the DDM's ability to drive real change in governance and service delivery."

MCPA: *"We have the land, we have the produce, but what we don't have is access to a stable market. No one from the government has linked us to buyers or assisted in finding distribution channels, and that is killing our project."*

MCPA: *"If we could just get support in accessing supermarkets or processing plants, our farms would be sustainable. Right now, we are stuck selling at informal markets with prices that don't even cover our costs."*

2MCPA: *"We are never informed about IDP and LED meetings, yet these are the platforms where decisions affecting us are made. How can land reform projects succeed if we are not part of the conversations?"*

2MCPA: *"It feels like land reform farmers are invisible. We only hear about decisions when they have already been made, and by then, it's too late to voice our concerns or request support."*

TCPA: *"The roads to our farms are in terrible condition. During the rainy season, we can't even transport our produce to the market because vehicles get stuck in the mud."*

TCPA: *"Without water and electricity, how can we farm effectively? We cannot irrigate our crops properly, and storing perishable products is impossible. We feel abandoned by the government."*

5.2.4 What recommendations can strengthen the DDM's capacity to overcome the challenges impeding institutional coordination for land reform project support in Makhado Local Municipality?

MTP and VTP: *"Embedding land reform into municipal plans is not just a suggestion; it is a necessity. Without clear integration into IDPs and LED strategies, land reform remains an isolated effort, disconnected from broader development goals. If we align land reform with local economic development, we can turn these projects into engines of growth rather than mere redistribution exercises."*

MTP: *"Municipalities are the closest government structures to communities, yet we are often sidelined in land reform processes. Our role should be legally defined to*

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avoid confusion and ensure we contribute meaningfully. If municipalities are given a clear mandate, we can provide better planning, support, and oversight to ensure that land reform delivers tangible benefits."

NCoGTA: *"One of the biggest challenges in land reform is the lack of coordination between different levels of government. We need structured engagements where municipalities, provinces, and national government sit together to align our efforts. Without this, we continue working in silos, which leads to inefficiencies, misaligned priorities, and missed opportunities for collaboration."*

LFSP and LRS: *"Municipal staff often struggle to implement land reform initiatives because they lack technical knowledge on land use planning, legal frameworks, and beneficiary support. Regular training programs would empower officials with the skills needed to manage land reform projects effectively. Without investment in capacity building, we are setting ourselves up for failure."*

NCoGTA: *"One of the biggest frustrations is the disconnect between financial planning and land reform priorities. Budget allocations often do not reflect the needs on the ground, leading to project delays and incomplete initiatives. We need joint budgeting sessions where all stakeholders align their financial plans to ensure land reform is adequately funded and implemented effectively."*

NCoGTA: *"Land reform cannot succeed when different government entities are working against each other instead of together. We need a clear coordination policy that mandates collaboration across all spheres of government. If municipalities, provincial departments, and national agencies do not share information and resources, land reform efforts will continue to be fragmented and ineffective."*

LRS: *"There must be clear accountability measures to track the progress of land reform projects. Regular reporting and transparent monitoring frameworks will help ensure that commitments are followed through. If municipalities and other stakeholders are not held accountable, land reform will remain a policy on paper rather than a reality for communities."*

LRS: *"Performance-based funding could be a game changer for land reform implementation. If funding is tied to measurable progress and effective use of resources, municipalities and departments will be more motivated to deliver results.*

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This approach ensures that resources are used efficiently and that successful initiatives receive the necessary support to scale up."

5.3 Research finding analysis

This section presents the study's analysis, which starts with a summary of the main themes that showed up during data collection. These themes offer an organised framework for comprehending the trends and revelations revealed in the study. After the themes have been presented, a thorough analysis will be carried out to examine their importance in light of the research objectives and body of current literature.

5.3.1 To outline and describe the current institutional arrangement for provision of support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality.

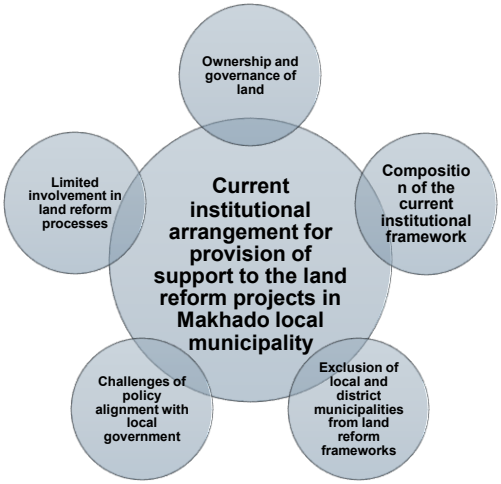


Figure 5.3: Generated themes for objective 1

Source: Author (2025)

- **Composition of the current institutional framework**

The research findings unveiled a structured and hierarchical institutional framework that governs the delivery of support for land reform projects. This framework involves three primary stakeholders: the National Government, Provincial Government, and Agricultural Extension Officers. Each plays a unique and complementary role in ensuring the successful planning, coordination, and implementation of land reform initiatives. The collaboration between these entities is seen as fundamental to the functionality of the institutional framework, with clear delineations of responsibility. An

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official from the National Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development elaborated on the National Government's role, emphasizing its position as the central authority responsible for setting strategic priorities, designing policies, allocating funding, and providing oversight.

Interview quotes from the LRS: *"The institutional framework is structured in a way that ensures each level of government plays a distinct role. At the national level, we focus on setting policies, allocating resources, and ensuring accountability. The provincial government, in turn, takes these policies and translates them into practical programs, while Agricultural Extension Officers bridge the gap between policy and community implementation."*

The National Government ensures that land reform programs align with broader national development goals, serving as the cornerstone for policy coherence across various spheres of government. Furthermore, the National Government plays a monitoring role to ensure compliance and accountability among lower-level institutions. At the provincial level, the Provincial Government is tasked with operationalizing these national policies into context-specific programs that address the unique challenges and opportunities within their jurisdictions. According to an official from the Provincial Department, their duties extend beyond mere implementation to include project monitoring, performance evaluations, and troubleshooting issues that arise during project execution. The Provincial Government acts as a pivotal intermediary, translating the high-level strategic vision of the National Government into tangible outcomes at the ground level.

Agricultural Extension Officers were identified as indispensable operational stakeholders within the framework. These officers act as the primary point of contact between the institutional system and land reform beneficiaries, providing critical technical advice, capacity-building support, and mentorship to communities involved in land reform projects. Their responsibilities include disseminating policy information, offering practical guidance on agricultural and infrastructural development, and addressing beneficiaries-specific challenges. One official highlighted the transformative role of these officers, describing them as the "connective tissue" that ensures policies are not only implemented but also adapted to meet the nuanced needs of beneficiaries. By bridging the gap between policy intent and community

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action, Agricultural Extension Officers play a central role in the success of grassroots-level projects. The integration of these three stakeholders creates a structured framework aimed at maximizing efficiency, accountability, and impact in land reform projects. However, as subsequent sub-themes reveal, this framework's effectiveness is limited by its exclusion of certain key actors, such as municipalities, and the inherent challenges of intergovernmental coordination.

- **Exclusion of local and district municipalities from land reform frameworks**

A recurring theme from the interviews was the deliberate exclusion of municipalities from the institutional framework supporting land reform projects. An official from the Provincial Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development expressed the view that municipalities are unnecessary participants in the land reform process. The official argued that the Provincial Government possesses adequate capacity, technical expertise, and financial resources to plan and implement projects without the involvement of local municipalities. This official further elaborated on the risks associated with including municipalities, noting that many local governments lack the necessary skills, institutional knowledge, and infrastructure to contribute meaningfully to land reform efforts. They described municipalities as potential bottlenecks that could hinder the efficient delivery of projects due to their limited capacity, fragmented priorities, and bureaucratic inefficiencies.

Interview quotes from LRDC and LFSP: *"Municipalities are not formally part of the land reform framework because their involvement would slow down project implementation. Many local governments lack the technical expertise, and their priorities do not always align with provincial strategies. If we were to involve them, we would face more delays, mismanagement, and unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles."*

Additionally, the official highlighted instances where misalignment between municipal agendas and provincial strategies created friction, further justifying their exclusion from the current framework. This perspective reflects a pragmatic stance among some stakeholders, who believe that the complexity of land reform projects necessitates streamlined coordination between the National and Provincial Governments, without the added layer of municipal involvement. However, this approach also raises

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concerns about missed opportunities for leveraging local knowledge and fostering inclusive governance.

Officials from both Makhado Local Municipality and Vhembe District Municipality confirmed their exclusion from the institutional framework governing land reform programmes within Makhado Local Municipality. Despite their proximity to communities and their administrative role, these municipalities are not included in the strategic planning or execution of land reform initiatives.

Interview quotes from the MIDP: *"The municipality has very little direct control over land, as most of it is owned by the national and provincial governments or traditional leaders. This limits our ability to influence land reform programmes in a meaningful way. Without land ownership, we cannot ensure that these initiatives align with our broader development strategies, which leads to fragmentation in governance."*

The lack of a formal role means that these municipalities are unable to actively participate in the coordination or implementation of programmes that could directly impact local development and service delivery. This exclusion is largely due to the perception that land reform falls outside the scope of municipal responsibilities. This is further evidenced by the absence of land reform considerations in key municipal strategic documents, such as IDPs, which set priorities and allocate resources, LED strategies, which focus on promoting local economic growth, and SDFs, which are critical for guiding spatial organization and land use planning. Without integration into these frameworks, land reform efforts remain disconnected from broader municipal development plans. Consequently, municipalities are unable to leverage their local knowledge and resources to influence or support land reform effectively, leading to missed opportunities for alignment and coordination with local needs.

- **Challenges of policy alignment with local government**

While some officials advocated for the exclusion of municipalities, others highlighted the challenges and opportunities associated with their involvement. An official from the National Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development emphasized the potential benefits of integrating municipalities into the institutional framework. They argued that municipalities, as the closest sphere of government to communities, possess an intimate understanding of local contexts, needs, and challenges, which could significantly enhance the effectiveness of land reform

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initiatives. However, the official acknowledged that the current policy framework does not support meaningful collaboration with local governments. This policy was developed during a period when most municipalities lacked the capacity, technical expertise, and institutional knowledge to engage effectively in land reform projects. Consequently, municipalities were largely excluded from the institutional framework, and this exclusion has persisted despite improvements in municipal capacity in recent years.

The official further explained that revising the policy framework to include municipalities would be a complex undertaking. Such a revision would require significant investment in capacity-building programs, institutional restructuring, and the development of mechanisms to align municipal activities with provincial and national strategies. Additionally, it would necessitate extensive consultation processes and coordination across multiple levels of government, which could be time-consuming and resource-intensive. Despite these challenges, the official stressed the importance of overcoming policy inertia and re-evaluating the role of municipalities in land reform programs. They argued that the inclusion of municipalities could foster greater accountability, ensure that local priorities are reflected in project planning, and enhance the overall sustainability of land reform initiatives. However, the official cautioned that achieving this vision would require a long-term commitment and a strategic approach to policy adaptation. This highlights the inherent tension between the desire for greater local government involvement and the practical challenges of integrating municipalities into a well-established institutional framework. It underscores the need for a balanced approach that considers both the benefits and limitations of municipal participation in land reform projects.

- **Limited involvement in land reform processes**

The involvement of municipal officials in land reform processes is described as being inconsistent and largely reactionary. Rather than being systematically included in the planning and implementation stages, municipal participation is limited to ad hoc engagements. These engagements typically occur when the Provincial Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development appoints external consultants to handle specific technical tasks. Common tasks include land use management applications, such as subdivision and consolidation of land, which require municipal input but are not consistently coordinated with local authorities. Officials also raised

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concerns about the unilateral decisions made by the provincial department in relation to land use changes. In many cases, the department exercises its authority to grant itself consent for land subdivisions, bypassing the need for consultation or approval from the municipality. This is particularly problematic when dealing with land under the ownership of the national or provincial government, as these decisions are made without considering the potential implications for local planning and development. This lack of consultation undermines the governance processes of local municipalities and creates a disconnect between land reform activities and municipal responsibilities. It also contributes to inefficiencies and missed opportunities for collaboration that could enhance the impact and sustainability of land reform initiatives.

- **Ownership and governance of land**

A significant barrier to municipal involvement in land reform is the ownership and governance structure of land within Makhado Local Municipality. Both local and district officials pointed out that the majority of land within the municipality is owned by the national government, provincial government, and traditional leaders, leaving the municipality with minimal land under its direct control. This limited land ownership restricts the municipality's ability to engage meaningfully in land reform programmes or influence land use decisions. The primary responsibility for land reform planning and implementation, therefore, rests with higher levels of government and traditional authorities. While municipalities may wish to ensure that land reform initiatives align with local development goals, their lack of ownership and governance authority prevents them from taking a proactive role. This disconnection hinders coordination and results in fragmented efforts, where the objectives of land reform may not align with the broader spatial, social, and economic planning goals of the municipality. Furthermore, the reliance on traditional leaders and higher government bodies for decision-making further complicates governance processes, often leading to delays and inconsistencies in land reform implementation. This fragmented approach highlights the need for greater collaboration and integration between the different levels of government and traditional leadership to ensure that land reform efforts are not only effective but also aligned with the needs and priorities of local communities.

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5.3.2 Objective 2: To identify the challenges prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality



Figure 5.4: Generated themes for Objective 2

Source: Author (2025)

- **Policy design and its role in institutional coordination**

The officials emphasized the intentional design of the policy framework that guides institutional coordination for land reform projects. They explained that the policy is structured to engage local governments on an as-needed basis, rather than requiring constant involvement.

Interview quote from the LRS: *"The policy was designed to allow flexibility in how land reform projects are coordinated. Instead of requiring municipalities to be involved at every stage, the framework enables them to step in when necessary. This approach helps prevent duplication of responsibilities, but it can also cause delays when urgent support is needed."*

The officials elaborated that the policy framework positions local municipalities as partners rather than primary coordinators. This arrangement allows national and provincial departments to focus on providing technical support and oversight, while municipalities concentrate on executing their operational mandates. By delineating these roles, the policy fosters a collaborative environment that avoids inefficiencies and overlaps. However, the reactive nature of the policy has some limitations. A few

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officials acknowledged that the flexibility, while beneficial in certain contexts, can result in delayed responses when local governments urgently require support. Despite these drawbacks, most officials agreed that the framework is functional and does not pose a significant hindrance to institutional coordination, provided it is implemented effectively.

- **Governance challenges in local municipalities**

Governance challenges were identified by many officials as critical barriers to effective institutional coordination in the context of land reform projects. These challenges stem from two main issues: lack of accountability and corruption. The lack of accountability within municipalities was a recurring concern. Officials noted that decision-making processes are often characterized by inadequate transparency and insufficient internal controls.

Interview quote from LRS: *"One of the biggest issues we face in land reform is the lack of accountability within municipalities. There are no strong monitoring systems in place, which means decision-making is often inconsistent and unreliable. Without proper oversight, corruption and inefficiencies continue to hinder the success of these projects."*

This absence of rigorous monitoring mechanisms fosters an environment where coordination efforts are inconsistent and unreliable. These inefficiencies hinder the ability of municipalities to execute their responsibilities effectively, ultimately undermining the success of land reform initiatives. Corruption was cited as another pervasive issue affecting governance in municipalities. Officials referred to high-profile scandals, such as the VBS Mutual Bank debacle in Vhembe District, and fraudulent tender practices in Thulamela Municipality, as examples of systemic corruption that have severely eroded trust among stakeholders. Such financial mismanagement creates significant challenges for intergovernmental collaboration, as national and provincial departments may be reluctant to delegate responsibilities or resources to municipalities with questionable governance practices. The officials emphasized that addressing these governance issues is critical to fostering trust and establishing effective partnerships among various levels of government. Without resolving these challenges, efforts to provide coordinated support for land reform projects are likely to remain ineffective.

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- **Capacity and political interference**

In addition to governance concerns, officials highlighted capacity constraints and political interference as significant obstacles to institutional coordination. A lack of technical skills and expertise within municipalities emerged as a prominent issue. Many officials reported that municipalities are often ill-equipped to plan, execute, and monitor land reform projects effectively. This skills deficiency is particularly evident in specialized areas such as land-use planning, rural development coordination, and intergovernmental relations. Limited training opportunities and insufficient resource allocation further exacerbate this challenge, leaving municipalities unable to meet the complex demands of land reform initiatives.

Political interference was also frequently mentioned as a challenge that disrupts institutional coordination. Officials expressed concerns that political agendas often override technical priorities, leading to delays in project timelines and undermining the impartiality of decision-making processes. For example, local political figures may prioritize projects that align with their constituencies or personal interests, even when such projects conflict with broader land reform objectives. This interference not only impedes project implementation but also risks alienating key stakeholders who feel excluded from the decision-making process. Officials warned that unless these capacity and political challenges are addressed, the effectiveness of land reform programs in municipalities like Makhado will remain severely compromised. These issues pose significant risks to the overarching goals of rural development and social equity, underscoring the need for targeted interventions to strengthen institutional coordination and mitigate political influence.

- **Lack of policy mandates for coordination**

Officials from Makhado Local Municipality and Vhembe District Municipality highlighted significant challenges stemming from the absence of legislative mandates compelling provincial and national departments to collaborate with municipalities on land reform initiatives. These officials expressed frustration that existing policies fail to explicitly require intergovernmental coordination, resulting in the exclusion of municipalities from crucial planning and implementation processes. This exclusion limits their ability to integrate land reform projects into broader developmental frameworks, reducing the potential for sustainable, localized development. The lack of mandated coordination has led to a significant disconnect in planning. Municipalities

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are unable to incorporate land reform projects into critical developmental documents such as IDPs, LED strategies, SDFs, or Human Settlement plans. Consequently, there is a fragmented approach to development, where opportunities for synergies between land reform and local planning efforts are missed. One prominent example illustrating this gap is the Tshakhuma 24-Hour Fresh Market, constructed by the provincial Department of Economic Development in 1985. Due to the absence of alignment with municipal plans, the market remains unavailable to land reform beneficiaries who are not from Tshakhuma village since the administrative process is not done at the municipality but it involves traditional leaders and the local committee.



Figure 5.5: Tshakhuma fresh market

Source: Venda land (n.d.)

In contrast, the municipality recently approved and completed the Tshakhuma Mall project in 2023 to anchor the market and boost customer traffic in the area (see figure 5.6). Unlike the Tshakhuma 24-Hour Fresh market, the completed mall does not allow street vendors in their premises and its not clear if local farmers and emerging farmers are the ones supplying the mall. Although there is economic progress in the area at face value, the municipal officials argue that the mall project demonstrates and underscores the costs of missed coordination opportunities between the local government and provincial government.

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Figure 5.6: Tshakhuma Mall

Source: Author (2024)

- **Municipal powers and Auditor-General constraints**

Municipal officials emphasized that land reform falls outside the scope of their constitutionally mandated powers and functions. This restriction significantly hampers their ability to participate in land reform projects, even when such projects align with local developmental priorities. They also noted concerns regarding the AGSA, which has previously penalized municipalities for undertaking activities perceived as falling outside their mandates. The fear of receiving qualified audits discourages municipalities from proactively engaging in land reform projects. Despite recognizing the potential economic benefits of linking land reform to local development initiatives, municipalities are hesitant to al locate resources to such projects due to the risk of audit penalties and reduction of financial year budget. This cautious approach leaves many opportunities for integrated development unrealized, perpetuating fragmentation in planning and implementation. Another major issue is the financial impact of land

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reform on municipal revenue. When land reform projects result in the transfer of ownership from white farmers to beneficiaries, municipalities often lose significant income from property rates and taxes previously paid by the farmers. This reduction in revenue severely limits their ability to provide services to newly established farms or other land reform-related activities, creating a cycle of underfunded and unsupported initiatives.

- **Land ownership and funding challenges**

Land ownership patterns present another substantial challenge to effective institutional coordination for land reform projects. Many such projects occur on land owned by traditional leaders or the state, which limits municipal jurisdiction and ability to influence or support these initiatives. This ownership complexity creates a disconnect between the municipality's developmental agenda and the objectives of land reform projects. Additionally, municipalities face significant funding challenges. Due to budgetary constraints and a lack of financial support from higher spheres of government, municipalities are unable to allocate resources to provide basic services for newly established farms or beneficiaries of land reform. This lack of funding not only hampers the success of these projects but also discourages municipalities from actively participating in land reform initiatives, as they lack the capacity to support them effectively.

- **Fragmented communication and stakeholder engagement**

Another challenge highlighted by municipal officials is the lack of effective communication and stakeholder engagement mechanisms across government levels. Provincial and national departments often operate independently when implementing land reform projects, with limited consultation or information sharing with local municipalities. This fragmented communication exacerbates coordination challenges and creates a sense of isolation among local government officials. For example, municipal officials noted that they are often informed about land reform projects only after implementation has begun, leaving little room for municipalities to align their planning frameworks with these initiatives. This lack of early engagement prevents municipalities from integrating land reform projects into local development strategies, reducing the overall effectiveness of such initiatives. Additionally, weak communication channels hinder collaboration with other critical stakeholders, such as traditional leaders, who play a significant role in land reform. The absence of coordinated

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stakeholder engagement leads to overlapping efforts, resource inefficiencies, and missed opportunities to address the unique needs of land reform beneficiaries.

5.3.3 Objective 3.1: To evaluate measures provided by the DDM to address inadequate institutional coordination against the challenges prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality

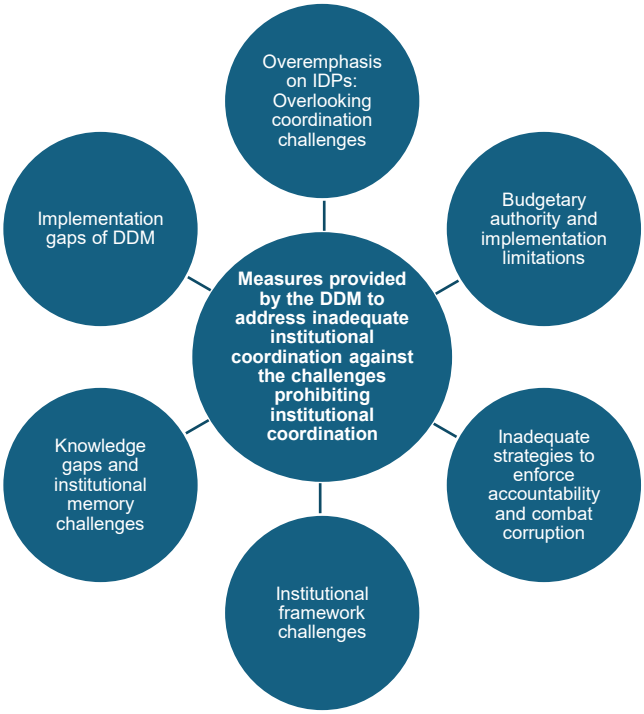


Figure 5.7: Generated themes for objective 3.1

Source: Author (2025)

- **Overemphasis on IDPs: Overlooking coordination challenges**

The officials provided a detailed overview of CoGHSTA's central role in the District DDM, emphasizing its mandate to coordinate and assess IDPs from municipalities across the province. This role is critical in ensuring that municipal plans align with provincial priorities, creating a unified framework for service delivery. The assessment process is intended to bridge gaps between local and provincial governance, streamlining efforts to address developmental challenges. However, officials noted that while this framework appears effective in theory, its implementation presents several practical challenges, especially regarding the alignment of priorities across different government spheres. One of the most pressing issues identified was the lack of guaranteed alignment between CoGHSTA's priorities and those of other key

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departments such as Human Settlements and Agriculture, Rural Development, and Land Reform. These departments often operate in silos, pursuing their mandates independently without incorporating CoGHSTA/COGTA's broader vision for institutional coordination. This misalignment undermines the primary objective of the DDM, which is to integrate and harmonize efforts across various sectors to maximize impact. The disconnect between these departments further complicates land reform initiatives, which rely on seamless interdepartmental collaboration.

Officials emphasized that the lack of statutory authority granted to CoGTA is a significant factor contributing to this misalignment. Although CoGTA has the power to assess and approve IDPs, it cannot enforce compliance or dictate how other departments should prioritize or execute their plans. This limited authority results in fragmented approaches, where different sectors work independently, often duplicating efforts or pursuing conflicting objectives. Another concern raised was the tendency for IDP alignment to focus heavily on provincial priorities without adequately considering the unique needs and contexts of individual municipalities. This top-down approach often leaves municipalities struggling to implement plans that may not fully align with their local challenges or resource capacities. As a result, IDPs become more of a compliance exercise rather than a meaningful tool for driving local development. This limitation hinders the DDM's ability to act as a genuinely transformative framework for governance and service delivery.

Interview quote from LCoGHSTA: *"The idea of aligning IDPs with provincial priorities looks good on paper, but in reality, departments are not working together as they should. Each department still operates in isolation, making it difficult to integrate efforts effectively. The biggest challenge is that CoGHSTA does not have the authority to enforce alignment, so every department continues to focus on its own mandate without considering the broader vision of institutional coordination. We can approve municipal IDPs, but we have no control over the financial resources needed to implement them. Municipalities make their own budgetary decisions, and often, they prioritize projects that do not align with provincial priorities. This weakens the effectiveness of the DDM because without financial oversight, even the best-aligned plans can remain unimplemented due to a lack of funding or delays in resource allocation."*

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The officials also noted that the alignment of IDPs does not address systemic issues within the governance structure, such as the lack of capacity and resources in some municipalities. While CoGHSTA may facilitate the alignment of plans, it does not provide adequate support to ensure that these plans are effectively implemented. This gap further undermines the objectives of the DDM, particularly in addressing complex challenges such as land reform, which requires coordinated efforts and significant resource investment.

- **Budgetary authority and implementation limitations**

While CoGHSTA plays a critical role in approving municipal IDPs, its authority does not extend to controlling the financial resources required to implement these plans. Officials highlighted that budgetary decisions, including allocations and expenditures, remain the sole responsibility of municipal councils. This decentralized structure limits CoGHSTA's ability to ensure that the projects outlined in IDPs are adequately funded and executed. Consequently, even when plans are aligned with provincial priorities, the lack of financial control often leads to delays or incomplete implementation. A major concern raised was the disconnect between approved IDPs and municipal budgeting processes. Although CoGHSTA can ensure that plans from the DDM align with overarching provincial priorities, it cannot dictate how municipalities allocate their resources. This autonomy often results in municipalities prioritizing projects that may not align with the DDM's strategic goals, thereby undermining efforts to create a cohesive and coordinated governance framework. This misalignment is particularly problematic for land reform initiatives, which require substantial and sustained financial investment. Officials also highlighted the inconsistencies in resource allocation across municipalities, which are exacerbated by the lack of centralized budgetary oversight. While some municipalities are well-resourced and capable of implementing their IDPs effectively, others face significant financial constraints that hinder their ability to deliver on planned projects. This uneven distribution of resources creates disparities in service delivery, further complicating efforts to address land reform challenges comprehensively.

Moreover, the officials noted that the absence of financial oversight mechanisms within CoGHSTA leaves room for inefficiencies and mismanagement at the municipal level. Unlike the National Treasury, which has established frameworks for monitoring and enforcing budgetary compliance, CoGHSTA lacks the tools and authority to ensure

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that municipal budgets are used effectively. This limitation not only reduces accountability but also increases the risk of corruption and fiscal mismanagement, further undermining the objectives of the DDM. The decentralization of financial authority also affects the timeliness of project implementation. Without the ability to influence budgetary decisions, CoGHSTA often relies on municipal goodwill and cooperation, which can lead to significant delays in the execution of critical projects. These delays are particularly detrimental to land reform initiatives, where timely action is essential to address pressing social and economic challenges.

- **Inadequate strategies to enforce accountability and combat corruption**

CoGHSTA's lack of robust oversight mechanisms in municipal financial management was highlighted as a critical weakness in the DDM framework. Unlike the National Treasury, which works in close collaboration with the AGSA to enforce fiscal accountability, CoGHSTA does not have similar structures to monitor municipal spending. This gap not only limits CoGHSTA's ability to ensure budgetary compliance but also creates opportunities for inefficiencies and financial mismanagement. Officials emphasized that without clear enforcement mechanisms, municipalities are left to operate with minimal accountability for their financial decisions.

Interview quote from LCoGSTA: *"One of the biggest weaknesses in the current system is the lack of strong oversight in municipal financial management. Unlike the National Treasury, CoGHSTA does not have mechanisms to track spending effectively, which leaves room for inefficiencies and, in some cases, corruption. Without enforcement tools to hold municipalities accountable, we continue to see funds mismanaged, and projects, including those related to land reform, either delayed or completely abandoned."*

The absence of a comprehensive anti-corruption strategy further exacerbates these challenges. Corruption and mismanagement at the local government level are prevalent issues that undermine the successful implementation of key projects, including those related to land reform. Officials noted that CoGHSTA's inability to address these systemic issues weakens the overall efficacy of the DDM, as it relies on a foundation of trust and cooperation that is often eroded by such practices. A lack of enforcement mechanisms to address fiscal impropriety significantly hinders the ability to foster institutional coordination and achieve the DDM's objectives.

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Accountability deficits at the municipal level also perpetuate cycles of ineffective governance. Officials pointed out that when mismanagement or corruption occurs, CoGHSTA has limited recourse to intervene or impose corrective measures. This inability to hold municipalities accountable undermines trust in the DDM as a governance model and erodes confidence in its ability to drive meaningful change. As a result, projects aimed at supporting land reform and other critical initiatives often experience delays, cost overruns, or fail entirely. Another concern is the inconsistent application of accountability measures across municipalities. While some municipalities may demonstrate a commitment to financial transparency and ethical governance, others lack the capacity or willingness to adhere to best practices. This disparity creates uneven progress in implementing DDM initiatives, with well-governed municipalities advancing more quickly than their counterparts.

- **Institutional framework challenges**

Officials identified deep-seated structural flaws within the institutional framework of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform as a significant barrier to the DDM's success. These flaws stem from a governance model that largely excludes local governments from critical planning and implementation processes for land reform initiatives. By sidelining local municipalities, the current framework fails to leverage their on-the-ground knowledge and capacity, resulting in fragmented and ineffective planning. This exclusion contradicts the DDM's core principle of integrated governance and hampers its ability to deliver meaningful outcomes. The lack of integration among sector departments and municipalities reinforces siloed operations. Each department tends to operate independently, focusing narrowly on its specific mandates without collaborating with other stakeholders. Officials highlighted that this siloed approach undermines the DDM's goal of fostering seamless coordination across government levels. For instance, while the Department of Rural Development may prioritize land acquisition, municipalities are often left out of critical discussions on implementation strategies, leading to delays and inefficiencies in project execution.

A major challenge lies in the DDM's inability to compel departments to integrate their operations with local government efforts. Unlike other governance models that include enforceable mandates, the DDM relies on voluntary collaboration, which often falls short in practice. Officials noted that without clear authority to mandate integration, CoGHSTA and other coordinating bodies struggle to align the efforts of various

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departments with municipal priorities. This lack of alignment perpetuates a fragmented governance landscape that fails to address the systemic challenges facing land reform. Officials also pointed to the lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities as a significant impediment to the DDM's success. In many cases, the overlapping mandates of sector departments and municipalities lead to confusion and duplication of efforts. Another issue is the insufficient capacity within local governments to meaningfully participate in land reform initiatives. Many municipalities lack the technical expertise, financial resources, and institutional frameworks necessary to engage effectively in planning and implementation processes. Officials noted that addressing these capacity gaps is essential to creating a more inclusive and effective institutional framework under the DDM. Without building the capacity of local governments, the DDM's reliance on their participation remains a theoretical aspiration rather than a practical reality.

- **Implementation gaps of DDM**

The conceptual design of the DDM assumes that departments and senior officials will voluntarily collaborate to achieve joint goals. However, officials highlighted that this assumption fails to account for the complexities of interdepartmental coordination.

Interview quote from LCoGHSTA: *"We can approve municipal IDPs, but we have no control over the financial resources needed to implement them. Municipalities make their own budgetary decisions, and often, they prioritize projects that do not align with provincial priorities. This weakens the effectiveness of the DDM because without financial oversight, even the best-aligned plans can remain unimplemented due to a lack of funding or delays in resource allocation."*

Departments often operate with conflicting priorities, which are shaped by their individual mandates and institutional cultures. These misalignments create significant barriers to effective collaboration, as departments may resist initiatives that do not align with their specific objectives. Furthermore, institutional inertia, where departments are reluctant to adopt new practices or approaches further compounds these challenges, undermining the DDM's ability to foster seamless coordination. While the DDM encourages joint planning and execution, there are no concrete strategies to prevent stakeholders from reverting to siloed operations. This gap leaves room for departments to prioritize their individual mandates over collective goals,

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particularly when faced with resource constraints or competing interests. The absence of enforceable accountability measures undermines the sustainability of the DDM, as it fails to address the systemic barriers that perpetuate fragmented governance. Another significant concern is the DDM's reliance on district-wide IDPs as a primary tool for coordination. While these plans are meant to serve as a framework for joint action, officials noted that they often lack the depth and specificity needed to drive meaningful collaboration. The focus on compiling IDPs without integrating actionable strategies reduces the DDM to a theoretical exercise with limited practical impact. Moreover, the reliance on existing IDP structures raises questions about whether the DDM can achieve its intended goals of institutional transformation and improved service delivery.

- **Knowledge gaps and institutional memory challenges**

A significant issue highlighted by officials is the knowledge gap created by the departure of individuals who were instrumental in the initial design and implementation of the DDM.

Interview quote with LCoGHSTA: *"When the officials who originally designed and implemented the DDM left, they took a lot of critical institutional knowledge with them. Unfortunately, there was no structured process to transfer this knowledge to new staff, leaving us with gaps in understanding and implementation. As a result, instead of innovating and improving the model, we are simply repackaging old processes, which limits the DDM's ability to drive real change in governance and service delivery."*

These individuals possessed a deep understanding of the DDM's objectives, operational strategies, and intended outcomes. Their expertise was critical to guiding the early stages of the model's development, ensuring its alignment with broader governance goals. However, as these key personnel moved on to other roles or organizations, they left behind a void that has proven difficult to fill. The absence of this institutional memory has created challenges for remaining staff, who now face difficulties in maintaining continuity and consistency in the DDM's implementation. The lack of detailed documentation or knowledge transfer processes has exacerbated this issue, leaving the current workforce without a comprehensive understanding of the model's original intent. This gap has led to confusion and inconsistencies in how the

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DDM is operationalized across different municipalities, undermining its potential as a cohesive and transformative governance framework.

One of the most noticeable impacts of this knowledge gap is the fragmented approach to implementing the DDM. Without a clear understanding of its foundational principles, staff have defaulted to familiar practices, such as compiling district-wide IDPs and labelling them as "DDM plans." While these plans may provide a semblance of alignment, they often lack the depth and integration necessary to drive meaningful interdepartmental coordination. This reliance on existing processes raises questions about the extent to which the DDM represents a genuine shift in governance practices versus a superficial rebranding of pre-existing mechanisms. Furthermore, the departure of experienced personnel has hindered the ability of CoGHSTA and other stakeholders to innovate and adapt the DDM to evolving challenges. The model was envisioned as a dynamic framework capable of addressing complex governance issues, but its implementation now appears static and overly reliant on the original design. Without the insights and expertise of those who played a pivotal role in its creation, the DDM risks becoming stagnant, unable to adapt to the nuanced and changing needs of municipalities and sector departments.

5.3.4 Objective 3.2: To evaluate the impact of the DDM on the challenges faced by the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality

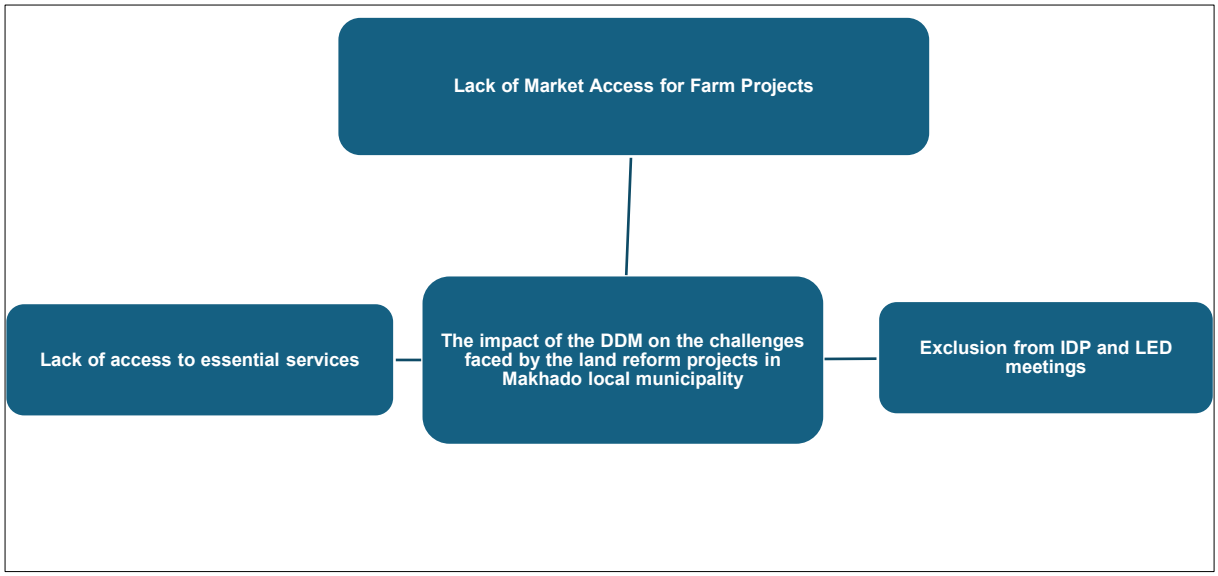


Figure 5.8: Themes generated for objective 3.2

Source: Author (2025)

- **Lack of market access for farm projects**

One of the most pressing challenges faced by CPAs in Makhado is the continued struggle to access markets for their agricultural produce. While the DDM framework aims to integrate land reform beneficiaries into broader economic development initiatives, many immerging farmers find themselves excluded from key value chains. Without structured support mechanisms, these farms remain disconnected from potential buyers, suppliers, and commercial networks. The lack of coordination between CPAs and local economic development structures has exacerbated the problem, leaving many projects unable to generate sustainable income. Farmers have reported that despite their best efforts to produce crops and livestock, they are unable to find stable markets.

Interview quote from MCPA: *"We have the land, we have the produce, but what we don't have is access to a stable market. No one from the government has linked us to buyers or assisted in finding distribution channels, and that is killing our project."*

Interview quote from MCPA: *"If we could just get support in accessing supermarkets or processing plants, our farms would be sustainable. Right now, we are stuck selling at informal markets with prices that don't even cover our costs."*

This situation forces them to sell their produce at significantly lower prices or let it go to waste due to a lack of buyers since there is no connection between the human settlements and the agricultural land. Additionally, there is little to no infrastructure in place to assist smallholder farmers with value addition or market access strategies, making it difficult for them to compete with commercial farmers. Below are some of the pictures which were taken in the three farms which were visited by the researcher.

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Figure 5.9: Mulelu farm (non-productive farm was turned into a place to collect firewood)

Source: Author (2024)

The farm's beneficiaries complained that it was very difficult for them to market their goods since the main road was too distant from where they were. They also had to rely on a well for water access because the region lacked water hookups. They finally made the decision to leave the property as a result of these difficulties. As a result, the site is currently mostly used by surrounding community members for collecting firewood.

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Figure 5.10: Muananzhele farm (Broken chicken cage)

Source: Author (2024)

The 10,000-bird capacity of the chicken cage has never been fully utilised since the ability to farm was granted. The CPA tried farming, but because of inadequate security, most of the hens were stolen. The farm's distance from their residences is one of the biggest obstacles, making it hard for them to watch over the establishment at night. Accessibility is also a big problem due to its rural location, distant from the community. People are discouraged from walking or driving to the property because it is only accessible by a dirty gravel road (see figure 5.9). In addition, there is no electricity on the farm, and the CPA cannot afford to install solar panels as an alternative energy source. Because of this, the chicken cage has been abandoned for several years and is currently deteriorating.

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Figure 5.11: Gravel road used as an access to agricultural land where Muananzhele farm located

Source: Author (2025)

According to Tshivhazwaulu CPA, their dam is damaged (see figure 5.12) and they are unable to pay to have it repaired because of their financial issues, which are mostly brought on by their inability to sell their produce in marketplaces. They have therefore made the decision to give up farming and lease a section of their land to a white farmer, who pays them about R60,000 a month. The farm's isolated position, which makes it difficult to maintain agricultural operations due to its distance from both the main road and populated areas, also contributes to their hesitancy to continue farming. They have even started thinking about selling a portion of the farm to real estate developers so that a residential estate can be built in an attempt to look into alternate revenue streams. However, because the area is particularly zoned for commercial farming, they are unsure if the Department of Agriculture will accept their proposal.

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Figure 5.12: Tshivhazwaulu farm (Broken dam)

Source: Author (2025)

- **Exclusion from IDP and LED meetings**

Another major concern raised by CPAs is their exclusion from IDP and LED meetings. These forums are essential for shaping the development agenda of Vhembe and Makhado municipalities and ensuring that local communities benefit from economic initiatives. However, many CPAs report that they are not invited or are deliberately left out of these crucial discussions.

Interview quote from 2MCPA*: "We are never informed about IDP and LED meetings, yet these are the platforms where decisions affecting us are made. How can land reform projects succeed if we are not part of the conversations?"*

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Interview quote from 2MCPA: *"It feels like land reform farmers are invisible. We only hear about decisions when they have already been made, and by then, it's too late to voice our concerns or request support."*

This exclusion means that their voices are not heard when decisions about infrastructure, economic development, and resource allocation are made. The CPAs have expressed frustration at the lack of consultation, particularly when decisions about agricultural support and land use planning are made. This disconnect limits their ability to influence policies that directly impact their operations. Furthermore, without participation in these meetings, CPAs cannot access funding opportunities, strategic partnerships, or municipal programs designed to support emerging farmers.

- **Lack of access to essential services (roads, water, electricity, and sanitation)**

A third major issue is the lack of access to essential services such as roads, water, electricity, and sanitation since the CPAs are not part of the IDP and LED strategic meetings.

Interview quote from TCPA: *"The roads to our farms are in terrible condition. During the rainy season, we can't even transport our produce to the market because vehicles get stuck in the mud."*

Interview quote from TCPA: *"Without water and electricity, how can we farm effectively? We cannot irrigate our crops properly, and storing perishable products is impossible. We feel abandoned by the government."*

Many land reform beneficiaries are located in remote areas with little to no infrastructure development. The absence of proper roads makes it difficult to transport produce to markets, while inadequate water supply limits agricultural productivity. Without electricity, farmers cannot store perishable goods or use modern farming equipment, severely hampering their output. Despite repeated requests, CPAs claim that municipalities have not prioritised service delivery for land reform projects. This neglect forces farmers to rely on expensive alternatives, such as purchasing water from private suppliers or using generators to power basic farm operations. The result is increased costs and diminished profitability, making it difficult for land reform projects to thrive.

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Although the Tshivhazwaulu farm has electrical and water infrastructure that runs through its property to feed nearby settlements, the farm is not connected to the city's utilities. They have been told that the cost of installation is probably going to be very high, even though they have applied for municipal connections numerous times. Because of this, they are largely dependent on a generator and a borehole, both of which were supplied by the commercial farmer who currently leases a piece of their property. In order to help, the CPA would like the Limpopo DALRRD to coordinate the process of with the municipality. Their activities would be greatly enhanced by having access to municipal water and electricity, which would lessen their reliance on the generator and borehole and ultimately make farming more viable for them.



Figure 5.13:Vhembe district water infrastructure passing through Tshivhazwaulu farm

Source: Author (2025)

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Figure 5.14: Makhado Electrical infrastructure passing through Tshivhazwaulu farm

Source: Author (2025)

5.3.5 Objective 4: To recommend suggestions on how the DDM can address the challenges which are prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to land reform projects in Makhado local municipality



Figure 5.15: Themes generated for objective 4

Source: Author (2025)

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- **Integration of land reform into municipal frameworks**

Embedding land reform projects into municipal planning frameworks is a critical recommendation made by officials to address the disconnect between land reform initiatives and local development goals.

Interview quotes from MTP and VTP: *"Embedding land reform into municipal plans is not just a suggestion; it is a necessity. Without clear integration into IDPs and LED strategies, land reform remains an isolated effort, disconnected from broader development goals. If we align land reform with local economic development, we can turn these projects into engines of growth rather than mere redistribution exercises."*

By integrating land reform into IDPs, LED strategies, and SDFs, municipalities can ensure that these initiatives align with their broader socio-economic and spatial planning objectives. Such integration not only enhances the relevance of land reform activities but also enables municipalities to allocate resources and plan more effectively. IDPs, as the cornerstone of municipal planning, provide an overarching framework for resource allocation and service delivery. Officials noted that including land reform as a priority within IDPs would formalize its role in local development agendas. This would compel municipalities to allocate specific resources towards supporting land reform projects. Furthermore, integrating land reform into IDPs would enable municipalities to align these initiatives with other local development priorities, such as infrastructure provision, housing, and economic growth.

The inclusion of land reform in LED strategies was highlighted as a particularly impactful approach. Officials suggested that land reform should not only focus on redistributing land but also emphasize its potential as an economic catalyst in the surroundings of Makhado rural areas. By linking land access to agricultural, industrial, and tourism development initiatives, LED strategies could transform land reform projects into engines of local economic growth. For instance, municipalities could support emerging farmers or land reform beneficiaries by providing access to markets, training, and infrastructure, creating sustainable livelihoods and fostering economic inclusivity. Similarly, integrating land reform into SDFs would ensure that these projects are aligned with spatial planning goals, promoting sustainable land use and equitable development. SDFs guide the physical organization of municipalities, indicating where development should occur and which areas should be preserved for environmental or

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agricultural purposes. Officials emphasized that incorporating land reform into SDFs would enable municipalities to identify and prioritize areas for land redistribution while ensuring that such initiatives align with long-term spatial planning objectives. This integration would also help address challenges related to land use conflicts and ensure that redistributed land is utilized efficiently and sustainably.

Moreover, embedding land reform into municipal frameworks would foster greater accountability and transparency in its implementation. Municipalities would be required to report on the progress of land reform projects as part of their regular IDP and LED strategy reviews, providing a mechanism for monitoring and evaluation. This would also enable communities to hold municipalities accountable for delivering on land reform commitments, fostering trust and collaboration between local governments and the communities they serve. Finally, officials noted that integrating land reform into municipal frameworks would strengthen collaboration between different levels of government. Currently, land reform is largely driven by national and provincial departments, often bypassing municipalities. By embedding these initiatives into municipal plans, municipalities would be better positioned to participate in land reform processes, leveraging their local knowledge and administrative capabilities to complement provincial and national efforts. This alignment would create a more cohesive and coordinated approach to land reform, ensuring that it contributes meaningfully to local development goals.

- **Formalizing municipal roles in land reform**

The formalization of municipal roles in land reform processes is critical to addressing the challenges of institutional coordination. Many officials emphasized that municipalities, due to their proximity to communities and deep understanding of local contexts, are uniquely positioned to play a pivotal role in land reform. However, their contributions remain limited by unclear mandates and their exclusion from key decision-making and planning processes. Establishing well-defined roles for municipalities is essential to leveraging their capacity and ensuring land reform initiatives align with local priorities and development goals. One of the primary recommendations from officials was the need for legislative amendments to codify the role of municipalities in land reform governance.

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Interview quote from MTP: *"Municipalities are the closest government structures to communities, yet we are often sidelined in land reform processes. Our role should be legally defined to avoid confusion and ensure we contribute meaningfully. If municipalities are given a clear mandate, we can provide better planning, support, and oversight to ensure that land reform delivers tangible benefits."*

These amendments should specify the responsibilities of local governments in land acquisition, allocation, and post-settlement support. By doing so, municipalities would be empowered to actively participate in planning and implementation, ensuring that land reform projects are responsive to the unique socio-economic and spatial dynamics of their regions. Such legal recognition would also strengthen municipalities' ability to collaborate effectively with provincial and national departments.

Additionally, officials highlighted that municipalities could serve as crucial intermediaries between communities and higher levels of government. By formalizing their roles, municipalities can facilitate more inclusive decision-making processes that incorporate the voices of local stakeholders, including land reform beneficiaries and traditional authorities. This participatory approach would enhance transparency and foster trust among communities, ensuring that land reform efforts are aligned with their needs and aspirations. Formalized roles would also help prevent conflicts and misunderstandings that often arise from unilateral decisions made by provincial or national bodies. In their proposed roles, municipalities would also be responsible for integrating land reform initiatives into key strategic frameworks, such as IDPs, LED strategies, and SDFs. This integration would ensure that land reform projects are not only standalone interventions but are embedded within broader municipal planning processes. Such alignment would enable municipalities to allocate resources effectively, coordinate with oth0er development projects, and measure the impact of land reform initiatives on local economic growth and spatial planning.

Moreover, the formalization of municipal roles would require capacity building to equip local governments with the skills and resources necessary to fulfil their responsibilities. Officials recommended targeted training programs to enhance technical expertise in areas such as land use management, legal frameworks, and community engagement. Financial support would also be necessary to ensure municipalities have adequate resources to manage land reform projects effectively. These investments in capacity

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building would strengthen the overall institutional framework for land reform and improve the quality of outcomes. Finally, the formal recognition of municipalities as critical stakeholders in land reform would promote greater accountability and transparency. By assigning clear roles and responsibilities, municipalities can be held accountable for their contributions to land reform initiatives, while also ensuring that higher levels of government remain answerable for providing the necessary support and resources. This two-way accountability would create a more balanced and collaborative governance framework, ultimately leading to more sustainable and impactful land reform outcomes. Formalizing municipal roles in land reform is not merely an administrative adjustment; it represents a transformative shift in how land reform is governed and implemented. By empowering municipalities with clear mandates, legislative backing, and the necessary resources, the DDM can create a more inclusive and effective governance framework that bridges the gap between national strategies and local realities.

- **Enhancing collaborative mechanisms**

The officials emphasized that fostering regular and structured engagements among local, district, provincial, and national stakeholders is critical for improving coordination in land reform initiatives. Effective collaboration requires platforms that facilitate meaningful dialogue and collective decision-making. Officials proposed the establishment of permanent forums or committees to serve as central spaces for representatives from various government spheres to engage. These platforms would enable stakeholders to discuss land reform strategies, address challenges, and align their objectives. This approach is essential to bridge the communication gaps that often lead to fragmented efforts and inefficiencies in implementing land reform projects. The proposed forums or committees would not only provide a space for collaboration but also promote transparency and accountability. By ensuring that all stakeholders have a voice in the decision-making process, these platforms could reduce instances of unilateral decisions, which have historically undermined trust and coordination. For example, when provincial departments make decisions regarding land use without consulting local municipalities, it creates misalignment and hinders the achievement of shared goals. Collaborative mechanisms would address these issues by ensuring that all decisions are informed by the perspectives and expertise of relevant stakeholders.

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In addition to promoting alignment, these platforms could serve as a conduit for sharing critical information and data. Officials highlighted that one of the primary challenges in land reform is the lack of access to timely and accurate information. Collaborative forums could facilitate the exchange of data on land ownership, development opportunities, and community needs. This would enable stakeholders to make informed decisions and design projects that are better suited to the local context. Moreover, sharing best practices and lessons learned from other municipalities or provinces could further enhance the effectiveness of land reform efforts. Another significant benefit of structured engagements is their potential to resolve conflicts more effectively. Land reform is often accompanied by disputes over land use, ownership, and development priorities. Officials noted that the absence of a formal mechanism for conflict resolution frequently exacerbates tensions among stakeholders. Permanent collaborative platforms could provide a neutral space for mediating disputes and finding mutually acceptable solutions. This would not only improve relationships among stakeholders but also accelerate the implementation of land reform projects by reducing delays caused by unresolved conflicts.

To ensure the success of these collaborative mechanisms, officials recommended embedding them within the DDM framework. This integration would provide the forums with the necessary authority and legitimacy to operate effectively. It would also ensure that the outputs of these engagements are directly tied to the broader goals of the DDM, such as fostering integrated governance and delivering tangible development outcomes. By aligning collaborative efforts with the DDM, stakeholders could ensure that their collective actions contribute to the overarching objectives of land reform. Lastly, the officials stressed the importance of regularity and consistency in these engagements. Ad hoc meetings or irregular consultations are insufficient to build the trust and continuity needed for sustained collaboration. Structured mechanisms should include clear schedules, agendas, and follow-up processes to maintain momentum and ensure accountability. These regular engagements would create a culture of cooperation and shared responsibility, ultimately leading to more cohesive and effective land reform initiatives.

- **Capacity building for municipal and district officials**

Municipal staff frequently face challenges related to limited expertise in land reform policies and technical processes, which hinders their ability to contribute effectively to

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land reform projects. This knowledge gap often stems from inadequate exposure to national and provincial frameworks, limited training opportunities, and a lack of technical resources at the local government level. Officials stressed that bridging this gap is critical to ensuring that municipalities can play an active and meaningful role in land reform planning and implementation.

Interview quote from LFSP and LRS: *"Municipal staff often struggle to implement land reform initiatives because they lack technical knowledge on land use planning, legal frameworks, and beneficiary support. Regular training programs would empower officials with the skills needed to manage land reform projects effectively. Without investment in capacity building, we are setting ourselves up for failure."*

Capacity-building programs tailored to address these shortcomings were identified as a priority for fostering effective participation. One of the key recommendations made by officials was the introduction of comprehensive training workshops for municipal staff. These workshops should focus on equipping officials with knowledge about land reform policies, including their objectives, legal frameworks, and operational guidelines. Additionally, the workshops should cover technical aspects such as land use management, subdivision processes, and stakeholder engagement strategies. Training sessions should be customized to address the specific challenges faced by municipalities, ensuring that staff members are better prepared to navigate the complexities of land reform initiatives.

To further enhance capacity, knowledge-sharing initiatives were highlighted as an essential tool. Officials proposed creating platforms where municipalities can exchange best practices, successful case studies, and innovative solutions. Such platforms could take the form of inter-municipal forums, where representatives share insights and collaborate on common challenges. Knowledge-sharing can also extend to partnerships with provincial and national departments, enabling municipal officials to gain exposure to broader land reform strategies and leverage their expertise. Another important recommendation involved fostering partnerships with academic institutions and research organizations. Universities and technical colleges could play a vital role in providing specialized training programs, offering courses in areas such as spatial planning, land reform policy analysis, and sustainable development. These partnerships could also include internships or collaborative research projects, where

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municipal staff work alongside academic professionals to develop innovative solutions for land reform challenges. Such initiatives would not only enhance technical skills but also foster a culture of continuous learning within municipalities.

Officials also stressed the importance of digital tools and e-learning platforms as part of capacity-building efforts. Given the rapid advancements in technology, online courses, webinars, and virtual workshops can provide accessible and cost-effective training opportunities for municipal staff. Digital tools can also facilitate remote collaboration and access to real-time data on land reform projects, enabling staff to make informed decisions. Incorporating technology into capacity-building programs ensures that municipalities are equipped to operate in a modern, data-driven environment. Finally, capacity building must also focus on leadership development and institutional resilience. Effective land reform implementation requires not only technical expertise but also strong leadership to drive collaboration and innovation. Leadership training programs should emphasize skills such as strategic planning, conflict resolution, and stakeholder management, enabling municipal leaders to guide their teams and align efforts with provincial and national priorities. By investing in both technical and leadership capacity, municipalities will be better positioned to overcome challenges and make significant contributions to the success of land reform initiatives. In a nutshell, capacity-building programs that integrate training, knowledge-sharing, academic partnerships, technological tools, and leadership development are essential to empowering municipal and district officials. These initiatives will enable local governments to actively and effectively participate in land reform projects, ensuring that they align with broader development goals and address the needs of local communities.

- **Strengthening financial alignment and resource allocation**

Officials have identified a significant challenge in land reform programs due to the persistent misalignment between budgetary allocations and priorities. This misalignment often leads to delays, inefficiencies, and the inability to implement key projects. The DDM aims to promote coordinated governance but financial planning and resource allocation remain fragmented across government spheres. To address this issue, officials propose joint budgeting sessions that bring together stakeholders from local, district, provincial, and national levels of government. These sessions would allow all parties to collaboratively plan budgets, ensuring resources are

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allocated in line with shared priorities. Financial oversight structures within the DDM framework would monitor the allocation and utilization of funds for land reform projects, ensuring resources are directed towards agreed-upon priorities. These structures would enhance accountability, reduce the risk of mismanagement or corruption, and provide a mechanism for tracking progress and identifying funding gaps.

Dedicated grants specifically earmarked for land reform initiatives would be allocated directly to municipalities, allowing them to address local needs more effectively. These funds could support infrastructure development, technical assistance, and capacity-building activities essential for the success of land reform projects. Incorporating performance-based funding models into the DDM framework would incentivize efficiency and ensure effective resource utilization. Performance-based funding could also help address disparities in resource allocation, as well-performing municipalities could act as models for others. Fostering intergovernmental collaboration is crucial to address financial alignment issues. Collaborative workshops and knowledge-sharing platforms would enable stakeholders to jointly identify funding priorities and explore innovative financing mechanisms. By fostering a culture of collaboration and shared responsibility, the DDM can enhance financial alignment and resource allocation, ensuring that land reform programmes are effectively supported and implemented.

- **Addressing institutional fragmentation and siloed operations**

The DDM faces significant challenges due to fragmentation between sector departments and municipalities, leading to inefficiencies, duplication of efforts, and conflicting priorities. This fragmentation not only delays progress but also creates missed opportunities for collaboration that could enhance service delivery and project outcomes. To address this, officials propose the development of an overarching coordination policy within the DDM framework, mandating collaboration across all spheres of government.

Interview quote from NCoGTA: *"Land reform cannot succeed when different government entities are working against each other instead of together. We need a clear coordination policy that mandates collaboration across all spheres of government. If municipalities, provincial departments, and national agencies do not share information and resources, land reform efforts will continue to be fragmented and ineffective."*

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This policy would define roles, responsibilities, and expectations for each entity involved in land reform, providing a structured approach to managing relationships and ensuring accountability across different levels of government. A key component of this coordination policy is the adoption of shared project management tools, such as centralized databases, integrated planning platforms, and communication systems that allow stakeholders to access real-time information on project progress. These tools reduce duplication and ensure alignment among all parties, reducing the likelihood of conflicting actions by different departments.

Integrated timelines are also crucial for the DDM, as they align the activities of various departments and municipalities, synchronizing efforts and preventing overlaps. Fostering a culture of collaboration among stakeholders is essential, including building trust, encouraging open communication, and promoting shared ownership of land reform goals. Regular interdepartmental workshops, joint planning sessions, and stakeholder forums can strengthen relationships and encourage cooperative decision-making. Oversight and monitoring mechanisms are essential for the sustainability of these efforts. An independent body or a dedicated unit within the DDM framework could oversee the implementation of coordination policies, track progress, and address any issues that arise. Regular reporting and evaluation processes can help identify gaps and ensure continuous improvement. By addressing institutional fragmentation and promoting integrated operations, the DDM can fulfil its potential as a transformative governance model for land reform.

- **Accountability and monitoring frameworks for DDM implementation**

Officials have emphasized the importance of robust accountability and monitoring frameworks to effectively meet the objectives of the DDM.

Interview quote from LRS: *"There must be clear accountability measures to track the progress of land reform projects. Regular reporting and transparent monitoring frameworks will help ensure that commitments are followed through. If municipalities and other stakeholders are not held accountable, land reform will remain a policy on paper rather than a reality for communities."*

They recommend the implementation of clear accountability measures, such as documenting commitments, setting measurable goals, and regularly reporting on progress. This approach fosters transparency, trust, and commitment among

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stakeholders. Regular progress reviews are also suggested, conducted at set intervals depending on the scale and urgency of projects. These reviews allow for an assessment of project implementation status, identify obstacles, and propose corrective actions. Transparent reporting mechanisms are also essential, with all stakeholders, including municipalities, provincial departments, and national entities, submitting regular reports detailing their contributions, challenges, and results. These reports serve as a basis for performance evaluations, enabling decision-makers to identify areas of success and those requiring improvement. Publicly accessible reports promote greater accountability by allowing communities to track the progress of projects that impact their lives.

Performance evaluations for key projects and stakeholders are also recommended, using both qualitative and quantitative metrics to assess the efficiency, effectiveness, and impact of initiatives under the DDM framework.

Interview quote from LRS: *"Performance-based funding could be a game changer for land reform implementation. If funding is tied to measurable progress and effective use of resources, municipalities and departments will be more motivated to deliver results. This approach ensures that resources are used efficiently and that successful initiatives receive the necessary support to scale up."*

These evaluations highlight successes and provide valuable lessons for future projects. A centralized monitoring system is advocated, serving as a digital platform for stakeholders to input data, upload reports, and monitor real-time updates on project implementation. Success in any accountability and monitoring framework relies on strong leadership and a culture of transparency. Senior officials across all levels of government must champion these initiatives, ensuring accountability becomes an integral part of the DDM's implementation. By embedding these principles into the operational culture, the framework will not only track progress but also foster shared responsibility and ownership among stakeholders, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of the DDM.

5.4 Chapter summary

The chapter presents the findings of a research study on land reform support in Makhado Local Municipality, involving 38 participants from various government

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departments, municipalities, and CPA beneficiaries. The study found that the institutional framework for land reform support is structured at three levels: national, provincial, and agricultural extension officers. However, municipalities are largely excluded from this process due to limited technical expertise and bureaucratic inefficiencies. Several challenges hinder institutional coordination, including the lack of a clear legislative mandate requiring national and provincial collaboration with municipalities, governance issues such as weak accountability, corruption, and limited technical capacity within municipalities, and financial constraints and a lack of support. The DDM aims to enhance coordination but faces challenges due to misalignment of priorities between different government departments. Land reform beneficiaries struggle with market access due to a lack of structured government support in linking them to buyers or formal markets. They are often excluded from IDP and LED planning meetings, limiting their influence over land use and economic policies. Infrastructure deficits, such as poor roads, water shortages, and lack of electricity, severely hinder the productivity of land reform projects. To strengthen the DDM's role in land reform, several recommendations are proposed. Land reform should be integrated into municipal frameworks by aligning it with IDPs, LED strategies, and SDFs to ensure sustainability. Municipal roles in land reform should be formalized through policy amendments, collaboration mechanisms should be enhanced through permanent forums for structured engagements, and municipal capacity should be built through training programs. Financial planning should be aligned with land reform goals by implementing joint budgeting processes and creating dedicated grants for land reform projects.

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CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The chapter summarizes the findings, interpretations, and recommendations from a study on land reform support in Makhado Local Municipality. It focuses on the effectiveness of the DDM in facilitating coordination, the role of municipalities in land reform efforts, and the various governance, financial, and infrastructural barriers that hinder effective implementation. The chapter also discusses the implications of the findings, linking them to broader policy and governance frameworks. It explores potential strategies for overcoming challenges, focusing on improving collaboration between government entities, ensuring better financial alignment, and strengthening governance mechanisms to enhance the sustainability of land reform initiatives. The recommendations aim to address structural and operational inefficiencies, promoting a more integrated approach to land reform. By considering both challenges and opportunities, the chapter offers practical solutions to improve land reform implementation and realize its intended socio-economic benefits.

6.2 Summary of the findings

The study set out to investigate the efficacy of the District Development Model in coordination of support to land reform projects in Makhado local municipality, South Africa and its objectives were the following:

i. To outline and describe the current institutional arrangement for provision of support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality.

ii. To identify the challenges prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality.

iii. To evaluate measures provided by the DDM to address inadequate institutional coordination against the challenges prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality.

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iv. To recommend suggestions on how the DDM can address the challenges which are prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to land reform projects in Makhado local municipality.

The study employed a qualitative research approach to gain a deep and comprehensive understanding of the topic. This approach was chosen because it allows for the exploration of complex phenomena in their natural context, focusing on the meanings, experiences, and perspectives of the individuals and institutions involved. Through qualitative methods, the study aimed to capture rich, detailed data that would provide valuable insights into the efficacy of the DDM in coordinating support for land reform projects in Makhado Local Municipality. To gather the necessary information, the study collected both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through direct engagement with key stakeholders involved in land reform and institutional coordination, such as interviews and surveys.

6.2.1 To outline and describe the current institutional arrangement for provision of support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality

The study reveals a structured institutional framework for land reform support, involving the National Government, Provincial Government, and Agricultural Extension officers. Each stakeholder plays a distinct role, with the National Government responsible for policy development, funding allocation, and oversight, while the Provincial Government translates these policies into practical programs and ensures implementation. Agricultural Extension Officers provide technical support and guidance to land reform beneficiaries. However, the framework excludes key role players such as municipalities, limiting its effectiveness. Municipals are often excluded from land reform frameworks due to lack of technical expertise, resources, and capacity. This exclusion prevents them from integrating land reform into strategic documents like IDPs, LED strategies, and SDFs. This disconnects land reform efforts from broader municipal development initiatives, leading to missed opportunities for alignment and collaboration.

Some stakeholders advocate for the exclusion of municipalities, while others emphasize the need to integrate them into the institutional framework. Revising the framework would require significant investments in capacity building, institutional restructuring, and intergovernmental coordination. This could foster better

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accountability, improve project alignment with local development priorities, and enhance the sustainability of land reform initiatives. Municipal involvement in land reform is inconsistent and reactionary, often limited to technical engagements. The Provincial Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development frequently makes unilateral decisions on land subdivision and consolidation, bypassing municipal consultation. Land ownership patterns in Makhado Local Municipality also present barriers to municipal involvement, leaving them with minimal authority over land use decisions. Overall, the study highlights significant institutional coordination challenges in land reform implementation, primarily due to the exclusion of municipalities, limited policy alignment, and governance constraints.

6.2.2 To identify the challenges prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality

The study reveals several challenges affecting institutional coordination for land reform projects in Makhado Local Municipality. The policy design, which aims to involve local governments on an as-needed basis, has been found to be functional but has also resulted in delayed responses when municipalities urgently require support. Governance issues in local municipalities, such as lack of accountability and corruption, have hindered intergovernmental collaboration, as national and provincial departments remain hesitant to delegate responsibilities to municipalities with questionable financial management. Addressing these governance issues is crucial to fostering trust and improving coordination in land reform initiatives. Capacity constraints and political interference further complicate institutional coordination. Many municipalities lack the technical skills and expertise needed to plan, execute, and monitor land reform projects effectively, particularly in specialized areas like land-use planning and rural development. Limited training opportunities and insufficient resources exacerbate this problem. Political interference disrupts project timelines, undermining impartial decision-making and alienating key stakeholders. Lack of policy mandates for coordination between national, provincial, and local government structures also contribute to the exclusion of municipalities from crucial planning and implementation processes.

This results in municipalities struggling to integrate land reform projects into broader developmental frameworks such as IDPs, LED strategies, and SDFs. The Tshakhuma

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24-Hour Fresh Market serves as a notable example of the consequences of misalignment, as the market remained unavailable to vendors from other communities or emerging farm owners who might want sell their products directly to the public. Municipal powers and Auditor-General constraints present obstacles to municipal involvement in land reform. Land reform falls outside the constitutionally mandated powers of municipalities, making it difficult for them to justify engagement in such initiatives. Municipalities also face scrutiny from the AGSA, which discourages them from allocating resources to land reform projects due to the risk of financial penalties. Land ownership and funding challenges further hinder institutional coordination, as many land reform projects are implemented on land owned by traditional leaders or the state, restricting municipal jurisdiction and support. Finally, fragmented communication and stakeholder engagement have emerged as a critical issue, as national and provincial departments often operate independently, implementing land reform projects with minimal consultation with local municipalities. Poor communication results in resource inefficiencies, overlapping efforts, and missed opportunities to support land reform beneficiaries effectively.

6.2.3 To evaluate measures provided by the DDM to address inadequate institutional coordination against the challenges prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality

The study reveals several challenges in the institutional coordination and implementation of land reform projects in Makhado Local Municipality. The primary issue is the overemphasis of the DDM strategy on municipalities IDPs without considering coordination challenges which are hindering cooperation between sector departments and the local government. The CoGHSTA plays a crucial role in aligning municipal IDPs with provincial priorities, but its limited authority results in reinforcement of the status quo where there is fragmented institutional framework in provision of support to land reform projects. This top-down approach often ignores the unique needs of municipalities, turning IDPs into compliance exercises rather than effective planning tools. The lack of budgetary authority and implementation limitations further complicates the process. CoGHSTA's control over municipal budgets leads to resource disparities among municipalities, and the lack of financial oversight

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mechanisms contributes to inefficiencies, mismanagement, and delays in project execution. Inadequate strategies to enforce accountability and combat corruption are also highlighted as critical weaknesses within the DDM framework.

The study also highlights institutional framework challenges, particularly the exclusion of local municipalities from key land reform processes. The governance model prioritizes national and provincial departments, sidelining municipalities with valuable local knowledge. The lack of integration among departments perpetuates siloed operations, making coordination efforts ineffective. The voluntary nature of the DDM means that departments are not obligated to collaborate, further exacerbating inefficiencies. Implementation gaps within the DDM further hinder effective land reform support. Conflicting departmental priorities and institutional inertia make it difficult to enforce interdepartmental coordination. The heavy reliance on district-wide IDPs reduces the DDM to a theoretical exercise with little practical impact. Knowledge gaps and institutional memory challenges are also identified. The departure of key personnel has left a void in expertise, leading to inconsistencies in how the model is applied across different municipalities. Finally, the study found that beneficiaries continue to face significant challenges in land reform projects. Lack of market access prevents smallholder farmers from integrating into value chains, exclusion from IDP and LED meetings marginalizes them, and lack of access to essential services hampers agricultural productivity and sustainability. Addressing these challenges is crucial for the successful implementation of land reform projects in Makhado Local Municipality.

6.2.4 To recommend suggestions on how the DDM can address the challenges which are prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to land reform projects in Makhado local municipality

The study reveals several critical areas that need to be addressed to improve institutional coordination and the effectiveness of land reform initiatives in Makhado Local Municipality. One issue is the overemphasis on IDPs, which often fail to effectively incorporate land reform objectives. To address this, better integration of land reform into municipal frameworks is recommended, ensuring projects align with IDPs, LEDs strategies, and SDFs. This will allow municipalities to allocate resources more effectively, align land redistribution with broader economic and infrastructure

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development goals, and enhance transparency and accountability in implementation. Another major finding is the need to formalize municipal roles in land reform, as they currently lack a clear mandate in land acquisition, allocation, and post-settlement support. Legislative amendments should be proposed to define municipal responsibilities and establish structured participation in land reform governance. This would facilitate more inclusive decision-making and better coordination of resources.

Enhancing collaborative mechanisms among local, district, provincial, and national stakeholders is also crucial. Regular structured engagements can bridge communication gaps, align land reform strategies, and promote transparency in decision-making. Capacity building of municipal and district officials is also essential for strengthening institutional coordination. Strengthening financial alignment and resource allocation is another key recommendation. Misalignment between budgetary allocations and land reform priorities often leads to inefficiencies and project delays. Joint budgeting sessions involving all levels of government and dedicated grants for land reform initiatives and performance-based funding models could further enhance accountability and efficiency. Institutional fragmentation and siloed operations are major challenges affecting land reform implementation. An overarching coordination policy within the DDM framework is recommended to clearly define roles, responsibilities, and collaborative mechanisms. Robust accountability and monitoring frameworks should be incorporated to track progress and ensure the effective implementation of land reform initiatives.

6.3 Conclusions

The research on the efficacy of the DDM strategy in coordination of land reform support in Makhado local municipality highlights critical institutional, financial, and governance challenges that hinder effective implementation. One of the primary issues identified is institutional coordination gaps. The study reveals a fragmented institutional framework where Makhado and Vhembe municipalities are largely excluded from land reform processes due to the absence of land reform mandate within their powers and functions. Persistence of poor governance and accountability challenges in local government further pushes away sector departments from decentralising some of land reform roles to Makhado an Vhembe municipalities. The lack of transparent reporting frameworks and structured intergovernmental

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engagements results in misaligned priorities, hindering the success of land reform initiatives. Despites the introduction of the DDM, poor infrastructure, including inadequate roads, water shortages, unreliable electricity and lack of access to the markets still limiting the beneficiaries' ability to engage in sustainable agricultural practices. Despite the introduction of the DDM, the beneficiaries of land reform are stil excluded from the IDP and LED) meetings further isolates them from municipal economic strategies, reducing their chances of successfully utilising redistributed land. Its impact on land reform has been limited due to the misalignment between municipal, provincial, and national priorities. The DDM strategy primarily focuses on IDP coordination rather than addressing the structural obstacles that impede effective land reform support. The study underscores the necessity of integrating land reform into municipal frameworks through policy and legislative amendments. Aligning land reform goals with IDPs, LED strategies, and SDFs is essential for sustainability. Furthermore, defining municipalities' roles in land reform through legislation would facilitate better planning, support, and oversight. Addressing these institutional and governance challenges through the DDM will be crucial in improving the effectiveness and sustainability of land reform projects in Makhado local municipality.

6.4 Recommendations

6.4.1 Strengthening municipal involvement in land reform programme

- **Policy advocacy and legislative amendments**

The DDM should promote legislative changes that include municipalities in land reform institutional framework should be the primary responsibility of CoGTA and CoGHSTA. To ensure their active engagement, legislative amendments should explicitly specify the responsibilities that local municipalities play in land acquisition, distribution, and post-settlement support. To achieve a consistent approach across many locations, these changes must be institutionalised in national and provincial policy. To guarantee conformity with the DDM and other governance frameworks, coordination with sector departments and Parliament is crucial. To address changing land reform issues and take into account learning from previous implementations, legislation should be reviewed on a regular basis. Additionally, it is crucial to make sure that municipalities have the legal authority to promote land reform without needless red tape. As a result,

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accountability will increase and municipal involvement will become more organised and efficient.

- **Framework development**

A structured intergovernmental framework should be developed to clearly define municipal roles in land reform governance. This framework must provide explicit guidelines that institutionalise municipal responsibilities within the DDM to eliminate ambiguity in land reform initiatives. Effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be incorporated to track progress and ensure compliance with the framework's provisions. Coordination structures must be established to prevent fragmented implementation and promote seamless collaboration between municipalities, provincial departments, and national agencies. Policies promoting stakeholder engagement should be embedded within the framework to ensure inclusivity, particularly by involving land reform beneficiaries. Additionally, capacity-building mechanisms should be integrated into the framework to ensure local municipalities are well-equipped to execute their roles effectively. Lastly, a comprehensive legal framework should be formulated to safeguard municipal involvement in land reform and ensure long-term sustainability.

6.4.2 Enhancing intergovernmental coordination and stakeholder engagement

- **Compulsory stakeholder engagement**

The DDM should establish an intergovernmental coordination structure to mandate the active participation of local municipalities in land reform processes. CoGTA and CoGHSTA should ensure that sector departments, local municipalities, and land reform beneficiaries collaborate effectively through formalised agreements. Engagement strategies must be developed to align land reform policies across all levels of government, preventing misalignment and duplication of efforts. Transparency in stakeholder engagement should be promoted by establishing clear communication channels that allow municipalities to participate in decision-making. Accountability measures must be implemented to track stakeholder collaboration and address any inefficiencies that may arise during implementation.

- **DDM coordination enhancement**

The DDM must be strengthened to facilitate structured communication and decision-making among national, provincial, and municipal entities involved in land reform.

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CoGTA and CoGHSTA should ensure that land reform objectives are fully incorporated into the DDM framework to enhance coordination and resource allocation. Establishing coordination forums where municipalities engage directly with sector departments will help address gaps in collaboration. Additionally, developing strategies to eliminate duplication and fragmented project execution is crucial for improving efficiency. Standard operating procedures should be set in place to ensure seamless coordination among all entities involved in land reform projects.

6.4.3 Capacity building for municipalities

- **Skills development and training**

Municipal officials require specialised training to effectively engage in land reform institutional framework. CoGTA and CoGHSTA should develop training programmes tailored to municipal needs, focusing on areas such as land-use planning, rural development, and project management. Partnerships with academic institutions should be established to provide certified training courses. Organizing workshops that incorporate case studies of successful land reform projects can enhance practical knowledge. To ensure continuous learning, regular evaluations should be conducted to assess the effectiveness of training programs and implement necessary updates.

- **Dedicated support units**

Through the DDM strategy, a municipal land reform support units should be established and staffed with experts in land governance, finance, and project management. These units should receive financial and technical assistance from CoGTA and CoGHSTA to ensure sustainability. Adequate resources, infrastructure, and personnel must be provided to enable effective support for land reform projects. Continuous professional development opportunities should be offered to unit staff to enhance their expertise. Regular monitoring should be conducted to assess the effectiveness of support units in achieving land reform goals.

- **Knowledge exchange**

Furthermore, the DDM should develop platforms for municipalities to share best practices in land reform governance. CoGTA and CoGHSTA should facilitate mentorship programs where experienced municipalities provide guidance to those facing challenges. Annual summits on land reform coordination should be organized to promote collaboration and knowledge-sharing. An online portal should be created

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to store and disseminate valuable resources related to land reform implementation. Encouraging research collaborations between municipalities and academic institutions can help develop evidence-based policies and strategies.

6.4.4 Aligning land reform with IDPs

- **Integration into municipal planning**

Ensuring that land reform is explicitly included in municipal IDPs, LED strategies, and SDFs is critical for alignment with broader development plans. Municipalities should be required to integrate land reform objectives into their strategic planning and resource allocation in their DDM strategies. CoGTA and CoGHSTA must provide technical assistance to municipalities to facilitate this integration. Periodic reviews should be implemented to assess the effectiveness of alignment efforts. Penalties for non-compliance should be introduced to encourage municipalities to prioritise land reform initiatives.

- **Policy directives**

Policy directives should be issued to compel Makhado local municipality to integrate land reform into its planning and budgeting processes. Monitoring mechanisms must be developed to track compliance and measure the impact of municipal involvement. Clear roles and responsibilities should be outlined to ensure a structured approach to land reform. Regular intergovernmental consultations should be facilitated to refine policies and address emerging challenges. These directives should be aligned with national and provincial land reform strategies to promote coherence.

6.4.5 Addressing financial and resource constraints

- **Dedicated land reform funding**

Municipalities require dedicated funding streams to effectively support their involvement in land reform initiatives. The national CoGTA and the Limpopo CoGHSTA should play a proactive role in using the DDM to advocate for conditional grants that are specifically allocated to land reform programme. These grants should be structured to ensure transparency and efficiency in their disbursement and utilisation. To maximise the impact of these financial resources, funding allocations must be tailored to reflect local priorities, ensuring that the most pressing land reform needs are addressed. Additionally, municipalities should be equipped with comprehensive

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financial management training programs to enhance their capacity in managing land reform funds effectively. This training should cover aspects such as budget planning, financial reporting, and fund utilisation strategies. To maintain accountability and ensure optimal utilization of financial resources, regular evaluations should be conducted to monitor the effectiveness of funding allocations. These evaluations should involve periodic audits, performance reviews, and impact assessments. Any inefficiencies or mismanagement identified during these evaluations should prompt necessary adjustments to improve the overall financial management of land reform initiatives.

6.4.6 Enforcing accountability and monitoring mechanisms

- **Performance-based implementation**

The DDM should ensure accountability in land reform projects requires linking financial allocations to tangible project outcomes. CoGTA and CoGHSTA should develop clear and measurable evaluation criteria to assess municipal contributions to land reform initiatives. These criteria should focus on key performance indicators such as the number of land parcels successfully reallocated, productivity improvements, and community benefits derived from land reform projects. To encourage good governance and efficiency, a performance rating system should be introduced, allowing municipalities to be ranked based on their effectiveness in implementing land reform projects. Municipalities that demonstrate excellence in governance, transparency, and project execution should be rewarded with additional financial incentives or increased funding allocations, fostering a culture of continuous improvement. Periodic impact assessments should be conducted to ensure that land reform projects remain effective and continue to deliver intended benefits. These assessments should involve stakeholder consultations, data collection, and impact evaluations to identify challenges and address inefficiencies in implementation. By maintaining a robust accountability framework, CoGTA and CoGHSTA can enhance the long-term sustainability and success of land reform initiatives.

6.5 Limitations of the study

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6.5.1 Time constraints

The study was conducted within a limited timeframe, which presented several challenges. The constrained period restricted the ability to gather extensive qualitative and quantitative data, limiting the depth and breadth of the research. Due to time limitations, only a select number of interviews and surveys could be conducted, potentially omitting valuable insights from additional stakeholders. Moreover, the short duration of the study made it difficult to analyse long-term trends in the coordination of land reform through the DDM in Makhado. As a result, some dynamic factors that evolve over time, such as policy adjustments, changing stakeholder engagements, and long-term project impacts, could not be thoroughly examined. The limited timeframe also affected the ability to cross-check and validate data from multiple sources, which may have influenced the overall robustness of the findings. To mitigate time constraints, a well-structured research plan was implemented, prioritising key research activities such as data collection, interviews, and analysis. A focused approach ensured that critical aspects of the study were addressed within the available time. However in the end an extension had to be requested to ensure that the research report is sent to the language editor before the submission.

6.5.2 Limited access to key stakeholders

One of the major challenges encountered in the study was restricted access to key stakeholders, including government officials, municipal representatives, and land redistribution beneficiaries. Many of these individuals had demanding schedules, making it difficult to secure interviews or obtain detailed responses. Additionally, some stakeholders were hesitant to participate in discussions regarding land reform coordination, possibly due to political sensitivities, confidentiality concerns, or a lack of willingness to share candid perspectives. The reluctance or unavailability of key informants resulted in gaps in primary data collection, limiting the study's ability to fully capture diverse viewpoints on the effectiveness of the DDM strategy. Consequently, some aspects of stakeholder collaboration, policy implementation challenges, and community participation in land reform processes may not have been fully explored. Where key stakeholders were unavailable for direct interviews, secondary sources such as official reports, academic papers, and recorded public statements were utilized to supplement missing information. Additionally, follow-up text messages and

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WhatsApp conversations helped to engage some stakeholders who were initially unavailable.

6.5.3 Data availability and reliability

The study relied primarily on government reports, policy documents, and secondary data sources, some of which were outdated, inconsistent, or lacked comprehensive details. The availability of accurate and up-to-date datasets on land reform coordination in Makhado was a significant challenge, as official records were sometimes incomplete or not systematically updated. The reliance on secondary data also introduced potential biases, as different sources may have presented varying interpretations of policy effectiveness and implementation outcomes. Furthermore, the inconsistency in available records made it difficult to triangulate findings, reducing the ability to draw definitive conclusions. The limitations in data availability and reliability affected the study's capacity to generalize findings beyond the specific context of Makhado, thereby restricting broader applicability to other districts or regions. To enhance the reliability of data, multiple sources were cross-checked to verify findings. Combining qualitative interviews, policy analysis, and secondary data reviews strengthened the credibility of the research and minimized the impact of data inconsistencies.

6.5.4 Consideration of local cultural practices affecting land issues

While this dissertation has made a significant contribution by examining the efficacy of the DDM in coordinating support for land redistribution projects in Makhado Local Municipality, South Africa, it did not sufficiently identify, analyse, and integrate the role of local cultural practices that contribute to land-related challenges. Cultural norms, traditions, and customary land-use practices often influence access, ownership disputes, allocation processes, and community acceptance of land reform initiatives in rural municipalities. Their omission means that the study does not fully capture the socio-cultural dynamics that shape land redistribution outcomes. Incorporating such practices into the analysis would have enriched the findings by highlighting not only institutional and policy-related challenges but also the underlying community-level factors that affect implementation. Furthermore, recognising these practices could have informed more holistic recommendations that address both structural governance issues and localised cultural realities.

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6.6 Areas of future research

6.6.1 Strategies to overcome challenges hindering collaboration between sector departments and local municipalities within Vhembe district

The research reveals significant gaps in coordination among national, provincial, and municipal governments in the implementation of land reform initiatives in the Vhembe district. The DDM was introduced to enhance collaboration and service delivery across government spheres, but it does not outline clear strategies for fostering effective intergovernmental cooperation, particularly between sector departments and local government. This results in fragmented decision-making, duplication of efforts, and inefficient resource allocation, weakening the impact of land reform initiatives. Future research could investigate practical mechanisms to improve coordination and integration between these governmental entities. One potential strategy is the development of structured engagement platforms, where formalized multi-sectoral forums could be established for local municipalities, provincial departments, and national entities to engage in collaborative planning, share progress updates, and address bottlenecks. Policy adjustments should be explored to reform existing policies that mandate active municipal participation in land reform planning and implementation, ensuring that sector departments align their strategies with local development priorities.

6.6.2 Legislative amendments to clearly define and fund local government's role in land reform

Another key area for research is the establishment of collaborative decision-making frameworks that promote joint decision-making between municipalities and sector departments, fostering accountability, shared ownership, and efficient resource distribution. Performance monitoring and accountability mechanisms should be developed to track the implementation of collaborative efforts, ensuring that commitments from all levels of government translate into effective action. By addressing these structural gaps, future research can contribute to developing a more integrated and responsive governance system that supports land reform in the Makhado municipality and Vhembe district. Legislative amendments to clearly define and fund local government's role in land reform are also crucial. This includes clarifying

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municipal responsibilities by proposing amendments to relevant legislation, ensuring adequate funding for municipalities, and strengthening institutional capacity. By redefining local government's role in land reform through legislative changes, future research can contribute to a more decentralized and efficient land governance system, ensuring that municipalities are actively involved in achieving land reform objectives.

6.6.3 Enhancing collaboration between national and provincial DALRRD to prevent siloed operations and strengthen municipal involvement

Enhancing collaboration between the National and Limpopo Provincial DALRRD to prevent siloed operations and strengthen municipal involvement is also essential. Future research could focus on institutionalizing joint governance structures by developing models for integrated land reform management that require national and provincial DALRRD offices to collaborate with municipalities through formalized intergovernmental planning committees. Additionally, reducing over-reliance on external service providers and strengthening accountability mechanisms are essential. Capacity-building and knowledge-sharing initiatives should be assessed to improve knowledge transfer between DALRRD and local government officials. By promoting collaboration and dismantling the siloed approach to land reform governance, future research can help create a more coordinated, effective, and locally driven land reform system that fully leverages the role of municipalities.

6.6.4 Integration of local cultural practices in land reform analysis

Although this dissertation provides important knowledge on the efficacy of the DDM in coordinating support for land redistribution projects in Makhado Local Municipality, it did not explore in depth the influence of local cultural practices on land-related challenges. In many South African rural municipalities' contexts, customary traditions, cultural norms, and community practices play a decisive role in shaping land access, land use planning and management, ownership disputes, allocation processes, and the acceptance of land reform initiatives. Future research should therefore systematically identify, analyse, and integrate these cultural practices into the study of land redistribution. Doing so would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that affect the success or failure of land reform, moving beyond institutional and governance frameworks to include community-level dynamics. This would allow findings and recommendations to be more context-sensitive and grounded in lived

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realities, thereby enhancing the sustainability and legitimacy of land reform interventions. By bridging the institutional and cultural dimensions of land issues, future studies can generate insights that not only strengthen the coordination role of the DDM but also inform policy and practice in ways that are responsive to both state frameworks and community traditions.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Permission request for Vhembe District Municipality

University of Venda

Urban and Regional Planning
School of Environmental Sciences
University of Venda
Private Bag X5050
Thohoyandou
0950

Attention: Municipal Manager
Vhembe District Municipality
Old Parliament Government Complex
Tusk Venda Street
Thohoyandou
0950

01 August 2024

Dear Mr. Kutama Z. N.

Re: Permission to conduct research at Vhembe District Municipality.

My name is Khuliso Maphiri. I am studying towards a Master of Science in Urban and Regional Planning at the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture. I am seeking your permission to conduct interviews with two municipal officials from Vhembe District Municipality.

I am conducting research on the role of Makhado Local Municipality on District Development Model (DDM). As the Vhembe District Municipality is responsible for improving water service delivery and providing support to the local municipalities within its jurisdiction, information from the District Municipality will be valuable to my study.

The research will entail interviewing officials responsible for Integrated Development Planning and Intergovernmental Relations. They will be asked about the importance of collaboration between Vhembe District Municipality, sector departments, and Makhado Local Municipality. The interview session will examine the roles of both municipalities in providing settlement support for the land redistribution program and

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the challenges in coordinating their partnership for the implementation of the DDM. Recommendations for addressing these coordination challenges will also be sought. Interviews are anticipated to take place on the third week of August 2024 and will take about 30 minutes and will be conducted at their offices during work hours. I will make use of a book and a pen to take notes during the interviews.

Participants' responses will be treated confidentially, and information will not be shared with anyone. Their identities will be anonymous. All research data will be stored in a password encrypted computer for the duration of the research process and will be kept securely for possible use as secondary data. If this occurs, please be assured that none of the participants' identities will be revealed.

The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. They will be reassured that they can withdraw their permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The participants will not be paid for this study. The results will be communicated in a research report and shall be stored at University of Venda Library.

I therefore request permission to conduct interviews with some officials from the Vhembe District Municipality. If you grant me permission, I respectfully request that you prepare a formal Letter of Permission. It should be written under the Vhembe District Municipality's letterhead, signed, and dated, and specifically referring to myself by name and the title of my study.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,

Khuliso Maphiri
069 219 3350
Maphirikhuliso@gmail.com

Supervisor: Frank Moffat
Contact number: 079 638 6548
Frank.Moffat@univen.ac.za

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Appendix B: Permission request for Makhado local municipality

University of Venda

Urban and Regional Planning
Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture
University of Venda
Private Bag X5050
Thohoyandou
0950

Attention: Municipal Manager
Makhado Local Municipality
Private Bag X2596
Louis Trichardt
Limpopo
0920

06 August 2024

Dear Mr. M. K. Nemaname

Re: Permission to conduct research at Makhado Local Municipality.

My name is Khuliso Maphiri. I am studying towards a Master of Science in Urban and Regional Planning at the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture. I am seeking your permission to submit research questionnaires to municipal officials from Makhado Local Municipality.

I am conducting research on the **efficacy of district development model support to land reform programme** and the role of Makhado Local Municipality on the District Development Model (DDM). As the Makhado Local Municipality is responsible for Planning and implementation of its own jurisdictional area, inputs from the Urban Planning Section, IDP section and LED section would be very crucial for study.

The officials from the three sections above will be asked about the importance of collaboration between Makhado Local Municipality, sector departments, and Makhado Local Municipality and the role that the municipality currently plays in the DDM. The questionnaire will examine the role of the Municipality in providing settlement support for the land reform programme and the challenges in coordinating their partnership for

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the implementation of the DDM. Recommendations for addressing these coordination challenges will also be sought.

Participants' responses will be treated confidentially, and information will not be shared with anyone. Their identities will be anonymous. All research data will be stored in a password encrypted computer for the duration of the research process and will be kept securely for possible use as secondary data. If this occurs, please be assured that none of the participants' identities will be revealed.

The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. They will be reassured that they can withdraw their permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The participants will not be paid for this study. The results will be communicated in a research report and shall be stored at University of Venda Library.

I therefore request permission to submit questionnaires to officials from the Makhado Local Municipality. If you grant me permission, I respectfully request that you prepare a formal Letter of Permission. It should be written under the Makhado Local Municipality's letterhead, signed, and dated, and specifically referring to myself by name and the title of my study.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,

Khuliso Maphiri
069 219 3350
Maphirikhuliso@gmail.com

Supervisor: Frank Moffat
Contact number: 079 638 6548
Frank.Moffat@univen.ac.za

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Appendix C: Permission request for the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform

University of Venda

Urban and Regional Planning
Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture
University of Venda
Private Bag X5050
Thohoyandou
0950

Attention: Acting Director-General: Rural Development and Land Reform
Department of Rural Development and Land Reform
Private Bag X833
Pretoria
0001

05 August 2024

Dear Mr. R. Sadiki

Re: Permission to conduct research at the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.

My name is Khuliso Maphiri. I am studying towards a Master of Science in Urban and Regional Planning at the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture. I am seeking your permission to submit research questionnaires to municipal officials from Makhado Local Municipality.

I am conducting research on the **efficacy of district development model support to land reform programme** and the role of Makhado Local Municipality on the District Development Model (DDM). The study will also explore the role of the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) and assess the existing institutional framework involving relevant officials within the Limpopo Provincial DALRRD and the Vhembe Regional DALRRD. Officials from the relevant sections will be engaged to provide insights into the significance of collaboration between the Makhado Local Municipality and sector departments.

The questionnaire will examine the role of the Municipality in providing settlement support for the land reform programme and the challenges in coordinating their partnership for the

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implementation of the DDM. Recommendations for addressing these coordination challenges will also be sought.

Participants' responses will be treated confidentially, and information will not be shared with anyone. Their identities will be anonymous. All research data will be stored in a password encrypted computer for the duration of the research process and will be kept securely for possible use as secondary data. If this occurs, please be assured that none of the participants' identities will be revealed. The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. They will be reassured that they can withdraw their permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The participants will not be paid for this study. The results will be communicated in a research report and shall be stored at University of Venda Library.

I therefore request permission to submit questionnaires to officials from the Makhado Local Municipality. If you grant me permission, I respectfully request that you prepare a formal Letter of Permission. It should be written under the Makhado Local Municipality's letterhead, signed, and dated, and specifically referring to myself by name and the title of my study.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,

Khuliso Maphiri
069 219 3350
Maphirikhuliso@gmail.com

Supervisor: Frank Moffat
Contact number: 079 638 6548
Frank.Moffat@univen.ac.za

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Appendix D: Approval from Department of Rural Development and Land Reform

rural development
& land reform
Department:
Rural Development and Land Reform
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL: DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND LAND EFORM
Private Bag X833, Pretoria, 0001; 184 Jeff Masemola Street, Pretoria; Tel: 012 312 8911; Fax: 012 323 6072;
Email: DGOffice@drdlr.gov.za

Mr K Maphiri
P. O. Box 87
TSHIDIMBINI
0972

Dear Mr Maphiri

APPROVAL TO CONDUCT ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND LAND REFORM

Thank you for your application providing details of your research in relation to your dissertation.

The Department has no objection to your request to conduct research; however, the following must be adhered to:

- The final copy of your research report must be submitted to the Department prior to your final submission to the Institution of study.
- Files and records may not be removed from the Department's archives.
- Photocopies of official records may not be made for public purposes.
- Names of individuals from official records may not be published.
- Access to the records must be arranged in collaboration with the Head of Office, or in the case of National Office, with the Directorate: Information and Innovation Management Services.
- The Department reserves the right to restrict access to files of a sensitive nature.
- Access to classified information will not be granted if you have not been security cleared.
- Supply annual proof of registration from your University to the Department.

The Department will not be responsible for your travelling and accommodation expenses during this time of conducting the research.

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APPROVAL TO CONDUCT ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND LAND REFORM

You will need to sign the attached letter of indemnity before conducting research in the Department.

Your co-operation to meticulously adhere to the aforementioned will be highly appreciated.

Kind regards

MS R SADIKI
ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL: RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND LAND REFORM
DATE: 04/09/2024

Appendix E: Ethical Clearance Certificate

FACULTY OF SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

NAME OF RESEARCHER/INVESTIGATOR: MAPHIRI K

STAFF/STUDENT NO: 11627739

PROJECT TITLE: Assessing the Efficacy of District Development Model in coordination of support to land reform programme: a case of Makhado local municipality, South Africa.

ETHICAL CLEARENCE NO: FSEA/24/URP/46

SUPERVISORS/ CO-RESEARCHERS/ CO-INVESTIGATORS

NAME	INSTITUTION & DEPARTMENT	ROLE
Dr Moffat F	University of Venda, Department of Urban and Regional planning.	Supervisor
Dr Ingwani E	University of Venda, Department of Urban and Regional planning.	Co-Supervisor

Type: Student research

Risk: Minimal risk to humans, animals, or environment (Category 1)

Approval Period: November 2024 – December 2026

The Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture hereby approves your project as indicated above.

General Conditions

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following.

- The project leader (principal investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the REC:
  - Annually (or as otherwise requested) on the progress of the project, and upon completion of the project

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• The approval applies strictly to the protocol as stipulated in the application form. Should a change to the protocol be deemed necessary during the project, the project leader must apply for approval of these changes before their implementation. Should there be a deviation from the study protocol, without the necessary approval for the change, the ethics approval is automatically forfeited.

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- withdraw or postpone approval if:
- Any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected.
- It becomes apparent that relevant information was withheld from the REC or that information has been false or misrepresented.
- The required annual report and reporting of adverse events was not done timely and accurately,
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ISSUED BY:
FACULTY OF SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND AGRICULTURE RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Date considered: November 2024



Chairperson: Prof. L.C Mavhungu

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Appendix F: Consent information sheet

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

EFFICACY OF DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT MODEL IN COORDINATION OF SUPPORT TO LAND REDISTRIBUTION PROJECTS: A CASE OF MAKHADO LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, SOUTH AFRICA

Dear Sir / Madam

My name is Khuliso Maphiri, and I am a Master's student pursuing a Master of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Venda. My supervisor is Dr. Frank Moffatt. I am conducting a research study on the Efficacy of District Development Model in coordination of support to land redistribution projects: a case of Makhado local municipality, South Africa. You have been selected to participate in this study because of your valuable knowledge, expertise, and experience. Your insights will be instrumental in understanding how strategic plans are developed and coordinated to enhance the effectiveness of land redistribution programs, particularly in terms of institutional arrangements and stakeholder roles.

I invite you to take part in an academic research interview, which will last approximately 30 minutes. The interview will be based on the involvement of various sector departments in the development planning process, their contributions to land redistribution programs, and the coordination mechanisms used to integrate these efforts. Your participation will provide critical perspectives on the roles of different stakeholders in supporting land redistribution initiatives and addressing challenges associated with coordinating development strategies. The interview will take place at a location and time convenient to you during working hours. With your permission, I would like to take hand-written notes during the interview. All data collected will be securely stored for two years and then destroyed. Only I will have access to the data, and it will not be shared with anyone else.

During the interview, I will ask questions about the significance of collaboration between local municipalities, sector departments, and district municipalities in supporting land redistribution efforts. Additionally, I will seek insights into the challenges faced in coordinating these efforts and recommendations for improving coordination mechanisms. The interview will be confidential and anonymous. When sharing the research findings, I will not use your name but will refer to you in a general capacity as a municipal official. With your permission, other researchers may use the collected data, but your identity will remain anonymous. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time without consequences. You are not obligated to answer any questions you are uncomfortable with. There will be no financial compensation for participating, and your involvement will not impact any services, benefits, or rights you currently have. The risks involved in this study are minimal and comparable to those encountered in everyday professional interactions. The findings of this study will be compiled into a research report, which will be available on the university library website. If you would like to receive a summary of the report, I will be happy to provide one upon request.

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If you have any questions or require further clarification, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor using the details provided below. Should you have any concerns regarding the ethical aspects of this study, you may reach out to the relevant ethics committee at the University of Venda.

Yours sincerely,

Researcher:
Khuliso Maphiri
069 219 3350
maphrikhuliso@gmail.com

Supervisor:
Dr. Frank Moffat
079 638 6548

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Appendix G: Language editing letter

Language Editing Report

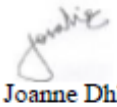
20 March 2025

To whom it may concern

This letter serves to confirm that I, Joanne Dhlamini have edited a dissertation titled **"Efficacy of District Development Model in coordination of support to land redistribution projects: a case of Makhado local municipality, South Africa"**, to be submitted at University of Venda.

I carefully read through the dissertation focusing on language, grammar and spellings to the best of my ability. Neither the dissertation content nor the author's intentions were altered in any way during the editing process.

Yours sincerely



Joanne Dhlamini

(Language Editor)

235 Pretoria road

Rivergate

Lyndhurst

2192

Email: joannedhlamini@gmail.com

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Appendix H: Turnitin Report

MURP Dissertation

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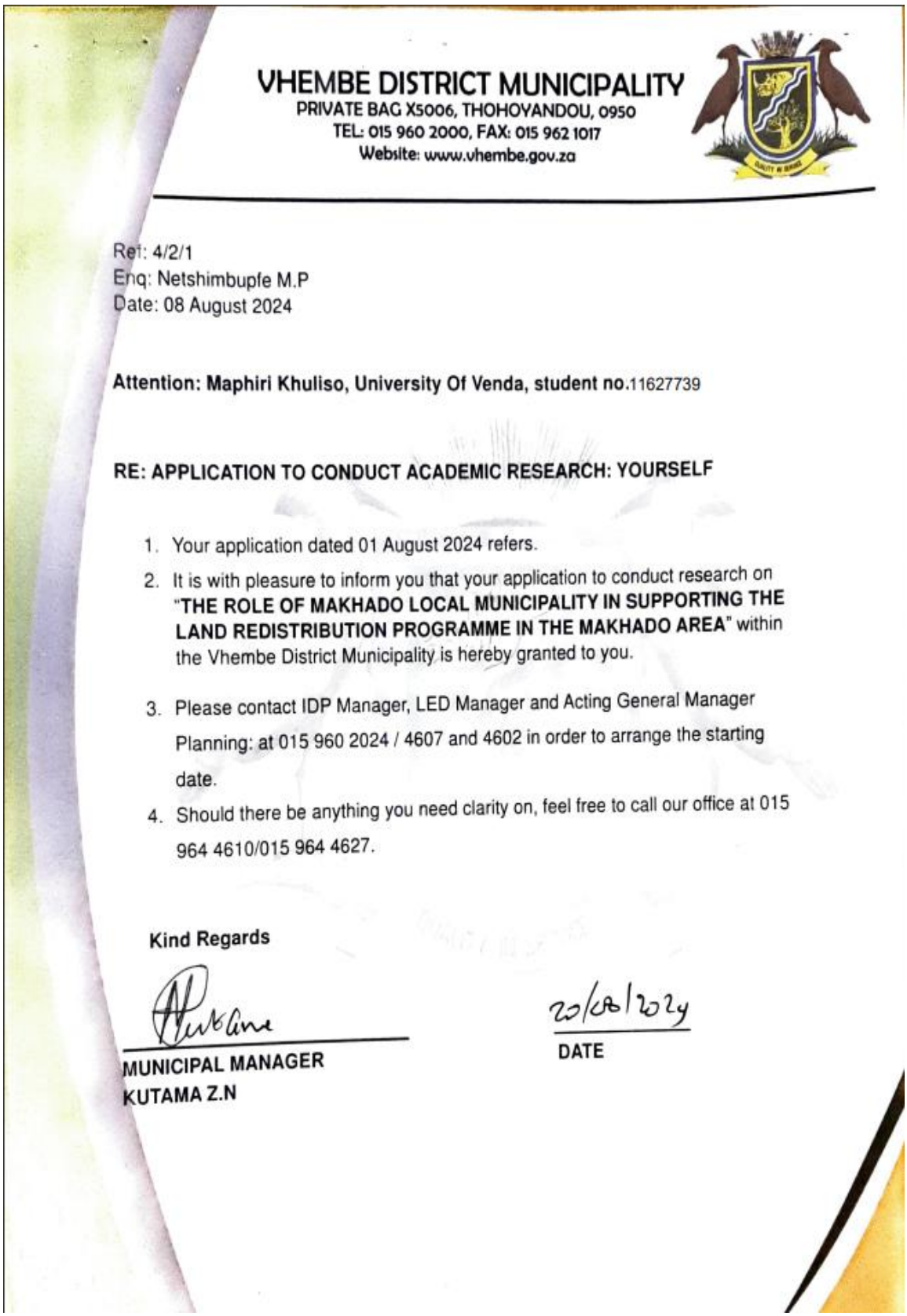
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Appendix I: Letter of data collection request approval from Vhembe district municipality



VHEMBE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY
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TEL: 015 960 2000, FAX: 015 962 1017
Website: www.vhembe.gov.za

Ref: 4/2/1
Enq: Netshimbupfe M.P
Date: 08 August 2024

Attention: Maphiri Khuliso, University Of Venda, student no.11627739

RE: APPLICATION TO CONDUCT ACADEMIC RESEARCH: YOURSELF

1. Your application dated 01 August 2024 refers.
2. It is with pleasure to inform you that your application to conduct research on "**THE ROLE OF MAKHADO LOCAL MUNICIPALITY IN SUPPORTING THE LAND REDISTRIBUTION PROGRAMME IN THE MAKHADO AREA**" within the Vhembe District Municipality is hereby granted to you.
3. Please contact IDP Manager, LED Manager and Acting General Manager Planning: at 015 960 2024 / 4607 and 4602 in order to arrange the starting date.
4. Should there be anything you need clarity on, feel free to call our office at 015 964 4610/015 964 4627.

Kind Regards

20/08/2024

MUNICIPAL MANAGER
KUTAMA Z.N

DATE

Appendix I: Interview schedule

1. Objective 1: To outline and describe the current institutional arrangement for provision of support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality

Questions directed at Vhembe District Municipality Office, Makhado Local Municipality and Limpopo Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development:

(a)Which institutions/organisations are responsible for providing support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality, Limpopo province?

List:

(i).----------

(ii).----------

(iii).----------

(iv).----------

(v). ----------

(b) What are the roles of the organizations/institutions responsible for providing support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality, Limpopo province?

(c) Are there formal mechanisms in place for coordinating land reform activities among different institutions/organizations in Makhado local municipality?

(d) How do institutions/organizations involved in land reform initiatives communicate with each other?

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(2) Objective 2: To identify the challenges prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality

Questions directed at Makhado municipality, Vhembe District Municipality, Limpopo Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs

(a) What are the key challenges faced in coordinating institutional efforts for land reform in Makhado local municipality?

(b) What are the existing challenges in terms of capacity building and resources for land reform implementation in Makhado local municipality?

(iii) What are legal or administrative barriers that hinder effective coordination for land reform in Makhado local municipality?

(iv) How does the local municipalities engage with relevant stakeholders (e.g., land reform beneficiaries, civil society organizations, traditional leaders, district municipality, provincial government, and national government) in the land reform process?

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(3) Objective 3: To evaluate measures provided by the DDM to address inadequate institutional coordination against the challenges prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to the land reform projects in Makhado local municipality" the following research questions were adopted.

Questions Directed at Vhembe District Municipality, Makhado local municipality, and Limpopo Cooperative Governance, Human Settlement and Traditional Affairs

(a) How does the DDM intends to make national and provincial sector departments responsible for land reform to share their budgets and plans and not revert to their current approaches to managing their project and budget?

(b) How does the DDM intends to ensure an ongoing commitment over electoral cycles to the model by all political stakeholders, sector departments of national and provincial governments, and the relevant local governments?

(c) How should the progress and outcomes of the DDM be monitored and evaluated in terms of its impact on institutional coordination on implementation of land reform projects in Makhado municipality?

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(d) What indicators or metrics can be used to measure the effectiveness of the DDM in improving institutional coordination on implementation of land reform projects in Makhado municipality?

(e) What kind of capacity building programs or training opportunities are provided to officials and staff involved in land reform process at the local municipality level through the DDM to ensure smooth collaboration between the three spheres of government?

Questions directed at the land reform beneficiaries

(a) What challenges were you facing before 2019 and are you currently still facing them after 5 years?

(4) Objective 4: To recommend suggestions on how the DDM can address the challenges which are prohibiting institutional coordination for provision of support to land reform projects in Makhado local municipality

Questions Directed at Makhado local municipality, Vhembe District municipality and Limpopo Cooperative Governance Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs

(a) How can DDM empower Makhado municipality to overcome institutional coordination challenges and enhance the capacity of their staff to effectively coordinate land reform projects efforts?

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(b) Are there any successful best practices from other regions or countries that can be replicated to enhance institutional coordination for land reform?

(c) What strategies or approaches can be adopted to ensure successful implementation of the DDM for improved institutional coordination?

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