Agrarian reform, institutions and livelihood dynamics of emergent livestock farmers in Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

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Agrarian reform, institutions and livelihood dynamics of emergent livestock farmers in Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

By

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RESEARCH DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is entirely my own work and that, unless otherwise stated, any use of the work of others has been duly acknowledged and referenced accordingly in a bibliography. This work has not been previously accepted for a higher degree and was conducted in compliance with Coventry University research ethics policy.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents, for their unwavering support, and to my family, my pillar of strength.

To God Almighty, I owe it all unto you.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

This thesis by artefact consists of the following research articles:

Peer-reviewed publications:

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CO-AUTHORS DECLARATION

We, the undersigned, declare that Lovemore Christopher Gwiriri undertook the research from which the articles presented in this thesis were produced, during his PhD study supervised by James Bennett, Sara Burbi and Cletos Mapiye. Lovemore Christopher Gwiriri was the first author responsible for data collection and analyses, preparation and submission of the original research articles, responding to reviewer comments and the article publication process.

ABSTRACT

Agriculture in South Africa has historically perpetuated a dual system of freehold commercial and communal subsistence farming. To bridge these extremes, post-apartheid agrarian reform policies have shifted towards neoliberal market approaches aimed at commercialising smallholder agriculture by encouraging the creation of a class of emergent, commercially-oriented farmers. Through an analysis of 120 in-depth interviews and 177 survey questionnaires with emergent and smallholder livestock farmers in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa, this thesis employs a Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) to evaluate the effectiveness of the agrarian reform process in supporting the transition of smallholder farmers into small-scale commercial agriculture.

As part of this evaluation process, the thesis first critiques the emergent farmer concept and analyses the considerable differentiation that exists within it using a class analytical perspective. The thesis also analyses the efficacy of institutions mandated to support agrarian reform. Specifically, it evaluates the role of Custom Feeding Programmes (CFPs) in enabling smallholder farmer market participation. It also examines the extent to which cooperatives are able to balance democratic function with effective programme delivery by drawing on the principles of democratic decentralisation and governance of institutions. The thesis then evaluates the livelihood trajectories of emergent farmers in their transition to small-scale commercial agriculture. Through mapping a resilience framework on the SLF, the thesis examines the capitals they draw on to facilitate this transition, and whether they become more or less resilient in the process.

Three broad categories of farmers are identified within the emergent farmer category (subsistence farmers on private land; small-scale commercial farmers; and fully commercialised farmers). The analysis demonstrated that despite having accessed private farms, most of the smallholder farmers analysed show very limited transition to small-scale commercial production, drawing on largely the same capitals to survive as previously, and remaining vulnerable in the process. Only a small group of farmers show an apparent transition to small-scale commercial production and most closely approximate to the emergent farmer class the agrarian reform process is attempting to create, drawing primarily on financial, human and social capital to effect this. However,

several of these farmers have drawn upon considerable levels of financial capital in the form of loans or savings, resulting in them being in a more vulnerable position than previously. Also evident is a small elite group of fully commercialised farmers, not necessarily transitioning from one production class to another, but rather diversifying their external financial capital investment into agriculture. The thesis also concludes that while CFPs are effective in systematising informal marketing, both CFPs and cooperatives perpetuate elite capture and exclusion of marginalised farmers through skewed service delivery and weak democratic ethos. CFPs are not well-structured to support smallholder farmers to engage with formal markets, and cooperatives are not effective in enabling equitable access to livelihood capitals to support the transition to small-scale agriculture for most smallholder farmers.

On this basis, the research recommends that a more nuanced and differentiated approach to agrarian reform policy is required to effectively enable greater broad-based accumulation from below and reduce elite capture. Policy reforms to enable institutions to be better embedded in communities; reduce gender and economic disparity; and effectively balance democracy and service delivery are suggested to enable these institutions to effectively support the agrarian reform process. Broadening agrarian policy in South Africa from its narrow neoliberal focus on economic viability, to encompass more inclusive and sustainable approaches to agrarian livelihoods, will be key in enabling agrarian reform to support and balance livelihood transitions and resilience.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARDRI	-	Agricultural Rural Development and Research Institute
AsgiSA	-	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa
AST	-	Abroad Spectrum Trading
BEE	-	Black Economic Empowerment
BioMASS	-	Biomass Fodder Production Assistance
CASP	-	Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme
CFP	-	Custom Feeding Programme
CSIR	-	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
CTA	-	Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation
DAFF	-	Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
DCGTA	-	Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
DEDEAT	-	Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism
DFID	-	Department for International Development
DPME	-	Department Perfomance Monitoring and Evaluation
DRDAR	-	Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform
DRDLR	-	Department of Rural Development and Land Reform
ECDC	-	Eastern Cape Development Cooperation
ECPC	-	Eastern Cape Planning Commision
ECRDA	-	Eastern Cape Rural Development Agency
FAO	-	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FTLR	-	Fast Track Land Reform
GCIS	-	Government Communication and Information System
HLPE	-	High Level Panel of Experts
IASC	-	Ikhephu Agricultural Secondary Cooperative
IBLI	-	Index-Based Livestock Insurance
IDC	-	Industrial Development Corporation
IFAD	-	International Fund for Agricultural Development
LIS	-	Livestock improvement Scheme
LRAD	-	Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development

MAFISA	-	Micro-Agricultural Finance Institutions of South Africa
NAFU	-	National Association of Farmers Unions
NAMC	-	National Agricultural Marketing Authority
NERPO	-	National Emergent Red Meat Producers' Organisation
NRMDP	-	National Red Meat Development Programme
ODI	-	Overseas Development Institute
PLAS	-	Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy
RADP	-	Recapitalization and Development Programme
RSA	-	Republic of South Africa
SAFU	-	South Africa Farmers Union
SLAG	-	Settlement Land Acquisition Grant
SLF	-	Sustainable Livelihoods Framework
SSA	-	Sub-Saharan Africa
UNDESA	-	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNICEF	-	United Nations International Child Education Fund
VC-ARID	-	Value Chain Analysis for Resilience in Drylands
WFP	-	World Food Programme
WHO	-	World Health Organisation
ZAR	-	South African Rand

CHAPTER ONE

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Rising global food and nutrition insecurity, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) (HLPE 2012, 2017, FAO 2015, FAO et al. 2018) has created renewed interest in the role of smallholder agriculture in mitigating this (Muyanga et al. 2011, Sitko and Jayne 2014). However, the most effective way for smallholder agriculture to achieve this, and particularly the potential for greater commercialisation of smallholder production to play a role in this, remains strongly contested (Aliber and Hall 2012, Poole et al. 2013, Sitko and Jayne 2014, Hakizimana et al. 2017, Hall et al. 2017, Kabiti et al. 2017).

Debates have focussed on what the primary goal of agrarian reform should be and how this can most effectively be achieved. On the one hand many scholars argue that agrarian reform should aim to provide secure and resilient livelihoods for as many smallholder producers as possible, through access to land to enable them to produce beyond subsistence and begin the process of accumulation from below (e.g. Lipton 2006, Lahiff et al. 2007, Hall 2009, Cousins 2010, Vetter 2013, Aliber 2019). Proponents of this approach argue that an alternative, market-driven focus on transitioning smallholder farmers into commercial agriculture through agrarian reform and associated provision of private farms, fails to provide livelihood security for most smallholders, as the process invariably excludes the rural majority from the process of private land acquisition. The process has also been criticised for frequently not realising the scale of commercialisation it was designed to achieve, even amongst those farmers who have benefitted from land acquisition (Poole et al. 2013, Vetter 2013, German et al. 2018, De Satgé and Cousins 2019).

Nonetheless, many recent agrarian reform approaches in SSA have been grounded in neo-liberal policies focused on the commercialisation of smallholder agriculture through formal land titling and market-led consolidation (De Soto 2000, Peters 2009, Yaro et al. 2017). Proponents of these approaches argue that food security can best be achieved through market liberalisation or market-led commercialisation of smallholder agriculture and the increased role of the market in land access and use (Deininger 2003, World Bank 2007, 2008). This is also reflected in the debates on the link between food security and

land tenure reform (Holden and Ghebru 2016), with Lawry et al. (2017) arguing that there is a link between food security and provision of secure land rights and formalisation of access to land.

1.2 Agrarian reform in South Africa

South Africa offers an interesting case through which to examine these debates. The agrarian structure and land holdings in South Africa remain dualistic in nature and contentious (Lahiff 2016), stemming from the legacy of colonial rule enshrined, in particular, in the Native Lands Act of 1913 (Hebinck et al. 2011, Commey 2013). Agrarian reform efforts in South Africa, since 1994, have used an ambitious market-led approach to try and resolve the issue of highly skewed land distribution by encouraging smallholder farmers into commercial agriculture (Aliber 2011, O'Laughlin et al. 2013) and using this as means to try and address rural poverty and unemployment. This has involved a tri-component strategy consisting of land restitution (predicated on the 1994 Restitution of Land Rights Act); land tenure reform (based on the Land Tenure Rights Act of 1991); and land redistribution (grounded in the Provision of Land and Assistance Act of 1993), and has been extensively critiqued by a range of scholars (e.g. Jacobs et al. 2003, Lahiff 2007, 2016, Aliber et al. 2013, Okunlola et al. 2016, Hall and Kepe 2017, Aliber 2019).

The process has evolved considerably from the initial Settlement Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG) available to land reform beneficiaries from 1995 to 1999; through a second stage of Land Reform for Agricultural Development (LRAD) from 2000 to 2005; to the latest Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS) approach since 2006. This change in policy, driven by perceived failures of the preceding agrarian reform stages to achieve the national target of redistributing 30 per cent of farmland (24.6 million ha) and, importantly, criticisms that transferred land was no longer 'productive' in a commercial sense (Africa Research Institute 2013), was accompanied by a fundamental shift in the overall objective of agrarian reform. SLAG focussed on the distribution of private land to historically disadvantaged rural smallholders or small-scale farmers to enable them to engage in petty commodity production i.e. it aimed to support a process of accumulation from below (Cousins 2007, 2010, van den Berg et al. 2016, Shepherd and Scott 2018).

However, with LRAD (and later PLAS) under the Mbeki administration (2000-2008), there was a deliberate policy shift towards the redistribution of freehold (or leasehold) land primarily to benefit 'better-off' black entrepreneurs and encourage them to become commercial or black capitalist farmers (Lahiff 2007, Cousins 2010, Hall and Kepe 2017). This shift in focus from the poor to the better-off, encouraged the creation of a class of so-called 'emergent farmers' to try and bridge the historical dichotomy in South African agriculture. These are envisaged as ideally being medium-scale capitalist farmers able to farm at a scale beyond petty commodity production (Hall 2009, Cousins 2010, Hebinck et al. 2011). This refocusing of the land reform process in South Africa has been heavily contested not only because it excludes many potential beneficiaries, but may also be subject to elite capture (e.g. O'Laughlin et al. 2013, Lahiff 2016, Okunlola et al. 2016, Hall and Kepe 2017, Vink and Kirsten 2019). Specifically, the extent to which the agrarian reform process has managed to support the emergence of a class of medium-scale commercial farmers remains unclear, as indeed does the form these farmers are taking or where they are 'emerging' from.

1.2.1 The 'emergent farmer' concept.

Hall (2009) and Cousins (2010) suggest that the success of agrarian reform hinges on its ability to create conditions for broad based accumulation from below i.e. creating a 'middle' group of farmers who are supported to emerge from a subsistence or expanded petty commodity production base. This 'middle farmer' or 'emergent farmer' concept finds resonance and application elsewhere in SSA where widely varying levels of commercial productivity and accumulation strategies have been accompanied by shifts in agrarian reform policy at different points (e.g. Sitko and Jayne 2014, Jayne et al. 2015 for Zambia; Scoones et al. 2011b, Marongwe 2011 for Zimbabwe; Neven et al. 2009 for Kenya).

In Zambia, Sitko and Jayne (2014) and Jayne et al. (2015) identify a changing land ownership pattern to support the creation of a class of emergent farmers encouraged by specifically-targeted agrarian reform and government spending policy shifts. In this context these farmers are described as investor farmers, i.e. salaried urbanites or rural elites who invest in agriculture largely facilitated through the conversion of customary tenure into private tenure by the 1995 Land Act. This group also includes black

commercial farmers who have also emerged from small-scale communal farming (Jayne et al. 2015), indicating a wide variation in what constitutes an emergent farmer. Studies by Hakizimana et al. (2017) observed similar trends in Kenya, where a significant capitalist farming class emerged, largely supported by access to off-farm income. As in Zambia, variations in accumulation dynamics resulted in a range of 'capitalist smallholders' and 'medium scale commercial farmers' (Hakizimana et al. 2017: 570). In Zimbabwe, the Fast Track Land Reform programme (FTLR) from 2000 broadened accumulation strategies and resulted in the creation of a variety of emergent farmers, ranging from largely subsistence farmers to commercial (A2) black farmers, the latter involving access to land by a group of elite beneficiaries (Scoones et al. 2011a, 2011b, Marongwe 2011). This was precipitated by a shift in the objective of agrarian reform, from supporting accumulation from below under the 'willing buyer willing seller' (1979-99) model, to accumulation from both below and above under FTLR. Similarly, in South Africa, shifts in agrarian reform policy have resulted in a range of accumulation strategies and associated levels of commercial production within the emergent farmer class, ranging from black commercial or capitalist farmers who accumulate from above to small-scale or entrepreneur farmers accumulating from below (Cousins 2010, Aliber and Hall 2012, Hall and Kepe 2017).

Thus, the use of the emergent farmer concept as a homogeneous term for all land reform beneficiaries within the current agrarian reform process in South Africa (DAFF 2012, 2018a) raises questions about its value in helping to unpack the dynamics of who these farmers really are and suggests that a much more critical understanding of the concept is required. Specifically, the concept remains vague about what an emergent farmer is and what exactly they are emerging from and to. What are the patterns of class formation in this discursively deployed political category, and what are the agrarian reform (or rural development) policy implications of a differentiated and more nuanced approach to this concept?

1.2.2 Livestock production and marketing

Livestock policies in Africa have consistently failed to transition poor livestock farmers into sustainable commercial livestock production and expand livestock marketing (Pica-ciamarra 2005). Due to persistent production and marketing challenges that remain unaddressed by agricultural policy, poor livestock farmers find it difficult to respond to

market opportunities and price incentives driven by the current and projected increase in demand for livestock products in developing countries (Pica-ciamarra 2005, Thornton 2010, FAO 2018, Enahoro et al. 2019). This is coupled with poor public investment in agriculture in developing countries, currently ranging from 3.6% in Malawi to just 0.15% in Guinea-Bissau (Shimeles et al. 2018). Policies have often approached livestock production and household economics separately. For instance, agricultural policies to address output market failures e.g. special economic zones, structural adjustment and trade liberalisation (Markelova and Mwangi 2010, Shimeles et al. 2018), are seldom coupled with support to address input market, productive and risk coping challenges. Poor livestock farmers in Africa also face significant challenges with access to resources e.g. land, as well as livestock diseases and high mortality, poor nutrition sources, poor market infrastructure and information, extension and insurance services (Mapiye et al. 2009b, Mwai et al. 2015, Nyamushamba et al. 2017, CTA 2018, FAO 2018, Matope et al. 2019). Further, Shimeles et al. (2018) indicates that a significant number of African countries still lack a cohesive livestock development strategy. An integrated or holistic agricultural policy approach (FAO 2018, Salmon et al. 2018) linked with investment in agricultural research (Enahoro et al. 2019) could be instrumental in encouraging the transition to sustainable commercial livestock production.

In South Africa, the transition to commercialise smallholder agriculture has been underpinned by reforms to improve livestock production and off-take in communal areas and facilitate engagement of smallholder farmers with formal markets. This is premised on the fact that livestock plays a pivotal role in buffering smallholder livelihoods, with 75% of the livestock in SSA kept by smallholder farmers (Nyamushamba et al. 2017). However, this policy approach to encourage formal market engagement presents a missed opportunity, as considerable informal livestock trade occurs in Africa (de Haan et al. 1999, Eid 2014, Mpairwe et al. 2015), and in South Africa (Meissner et al. 2013a, Vetter 2013). Furthermore, the current formal market beef classification and related high transaction costs; poor market infrastructure; lack of adequate market information (Meissner et al. 2013a, 2013b, Sikwela and Mushunje 2013, Soji et al. 2015, Chingala et al. 2017, Sotsha et al. 2017) and small herd sizes (Coetzee et al. 2005, Musemwa et al. 2007, Mapiye et al. 2009b, Bennett et al. 2013, Mapiye et al. 2018) deter poor livestock farmers from engaging with this marketing channel.

With 69% of land in South Africa only suitable for livestock and wildlife production (DAFF 2017), livestock play a key role in agriculture. The smallholder sector accounts for 40% of the estimated 13.4 million cattle in the national herd (DAFF 2017, 2018b). However, the contribution of livestock from this sector to the formal market is estimated to be only 5 to 10% (Musemwa et al. 2010, Ndoro et al. 2013). To encourage livestock production and market participation, agrarian reform has been coupled with livestock marketing initiatives. This has occurred through the National Red Meat Development Programme (NMRDP) initially developed in 2005 as the Eastern Cape Red Meat Project in the form of Custom Feeding Programmes (CFPs) (ComMark 2013, Nyhodo et al. 2014, Sotsha et al. 2017). CFPs are coordinated by the National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC) and underpinned by the 'retained-ownership' model, a marketing strategy where ownership of cattle is retained by the seller throughout the CFP phase and proceeds are remitted to the seller when the livestock are sold (Gillespie et al. 2004, NAMC 2013). The objective of CFPs is to encourage formal market participation of emergent and communal livestock farmers through a process of 'finishing' their cattle using grain-based commercial feed at a subsidised, fixed fee (Ntombela et al. 2013, Nyhodo et al. 2014, Sotsha et al. 2017). Furthermore, CFPs also aim to 'systematise' the informal marketing of cattle i.e. organised collective informal cattle marketing to attain consistently higher informal market prices.

Despite the current importance vested in CFPs in South Africa as a means of improving participation of smallholder livestock farmers in formal markets, there has been very little attempt to evaluate their performance, and where studies have been undertaken, these have mainly focussed on livestock off-take and feed dynamics (e.g. Nyhodo et al. 2014, Marandure et al. 2016b). There is a need to develop a more detailed understanding of the social (equity and participation) and operational sustainability of CFPs, with a view of understanding how they really contribute to farmer livelihoods. Critically, are CFPs an appropriate model to deliver inclusive smallholder livestock marketing? Cognisant of the smallholder production system, marketing patterns and the socio-economic and cultural roles of livestock (Ainslie et al. 2002, Ainslie 2013, Twine 2013), what are the socio-political, institutional and practical implications of such an approach?

1.2.3 Cooperatives as decentralised institutions for service delivery

Coupled with improving productive capacity, linking developing farmers with input and output markets has become a key strategy in agricultural policy to achieve poverty reduction and rural development (Fischer and Qaim 2012, Verhofstadt and Maertens 2014). Strategies have aimed to reduce market failures and transaction costs; and improve access to services and rural finance; factors which impede participation of poor farmers in markets. Forms of collective action, such as cooperatives have been the most common avenue to achieve this in Africa (Markelova and Mwangi 2010, Fischer and Qaim 2012, Francesconi and Wouterse 2019). Cooperatives are linked to reduction in transaction costs and improved access to information, technologies and assets, services and participation of smallholder farmers in markets, through enhanced institutional support and collective action (Holloway et al. 2000, Markelova and Mwangi 2010, Fischer and Qaim 2012, Verhofstadt and Maertens 2014). Therefore, the poor performance of rural institutions negatively affects engagement of smallholder farmers with agriculture (Markelova and Mwangi 2010, Francesconi and Wouterse 2019). This is strongly connected to the poor governance of cooperatives and often misdirected and unregulated interference of external organisations, particularly the state, in this (Markelova and Mwangi 2010). Furthermore, where cooperatives are not effectively governed, there is the risk of exclusion of poorer members and accrual of benefits to a few powerful members in these institutions, termed elite capture, reported by several authors in Africa and elsewhere (Olowu 2003, Quisumbing et al. 2008, Liverpool-Tasie 2014, Hu et al. 2017).

Cooperatives remain the primary institutions through which delivery of governmental agricultural support programmes for rural communities is realised in South Africa. They are designed to be autonomous and democratic voluntary membership institutions that function to deliver collective and mutually-shared economic, social and cultural benefits for members (Allahdadi 2011, FAO 2012) by drawing on collective action and social theory (Ostrom 1990, Dietz et al. 2008, Streifeneder 2015, Singleton 2017). The ability of these institutions to equitably deliver service and resources is dependent on an imbedded governance ethos of democratic decentralisation and downward accountability (Agrawal and Ribot 1999, Ribot 2004), an aspect that has not been adequately achieved in many parts of Africa (Olowu 2003), and in South Africa (Wittenberg 2006, Koelble and Siddle 2014). Cabral (2011) indicates that decentralisation in Africa has often been

driven by political motives and consists mainly of deconcentrating political functions to retain central power through local elites. Ndengwa (2002), Olowu (2003) and Cabral (2011) concur that political, fiscal and administrative decentralisation are poorly delivered in most African countries, and are rarely separated. Poor governance frequently results in skewed benefits distribution and elite capture due to prevailing power dynamics and authority (Mansuri and Rao 2004, Wong 2010, Arnall et al. 2013). For instance, Liverpool-Tasie (2014) demonstrates skewed resource allocation in farmer groups in Nigeria. Francesconi and Wouterse (2019) conclude that most cooperatives in Africa perform poorly due to poor management capacity.

In South Africa, emergent farmers are organised into cooperatives, which have been designed as the primary conduits for accessing state agricultural improvement programmes and thus provide the necessary support to facilitate commercialisation of smallholder agriculture (Mtero 2012). Cooperatives are guided by the principles of good cooperative governance (RSA 2015) enshrined in the Cooperatives Act no. 14 of 2005 and the Cooperatives Amendment Act no. 6 of 2013 of South Africa (RSA 2013). This means that service delivery and access to resources for emergent farmers is strongly dependent on the cooperative governance structure and their socio-political leadership i.e. accountability of the leadership to its membership (Fulton and Giannakas 2007, Fiedler 2008). However, the limited capacity of local government to reach down to rural farmers means that cooperatives may be inclined to elect powerful, politically-connected leaders to help reach up to service providers to access resources, who might not necessarily have the appropriate leadership and management capacity (Francesconi and Wouterse 2019). This is complicated in South Africa by the resurgence of traditional authority as chiefs and headmen are prime candidates to be elected into these roles (Ribot 2002, Bennett 2013, Bennett et al. 2013).

This raises important questions about how these issues are potentially impacting on the performance and function of cooperatives. It is critical to understand how these institutions balance service delivery with upholding democratic principles. What are the roles of legitimacy, power and accountability in cooperative performance and delivery of agrarian reform? Is the role of the cooperatives to merely underpin or complement state-dictated policy or act as independent self-governing institutions?

1.2.4 Resilient or vulnerable livelihoods

The broadscale transition from smallholder subsistence production to various levels of commercial production under agrarian reform in Africa has created an array of livelihood outcomes for farmers (Sitko and Jayne 2014, Scoones 2015, Hakizimana et al. 2017, Scoones et al. 2018). However, it is important to develop a more detailed understanding of the livelihood transitions that occur through agrarian reform, and whether this process results in more resilient of vulnerable livelihoods.

A number of studies have sought to understand smallholder livelihood dynamics within an agrarian reform context in SSA (e.g. Werner and Odendaal 2010b, Aliber and Cousins 2013, Matenga and Hichaambwa 2016, Scoones et al. 2018) and in agriculture elsewhere (e.g. Sallu et al. 2010, Borras and Franco 2012, Huot and Pain 2017, Cottyn 2018). However, studies of livelihood transitions have focussed less on identifying the different assets that facilitate these transitions i.e. the assets farmers draw upon in shaping their livelihood trajectories through agrarian reform transitions, and whether as part of this process they become more or less vulnerable than previously. This understanding is fundamental in providing a grounded critique of current agrarian reform policies in SSA, not only in terms of whether these transitions are being made but what they are achieving for the farmers that make them (or indeed fail to). To what extent is a recognised transition being made by emergent livestock farmers from one production strategy to another? What are the key livelihood capitals they are drawing on to effect these transitions? Do these transitions enable these farmers to become more resilient or make them more vulnerable to the shocks and stresses they currently face?

Agrarian reform policy in South Africa remains unclear as to whether it retains any focus on supporting secure livelihoods through access to land or is solely focussed on commercialising production. This means that agrarian reform beneficiaries are left to navigate the precarious balance between engaging with commercial production and simultaneously trying to create secure livelihoods for themselves. This provides a framing for the shocks and stresses in unfamiliar socio-economic contexts that guide the livelihood decisions and choices that agrarian reform beneficiaries make. Smallholder farmers usually react to unfamiliar stresses, shocks and risk by livelihood diversification to buffer risk and declining livelihood returns (Twine 2013, Tittonell 2014). This raises important questions about the extent to which a narrow focus on commercialisation might

actually limit opportunities for livelihood diversification amongst emergent livestock farmers and thus undermine their resilience.

Several authors have demonstrated that livelihood resilience has its origins in the ability to cope or recover from shocks and stresses, which is dependent on the access to livelihood capitals (Adger 2006, Obrist et al. 2010, Sallu et al. 2010, Meybeck et al. 2012, Ifejika Speranza et al. 2014). It is therefore important to understand how the agrarian reform process affects access to key livelihood capitals and hence the ability of farmers to cope with this and still strengthen their livelihoods. This is important in contributing to current debates about who should be targeted by agrarian reform and how the process can be reformed to better support livelihoods (Aliber 2019, De Satgé and Cousins 2019).

1.3 Research objectives

The present thesis aims to understand the livelihood transitions of emergent farmers under agrarian reform. This is underpinned by an understanding of what an emergent farmer is, how they are organised within the institutions that govern them, and the capitals they draw on in making their transitions under agrarian reform. To understand these dynamics, the specific objectives of the current thesis are:

i) To critically unpack the emergent farmer concept in the context of agrarian reform in South Africa.
ii) To evaluate the role played by CFPs in supporting the marketing of smallholder cattle into both the formal and informal livestock sectors.
iii) To evaluate the role of cooperatives in service delivery to emergent farmers and critically understand how they achieve this within a democratic framing.
iv) To critically analyse the transition of smallholder farmers to commercial production through agrarian reform, and the extent to which this transition supports resilient livelihoods.

1.4 Organisation of the thesis

The current thesis by artefact is constructed around four research papers and organised as follows:

Chapter 1, the introduction, outlines the background to the study and the objectives of the thesis. It draws on the wider debates pertaining to agrarian reform, how the farmers are organised under the institutions that govern them and the livelihood transitions that underpin the process. These sections are underpinned by pertinent questions that help to frame the research objectives.

Chapter 2 is an account of the methodological approach and theoretical underpinnings employed by the current thesis. It describes the rationale for selecting the study sites, the sampling frame utilised to select respondents and a critique of the overarching analytical framework, the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF). The section describes the data collection and analysis process, and the complementary analytical frameworks that are employed. The section concludes with an outline of the positionality, language and ethical issues that should be considered when interpreting the findings of the study.

Chapter 3, 4, 5 and 6 comprise the four research articles. The different datasets drawn on, the key outputs and the key analytical frameworks applied, and how the research articles are linked, is summarised in Figure 1-1. These research articles are linked overall by the SLF. The SLF and the methodologies underpinning them are described in detail in Chapter 2.

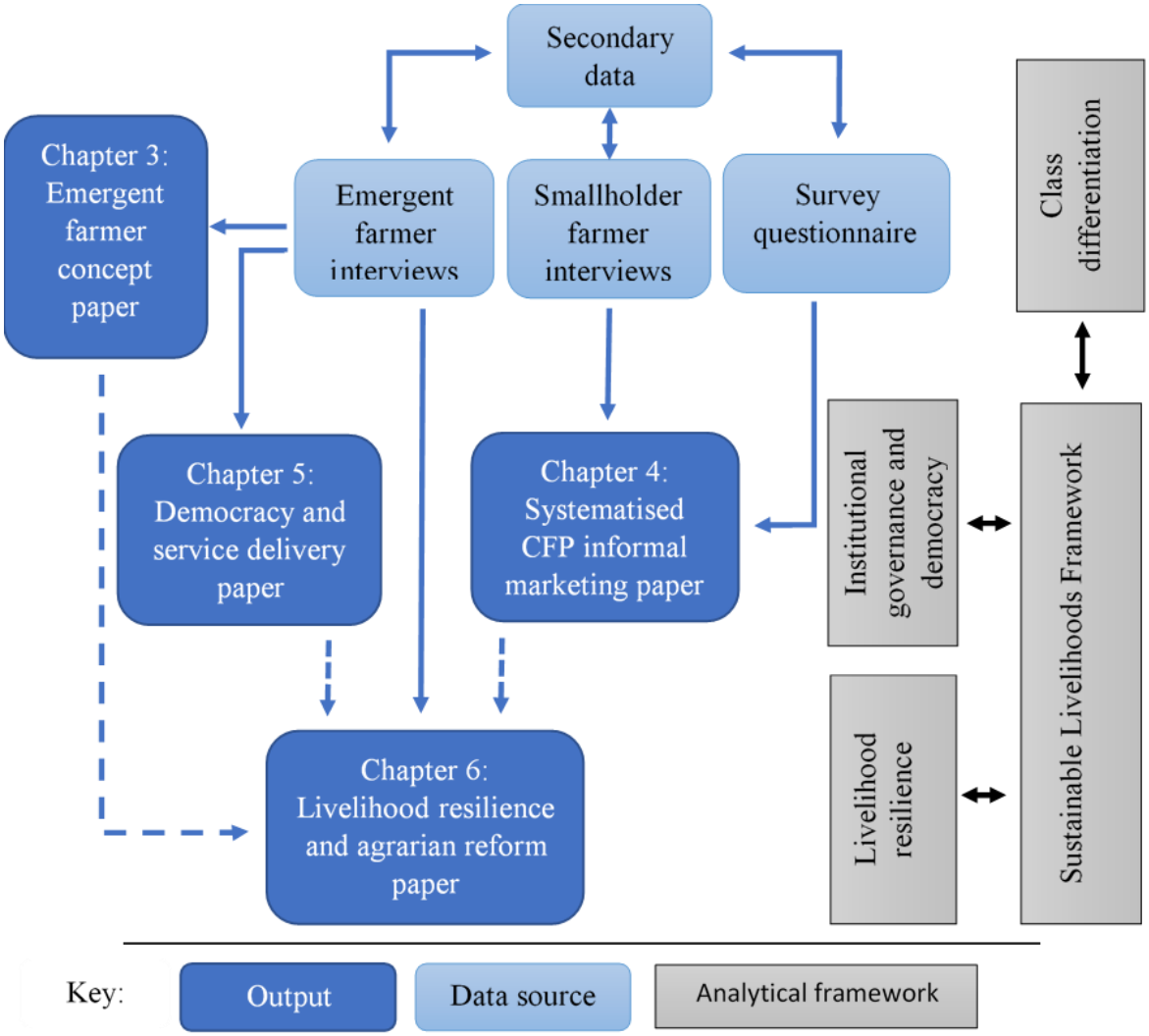


Figure 1- 1: Schematic of data sets, outputs and key analytical frameworks applied in the current study

Chapter 3 consists of an article addressing the first objective, which critically explores the emergent farmer concept. The chapter initially draws on regional studies from SSA to understand what an emergent farmer is, and how the concept has been approached under agrarian reform. The chapter then critically analyses how the concept has been deployed in the South African agrarian reform context and unpacks the differentiation that exists in this concept using a class analytical perspective. It draws on the emergent farmer interviews and the analysis is grounded in their level of engagement with livestock production and marketing through their local CFP. The chapter concludes with agrarian reform policy recommendations.

Chapter 4 contains an article addressing the second objective, which examines the institutions governing the marketing of livestock as part of commercialisation of

smallholder farmers within agrarian reform. It evaluates the constraints to systematised livestock marketing through CFPs, and the wider application of such an approach in smallholder livestock production systems. The chapter further evaluates the sustainability of CFPs, their ability to add value to smallholder livestock production and their role in enabling equitable market participation. It draws on qualitative data from the smallholder farmer interviews, quantitative data from the survey questionnaire and existing secondary data. The chapter concludes with an understanding of the challenges in operationalising CFPs and suggestions as to how CFPs can enable effective and inclusive market participation.

Chapter 5 is structured as an article to address the third objective and evaluates cooperatives as institutions designed to support service delivery to emergent farmers. The chapter explores how cooperatives deliver services in the context of limited government support, and are able to balance service delivery with accountability, power and transparency as democratic decentralised institutions. This chapter primarily draws on the emergent farmer interviews. It concludes with recommendations as to how cooperatives can be strengthened to support emergent farmers.

Chapter 6 is structured as an article that builds upon the previous chapters, by exploring the livelihood trajectories of emergent farmers from subsistence production through to the different farmer classes identified in chapter 3, i.e. the capitals that emergent farmers draw upon to transition to the different levels of commercial production. It evaluates their livelihoods prior to agrarian reform by drawing on the emergent farmer interviews and chapter 4, and the institutional frameworks they draw support from (evaluated in Chapter 4 and 5) to transition into these class positions. The chapter critically analyses whether, through the current neoliberal approach of agrarian reform in South Africa, the transition to commercial agriculture supports resilient or vulnerable livelihoods.

Chapter 7 discusses the significance of the research findings and their broader contribution to debates about agrarian reform and policy. It draws out the key findings and lessons from the agrarian reform process, the institutions that support the process and the livelihood transitions facilitated by this process, and the wider application of these lessons to SSA and beyond. The chapter concludes by signposting areas for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO

2 Methodology

This chapter describes the study area, the theoretical underpinnings of the study and the methods used for data collection and analysis. The chapter further outlines the positionality and ethical issues raised by the research.

2.1 Selection of study area

The study was carried out in Eastern Cape Province specifically in the former homeland of Transkei, in South Africa. The Eastern Cape was selected for the research based primarily on two factors.

i) Firstly, considerable agrarian reform has occurred in the province aimed at transitioning black, smallholder farmers beyond petty commodity production into capitalist commercial productivity i.e. the creation of a class of 'emergent' farmers. Jacobs et al. (2003), for example, demonstrate that during the early stages of agrarian reform more than 50% of all LRAD projects were located in the Eastern Cape and Free State provinces, with 51 600ha redistributed in the Eastern Cape through LRAD. In total since 1994, there have been 816 agrarian reform projects in the Eastern Cape, through which 491 980ha of land have been redistributed, benefitting 26 563 people across 1 356 households. This diversity of empirical material provides an ideal opportunity to explore current debates as to what the agrarian reform process in South Africa is actually achieving (e.g. Commey 2013, Dikgang and Muchapondwa 2016, Hall 2009, Cousins 2009, Lahiff 2016, Kepe and Hall 2018), particularly in terms of the commercialisation of smallholder agriculture (Aliber and Hall 2012).

ii) Secondly, of the 13.4 million cattle currently in South Africa, 3.1 million are in Eastern Cape Province (DAFF 2018b). Thus, not only does the Eastern Cape have the highest proportion of cattle (24%) of any province in South Africa (DAFF 2018b), 60% of these animals are found in the communal and developing agricultural areas (Grant et al. 2004, Mapiye et al. 2018). With limited crop production due to local agro-ecological conditions, 90% of the Eastern Cape province is utilised for communal and commercial livestock production, game

ranching and nature conservation (CSIR 2004, DAFF 2018b). However, production and marketing challenges persist (see Coetzee et al. 2005, Musemwa et al. 2007, Mapiye et al. 2009b, Meissner et al. 2013a, Soji et al. 2015, Mapiye et al. 2018) such that cattle in the Eastern Cape contribute insignificantly to formal beef production in South Africa (NAMC 2013). Until recently, formal abattoirs were largely absent in the Eastern cape, formal marketing occurring mostly by calves supplied for fattening to feedlots in the North West, Free State and Mpumalanga provinces where maize and soya bean are produced. The recent coupling of agrarian reform in Eastern Cape with initiatives to enhance both the formal and informal market participation of smallholder livestock farmers, such as the Eastern Cape Red Meat project and later National Red Meat Development Programme in the form of CFPs (ComMark 2013, Nyhodo et al. 2014, Sotsha et al. 2017), provides an opportunity to evaluate the ability of such initiatives to improve cattle marketing, as well as the broader sustainability of livestock-based livelihoods for the smallholder farmers they are designed to support.

2.2 Description of study area

Eastern Cape Province has a current population of 6 562 million people occupying 17 million hectares, 80% of this land being suitable for grazing and 6.9% for arable production (DAFF 2018b). The Eastern Cape region around the former homeland of Transkei is described as semi-arid (Hillerislambers et al. 2001), with a mean annual rainfall range of 600-1200mm and average mid-day temperatures of 15°C in June to 25°C in January around the Elliot area (Mucina and Rutherford 2006). Topographically the province is highly variable, rising from sea level in its south and south-eastern parts through 1 500m in the north-eastern parts to 2 100m in the north-western parts (Gibbs-Russell and Robinson 1981). Ecologically, the province consists of a mixed veld i.e. sweet and sour rangelands which vary with vegetation type and rainfall. Sour rangelands are composed of mostly perennial grasses that decline in palatability and nutritional quality during the drier periods and receive between 600 and 800mm of rainfall annually. Sweet rangelands are composed of perennial grasses punctuated by false thornveld and valley bushveld that maintain nutritional quality and palatability in the drier months, with precipitation between 250 and 600mm annually (Ellery et al. 1995, Teague et al. 2011). In general, vegetative nutrition is poor, particularly in the dry season. Typical grassland species are in the genera *Elionurus, Sporobolus, Digitaria, Cymbopogon, Eragrostis,*

Themeda and *Aristida*, and the grassland is interrupted by patches of short-grazed thornveld e.g. *Vachellia karroo*, dwarf shrubs e.g. *Chrysocoma ciliata* and invasive trees e.g. *Acacia mearnsii* (Mucina and Rutherford 2006). An exhaustive description of vegetation found in Eastern Cape Province is provided in Germishuizen and Meyer (2003). The soils are generally a mosaic of sandstones, mudstones and dolerite strips underlying clay, consisting of 30-35% clayey soils in the low-laying areas and litho-soils in the higher areas, considered low in phosphate and fertility (Moyo et al. 2010, Teague et al. 2011, Nqeno et al. 2011). This province is characterised by an increasing frequency of early cessation and delayed onset of rainfall (Weldeab et al. 2013), high disease burden (Meissner et al. 2013b, Rust and Rust 2013, Mapiye et al. 2018) and frequent veld fires.

The Eastern Cape has the second highest poverty incidence (estimated at 12.7%) of any province in South Africa (ECPC 2014, DEDEAT 2017). Annual GDP growth declined from 5.3% in 2007 to 0.6% in 2015 (DEDEAT 2017). The province is characterised by 49.1% female-headed households who are 47% poorer than male-headed households on average (DEDEAT 2017). Further, the province has a high estimated unemployment rate of about 28% (ECPC 2014) and a relatively poor literacy level, with only an estimated 28% of the population having attained some form of metric level or secondary education (DEDEAT 2017).

The dominant ethnic group in the province is the *Xhosa* people, consisting of the *Xhosa, Pondo, Thembu* and *Bomvana* tribes (Department of Education 2006). Communal subsistence-based agriculture is the dominant production system and livestock are 'enclaved commodities' that have important and rather contrasting socio-economic and cultural roles (Ainslie 2013: 37). Household mean cattle herd sizes of 12-13±10 are typical (e.g. Musemwa et al. 2010, Nqeno et al. 2011, Marandure et al. 2016b) with cattle market offtake of between 5 and 10% (Musemwa et al. 2010, Ndoro et al. 2013, Sotsha et al. 2017) owing to poor marketing infrastructure, information, pricing, relatively inaccessible formal markets and incapacity to sell due to small herd sizes (Sikwela and Mushunje 2013, Meissner et al. 2013a). Weighted average monthly household income for the province was estimated at ZAR7 462 (US$576) in 2011, with 41% of households primarily dependent on social grants (DEDEAT 2017) for their livelihoods.

2.3 Selection and description of study sites

To understand the contribution of agrarian reform to livelihoods, emergent smallholder farmers resettled in the Elliot area were selected for study (Figure 2-1). Elliot lies $31^0$31' S and $27^0$83' E at 1 450m above sea level in Sakhisizwe Local Municipality and is bordered to the south by the former Transkei magisterial districts of Cala, Engcobo and Tsolo (Aliber et al. 2006). It has a mean annual rainfall of 622mm, and the average monthly rainfall ranges from a minimum of 9mm in July and to a maximum of 105mm in February (Mucina and Rutherford 2006). The average mid-day temperatures range from 15^0C in June to 25.8^0C in January. Local vegetation is mainly Dohne sourveld dominated by *Cymbopogon-Themeda* grassland with areas of *Themeda triandra* sweetveld. It is characterised by species such as *Themeda triandra, Cymbopogon plurinodis, Heteropogon contortus and Tristachya leucothrix* with patches of invasive trees and shrubs such as *Chrysocoma ciliata* and *Acacia mearnsii* (Mucina and Rutherford 2006).

Elliot was selected because it has a large community of emergent farmers resulting from different models of agrarian reform (SLAG, LRAD and PLAS described in detail in chapter 1) and has achieved a relatively high level of land transfer (anything up to 40% land transfer in some areas, against a national average of less than 10%) (Aliber et al. 2006, NAMC 2013). Further, Elliot was also selected based on the presence of the Ikhephu commercial CFP, a government-supported cattle marketing initiative which has organised emergent farmers into primary cooperatives, designed to support them in finishing and marketing their cattle. This provided an opportunity to explore the level of service delivery provided to emergent farmers by these cooperatives in their capacity as decentralised institutions, responsible for accessing and disbursing equipment and services available through government agricultural support programmes (DAFF 2010).

In-order to understand more broadly the contribution of marketing initiatives such as CFPs to livestock production and the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, beyond only those who have received land through agrarian reform, the research also included several groups of communal farmers in the region. Eight of the 10 functional CFPs that have so far been established in communal villages the Eastern Cape (NAMC 2018) were used in the research i.e. Gxwalibomvu, Ngangegqili, Kamastone, Komani, Lahlangubo, Lower Hukuwa (L. Hukuwa), Umzimvubu and Ncorha CFPs (Table 2.1 and Figure 2-1). The

two other operational CFPs were not suitable for inclusion in the research because they were either located a long distance from the other CFPs and/or were newly established and hence had limited records of livestock sales, which made evaluation of their performance difficult.

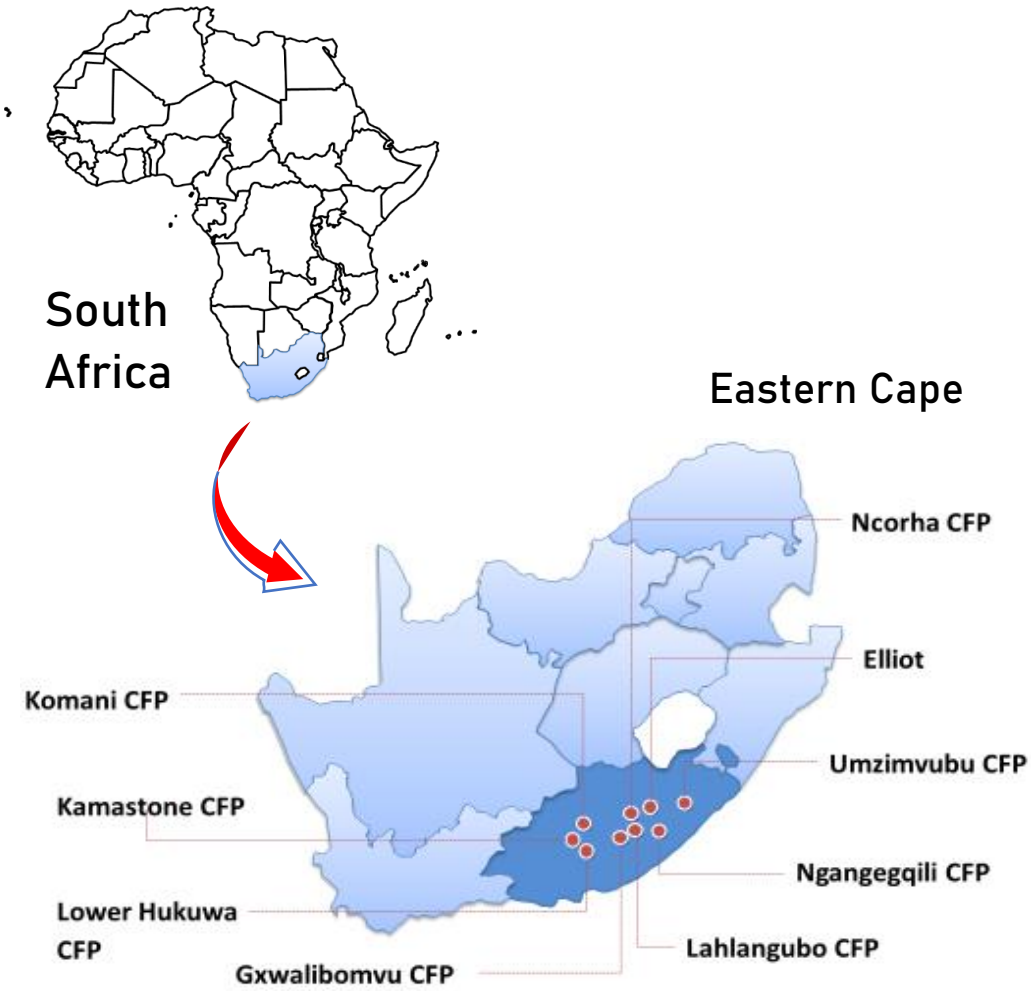


Figure 2- 1: Study sites in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa [*Source: Maps adapted by author using http://yourfreetemplates.com.*]

Studying these eight CFPs also enabled an important evaluation of challenges facing communal farmers in trying to participate in the CFPs and the operational constraints these CFPs face on a day-to-day basis in trying to support these farmers. The rainfall and temperature data for the CFP sites is as shown in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1: Rainfall and temperature data for the CFP study sites in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

CFP	Coordinates	Mean annual rainfall (mm)	Mean minimum monthly temperature	Mean maximum monthly temperature
Gxwalibomvu	32°1'4" S, 27°45'18" E	689 ± 11	11.1^{0}C	20.5^{0}C
Ncorha	31°59'27" S, 27°80'30" E	612 ± 12	8.3^{0}C	19.3^{0}C
Komani	31°92'43" S, 26°92'13" E	537 ±10	7.3^{0}C	20.1^{0}C
Lahlangubo	31°73'53" S, 27°82'50" E	635 ±10	10.6^{0}C	20.3^{0}C
Kamastone	32º8'74" S, 26º73'18" E	696 ±11	8.4^{0}C	19.6^{0}C
L. Hukuwa	32°19'20" S, 26°76'20" E	731 ±12	8.7^{0}C	19.5^{0}C
Umzimvubu	30°85'76" S, 28°95'11" E	757±10	10.4^{0}C	19.9^{0}C
Ngangegqili	32º1'11" S, 28º32'5" E	753±13	13.1^{0}C	20.7^{0}C

[Source: Weather data extrapolated by author using data provided by South African Weather Service and Bastien Dieppois (Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience, Coventry University, UK)]

2.4 Sampling frame

The 60 'emergent' farmers included in the study were purposefully sampled from a broader cohort of 155 emergent farmers who, as part of agrarian reform, have been resettled on private farms surrounding the small town of Elliot in the Eastern Cape Province. These 155 farms each fall within one of five primary cooperatives all of which fall under the broader umbrella of Ikhephu Secondary Agricultural Cooperative (IASC). Sampling of respondents was stratified according to four criteria with farms purposively selected (Palinkas et al. 2015) within each stratum based on: (i) the land reform model respondents benefitted from (SLAG, LRAD or PLAS); (ii) the primary cooperative they belonged to (one of five, anonymised as TVPC, BKPC, CNPC, ITPC and UMPC); (iii) farm characteristics such as where the farm was located and its distance from the market; and finally, (iv) whether they farmed individually or as part of a group (Figure 2-2).

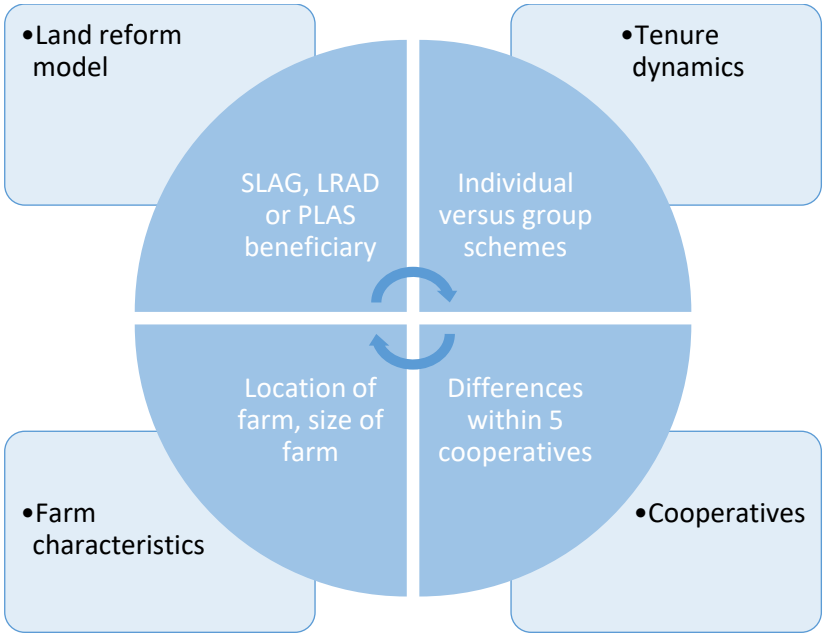


Figure 2- 2: Sampling frame for emergent farmers in Elliot, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

The sampling frame aimed to capture the broader nuances that characterised these 'emergent' farmers, and not necessarily to identify farms satisfying every combination of the four criteria and the characteristics within them, as in some instances this was practically impossible (for example, no farms were allocated on a group basis under the PLAS model). Rather, representative farms satisfying the main elements of each of the four criteria were identified and it transpired that many of these elements overlapped e.g. LRAD farms used in the study included a mixture of farms under group and individual ownership, varied widely in size and location and were found in all five of the primary cooperatives.

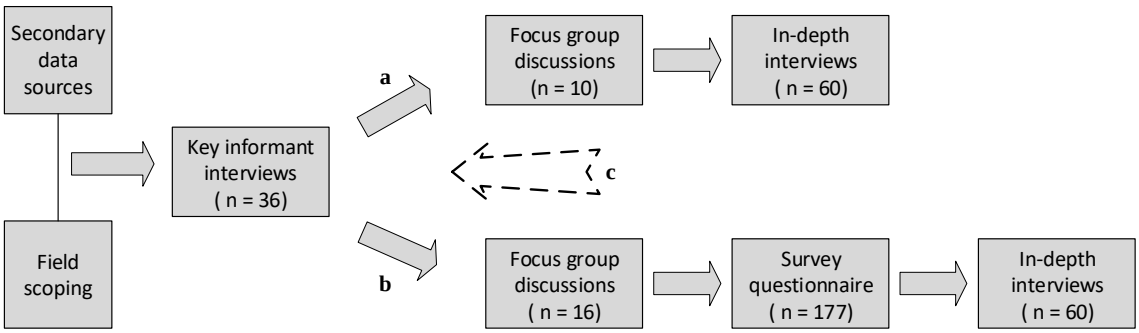
In terms of land reform (the stages, underlying debates and dynamics of which have been extensively described in Chapter 1), of the 60 farms included in the study, seven had been transferred under SLAG on a group basis, 51 as part of LRAD and two through PLAS. Across the five primary cooperatives, 12 farmers were purposefully selected from each cooperative. The farms were also purposefully selected to capture the wide variation in farm characteristics e.g. farm size and location. Farm size varied enormously (10-1 600ha), which is an important factor not only in understanding how viable the farms are in terms of potential commercial production but also the class dynamics of the 'emergent' farmers who now had access to them. Farm location was also highly variable and was

important to capture within the study sites, as previous studies (e.g. Senyolo et al. 2009, Khapayi and Celliers 2015, Mapiye et al. 2018) have shown that farms located at greater distance from markets (particularly where access roads are poor) and in close proximity to communal areas, present much greater challenges for emergent farmers to engage in any form of commercial production and marketing.

For the smallholder farmers connected to the eight CFPs selected for study in communal areas, a purposive sampling approach was adopted based on the records maintained by each CFP committee. Farmers were selected based primarily on ownership of cattle, numbers of cattle sold and gender (to ensure inclusion of female-headed households). On this basis 177 farmers across the eight communal CFPs were selected for a questionnaire survey and 60 farmers were selected for in-depth interviews from three of the CFPs. The three CFPs (Ncorha, Gxwalibomvu and Lahlangubo CFPs) were primarily selected based on their proximity to Elliot.

2.5 Data collection

A mixed-methods approach (Philip 1998), was employed for data collection. The pros and cons of mixed-method approaches have been discussed extensively (Philip 1998, Mason 2006, Johnson et al. 2007, Lisle 2011). According to Philip (1998), the mixed-method approach involves a combination of complementary methods that are aimed at addressing the research from multiple angles resulting in an in-depth understanding. A mixed-method approach minimises research associated error through methodological triangulation, complementarity and validation (Johnson et al. 2007). Qualitative data collection was appropriate to gain an in-depth understanding of livelihoods, livelihood trajectories, resilience and vulnerability, and the policies and processes that affect these. Quantitative data collection was appropriate for livestock production and marketing econometrics and data relating to farm characteristics. These methods employed in data collection were interlinked and overlapped considerably (Figure 2.3):



a = Data collection for emergent farmers. **b** = Data collection for communal farmers.
c = Key informants were also selected based on information obtained from focus group discussions and in-depth interviews.

Figure 2- 3: Data collection process for the study in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

2.5.1 Secondary data sources

Background information was collected by a desk review, a field scoping exercise and secondary sources such as annual, technical and field reports from DRDAR (Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform), DRDLR (Department of Rural Development and Land Reform) and IASC (Ikhephu Agricultural Secondary Cooperative). Mean annual rainfall, mean maximum and minimum monthly temperature data for the study sites (presented earlier in this chapter in Table 2-1) was computed from secondary historic data (1901 to 2017) obtained from the South African Weather Service. Livestock sales data were collated from the individual CFP records.

2.5.2 Key informant interviews

Based on a key informant mapping exercise, 36 key informant interviews were held. Key informants were selected and interviewed based on secondary data, focus group discussion stakeholder mapping and from information obtained through individual interviews (Figure 2-3). The range and number of each different type of key informant interviewed is indicated in Table 2-2.

Table 2- 2: Key informant sources (n =36) for the study in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

Cluster	Key informant sources
Communal CFP sites	CFP supervisors (9), CFP committee members (9), Local veterinarian (2), DRDAR and DRDLR agricultural extension officers (4).
Emergent farmers	Ikhephu CFP supervisor (1), IASC committee members (2), Regional DRDAR officer (1), Animal Health Inspector (1), DRDAR livestock extension officer (1), Local veterinarian (1), Local municipality officer (1), Chris Hani Development Association Officer (1), Local abattoir staff (1), Berlin Beef officer (1), Local NGO officer (1).

2.5.3 Focus Group Discussions

Twenty-six focus group discussions (FGDs) of between 6-10 people were carried out. Because the area that each cooperative (for emergent farmers) and CFP (for communal farmers) covers is wide, the FDGs were split into two groups held at locations that were logistically feasible for participants to attend. For emergent farmers, two FGDs were held for each of the five cooperatives (n=10). The respondents were purposefully sampled on the basis of the sampling frame (Figure 2-2). For communal farmers, two FGDs were held at each of the CFPs studied (n=16), participants sampled to reflect CFP participation or non-participation and gender. FGDs provide insight into the range of opinions, concepts, perceptions and challenges including causality relations between and within variables through group interaction and social processes. They can also explore variations and inconsistencies on a common subject area based on experiences, beliefs and practises of a community (ODI 2009, Masadeh 2012) and this was particularly important for the CFPs where a questionnaire survey was employed (discussed in stage 5 below). FDGs were also important for identifying key informant sources.

2.5.4 Individual in-depth interviews

A total of 120 households were interviewed for the study i.e. 60 in-depth interviews with emergent farmers in Elliot and 60 in-depth interviews with communal farmers located in Ncorha, Gxwalibomvu and Lahlangubo CFP communities. Semi-structured interviews allow a better understanding of the socio-economic determinants that underline livelihood strategies (UNDESA 2005). The semi-structured interviews were pilot tested to ensure consistency in meaning of questions to allow response comparison (Liswanti et al. 2012) before the commencement of the study.

Households for the emergent farmers were purposefully sampled (Palinkas et al. 2015) to represent the strata indicated in Figure 2-2. Households from CFP-associated communities were purposefully selected based on livestock ownership, livestock sales, CFP (non-)participation and gender, based on CFP records. The semi-structured interviews were designed to capture responses that reflect the different components (capitals) of the SLF and their inter-relationships to enable a resilience lens to be applied (Appendix 1 and 2). The semi-structured interviews consisted of open-ended questions which captured data to evaluate buffer capacity, self-organisation, learning capacity and livelihood strategies (Sallu et al. 2010, Ifejika Speranza et al. 2014). Additionally, the 60 emergent farmer interviews were designed to capture livelihoods before and after access to farmland, to provide an indication of the livelihood trajectories of these farmers. Due to the need to capture livelihoods before and after agrarian reform, it made the interview necessarily long, hence the interviews were undertaken in two stages. The first stage focused on the quantitative sections of the semi-structured interview aimed at characterising the levels of land use and production achieved. In the second stage, more qualitative aspects of livelihood dynamics associated with how land was being accessed and used were discussed in-depth with the farmer. This two-stage process allowed triangulation of data between the two interview stages; the researcher to follow-up on key issues raised in the first interview stage; an opportunity for the farmer to furnish more details that they remembered after the first stage interview; and an opportunity for the researcher to develop more trust with the farmer. Interviews were recorded and transcribed later on the same day.

2.5.5 Survey questionnaire

A survey questionnaire was administered to 177 communal farmers who were purposefully sampled using records held at the eight communal CFPs (Figure 2-3). The respondents were selected based on ownership of livestock and the need to include a mix of male and female headed households for each selected CFP: Gxwalibomvu (n = 22), Ngangegqili (n = 22), Kamastone (n = 23), Komani (n = 22), Lahlangubo (n = 22), Lower Hukuwa (n = 23), Umzimvubu (n = 22) and Ncorha (n = 21). The questionnaire (Appendix 3) aimed primarily to understand the engagement of farmers in communal areas with the CFPs that had been created to support them, and captured data on

household demographics; socio-economic status; cattle herd dynamics and marketing; and reasons for participation or non-participation in the CFP.

2.6 Conceptual and analytical frameworks

2.6.1 The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

The study was underpinned by the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF), also termed the Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Framework (Chambers and Conway 1992, Scoones 1998). The SLF enables an analysis of the context and inherent risks in which people survive, i.e. the *vulnerability context* (prevailing agro-ecological, demographic, technological and socio-economic conditions); the range of *capitals* i.e. financial, physical, natural, social and human assets that they have access to and the capability to productively utilise them; the enabling or disabling institutional factors i.e. *institutions, processes and policies* that determine how assets are accessed and decisions on how these assets are combined with activities (i.e. strategies) to provide a range of *outcomes* in response to the vulnerability context (Chambers and Conway 1992, Scoones 1998, Krantz 2001, Petersen and Pedersen 2010, de Haan 2012).

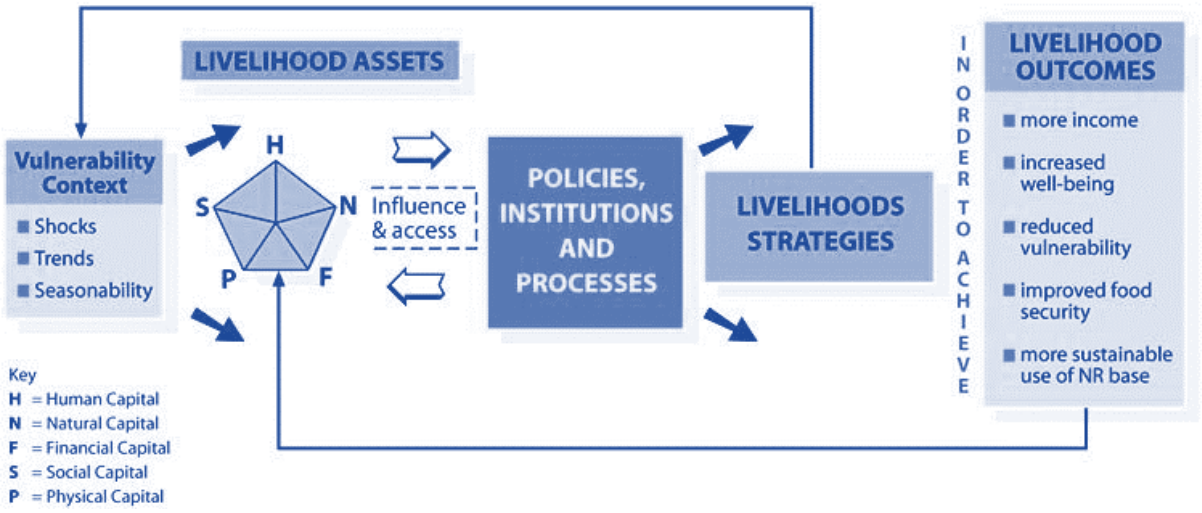


Figure 2- 4: The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework ***[Source DFID 1999:1]***

The SLF approach (Figure 2-4), was selected because of its multi-dimensional approach and adaptability to different contexts (e.g. Brown et al. 2018, Córdova et al. 2018, Michler et al. 2018, Yang et al. 2018). It also finds resonance with the current debates on how agrarian reform should be structured to deliver livelihoods to beneficiaries in South Africa particularly with regard to enabling alternative livelihood opportunities and how agrarian

reform can be steered going forward (Aliber 2019, De Satgé and Cousins 2019, Vink and Kirsten 2019). These debates are fundamentally situated in the dynamics of politics, power relations and governance that determine inclusion, exclusion and rights of access to productive assets, and ultimately the livelihood strategies that households adopt (May et al. 2009). Previous studies (e.g. Scoones 1998, Christensen and Pozarny 2008, Rahman and Akter 2010, Kamaruddin and Samsudin 2014), have indicated that an understanding of the context which determines the range i.e. quantity, diversity and transferability/substitution or sequencing of assets that households have access to is fundamental to sustaining livelihoods. Thus, the SLF enables a qualitative understanding of livelihoods, as opposed to abstract measures of productivity and performance based on income or consumption patterns (Lindenberg 2002, Muyanga et al. 2011). Household asset value and endowment is a more appropriate and relevant assessment of welfare, livelihoods and, as we will discuss below, the likelihood of resilience or vulnerability (May et al. 2009, Sallu et al. 2010, Obrist et al. 2010, Ifejika Speranza et al. 2014).

The efficacy of the SLF has been extensively debated (e.g. Bebbington 1999, Krantz 2001, Small 2007, Scoones 2009, de Haan 2012, Serrat 2017). It has been criticised for its inability to adequately emphasize aspects of politics, power relations and governance. Scoones (2009) in particular discusses these arguments in the context of knowledge, politics, scale and dynamics, which are linked to locality and agency in rapidly globalising contexts. The consensus among critics is that many studies have been able to use the SLF to provide a fairly static view of livelihoods in relation to key capitals but not necessarily to understand the transitions of people to either resilient or vulnerable livelihoods over periods. Applying the framework before and after land access (in the case of emergent farmers) and in conjunction with a specific resilience lens addresses these limitations (Ifejika Speranza et al. 2014).

2.6.2 Mapping the SLF to the concept of resilience

A livelihood is conceptualised to be sustainable when it can maintain or enhance its capabilities in an evolving vulnerability context i.e. cope and recover from shocks and stresses (the vulnerability complex) without depleting its natural resource base (Chambers and Conway 1992, Scoones 1998). Consequentially, livelihood resilience stems from coping with the vulnerability complex, which is largely dependent on the different combinations of livelihood capitals/assets and activities i.e. the livelihood strategy (Sallu

et al. 2010, Yuliati and Isaskar 2018). Several authors (e.g. Adger 2006, Obrist et al. 2010, Ekblom 2012, Meybeck et al. 2012, Ifejika Speranza et al. 2014) define resilience as the capacity of systems or actors to cope, adjust or bounce back from a shock or stress and maintain their structure, function and identity in terms of buffer capacity (ability to absorb change), self-organisation (adaptive capacity) and learning capacity (modification or transformation). Furthermore, Sallu et al. (2010), Obrist et al. (2010) and Ifejika Speranza et al. (2014) demonstrate that the concept of livelihood sustainability as captured within the SLF can be effectively linked with this conceptualisation of resilience. Buffer capacity is framed by the livelihood capitals or assets available; self-organisation is framed by the institutions and networks that determine how assets are accessed to adapt to the adversity; and learning capacity defines the knowledge that underpins decisions on combinations of assets and activities arrived at in adapting to the vulnerability complex i.e. the livelihood strategies (Figure 2-5). Muyanga et al. (2011) argues that assets become important determinants of resilience in smallholder contexts where rural finance, credit and insurance markets are either dysfunctional or out of reach for most smallholder farmers. The SLF also can be adapted for the assessment of livelihood trajectories and outcomes thereof, which are fundamental in assessing resilience (Chambers and Conway 1992, Scoones 1998, Miller et al. 2010). The SLF is therefore appropriate as a framework in terms of its ability to use the capital assets to explain the transition process, understand the institutions and networks that determine which assets are accessed, and explain the strategic decisions that households make to cope with shocks/stresses and perceived risk to sustain livelihoods.

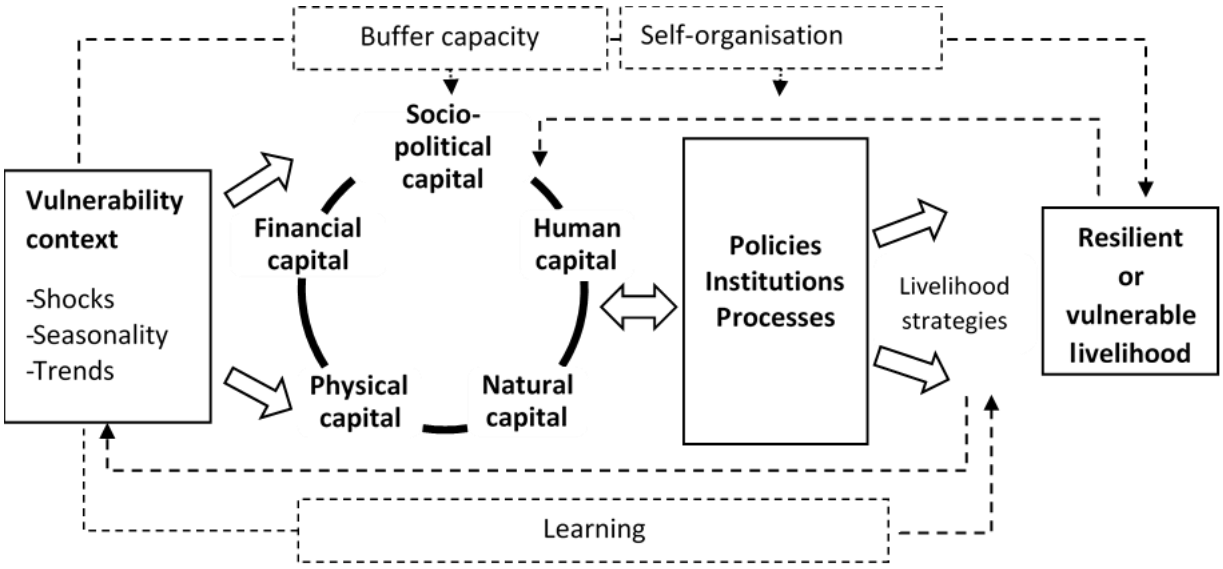


Figure 2- 5: The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework through a resilience lens ***[Source: adapted by author from DFID 1999]***

By applying a resilience lens to the SLF, the study was able to capture livelihood strategies for different groups of farmers and, importantly, how these change over time and whether the farmers become more or less vulnerable in the process, i.e. 'longitudinal' livelihood trajectories or 'rural social movements' (Scoones 2009: 188).

2.6.3 Class perspectives and institutional analysis

In addition to understanding the livelihood dynamics of these farmers, it was also necessary as part of this to understand who the farmers were in terms of their social (class) dynamics and thus help to unpack the emergent farmer concept which framed this study. This was important to enable a grounded understanding of the cultural context and social differentiation, of who owns what and why in-order to fully capture the concepts of dispossession, marginalisation, differentiation and accumulation. To achieve this, a class analytical perspective was employed (Bernstein 2010, Cousins 2010) to complement the SLF, primarily based on financial and social capital and the extent to which the farmers were engaged in petty commodity and capitalist production. Further details of this are provided in the research article presented in Chapter three. Furthermore, to gain a broader understanding of how power relations, democracy and accountability shaped access to resources for emergent farmers within the institutional context of the cooperatives through which all these farmers were collectively organised, this study drew on the principles of democratic decentralisation and governance of institutions (Agrawal and Ribot 1999, Ribot 2004). This was used to unpack both how and to what extent

cooperatives were able to link to existing programmes of agricultural support and, once accessed, how fairly these resources were disbursed to the emergent farmers within cooperatives. Further details are provided in the research article presented in Chapter five.

2.7 Data analysis

Qualitative data were coded and analysed using NVivo release 21.1 (NVivo 2018) through data indexing to identify emergent themes. Quantitative household socio-economic, demographic and livestock marketing data were analysed using descriptive statistics in SAS (SAS 2012). Cattle herd composition and marketing data were analysed by one-way ANOVA using the PROC GLM Procedure in SAS (2012). Interview excerpts and case studies were used to contextualise and support key findings, themes and trends (Shackleton and Luckert 2015).

2.8 Additional methodological considerations

2.8.1 Language

Although the respondents were generally able to converse in English, the dominant local language in the study area is Xhosa. The researcher engaged an interpreter to translate from English to Xhosa, allowing respondents to respond in either English or Xhosa. This gave the respondents the ability to converse in Xhosa where they felt they expressed themselves better in their local language. This also allowed the researcher to interview non-English speakers. To reduce the need of having to interject during interviews or focus group discussions for interpretations, the process was recorded, and the researcher and interpreter transcribed the interviews into English together later on the same day. This was particularly important for both the researcher and interpreter, with the researcher gaining knowledge of the language while the interpreter gained greater understanding of the research and its objectives, which helped with subsequent interviews.

2.8.2 Positionality

A researcher has ‘experiences, ideas, prejudices and personal philosophies’ as well as identifiers such as class, sexuality, nationality, gender and race which can introduce research bias (Smith and Noble 2014: 100). These must be acknowledged to enable research reliability, consistency, neutrality and validity throughout the research process (Morse et al. 2002). Key factors of relevance to the researcher are considered here. Firstly, the academic background of the researcher (animal science; and rural

development and food security) and work experience (Research Officer with Henderson Research Institute and later as Research Assistant with the International Livestock Research Institute) could potentially influence the researcher's interpretation of the findings. Secondly, the fact that the researcher (although a black African) was a non-South African i.e. an 'outsider', studying the contentious process of agrarian reform might have had some influence on how they were perceived by the respondents and thus what they were prepared to share.

To ensure the research reliability and viability, the researcher employed a number of strategies to reduce bias. An appropriate study design was selected, a mixed-method approach which reduced researcher bias (Johnson et al. 2007). The study design and methodological approaches were assessed by the Coventry University Ethics Committee (Certificate of Ethical Approval P65247), as the ethics approval process plays a critical role in ensuring robust methodology (Smith and Noble 2014), methodological coherence and sampling adequacy (Morse et al. 2002). The research questionnaires were pilot tested to ensure that they collected relevant data which conformed to the study aims. Furthermore, the rationale and objectives of the research were explained clearly to each respondent, which positioned the researcher as a learner rather than an expert, enabling the respondents to view the researcher as similar to them rather than as an 'outsider'. The fact that the researcher is from Zimbabwe, where extensive agrarian reform has also occurred, also enabled the respondents to identify and empathise with the researcher. As highlighted earlier, interviews were done in two stages enabling significant triangulation of the study responses and 'responsiveness' of the researcher to the research process (Morse et al. 2002:10). Transcription (concurrent data collection and analysis) was done in the field, which meant the research was an iterative process which enhanced research process validity (Morse et al. 2002).

2.8.3 Ethical Considerations

The research received ethical clearance (Certificate of Ethical Approval P65247) and was guided by Coventry University Ethics Committee on the Project Risk Assessment guidelines available and accessed at (https://ethics.coventry.ac.uk/documents/content/support/policy_governance_good_applied_research_conduct_rev0912.pdf). The researcher fully explained the purpose of the study

to each respondent and gained consent through the signing of an informed consent form prior to interviewing. Permission to record the process using a voice recorder and take photographs was also sought from each participant. Participant information sheet and informed consent forms are included (Appendix 4).

CHAPTER THREE

3 Unpacking the 'emergent farmer' concept in agrarian reform: Evidence from livestock farmers in South Africa

This chapter appears as the following published article in Development and Change:

> **Gwiriri, L.C**., Bennett, J., Mapiye, C. and Burbi, S. (2019) 'Unpacking the "emergent farmer" concept in agrarian reform: Evidence from livestock farmers in South Africa'. *Development and Change*. doi: 10.1111/dech.12516.

3.1 Abstract

South Africa has historically perpetuated a dual system of freehold commercial and communal subsistence farming. To bridge these extremes, agrarian reform policies have encouraged the creation of a class of 'emergent', commercially oriented farmers. However, these policies consider 'emergent' farmers as a homogeneous group of land reform beneficiaries, with limited appreciation of the class differences between them, and do little to support the rise of a 'middle' group of producers able to bridge this gap. This article uses a case study of livestock farmers in Eastern Cape Province to critique the 'emergent farmer' concept. The authors identify three broad categories of farmers within the emergent livestock sector: a large group who, despite having accessed private farms, remain effectively as subsistence farmers; a smaller group of small/medium-scale commercial producers who have communal farming origins and most closely approximate to 'emergent' farmers; and an elite group of large-scale, fully commercialized farmers, whose emergence has been facilitated primarily by access to capital and a desire to invest in alternative business ventures. On this basis the authors suggest that current agrarian reform policies need considerable refocusing if they are to effectively facilitate the emergence of a 'middle' group of smallholder commercial farmers from communal systems.

Keywords*: Agrarian reform, emergent farmers, livestock production, custom feeding programme.*

3.2 Introduction

Global food insecurity, particularly after the food crisis in 2008 (HLPE 2012), has led to increased interest in the role smallholder agriculture can play in addressing food security in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)(Muyanga et al. 2011, Sitko and Jayne 2014). The ability of smallholder agriculture to achieve household and national food security and reduce rural poverty, however, remains strongly contested (Aliber and Hall 2012, Sitko and Jayne 2014). Debates have focused on land tenure (O'Laughlin et al. 2013, Lahiff 2016), policy (Hall 2009), support mechanisms (Aliber and Hall 2012, Okunlola et al. 2016), production models able to transform subsistence smallholder agriculture into commercial agriculture (Aliber 2011), and the appropriate conditions and strategies to sustainably intensify production (Pretty et al. 2011).

Agrarian reform, as a mechanism for commercializing smallholder agricultural production in SSA, has had mixed success and remains controversial (Peters 2009, Cousins and Scoones 2010). It is often underpinned by an assertion that production under communal tenure is inherently lower than under private tenure, the veracity which has been contested by several scholars (e.g. Mafeje 2003, Moyo 2003). These authors argue that in many parts of SSA, this dualism is less apparent because communal production systems have, at various points in time, been able to respond to market demands and produce competitively at a commercial level, without the need for conversion to private tenure. Indeed, it has been argued that this was also true of South Africa for a brief period in the latter half of the 19th century, particularly in parts of the Eastern Cape, where small-scale African farmers successfully engaged in commercial production to meet the needs of an expanding settler market for grains such as barley, oats and wheat, as well as wool (Keegan 1983, Bundy 1988). However, this expansion of the African peasantry in South Africa was short-lived and was systematically eroded during the late 19th and early 20th centuries by a series of laws that limited both where Africans could live and the size of their landholdings, culminating in the Native Lands Act of 1913 (Commey 2013, Lahiff 2016). The complete restructuring of landholdings in homeland areas into relatively small (2-3 ha) arable plots ensured that Africans could not produce beyond a basic subsistence level and created the highly skewed communal-commercial divide that still characterizes agricultural production in South Africa (Lahiff 2014, 2016).

The South African policy approach has broadly aimed to encourage smallholder farmers into commercial production through redistribution of land. However, more than 20 years after the country's transition to democracy, the achievements of land reform remain debatable (Lahiff 2016). While commercialization of smallholder agriculture has continued to be a key feature of South African agrarian reform policy (Mtero 2012), provincial strategic plans (ARDRI 2013) and agricultural support policy (GCIS 2016), the reality is that achieving this goal remains a major challenge. Beginning with the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) phase (2000-04), the agrarian reform process in South Africa focused on creating a class of so-called 'emergent' farmers, who have access to commercial farmland on either a freehold or leasehold basis and are able (in theory) to transform from subsistence to commercial production (Hebinck et al. 2011). In spite of this, by 2010, 90% of redistributed land was classified by the government as 'no longer productive' (Africa Research Institute 2013: 3).

Hall (2009: 3) suggests that the creation of conditions that enable farmers to produce and participate in local and national markets will be critical to the success of agrarian reform, referring to a 'missing middle' - the untapped potential of smallholder farmers to produce not just sufficient for their own consumption, but also an excess for marketing. Cousins (2010: 16) argues that 'reforms will contribute to reducing rural poverty in South Africa only if they create the conditions for a broadly based accumulation from below', complemented by petty commodity production, creating the conditions required for the emergence of small-scale capitalist farmers who are well-supported to bridge the dual agricultural gap. However, rather than focusing on creating the conditions necessary to support this 'middle' group of emergent farmers, agrarian reform policy in South Africa has continued to classify all land reform beneficiaries as 'emergent' farmers and entitled them to government support regardless. This includes, for example, relatively wealthy entrepreneurs who accumulate from above by using land reform to get access to farms for large-scale commercial production. That such a wide variation in accumulation strategies is possible as an 'emergent' farmer in South Africa, raises questions about the utility of the emergent farmer concept and the effectiveness of the policies that underpin it in facilitating the desired transition of smallholder farmers from subsistence to small-scale commercial production.

This article critically examines the emergent farmer concept within the context of agrarian reform policy in South Africa. In particular, it seeks to identify the different classes of emergent farmers that currently exist and to understand the dynamics of accumulation within them. It begins by reviewing the emergent farmer concept within Southern Africa, how it has evolved and the agrarian reform policies that have shaped it. It then draws on case material from emergent livestock farmers in Eastern Cape Province, to examine the class differentiation apparent amongst them, the evidence (if any) for the emergence of a coherent 'middle', and the implications of this for policies designed to support them.

3.3 The emergent farmer concept

In Southern Africa, the emergent farmer concept is vague and defies easy definition. In agrarian reform rhetoric, it has been applied either interchangeably or in conjunction with other terms, such as 'emergent smallholder farmer' or 'small-scale commercial farmer' (Bernstein 2010, Cousins 2010). It has frequently been used as a blanket term for all land reform beneficiaries, but as Poulton et al. (2008: 10) point out, there remains a 'common, but erroneous, assumption that all these farmers "emerge" from the ranks of local smallholders', when in fact this is clearly not the case. But what exactly is an emergent farmer? Emerging from what, and to what?

An interrogation of the literature suggests that currently 'emergent' farmers are characterized by a range of different accumulation strategies and varying levels of commercial productivity. At one end of the spectrum, emergent farmers exist as fully commercialized farmers. Several scholars (see Benjaminsen et al. 2006, Cousins 2010, Jayne et al. 2015) have identified this group of farmers as emergent black commercial farmers. In Zambia, Jayne et al. (2015: 3) describe emergent farmers as 'medium-scale holders of between 5 hectares and 100 hectares, many of whom reside in urban areas' and have careers in non-farm sectors, labelling them 'emergent investor farmers'. In South Africa, Cousins (2010: 4), drawing on the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme of 2009, describes them as 'financially capable, aspirant black commercial farmers (black business people who will mostly farm on a part time basis)'. In both cases, this group largely consists of farmers from a non-agricultural background, who invest in acquiring agricultural land. This idea is supported by Hall and Kepe (2017: 123), who term them 'black capitalist farmers'.

Emergent, black commercial farmers have largely acquired land through deliberate shifts in the tenure system by African governments to support access to land by a financially endowed cohort of business people with no previous agrarian base. Jayne et al. (2015) argue that a deliberate agrarian reform policy and public spending portfolio contributed to the development of emergent black commercial farmers in Zambia, through the creation of private tenure. In some instances, agrarian reform in SSA primarily consisted of conversion of customary tenure into private tenure (Mafeje 2003). In Zambia, the 1995 Land Act permitted conversion of 280 000 ha of customary land to free leasehold and 1 million ha to block farms. Access to block farms required a 'non-refundable application fee of ZMK250 000-ZMK3 500 000 (roughly US$50-US$700)' (Sitko and Jayne 2014: 197), which promoted land access by a relatively well-off elite class of farmers. Similarly, access to land under LRAD in South Africa required personal contributions of a minimum of ZAR5 000 (US$385),[1] promoting access to land by a wealthier elite class. In Zimbabwe, a 'black elite' of 'urban petty bourgeoisie' who accessed land based on political affiliation to the ruling party is described by Marongwe (2011: 1071). Cousins (2010: 16) describes this Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) type of agrarian reform as a form of 'accumulation from above', as it has benefited a small number of large-scale black commercial farmers. Aliber and Hall (2012: 560) employ the term 'accumulation for the few', while Tilzey (2017: 3) refers to a 'resurgent landed oligarchy'.

There are also black commercial farmers who have emerged or transformed themselves from the ranks of existing small-scale communal farmers (Jayne et al. 2015). These constitute a second class of emergent farmers and are primarily former smallholder farmers from communal areas who were already producing commercially and who accessed private land through agrarian reform. Cousins (2010: 4) describes them as 'expanding commercial smallholders', who produce significantly above subsistence, and utilize surplus production income for capital agricultural accumulation. Aliber and Hall (2012: 548) refer to them as 'sustainable commercial smallholders' while Jayne et al. (2015: 15) refer to 'commercialized African farmers'.

[1] ZAR is the official South African currency, the South African Rand. Conversions in this article used the official exchange rate of 1 September 2018, of ZAR 1 = US$ 0.077.

There is also a third group of emergent farmers, consisting of smallholder farmers who were producing only at a subsistence level in the communal areas, but who have nonetheless accessed private farmland through agrarian reform. Cousins (2010: 17) argues that through this process of 'accumulation from below' and related 'petty commodity production', these farmers, having been given access to land, might produce beyond subsistence, and reinvest and engage in capital accumulation from agriculture. Both this group and the second group described above probably best represent the 'missing middle' (Hall 2009: 3) and 'entrepreneur' farmers (Cousins 2010: 16), who are potentially able to bridge the current dichotomy in South African agriculture.

The 'missing middle' concept has also found application more broadly within SSA. In Zimbabwe, Scoones et al. (2011b: 976) identify 'a core group of "middle farmers" … who are gaining surpluses from farming, investing in the land from off-farm work and so are able to accumulate from below'. Similarly, in Kenya, Neven et al. (2009: 1805) report that suppliers of supermarket horticulture products consist of emerging 'middle class farmers', whose scale of production lies between traditional small farmers and commercial export farmers. Poulton et al. (2008) describe them as small-scale commercial or 'investor' farmers primarily producing for the market. The underlining characteristic of this 'middle' group is being able to produce beyond subsistence levels and to market surplus produce to enable forms of reinvestment and accumulation in agriculture.

3.4 Emergent farmers and agrarian reform: evidence from South Africa and Zimbabwe

The emergent farmer concept not only includes a wide range of classes of farmers but has also been strongly shaped by specific dynamics of agrarian reform within different countries and how these have changed through time. Here we use South Africa and Zimbabwe to illustrate how these differences have played out and the types of emergent farmers that have resulted.

In Zimbabwe, land reform had two main stages, namely the 'willing buyer, willing seller' model (1979–99) followed by Fast Track Land Reform programme (FTLR) from 2000, both intended to encourage smallholder production above subsistence levels. The willing buyer, willing seller model had, by 1999, resulted in the transfer of 1.4 million ha of land

consisting of small-scale, 5 ha commercial units (Scoones et al. 2011b). Dekker and Kinsey (2011: 996) argue that these resettled holdings are commonly misconstrued to have constituted the 'core of a new small-scale class of commercial farms' but were not actually intended for commercial production. Regardless, this first stage of agrarian reform seems to have been broadly founded in the ethos of accumulation from below. From 2000, FTLR redistributed over 7.6 million ha from 4 500 existing farms to smallholder farmers, accounting for 20% of the total land transferred (Scoones et al. 2011a). FTLR, though chaotic and disorderly (Chiweshe et al. 2015), distributed larger landholdings, resulting in A1 (subsistence-oriented) and A2 (commercially oriented) smallholder farmers with mean holdings of 37 ha and 318 ha respectively (Scoones et al. 2011a). This shift in approach to agrarian reform resulted in a broadening of the dynamics of accumulation that remains apparent in Zimbabwe and has resulted in the variety of 'emergent' farmers now in operation. These range from farmers who failed to make the transition and remain largely at a subsistence level, through a middle group who are producing and marketing surplus, to the emergence of a class of commercial (A2) black farmers producing on much larger farms. This represents a conceptual shift from a focus on accumulation from below to accumulation from both below and above, the latter involving an elite group of beneficiaries as identified by Marongwe (2011).

In South Africa, agrarian reform has followed a market-led, tri-component approach, consisting of land restitution, based on the 1994 Restitution of Land Rights Act; land tenure reform; and land redistribution, grounded in the Provision of Land and Assistance Act of 1993.[2] Slow progress in achieving its primary objective of redistributing 30% of farmland (24.6 million ha) has resulted in land reform evolving over three stages. The first was the Settlement and Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG) from 1995 to 1999; the second was the LRAD from 2000 to 2005; and the latest is the Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS), operational since 2006. Each stage represented a shift in policy and targeted beneficiaries in response to perceived failures of the previous phase. SLAG targeted the rural poor, smallholders or small-scale farmers, with the intention of creating capacity for them to engage in commercial production or become 'profit makers', as (Ncube 2018: 2) suggests. SLAG was underpinned by a basic strategy of accumulation

[2] All of these have been extensively reviewed: see, e.g., Jacobs et al. (2003), Aliber (2011), Lahiff (2007, 2016), O'Laughlin et al. (2013), Okunlola et al. (2016), Hall and Kepe (2017).

from below (Cousins 2010) or growth from below (Shepherd and Scott 2018). In contrast, the primary beneficiaries of agrarian reform under the Mbeki administration (1999-2008), particularly during the LRAD phase, were the financially endowed elite, encouraged to become 'emerging commercial farmers' (Cousins 2010: 3) or 'black capitalist farmers' (Hall and Kepe 2017: 123). Lahiff (2007) indicates that there was a deliberate shift in emphasis in the land redistribution policy from 2000, from the poor to the better-off.

However, despite these clear shifts in the targeting of land reform beneficiaries, government policy has continued to treat them as a homogeneous group. For example, the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries consistently refers to the 240 000 'emergent' farmers that have been created through the government's agrarian reform programmes (DAFF 2012), even though this might include at one extreme former communal farmers who have accessed farms collectively but produce almost nothing for commercial sale and, at the other extreme, wealthy investor farmers on large farms who are focused purely on commercial production. The enormous variation in what currently constitutes an 'emergent' farmer in South Africa is further complicated by other fundamental differences between them, for instance in the size of their landholdings. For example, Bradstock (2005) found landholdings ranging in size from 14 to 346 ha for households in land redistribution projects in Limpopo province. Likewise, in Eastern Cape Province, Aliber et al. (2006) reported land holdings ranging from 135 to 1,055 ha, in their study of 42 farmers, all of whom were considered by government as 'emergent' farmers.

In the context of the highly variable application of the emergent farmer concept at different points in time and in different countries, it is difficult to arrive at a specific definition of an emergent farmer. Thus, the working definition we take into our analysis of smallholder farmers in South Africa is necessarily quite broad. We define emergent farmers as farmers who are able to produce and market agricultural produce beyond subsistence levels and reinvest and engage in capital accumulation in agriculture from below. They should be successful vertical integrators of agricultural production and marketing; they contribute to poverty and unemployment alleviation and, importantly, are able to demonstrate how they have 'emerged' from one form to another, for example, from petty commodity production to small-scale capitalist production. They should constitute a 'middle' group between subsistence farmers and 'investor' commercial

farmers, regardless of whether the latter group has benefited from any form of land reform. In this sense the definition acknowledges not only the ability of farmers to produce at commercial scale but also the way in which they reached this point - that is, through a process of accumulation from below rather than solely through the investment of existing capital in an alternative enterprise. Thus, we do not rule out the inclusion of fully commercialized farmers within this definition, as long as they have emerged from a subsistence context.

3.5 The case of collective livestock marketing in Eastern Cape province

To better understand the class-based divisions that characterize emergent farmers in South Africa, we use a case study of collective cattle marketing amongst emergent farmers in Eastern Cape Province. We draw on published studies, unpublished secondary data and primary data associated with custom feeding programme (CFP) initiatives designed to support cattle production amongst emergent farmers. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with 60 of the 155 farmers within the Ikhephu Agricultural Secondary Cooperative (IASC) and secondary data were collated from IASC records.

3.5.1 The policy and practice of emergent livestock farming in Eastern Cape

Of the 240 000 farmers categorized by the government as 'emergent' farmers in South Africa, those who have livestock own some 5.7 million cattle, or about 40% of the national herd. It has been estimated by the government that 87 000 of these emergent farmers have the potential to produce on a commercial scale (DAFF 2012). To support entry and competitiveness of emergent farmers in livestock markets, the meat industry was deregulated in 1996 through the introduction of the Marketing and Agriculture Act No. 47. However, the contribution of the emergent and smallholder livestock sector to the national economy has remained relatively low (Soji et al. 2015). Sotsha et al. (2017) argue that, while deregulation increased market access for emergent and smallholder farmers, it opened up market competition from established commercial farmers for local markets, mostly benefiting those emergent farmers who were aiming to become fully commercial. According to Aliber et al. (2006: 22), while emergent farmers occasionally marketed excess products, 'the evidence from Elliot land reform beneficiaries, at least as of late

2004/early 2005, was that they were barely marketing at all'.[3] Senyolo et al. (2009) found that emergent farmers occasionally sold their produce in the informal market, suggesting that they were unable to compete in the deregulated market.

Within the smallholder farming sector of the Eastern Cape, the market offtake for cattle has been reported at just 5% (e.g. Musemwa et al. 2010, Sotsha et al. 2017). This is despite the Eastern Cape having the highest provincial cattle population, accounting for 23% of all cattle in South Africa, the majority (over 60%) being in the communal sector (Grant et al. 2004, Mkabela 2013). Therefore, the potential to produce beyond subsistence levels in the province remains largely untapped. Low cattle market offtake in communal areas has mainly been attributed to poor animal condition and weight (Mapiye et al. 2009a), high mortality due to diseases and parasites (Scholtz and Bester 2010) and low reproduction rates (Nqeno et al. 2011). Barriers to effective market participation (Thamaga-Chitja and Morojele 2014) and overstocked and overgrazed rangelands due to contested and dysfunctional communal grazing institutions (Bennett et al. 2013) exacerbate the problem. Sikwela and Mushunje (2013) attribute the lack of market opportunities to the dissolution of the former Bantustan Agricultural Development Corporations at the end of apartheid and a failure to replace them.

Cattle marketing into the formal sector in South Africa mainly involves commercial feedlots, which account for 75% of the beef slaughtered through formal channels in South Africa (Chingala et al. 2017), estimated at 1.4 million cattle annually. However, until recently, commercial feedlots in the Eastern Cape were limited in number, hence smallholder and emergent farmers were typically excluded from formal marketing channels. In response to the livestock marketing challenge in the Eastern Cape, the Eastern Cape Red Meat Project was introduced in 2005, steered by the ComMark Trust (ComMark 2013)[4]. Subsequently, the National Agricultural Marketing Council took over the project in 2009 through a national initiative called the National Red Meat

[3] Elliot is a town in Sakhiziwe Local Municipality, in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa.

[4] Making Commodity and Service Markets Work for the Poor (ComMark) was a project that ran from 2003 to 2007, with the aim of improving the operation of commodity and service markets for the poor in Southern Africa.

Development Programme and has since established 10 communal CFPs and one commercial CFP within the Eastern Cape (Sotsha et al. 2017).

A CFP is defined as an agricultural activity 'established to specialize in finishing farmers' cattle, especially in communal areas, on a fixed fee service basis' (Ntombela et al. 2013: 4). According to Marandure et al. (2016a), a CFP acts as a centre that manages and finishes cattle using subsidized, commercial feed prior to marketing on behalf of the farmers. The main objective is to enhance formal market participation of emerging and smallholder farmers by improving live body weight and carcass quality of cattle and providing market information and infrastructure on a collective basis (Ngetu 2013).

3.5.2 Emergent farmer categories

Ikhephu CFP is a commercially focused enterprise supporting cattle farmers who have accessed freehold farmland through the agrarian reform process and private purchase. It is located in Elliot in Eastern Cape Province and operates under IASC, a secondary cooperative established in 2009. The cattle farmers utilizing Ikhephu CFP are clustered into five primary cooperatives, which all subscribe to IASC. Ikhephu CFP serves 155 'emergent' farmers with farm holdings amounting to some 64 000 ha in total, of which 10 000 ha are arable. It has a capacity of 500 animals and started operating in 2014 on a 126 ha municipal plot. Ikhephu CFP enforces age restrictions at intake, only accepting weaner steers of about 150-180 kg live weight, with a view to them reaching a target market weight of 350-400 kg within 90 to 120 days.

After accessing land and becoming part of IASC, overall herd size amongst the 155 IASC farmers increased from a mean of just 25 cattle per farmer to a mean of 60 cattle per farmer. However, a closer look at the distribution of cattle indicates that 25% of farmers still owned less than 25 cattle, 55% owned less than 50 cattle, and over 80% owned less than 100 cattle reared on less than 500 hectares (Table 3-1). Table 3-1 also indicates that owners of larger cattle herds also generally had larger farms.

Table 3- 1: Cattle and land ownership for farmers under IASC, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa, 2016 (n = 155)

Metric	**Cattle Ownership**				
	0–50	**51–100**	**101–150**	**>150**	**Totals**
Number of farmers	86	39	19	11	**155**
Total cattle	2448	2789	2341	1709	**9287**
Mean cattle (± SEM)	29 ± 1.5	72 ± 2.1	123 ± 3.3	213 ± 28	**60 ± 4.3**
Min–max cattle numbers	0–50	51–100	102–150	162–398	
Mean land size in cattle ownership category (ha)	325	489	603	664	**419 ± 21.7**

[Source: Authors' fieldwork]

Membership of IASC also enabled cattle farmers to benefit from support programmes sourced and channelled through the cooperative such as the Livestock Improvement Scheme (LIS), Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (AsgiSA) programme and the Abroad Spectrum Trading (AST) programme which distributed Bonsmara, Brahman, Angus and Drakensberger cattle on a loan basis. Several cattle farmers also made effective use of the CFP to sell cattle commercially. We analysed how the farmers engaged with the CFP in 2016 and categorized them on that basis.

IASC records indicate that from January to December 2016, Ikhephu CFP sold 409 animals, generating over ZAR2.7 million (US$207 900) (IASC 2016, unpublished), equivalent to an average sales value of ZAR6 680 (US$514) per animal. However, a deeper analysis of the sales data demonstrates that the 409 cattle sold belonged to just 55 different farmers out of the 155 livestock farmers who are affiliated to the CFP. Furthermore, of these 55 farmers, just 13 sold 246 of the cattle, underlining that a relatively small number of more commercially focused livestock farmers are responsible for most of the sales. The emergent farmers interviewed at Ikhephu CFP could be organized into three broad categories based on the dynamics of their accumulation and production, that is, a combination of how they accessed their land, the number of cattle they sold and their access to different support mechanisms. These characteristics are summarized in Table 3-2, and the three categories are elaborated below.

Table 3- 2: Key characteristics of identified farmer categories under IASC, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa, 2016 (n = 60)

Metric	Category 1 (n = 43)	Category 2 (n = 12)	Category 3 (n = 5)
Landholding range	10-379 ha	349-510 ha	491-1600 ha
Mean cattle sales	3 cattle per annum	16 cattle per annum	27 cattle per annum
Gender ratio	32 male: 11 female	10 male: 2 female	5 male: 0 female
Main income source	Social grants, primarily pensions, HIV-Aids grants, old age grants, child support grants	Cattle sales and social grants, primarily pensions and old age grants	Cattle sales and non-farm income from other businesses
Land access mode	Land reform through government grants, as individuals or groups	A combination of land reform government grants and personal purchase, as groups or as individuals	Multiple farms accessed using non-agricultural funds. At least one farm accessed through land reform government grants
Access to cattle support programmes	Limited access	Some access	Access to multiple programmes
Accumulation mode	From below	Primarily from below	From above

[Source: Authors' fieldwork]

3.5.3 Category 1. Subsistence farmers on private farms

This first category consisted of 43 farmers who sold a mean of three cattle each in 2016 (range one to five cattle). Their farms had been accessed through the land reform process, either as individuals or as groups using pooled government grants. Four of the farmers were initially in group arrangements, but these had largely fragmented due to challenges with group dynamics such as conflicts over resource access and use. The farmers in this first category hardly marketed cattle; had irregular cattle sales (28 farmers sold only once per year mainly to raise capital to meet immediate household needs); and employed family labour. Most of the farms were not mechanized and had very few working livestock-watering dams, with 40% of the farms having no dams at all. It is noteworthy that only three of the 43 farmers in this category had been able to access any of the cattle support programmes that were available. Furthermore, only nine of these farmers had their own means to transport cattle to the market, and 34 of the farmers did not have any prior training or education in agriculture. Most of these farmers were former communal farmers, farm workers and pensioners, who have remained largely subsistence-oriented, with only very limited evidence (if any) of petty commodity production. These farmers

spread risk by keeping active marketing and production linkages with their former communal areas. They all had land parcels in their former communal areas, which they still used to produce crops for home consumption, and 32 of them still held livestock in their former communal areas. The typical attributes and production strategies of farmers in this category are exemplified by Farmer X (Box 1).

Box 1

Farmer X, a former farm worker, initially accessed her 330 ha farm in 2003 as part of a group of 10 previously unrelated individuals who pooled their finances, received matching funds from government and accessed the farm under LRAD. The group collapsed due to severe conflicts over resource use and access, and the other farmers left, resulting in Farmer X eventually being the only farmer. She had 32 crossbred cattle and 68 sheep. She sold two cattle and eight sheep in 2016, to repair a broken-down cart and pay school fees for two children: one steer was sold through Ikhephu commercial CFP and one in the communal areas. Farmer X hired a vehicle locally for ZAR1 800 (US$139) to transport the animal 35 km from the farm to the CFP. She summarized her situation thus:

> *My animals are few, so I do not sell cattle that often. It is not worth it to send animals to Ikhephu CFP, I do not have my own transport and when I hire, the transport is expensive. I sell to my community now. I do not have a house here at the farm, so I stay at my homestead in Ngcobo and come here occasionally. My life is in Ngcobo, life has not changed much for me after getting the farm. The farming business is hard, we have little support. I did not go to school for it, I have grade 12, I use my own experience to farm.*

The largest proportion of household income is from grants, and occasional income from maize sales. Farmer X did not benefit from any of the locally available livestock support programmes. The partially fenced farm had one dam which dried up during the drier months and had no fenced cattle camps. She hired a tractor and implements for cultivating 6 ha of arable land and hired three labourers from the communal area during harvesting. Farmer X did not receive any visits from extension or veterinary services in 2016.

3.5.4 Category 2. Small-scale commercial farmers

The second category consisted of 12 farmers who could be classified as small-scale commercial farmers, each selling between 11 and 20 cattle in 2016. These farmers had regular cattle sales averaging 16 cattle per annum and derived a much larger proportion

of their incomes from these sales. A few of them were able to permanently employ an average of two farm labourers, and most also hired additional labour from the communal areas during periods of peak labour demand. Three of the farmers were formerly in group arrangements, through pooled matching funds under LRAD, the groups having collapsed for various reasons. Four of the farmers had purchased their farms using personal capital from either their pension packages or loans, and the other five had accessed the farms as individuals under government LRAD grants. It can be noted that even though some had purchased farms using their pensions or loans, and might be thought of as 'urban investors', they were still practising subsistence farming in their communal areas whilst employed, and hence essentially 'emerged' into small-scale commercial farming from a communal background. Most of the farms were moderately mechanized but had only a few functional livestock dams, most of which dried up during the dry season. Four of the farmers had joined cattle loan programmes but were struggling to repay the loans. Half of the farmers had their own vehicles to transport livestock to the market, the rest relied on hiring them. These farmers all marketed both formally through Ikhephu CFP and informally in their former communal areas. Two of the farmers possessed professional agricultural qualifications, and two had attended livestock production courses. Of the 12 individuals in this category, seven were former communal farmers, three were pensioners and two were currently employed, one in teaching and the other in the roadworks department. Farmers in this category are typified by farmer Y (Box 2).

Box 2

Farmer Y had previously farmed in the communal areas and worked as a civil servant. Upon retiring, he used his pension and multiple loans to purchase his farm for ZAR900 000 (US$69 300) and to buy additional cattle. He regularly sold cattle and sheep in both the formal and informal sector, to meet his loan repayments, leaving very little to reinvest in agricultural reproduction. In 2016, he had 78 cattle, 564 sheep and 52 goats on the 418 ha, partially fenced farm. Farmer Y had accessed 22 Bonsmara cattle through a ZAR100 000 (US$7 700) NERPO (National Emergent Red Meat Producers Organization) loan, and nine Drakensberger cattle through the AST cattle programme loan; he had a vehicle loan from West Bank and a tractor loan from the Land Bank. He summarized the problems he had with trying to raise sufficient capital from livestock sales:

> *Most of the livestock income goes on servicing the loans. Since I am paying a farm loan, which increased the cost of the farm to almost ZAR2 million (US$154 000) due to interest, and a cattle loan, I am left with very little income for implements. I therefore also had to get a vehicle and tractor loan to expand productivity, hence I have more loans to pay off. We survive on my wife's salary.*

Farmer Y produced rain-fed maize from 22 ha for livestock feed, the rest of the arable land being infested with invasive black wattle (Acacia mearnsii). In 2016, he raised ZAR191 200 (US$14 722) from the sale of 13 cattle and 51 sheep, to help service the ZAR150 000 (US$11 550) quarterly loan payment, pay school fees and purchase farm implements and inputs. Livestock marketing was difficult for Farmer Y due to the dilapidated dirt road which connected the farm with the main tarred road into Elliot. This 9 km stretch of track which the farmer had constructed at his own cost (having purchased the farm without road access), was mostly inaccessible during the rainy season. He had two tractors, several implements for ploughing and planting and a vehicle, and the farm was equipped with three functional dams. Farmer Y employed three permanent labourers and utilized additional labour from his former communal area during peak periods. Farmer Y continued to have strong links with his former communal area, producing maize (mainly for subsistence) on 10 ha and holding some cattle there, most of which were crossbreds inherited from his mother. He also utilized the shearing shed in his former communal area to shear the sheep from his farm, as he could not afford a shearing shed and equipment on the farm. Farmer Y had no formal training in agriculture, relying solely on the experience he had accumulated as a communal farmer.

3.5.5 Category 3. Fully commercialized farmers

The third category comprised five fully commercialized, large-scale farmers who sold between 21 and 30 cattle each in 2016, averaging 27 cattle each. All the farmers in this category had access to more than one farm, three of the farmers owning three farms each, with at least one of the farms having been accessed through a government LRAD grant. The farmers were involved in other businesses outside agriculture such as real estate, consultancy, transport and funeral insurance, and effectively constituted 'investor' farmers. These farmers frequently sold cattle to the commercial CFP. Two of the farmers were stud breeders of specified breeds in South Africa, possessing state-of-the-art equipment at their farms. The farmers permanently employed three to ten farm labourers at each of their farms and had mean herds of 150 cattle each. These farmers had at some point occupied influential positions in their respective cooperative committees and had managed to access all of the government support programmes available, securing cattle and farm implements on farms which had multiple working dams. All these farmers were business people, for whom farming constituted only a fraction of their income portfolio. The farmers seemed to be well connected socially and politically and also had access to loans from financial institutions. This category was exemplified by Farmer Z (Box 3).

Box 3

Farmer Z had three farms: two farms of 280 ha and 700 ha had been purchased privately, and one 370 ha farm had been accessed through an LRAD government grant. These farms - all of which have at least four functional dams - are highly specialized in terms of different forms of commercial production: the 280 ha farm holds 19 Bonsmara bulls and 230 Dohne Merino-crossed sheep; the 700 ha farm has 261 Bonsmara female and weaner cattle and 200 Mutton Merino sheep; and the 370 ha farm is retained predominantly for maize production, achieving a yield of 10t/ha in 2016. Following a vaccination, breeding and feed supplementation programme, the farmer sold 25 older cattle, 84 weaner cattle and 56 sheep in 2016, through both the formal and informal markets. Farmer Z also had other income sources: he was involved in the funeral insurance business, and he further augmented his income by buying specialized sheep breeds from breeders and reselling in various markets, in addition to income from sheep and wool sales from the farms. As a former Ikhephu CFP board member, he benefited from 11 cattle provided through the AST programme, 30 cattle from the AsgiSA programme, 30 cattle from the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) Nguni programme, fencing and equipment from the Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform, and ZAR270 000 (US$20 790) from the Biomass Fodder Production Assistance Programme. Farmer Z had access to loans if required but did not find the need to apply for one. He had strategic connections with local government and commercial farmers, underlined when he suggested:

> *Knowing people is very important. I have managed to get into most programmes because I know people, and they call me when something comes up. We have a group of five commercial farmers, and we bulk our cattle weaners together, and we sometimes buy from other farmers to make 500 weaners that we sell in one go. We were able to get free transport and a good price deal from the abattoir. We do this every three months, so I use money from my other business to buy my contribution of weaners to the group, and I make a tidy profit.*

Farmer Z was educated up to grade 12 and invested in various specialized courses such as Dohne Merino sheep production and cattle breeding courses in colleges in Veedersburg, Ventersdorp, Bloemfontein and Sutterheim, and at Dohne Private Farming College. He has also received livestock training through his primary cooperative, Cicirha Ntungele.

3.6 Prospects and challenges for emergent smallholder livestock development in South Africa

The case material underlines the considerable class differentiation that currently characterizes emergent farmers in South Africa. Indeed, the three categories of emergent livestock farmers that are identified in the analysis above are representative of the entire spectrum, from subsistence to commercial production, highlighting the lack of clarity currently being shown by policy makers in the application of the 'emergent' farmer label.

In the case material, the vast majority of farmers remained at a subsistence level, even though they now had access to private farmland through agrarian reform. Despite the move from a communal to a private farming system, there was no overall evidence of a change in production strategy associated with this through a recognizable shift to petty commodity production or small-scale capitalism. Post-resettlement support has largely failed to make a meaningful impact on this category of farmers (e.g. AsgiSA-EC 2014, Cousins 2013, Sikwela and Mushunje 2013). Difficult group dynamics in the context of controlling management and use of natural resources (Lahiff 2007), dilapidated roads, poor extension service access (Aliber and Hall 2012) and lack of access to finance, all challenge the productivity of these farmers. Hall (2009) concludes that fewer than 1 in 20 land reform beneficiaries benefited from loans from the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) or Micro-Agricultural Financial Institution of South Africa (MAFISA). Most of these farmers also remain excluded from livestock support programmes and hence still own low-yielding crossbred animals, which realize lower prices in the current red meat classification system (Chingala et al. 2017). A lack of functioning grazing camps and livestock dams further curtails their production potential. The failure of these farmers to make the transition to commercial production helps to explain why so much of the redistributed farmland in South Africa has been classified as 'no longer productive' (Africa Research Institute 2013, DPME 2013, O'Laughlin et al. 2013). Similar findings of 'underutilization' of land reform farms have been reported in Zimbabwe by (Marongwe 2011).

These farmers spread risk by continuing to draw strongly on their connections with the communal areas from which they originated. Communal areas provide a suitable market for the produce they are occasionally able to sell. The lack of essential equipment such as tractors means that they cannot make effective use of the relatively large arable land areas

available on their farms. Therefore, most of these farmers continue to undertake crop production in the communal fields in their home villages, where they can utilize draught power and engage friends and relatives in seasonal labour arrangements. Owing to the 'limited resources and skills to operate a market-oriented production system' (DAFF 2018a: vi), some of these farmers are reluctant or simply unable to make the shift to a more capitalist production model and therefore remain at a largely subsistence level, barely accumulating. We conclude that the inability of this category of farmers to transition to a consistent form of commercial production means that, despite being land reform beneficiaries, they cannot be considered as genuinely 'emergent' farmers.

However, the analysis did identify a relatively small group of farmers who are accumulating from below to make the transition from communal subsistence into small/medium-scale commercial production. This 'middle' category consists of farmers who emerged from rural areas, using either state assistance or capital from urban jobs to purchase their farms. Those who purchased farms using capital accumulated through urban employment were former communal farmers who had unsuccessfully applied for state assistance with farm purchase under agrarian reform. These farmers produced above subsistence and marketed their surplus produce regularly while employing external labour, characteristic of small/medium-scale capitalist farmers (Cousins 2010). This group most closely approximates to the 'missing middle' referred to by Poulton et al. (2008), Hall (2009) and Neven et al. (2009) in SSA. They also meet the criteria for classification as emergent farmers, having 'emerged' from communal petty commodity production (Cousins 2010, Aliber and Hall 2012) into varying levels of capitalist production on land reform farms. If properly supported, this emergent farmer group has the potential to effectively bridge the divide in South African agriculture. However, many of these farmers face real challenges in producing to scale due to their limited access to knowledge, finance and support programmes. Particularly important for this group is a lack of available financial capital, the farmers having to draw on their own limited capital or loans, resulting in debt. These challenges have also been identified by Marongwe (2011: 1070), who reported that aspirant black farmers in Zimbabwe 'lacked sufficient capital to invest meaningfully in commercial agriculture, did not have relevant farming experience, and were unable to put the bulk of their land into production for several years'. Due to the challenges they face, some of these farmers also spread risk by continuing to engage with their former communal areas.

Finally, the case material identified a small number of fully commercialized, large-scale capitalist farmers accumulating from above and using business capital to do so. The existence of these black capitalist farmers (Hall and Kepe 2017) is supported by published studies from other parts of Southern Africa (e.g. Jayne et al. 2015). However, they cannot be considered as genuine 'emergent' farmers as they are not emerging from one class system into another, but rather are capitalist entrepreneurs (Kay 2015, Tilzey 2017) investing capital in an alternative enterprise. They do, nonetheless, seem to be well-positioned politically and socially for 'elite capture' of the support schemes available to all 'emergent' farmers and they continue to qualify for access to farms on this basis. The fact that they are not representative of emergent farmers and certainly do not constitute the rural poor, raises questions about the extent to which they should actually be entitled to any such support.

Many of the challenges highlighted by the case study material find resonance with those extensively documented by other authors (Bradstock 2005, Macleod et al. 2008, Atuahene 2011, Aliber and Hall 2012, Lahiff 2016). Current policy acknowledges the skewed, uncoordinated, inadequate, inefficient and ineffective support afforded to emergent farmers in South Africa (DAFF 2018a). Increasing and sustaining an effective emergent farmer category in South Africa will be difficult within the current agrarian reform approach, which helps to perpetuate elite capture of resources and support services at one end while reinforcing subsistence production at the other. In effect, the dualism within South African agriculture that agrarian reform sought to address remains largely intact. Indeed, the latest draft policy on farmer development support (DAFF 2018a), suggests a move away from the term 'emergent' farmer and instead classifies farmers according to production capacity and annual financial turnover. Critically, this new policy maintains a requirement for farmers to have co-financing in order to access support, which might serve to prolong the exclusion of poorer farmers and reinforce their difficulty in transitioning to effective petty commodity production. Agrarian reform programmes need a more radical realignment with a much clearer focus, first, on enabling farmers who have accessed land to 'emerge' successfully into small/medium-scale capitalist production and, second, on offering more effective support for those few farmers who are already there - that is, creating and perpetuating the 'middle' group of small-scale producers who still remain largely absent from the farming system.

How to effectively support the large numbers of 'subsistent' farmers who, despite having access to land, have little ability to engage in effective petty commodity production remains a major challenge. One important step in trying to encourage any transition into the 'middle' might involve creating a comprehensive inventory of who these farmers are, what their challenges are and the knowledge gaps that characterize them. The current government proposal that all 'producers' be centrally registered and identified by a unique producer registration number (DAFF 2018a) might be a useful step in creating the database of smallholder producers that is currently lacking (Jacobs et al. 2003, Valente 2009). This could then be used to target support to them more effectively.

For the relatively small group of farmers who are already in the 'emergent' middle group, policy may need to focus on better enabling them to service the debts they have often accumulated in making the transition. This might take the form, for example, of government or private sector co-financing to provide capital for production, especially for those farmers who purchased farms and are left with inadequate funds for production. Improved access to support programmes and addressing critical knowledge gaps might also help to sustain this group.

For the fully commercialized investor farmers, the question is not so much how best to support them (the standard mechanisms that any commercial farmer has access to can do this, for example, business loans from banks), but rather how to limit their ability to access the support mechanisms that are currently available to all 'emergent' farmers. The South African government is clearly aware of this 'double-dipping' but at present it does not seem to have a clear way of preventing it (DAFF 2018a).

3.7 Conclusions

Current agrarian reform approaches in South Africa treat all land reform beneficiaries as a homogeneous group of 'emergent' farmers and are not conducive to offering appropriate support to farmers who, in reality, are often at very different stages in the transition to commercial production. Our analysis suggests that in the smallholder cattle sector, three categories of farmers are apparent but only one is really representative of the transition to commercial production that an 'emergent' farmer should demonstrate. This small group has emerged from communal petty commodity to small/medium-scale capitalist commercial production through accumulation from below, and probably most

closely approximates to the ‘missing middle’ that scholars have argued is vital in bridging the subsistence–commercial divide. The other two groups consist of the larger fraction of farmers who remain largely subsistence-oriented, at one end of the spectrum, and an elite group of already commercialized investors accumulating from above, at the other end. Neither of these groups shows evidence of ‘emergence’, and we conclude that the term ‘emergent’ farmer is thus misplaced for the majority of land reform beneficiaries in South Africa. The term has limited utility not only because it fails to focus support on those who most need it in making the transition to the ‘middle’, but also because it fails to define when and how an emergent farmer ceases to be ‘emergent’. This is facilitating the continued capture of resources by an already commercialized elite who are able to benefit from agrarian reform through land access and associated support, as ‘emergent farmers’. We suggest that the adoption of a much clearer definition of the term ‘emergent farmer’ will help to focus policy on supporting those who are genuinely ‘emerging’ into the middle ground of small-scale commercial production. Importantly, if this definition is to effectively support the transition of subsistence farmers to commercial production, it should not only recognize the aspects of production and financial turnover that are currently being mooted but also acknowledge the class from which these farmers have emerged.

CHAPTER FOUR

4 Constraints to the sustainability of a 'systematised' approach to livestock marketing amongst smallholder cattle producers in South Africa.

This chapter appears as the following published article in the International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability:

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4.1 Abstract

Commercialisation of smallholder agriculture in South Africa is underpinned by reforms to improve livestock off-take in communal areas and engage smallholder farmers with formal markets. To achieve this, Custom Feeding Programmes (CFPs) were established to improve the condition of communal cattle prior to their sale into formal markets and to 'systematise' the informal marketing of cattle in communal areas by enabling participants to achieve higher informal market prices. We evaluate the sustainability of eight CFPs located in Eastern Cape Province in terms of their ability to add value to smallholder cattle production and encourage market participation. Communities with CFPs achieved a 16.6% mean cattle off-take rate, substantially higher than in most communal systems. Furthermore, cattle sold through CFPs attained a 17% higher mean selling price than those sold through other marketing channels. However, these benefits were mainly realised by better-off farmers with larger cattle herds and greater ability to transport animals to and from CFPs. More marginalised farmers, particularly women, had low participation. CFPs also face challenges to their sustainability, including inconsistent feed and water supplies, poor infrastructure and high staff turnover. Key to enhancing participation in CFPs, will be improving the way they are supported and embedded within communities.

Keywords: *Smallholder livestock marketing, sustainability, livelihoods, custom feeding programme, South Africa.*

4.2 Introduction

With an asset value of more than US$1.4 trillion and employing more than 1.3 billion people globally, livestock market chains play a significant role in agriculture-based livelihoods (Thornton 2010). In addition to supporting over 600 million smallholder farmers, livestock form part of an important risk management strategy for poor households in developing countries (Thornton 2010). With increasing climate variability predicted to impact negatively on agricultural productivity (Godfray and Garnett 2014), the role of livestock in buffering smallholder systems against climate change is set to become more important (Rust and Rust 2013).

Livestock farming remains a vital activity for smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa (Dovie et al. 2006), and a key component of the livelihoods of more than 52.5 million poor livestock keepers in Southern Africa (McDermott et al. 2010). Over 90% of livestock keepers in Southern Africa are classified as smallholder farmers and they own about 75% of the livestock in the region (Nyamushamba et al. 2017). In South Africa, 82% of land is suitable for agriculture, 13% being estimated to be arable, and 69% suitable for livestock and wildlife production (DAFF 2017). The communal farming sector (wherein livestock production is undertaken on land that is collectively accessed and managed) occupies an estimated 17% of this land area and accounts for 40% of the estimated 13.4 million cattle currently held in South Africa (DAFF 2017). The largest financial investment in agricultural assets in these communal areas can be attributed to livestock. There is considerable untapped potential for livestock to further contribute to the livelihoods of the rural poor, as the importance of livestock to smallholder households is likely to increase in the face of rising population growth and unemployment (Vetter 2013). However, the contribution of the 3.3 million smallholder livestock farmers in communal areas to the formal beef sector remains low, with offtake estimated at between just 5 and 10% (Musemwa et al. 2010, Ndoro et al. 2013).

Livestock-based livelihoods have the potential to drive inclusive, climate-resilient economic development in the communal areas of Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. Eastern Cape Province accounts for the highest proportion (24%) of the cattle population in South Africa, estimated at over 3.1 million cattle (DRDAR 2014). With over 60% of the cattle in the province being in communal areas (Mkabela 2013), the contribution of communal cattle to smallholder livelihoods through alternative marketing strategies could

be significant. Smallholder farmers, however, face a host of challenges in accessing formal market systems, particularly since the deregulation of the South African meat industry through the Marketing and Agriculture Act number 47 of 1996 (Soji et al. 2015). Meissner et al. (2013b) argue that smallholder farmers struggle with deregulation due to competition from established commercial farmers in an uncontrolled formal market system. High transaction costs mainly due to distance to markets and fees to acquire statutory documents such as transport permits (Sotsha et al. 2017), limit smallholder farmers' participation in formal market systems. Authors also attribute low formal market offtake in communal areas to poor marketing infrastructure (Sikwela and Mushunje 2013), poor access to formal markets, lack of information and the pricing structure (Meissner et al. 2013a). Smallholder farmers often lack adequate information on formal markets, including the carcass classification system and pricing structure, which usually pays lower prices for the older, indigenous and crossbred cattle, smallholder farmers possess.

Smallholder livestock production systems are characterised by poor production efficiency (Meissner et al. 2013a) and poor condition of animals (Mapiye et al. 2009b), mostly resulting from seasonally overgrazed and overstocked rangelands that are poorly managed (Bennett et al. 2013). Furthermore, according to Nyamushamba et al. (2017), 66.4% of cattle herds in the smallholder sector of South Africa consist of crossbred cattle, further limiting productivity. However, these limitations on productivity must be viewed in the context of the multiple roles cattle play in communal areas (Twine 2013). Both Vetter (2013) and Meissner et al. (2013a) make a compelling argument that significant cattle trade occurs through informal markets within the communal sector, which is not captured in official statistics, hence the off-take for communal areas might well be higher than is currently recognised. Overall, considerable livestock trade in Africa occurs through informal trade (de Haan et al. 1999, Eid 2014, Mpairwe et al. 2015). Informal marketing of cattle plays a significant role in communal livelihoods in South Africa, hence alternative marketing strategies that harness the benefits of informal marketing will be important for smallholder systems.

Alternative strategies do already exist in other parts of the world to increase the competitiveness of smallholder farmers in both formal and informal cattle markets. In Vietnam, for example, smallholder farmers intensified livestock production by adopting

a stall-fed system as an alternative to the traditional grazing system, enabling them to be more competitive in formal livestock markets (Stür et al. 2013). Likewise, 'retained-ownership' in custom feedlots has been applied in the United States as a marketing alternative to the conventional auction and feedlot method (Gillespie et al. 2004). Retained-ownership is a marketing agreement where ownership of cattle is usually maintained by the seller throughout the feedlot phase, and the seller is then paid when the cattle are sold (Gillespie et al. 2004). A retained-ownership market alternative has been initiated in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa, in the form of CFPs. Smallholder cattle are brought to a CFP but remain owned by the producers (NAMC 2013).

The Eastern Cape Red Meat Project was introduced in 2005, under ComMark Trust, with the objective of increasing formal market participation of communal and emerging livestock farmers (Sotsha et al. 2017). To a lesser extent, the programme also aimed to 'systematise' the informal marketing of cattle, which entails collective and organised informal marketing of cattle to achieve consistently higher informal market prices. The programme was subsequently handed over to the National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC) in 2009, which organised it into CFPs and expanded it to other provinces as part of a national initiative called the National Red Meat Development Programme (NRMDP). NAMC has now established 11 CFPs within Eastern Cape Province, aimed at finishing communal cattle using grain-based commercial feed for a period of 120 days for a subsidised, fixed fee (Ntombela et al. 2013, Nyhodo et al. 2014). There have been few studies on the performance and impact of these CFPs, and those that have been undertaken have focused mainly on livestock off-take (Marandure et al. 2016a) and feed dynamics (Nyhodo et al. 2014). Moreover, in light of the widely recognised constraints to increased market participation by smallholder farmers in South Africa and poor record of state-supported service delivery to farmers (e.g. Musemwa et al. 2010, DAFF 2018a) serious questions remain about how sustainable CFPs are from a social (equity and participation) and operational perspective. This article seeks to address this by: a) evaluating in greater depth the contribution of CFPs to communal livestock marketing and associated income and for whom; b) exploring the challenges to wider participation in the CFPs by the communities in which the CFPs are located; and c) analysing the operational constraints to continued functioning of CFPs.

4.3 Methodology

4.3.1 Study sites

The study was conducted using eight of the eleven CFP sites in Eastern Cape Province (Table 4-1 and Figure 4-1). The three remaining CFPs were found not suitable for inclusion. Nyandeni CFP was excluded because it had only been recently established and thus did not have sufficiently comprehensive data on cattle marketing. Fort Cox CFP was excluded because it was located at a considerable distance from the other CFPs and was difficult to access. Ikhephu CFP was excluded because it was designed to support emergent commercial farmers on freehold or leasehold land and hence was not comparable with the other CFPs, which were all supporting livestock farmers in communal areas.

Table 4- 1: The studied CFPs in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

CFP	Carrying Capacity	Location	Local Municipality	District Municipality
Gxwalibomvu	540 cattle	Tsomo	Intsika Yethu	Chris Hani
Ncorha	540 cattle	Ncorha	Intsika Yethu	Chris Hani
Komani	250 cattle	Queenstown	Lukhanji	Chris Hani
Lahlangubo	350 cattle	Engcobo	Engcobo	Chris Hani
Kamastone	540 cattle	Whittlesea	Lukhanji	Chris Hani
Lower Hukuwa	540 cattle	Whittlesea	Lukhanji	Chris Hani
Umzimvubu	80 cattle	Lugangeni	Umzimvubu	Alfred Nzo
Ngangegqili	200 cattle	Idutywa	Mbhashe	Amathole

The Province has an arid to semi-arid climate with a mean annual rainfall range of 600-1200mm, being lowest towards the western interior and highest towards the coast. Most vegetation in the province is classified locally as sourveld, meaning that it becomes unpalatable to livestock during the dry season. The region is characterised by generally shallow sandy soils unsuitable for crop production (Nqeno et al. 2011). Eastern Cape Province has the second highest poverty incidence in South Africa (ECPC 2014) and subsistence-based agriculture remains the dominant production system in communal areas, centred on the former homelands of Ciskei and Transkei.

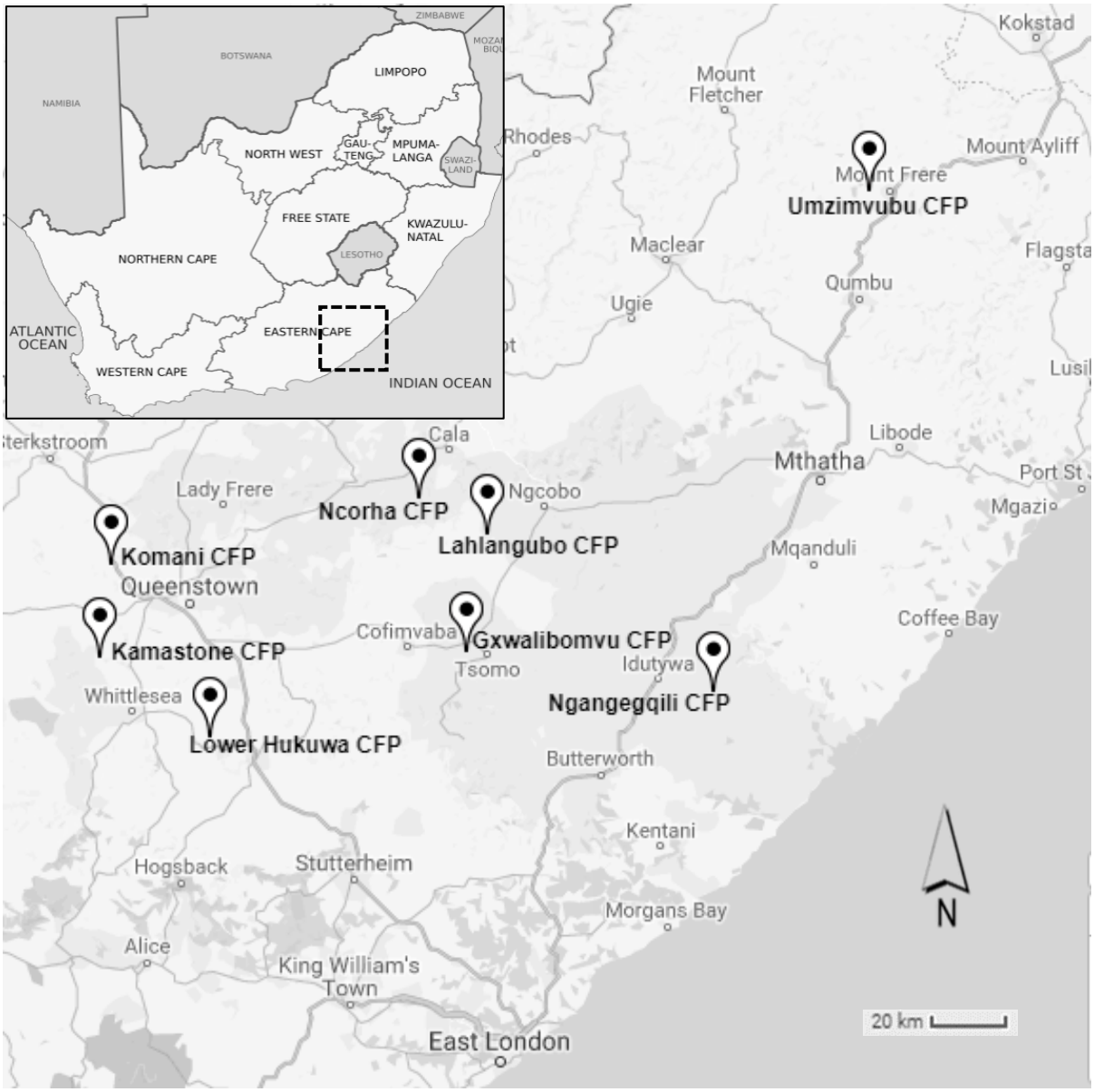

Figure 4- 1: Map indicating location of CFPs in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa
[Source: maps adapted by author using scribble maps (https://www.scribblemaps.com/)]

4.3.2 Data collection

A mixed methods approach was employed, with qualitative and quantitative data being collected. Key informant interviews were held with CFP supervisors, extension officers, veterinary practitioners, committee members, DRDAR and DRDLR staff and local authority staff. Secondary data on cattle sales was collected from records kept at the eight CFPs every three months from January to December 2017. Data was also collected through a survey questionnaire. The survey questionnaire was administered to 177 farmers who were purposefully sampled from records of the eight CFPs based on ownership of livestock and within this a mix of male and female headed households

(Gxwalibomvu = 22, Ngangegqili = 22, Kamastone = 23, Komani = 22, Lahlangubo = 22, Lower Hukuwa = 23, Umzimvubu = 22, Ncorha = 21). The questionnaire captured data on household demographics; socio-economic status; cattle herd dynamics and marketing; and reasons for participation or non-participation in the CFP.

4.3.3 Data analysis

Quantitative household socio-economic, demographic and livestock marketing data was analysed using descriptive statistics in SAS (SAS 2012). Cattle herd composition and marketing data were analysed by one-way ANOVA using the PROC GLM Procedure in SAS (2012). Representative excerpts from the qualitative information contained in key stakeholder interviews and survey questionnaires were used to contextualise and support relationships identified in the quantitative data (Shackleton and Luckert 2015).

4.4 Results

Several key factors constraining the sustainability of the CFP approach to livestock marketing were reported by farmers.

4.4.1 Socio-cultural constraints to cattle marketing

Although the communal CFPs have regulatory requirements such as age, sex, branding and dehorning for cattle that are allowed entry into CFPs, none of them enforce any of the restrictions, resulting in farmers bringing old animals of any breed (Table 4-2).

Table 4- 2: 2017 cattle marketing dynamics for eight studied communal CFPs in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

CFP	Cattle intake	Cattle sold	Class of most animals brought	Markets sold to
Gxwalibomvu	136	95	Old mixed breeds	Informal market
Ngangegqili	104	78	Old mixed breeds	Informal market
Kamastone	27	4	Old/young mixed breeds	Informal market
Komani	135	125	Old/young mixed breeds	Informal/auction/abattoir
Lahlangubo	151	133	Old/young mixed breeds	Informal market/abattoir
Lower Hukuwa	68	18	Old/young mixed breeds	Informal market
Umzimvubu	250	198	Old mixed breeds	Informal market
Ncorha	74	31	Old mixed breeds	Informal market

This is understandable within the socio-cultural context of cattle ownership in communal areas, where farmers do not generally sell young animals (Mapiye et al. 2009a, Ashley et al. 2018). Rather, cattle, particularly indigenous breeds, are socio-cultural assets which

contribute to the 'agrarian culture and heritage' of communal farmers through important rituals and ceremonies (Nyamushamba et al. 2017: 604). For this reason, most communal farmers are likely to market only older, spent animals (Strydom et al. 2015, Chingala et al. 2017). This presented a challenge for communal CFPs to meet their objective of marketing communal cattle into formal markets, by attempting to control the type of animals they processed.

Furthermore, nearly 90% of respondents possessed 'non-descript', crossbred cattle, which are a result of uncontrolled crossbreeding of indigenous (*Bos indicus* and *Bos taurus africanus*) with imported (*Bos taurus*) breeds. The remaining 10% owned indigenous breeds. Non-descript crossbreds, first appeared in low-input communal rangeland production systems in South Africa during the colonial and apartheid eras. Imported breeds were introduced to improve livestock performance in communal areas, but were unsuccessful due to high maintenance requirements and susceptibility to diseases and droughts (Mapiye et al. 2007).

Recent research shows that non-descript crossbred and indigenous cattle are primarily kept by smallholder farmers for their hardiness and disease resistance, which enables their survival in rural smallholder ecosystems that are characterised by high temperatures, high disease and parasite incidence, low nutrition and recurrent droughts (Mwai et al. 2015). However, from a production perspective, these non-descript crossbred and indigenous cattle are characterised by low feed utilization efficiency, small to medium frames and lower mature weight averaging 225-450kgs (Nyamushamba et al. 2017), and hence do not gain much weight when channelled through CFPs. The net result is that these animals fetch lower average prices when sold through formal markets, based on the current beef carcass classification system (Chingala et al. 2017). Most of the CFPs initially tried to market the non-descript crossbred and indigenous cattle they received to abattoirs but were discouraged by the prices attained. For instance, producers from Ncorha and Gxwalibomvu CFPs initially sold their cattle to abattoirs but only realised an average price of [5]ZAR6 000 (US$462) per animal. The low-weight, old age and flat body

[5] ZAR is the official South African currency, the South African Rand. The current official exchange rate (as at 01 September 2018) of 1 South African Rand equivalent to 0.077 United States Dollars was used to convert ZAR to US$ in this article.

conformation of communal cattle means their carcasses are normally classified as C4-5 grade, which has a lower price per kg of meat (Soji et al. 2015). This was illustrated by a cattle owner from one of the CFPs, who suggested that:

> *'The CFP sold my big cow to a local abattoir, and I got very little money for it, just ZAR5 000 (US$385). It was bigger than the cow that my neighbour sold to another farmer, but my neighbour got ZAR8 500 (US$655). I will not sell to the abattoir again'*

Marketing efficiency in formal markets such as abattoirs requires a consistent supply of large volumes of good quality animals, pre-requisites that the communal CFPs generally fail to meet due to inconsistent cattle sales patterns and inappropriate herd structure (too many older animals and bulls) in the communal areas where animals are drawn from (Marandure et al. 2016a). However, there was variation between the CFPs in their capacity to achieve this. Kamastone and Lower Hukuwa CFPs processed significantly higher weaner, cow and steer numbers than the other CFPs except Ncorha CFP ($p<0.05$). The trend is reflected in the significantly larger ($p<0.05$) mean herd sizes of 21 and 23 cattle in Kamastone and Lower Hukuwa CFP communities respectively (Figure 4-2), compared to a mean herd size across all the communal CFPs of 12 cattle in 2016.

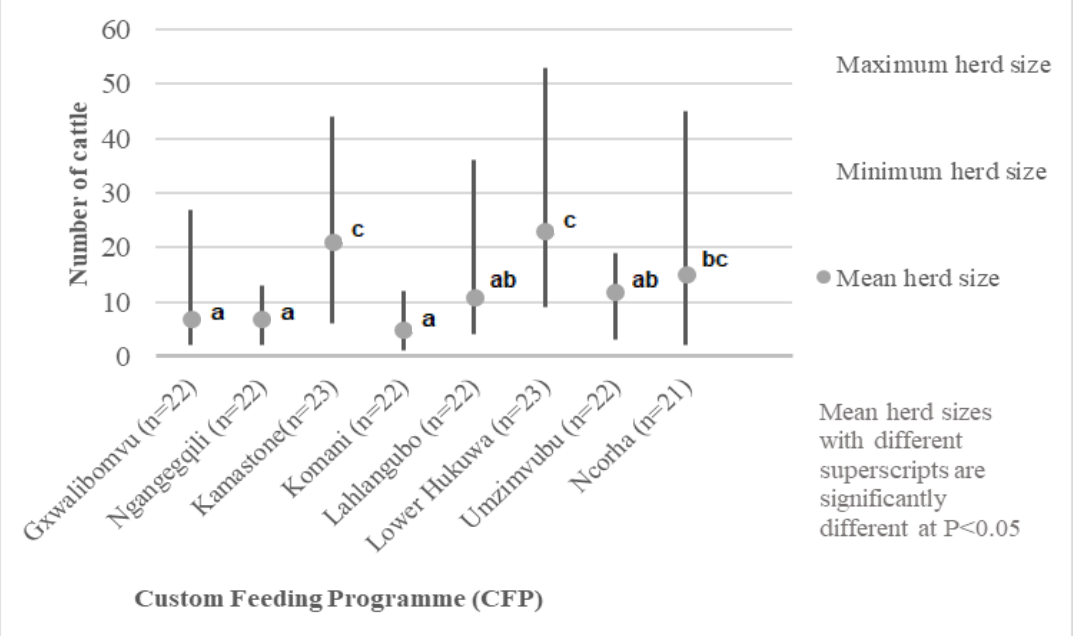

Figure 4- 2: Minimum, maximum and mean herd size for eight communal CFP communities studied in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

In rural communities, an increase in herd size increases propensity to participate in markets and consistency of market participation (Enkono et al. 2013), with those who have small herd sizes unlikely to sell. The significantly higher ($p<0.05$) herd sizes (Figure 4-2) and mean annual cattle sales (Table 4-3) in Kamastone and Lower Hukuwa CFPs support this relationship. In the U.S. stocker cattle market, herd size had a positive correlation with probability of selling and the marketing channels accessed (Schmitz et al. 2003).

Table 4- 3: 2016 mean annual cattle sales data for eight CFP communities studied in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa (n=177)

CFP	Gxwalibomvu	Ngangegqili	Kamastone	Komani	Lahlangubo	Lower-Hukuwa	Umzimvubu	Ncorha	Overall mean
Mean cattle sold	0.7^{ab}	0.4^{a}	3^{d}	0.2^{a}	1^{bc}	3^{d}	2^{cd}	2^{cd}	2
Standard deviation	1	0.6	2	0.9	2	2	4	2	2

Values within a row followed by different superscripts (a,b,c,d) are significantly different at $P < 0.05$

The unwillingness of cattle owners to sell young animals is further underlined by the fact that participants marketed an overall average of just 0.3 weaners per household in 2016 compared to 2 steers and 1 cow. Randela (2003) reported that young animals such as heifers are rarely sold by communal farmers as they are considered important for future herd building. This is problematic for CFPs because officially, their focus should be on marketing young animals which optimise value addition of CFPs to cattle production.

Amongst the farmers surveyed, there was a diversity of income sources, with only a relatively small proportion (9-24%) of respondents depending entirely on livestock for their income (Table 4-4). This underlines how smallholders in communal areas spread risk within households and are generally unwilling to focus on a single source of livelihood. Indeed, 41-64% of respondents derived no cash income at all from livestock in 2016, and at least 30% of all households depended for their income on social grants and pensions. Marandure et al. (2016b) reported similar findings.

Table 4- 4: Income sources for the eight CFP communities studied in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa in 2016 (n=177)

CFP	Income sources (% of respondents)							
	Livestock only	Livestock + Social grant	Livestock + Pension	Livestock + Salary	Social grant only	Pension only	Salary only	**Mean cattle income (ZAR)**
Gxwalibomvu	9	11	14	18	30	15	3	9 626[a]
Ngangegqili	10	13	9	13	13	18	20	10 232[a]
Kamastone	21	12	4	5	32	19	7	11 728[b]
Komani	10	18	8	13	34	4	13	10 482[a]
Lahlangubo	16	10	9	8	16	18	23	12 105[b]
L. Hukuwa	24	4	5	3	30	17	17	12 948[bc]
Umzimvubu	18	11	12	14	33	8	4	13 492[c]
Ncorha	10	13	8	9	31	15	14	12 261[b]

Values within a column followed by different superscripts (a,b,c,d) are significantly different at $P < 0.05$

Nonetheless, it is clear that periodic livestock sales remain an important part of the livelihood strategies of many households. Amongst those households that sold cattle, overall mean income from cattle sales was estimated at ZAR11 609 (US$894) in 2016, which accounted for 32% of mean annual household income. This is similar to 22% and 31% reported by Ashley et al. (2018) and Bishu et al. (2018) respectively.

4.4.2 Marketing channels and value addition

In 2016, the communal CFPs had an average cattle offtake rate of 16.6%, similar to the 15.8% reported by Sotsha et al. (2017) in their study of CFPs in five district municipalities. This is considerably higher than the 5% offtake rate reported for most communal systems in South Africa (Mapiye et al. 2007, Musemwa et al. 2010, Sotsha et al. 2017). In this respect, it can be concluded that CFPs have been effective in enhancing communal cattle off-take for those engaging with the CFPs. However, off-take figures in the current study remain well below the 25-30% reported for commercial cattle production systems in South Africa (Scholtz and Bester 2010, Sotsha et al. 2017). This most probably reflects the fact that most communal farmers have still not fully committed themselves to commercial livestock production due to the risks involved and small herd sizes (Lubungu et al. 2015, Marandure et al. 2016a); and that CFPs cannot fully support communal farmers to engage with formal markets.

Given the context outlined in the previous sections, the study also attempted to understand the marketing channels that the smallholder farmers engaged with, and the reasons for

engaging with those channels. The results indicate that at-least 77% of communal farmers channelled most of their cattle to informal markets either directly by selling to other farmers or through CFPs that in turn sold to the informal market (Table 4-5). The communal farmers occasionally sold through 'middlemen'[6], who either supplied to the formal or informal market. The formal market consists mainly of abattoirs and is currently accessed only by smallholder farmers from Lahlangubo and Komani CFPs. Therefore, six out of the eight communal CFPs did not engage with the formal market directly in the communities studied (see also Table 4-2).

Overall, a larger number (78%) of cattle were sold informally owing to the 17% higher average price realised of ZAR8 614 (US$663) compared to other marketing channels in 2016 (Table 4-5). Abattoirs and middlemen, who constitute or contribute to the formal sector, provided lower (although not significantly so) average prices of ZAR7 267 (US$559) and ZAR7 015 (US$540) respectively than cattle sold through CFPs and to 'other farmers'. Producers at Gxwalibomvu, Ngangegqili and Kamastone sold fewer cattle through CFPs than in other communities. Respondents from Kamastone CFP preferred to sell cattle through middlemen and 'other farmers' than through the CFP.

Table 4- 5: Cattle marketing channels and average prices obtained in eight communal CFPs studied in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa in 2016

CFP	***Average number of animals marketed through channel***			
	Abattoir	**CFP**	**Middle-men**	**Other Farmers**
Gwxalibomvu	.	1	1	2
Ngangegqili	.	1	.	2
Kamastone	.	1	2	3
Komani	3	2	.	1
Lahlangubo	1	2	1	2
Lower Hukuwa	.	3	2	2
Umzimvubu	.	2	1	1
Ncora	.	2	1	2
Mean cattle sold	2	3	2	2
Total cattle sold	8	96	34	52
Average price (ZAR)	7267[a]	8614[a]	7015[a]	8612[a]

Values within a row followed by different superscripts (a,b,c,d) are significantly different at $P < 0.05$

Importantly, the CFPs provided an opportunity for communal farmers to attain higher prices for older animals and reduce transaction costs. In this regard, CFPs centralised or

[6] Middlemen are people who purchase livestock from farmers and sells them to traders, retailers or consumers, 'linking farmers to traders and final markets' (Abebe et al. 2016).

'systematised' the marketing of communal cattle, which might help to explain the higher mean offtake of 16.6% in the communities that have access to these CFPs. Thus, CFPs appear to function as communal cattle hubs, providing buyers with an opportunity to access communal cattle in bulk from a 'central' point and thereby improve efficiency in smallholder cattle marketing, with buyers spending less time locating and purchasing animals. Livestock marketing in formal markets accrues high transaction costs mainly due to long distances, slaughter fees, taxes and statutory document fees such as transport permits (Sotsha et al. 2017, Mapiye et al. 2018). CFPs enabled communities within the locality of the CFPs to reduce these transaction costs when buying cattle, as they could access cattle from long distances without incurring the associated transport costs. Most CFPs drew cattle mostly from villages located 21 – 50 km away, but in some cases as far as 100 km or more from the CFPs (Table 4-6).

Table 4- 6: Catchment area for the eight CFP communities studied in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa in 2016

CFP	***Number of villages in relation to distance (kms) from CFP***						
	<5	**5-10**	**11-20**	**21-50**	**51-100**	**>100**	**Mean distance**
Gwxalibomvu	2	1		4	1	1	41
Ngangegqili	2	3		4	2		37
Kamastone	2	1	1	3			18
Komani	1	2	1	2	1		29
Lahlangubo	1	1	2	3	1	1	49
Lower Hukuwa	2	1	2	6			23
Umzimvubu	2	2	1	1			15
Ncora	1	1	1	2	2	1	46

Interestingly, communal farmers who were located further from CFPs seemed to engage more with CFPs than those situated in villages immediately adjacent to the CFPs, particularly at Gxwalibomvu, Kamastone, Lahlangubo, Lower Hukuwa and Ncorha CFPs. It was related by key informants that when CFPs opened, the farmers nearest to the CFPs brought animals to them. However, due to feed supply shortages some animals died in CFPs and farmers were not compensated, resulting in these local farmers disengaging from the CFPs. About 67% of the respondents who brought cattle from 20kms or further from the CFPs also responded that there are limited market opportunities in their areas, and they were able to get consistently higher prices at CFPs.

More importantly, communal farmers who were bringing cattle from long distances brought larger numbers of animals and had cost-reduction arrangements. One communal farmer bringing animals from 72 km away explained that:

> *'I combine my animals with my neighbour, and we hire one truck. When we share transport costs, we still make a better profit than selling in the villages around here'.*

Some 63% of the farmers bringing cattle from over 50 kms sold larger cattle numbers and also had their own transport to bring cattle to CFPs. These farmers, who effectively represent 'petty commodity producers', brought large numbers of weaners that enabled Lahlangubo and Komani CFPs to access the formal market. For example, in November 2017, Lahlangubo CFP had 38 weaner steers brought in by three farmers, which were sold to a local abattoir for an average price of ZAR8 500 (US$655) each. For this relatively well-off minority, CFPs add value to their animals by opportunistic marketing and the utilisation of the subsidised feed and labour the CFPs provide.

4.4.3 Understanding farmer engagement with CFPs

The study also characterised reasons for participation and non-participation in CFPs (Table 4-7). Of the 96 (54.2%) respondents who utilised CFPs, 77 (80%) utilised CFPs for marketing-related reasons. Of these, 52 (54.2%) utilised CFPs to attain relatively higher selling prices than through conventional marketing channels. Secondary data indicated that some animals were sold for as much as ZAR13 000 (US$1 001) through Umzimvubu CFP and ZAR15 000 (US$1 155) through Gxwalibomvu CFP, although data on age, weight, breed and conformation of these animals was not recorded. In this instance, CFPs seem to have managed to achieve the objective of attaining consistently higher prices for those communal farmers who engaged with them. Ouma et al. (2003) reported that communal cattle which receive supplementary feed are likely to be priced higher than those relying solely on communal grazing.

Table 4- 7: Reasons for (non-)participation in CFPs in communities studied in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa in 2016 (n=177)

Reason for CFP participation	Number of respondents								
	Gw	Ng	Ka	Ko	La	L.H	Um	Nc	Tot.
Attaining higher price	6	5	7	7	6	7	9	5	52
Marketing old animals	2	2	1	1	2	1	3	2	14
Ease of marketing/negotiation	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	11
Access to cheap feed/drugs	1	1	2	1	.	2	1	1	9
Fattening for rituals	1	2	.	1	1	.	.	1	6
Drought mitigation	.	1	.	1	2	.	.	.	4
Subtotal	11	12	12	12	13	11	15	10	**96**
Reason for CFP non-participation									
Lack of feed/drugs poses risk	2	2	4	3	2	4	3	3	23
Small herd size/no reason to sell	2	3	1	2	3	2	2	1	16
Lack of compensation for deaths/theft	3	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	14
Lack of adequate information	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	11
CFPs not well managed	1	1	1	2	.	2	.	.	7
Do not have old or sick animals	1	1	.	1	1	.	.	2	6
CFPs take too long to sell animals	1	.	1	.	.	.	1	1	4
Subtotal	11	10	11	10	9	12	8	10	**81**

Key: Gwxalibomvu (Gw); Ngangegqili (Ng); Kamastone (Ka); Komani (Ko); Lahlangubo (La); Lower Hukuwa (L.H); Umzimvubu (Um) and Ncora (Nc). Total respondents (Tot.)

The ability to negotiate was also a key factor in encouraging utilisation of CFPs. When a buyer in the informal market identified an animal to buy from the CFP, the owner of the animal was called, and they negotiated with the buyer on the animal price. In contrast to the rigid carcass classification system in the formal system, visual appraisal and negotiation determines cattle prices in informal systems (Soji et al. 2015). CFPs mediated, and then deducted their fixed fee, which ranged from ZAR800 (US$62) to ZAR1 000 (US$77) for the 120-day feeding period, from the agreed buying price and paid the owner the difference. One communal farmer indicated that:

> *'We prefer to market to other farmers directly or through CFPs, because we are familiar with them and we can negotiate the price. Negotiating is easy to do because these buyers know our cattle already, therefore they are confident that we are not selling them poor animals'.*

On this basis we suggest that one of the key values of the CFP approach lies in its compatibility with the ethos of communal cattle production systems. Cattle have multiple non-market livelihood benefits in rural communities including provision of milk, manure and draught power (Mwai et al. 2015), and hence households will usually only sell

animals when they are older and less useful to them (Soji et al. 2015). This helps to explain why 14 (14.6%) of communal farmers who made use of CFPs indicated that they found them useful in disposing of old animals, which would be difficult to sell into the formal market. Importantly, in doing so, CFPs (at least in the way they are currently being utilised) enable communal farmers to also benefit from the non-market outputs accrued during the period in which cattle are retained at households before being sold. One communal farmer explained it thus:

> *'I do not have money to hire a tractor, so I use my animals for draught power. It used to be hard for me to sell them when they are old, and it was difficult for me to replace them. Now I get meaningful income and I now frequently replace the animals I use for draught power'.*

These non-markets outputs were estimated by Dovie et al. (2006) to be worth US$656 per household per annum. The combined value of non-market outputs and the sales value of 'spent' cattle sold through CFPs, if properly supported and harnessed, might be where CFPs add the greatest value to communal livelihoods and livestock production systems.

Eighty-one (45.8%) respondents indicated that they did not utilise CFPs at all, and most of the reasons provided were risk-linked. Of the non-participants, 37 (45.7%) farmers cited the periodic lack of feed/drugs and lack of compensation in the event of animal death/theft in CFPs as risks they were not willing to take. The standard policy of communal CFPs is that animals are brought to CFPs at the 'owner's risk', hence farmers were not compensated in the event of animal deaths/theft whilst in CFPs.

Eleven (13.6%) non-participants cited lack of adequate information as a reason for not engaging with CFPs (Table 4-7). Indeed, overall, the respondents indicated a general lack of understanding of the purpose or function of CFPs and risks associated with utilising CFPs but were more confident in their knowledge of prices attained at CFPs. This apparent lack of information might point to inadequate consultation with the communities in the setting up of CFPs. Coetzee et al. (2005) reported that lack of adequate information negatively affected participation of communal farmers in markets.

The confusion farmers had in understanding the purpose of CFPs is evidenced by the fact that 6 (7.4%) of them perceived CFPs as being designed to support old or sick animals. For instance, one respondent suggested that:

> *'I do not have old cattle that need to be sent to the CFP. As far as I know it is only the old cattle in poor condition that should be sent to the CFP'.*

Participation was also skewed by gender and power relations. Women in particular, had low participation in CFPs (Table 4-8). In the current study, women constituted 25.9% of the respondents, but accounted for only 14.6% of CFP participants (Table 4-7). Women owned 13.8% of the total cattle with an average herd size of 7.1 cattle compared to men who owned 86.2% of cattle with an average herd size of 12.6 cattle. Similarly, Mapiye et al. (2018) found that 87% of cattle owners were male. Women sold an average of just 1.2 cattle per annum against an average of 2 cattle per annum for men and contributed only about 6% of the cattle channelled through CFPs. Moreover, in surveyed households, men were confirmed as having decision-making authority over cattle, and needed to be consulted when decisions to sell cattle and participate in CFPs were made. Even in female-headed households, men in the extended family generally needed to be consulted over decisions to market cattle. One female respondent indicated that:

> *'My late husband left me cattle, but they still remain the property of his family. When I want to sell cattle, I must inform my late husbands' brothers, who then give the go ahead to sell. They do not stay in this village, so it takes time to get a response from them sometimes'.*

Gender disparity in cattle ownership and marketing decisions is a well-documented phenomenon (World Bank 2009, IFAD 2010, Njuki and Sanginga 2013).

Table 4- 8: Key metrics and gender dynamics of CFP (non-)participants studied in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa in 2016 (n=177)

Component	Participants		Non-participants	
N value	96 households		81 households	
Gender	85% male: 15% female		61% male: 39% female	
Mean herd size	15.4 cattle		10.6 cattle	
Mean cattle sales	2.7 cattle		1.4 cattle	
Mean annual livestock income per household	ZAR12 743 (US$924)		ZAR9 765 (US$752)	
Income sources: (%)	Livestock only	18.3	Livestock only	11.4
	Livestock + Social grant	12.3	Livestock + Social grant	10.6
	Livestock + Pension	7.4	Livestock + Pension	6.9
	Livestock + Salary	12.9	Livestock + Salary	8.9
	Social grant only	23.4	Social grant only	35.5
	Pension only	15.6	Pension only	14.3
	Salary only	10.1	Salary only	12.4

Overall, however, CFP participants had larger mean herd sizes, sold more cattle and derived a higher percentage of their income from cattle compared to non-participants (Table 4-8). The table also indicates that poorer households (at-least based on herd size) tended not to participate in markets and relied more on social grants. This underlines the need for additional strategies to support poorer farmers to participate in marketing initiatives.

CFPs were run by committees, and the selection of committee members was frequently politically driven, with several holding influential positions such as through chieftaincy or a local government position. While these influential members were often viewed by participants as beneficial in representing the needs of CFPs to local government, the committee members were often part of a wealthy elite and were well-positioned to benefit personally from the utilisation of CFPs. For example, at one CFP, the chief was selected to be the CFP chairperson due to being 'connected' to the DRDAR, and hence in a position to influence provision of resources from the DRDAR. In this sense, such strategic decisions might be considered more as a form of 'benevolent capture' as opposed to 'malevolent elite capture' (Mansuri and Rao 2004, Arnall et al. 2013). According to Wong (2010: 2), '…a pragmatic use of elites' networks and resources channels benefits to poor communities'. However, these elites often channelled large numbers of their own cattle through CFPs, raising questions about how 'benevolent' their intentions were. Research indicates that the poor are least targeted and often do not benefit when power and authority is vested within an elite group (Mansuri and Rao 2004).

4.4.4 Structural and functional constraints to the sustainability of CFPs

The ability of CFPs to contribute to 'systematising' informal markets, and to facilitate engagement with formal markets is also constrained by various structural and functional challenges. First, and most importantly, CFPs have experienced a serious challenge with inconsistent feed supplies received from government. This contributed significantly to the general lack of confidence of smallholders in CFPs, as well as operational challenges in CFPs meeting their 120-day fattening objective. For instance, seven out of eight CFPs had severe feed challenges between September and December 2016. Lack of feed affected planned livestock sales in CFPs, as the animals were in a poor condition and not suitable for sale after the 120-day period they are expected to stay in the CFP. More importantly, prolonged lack of feed resulted in animal deaths in CFPs. Feed-related animal deaths occurred in all the CFPs in 2016. For example, Lower Hukuwa and Kamastone CFPs had a total of 18 cattle deaths due to starvation, resulting in these two CFPs temporarily closing from October 2016 to August 2017. The scepticism this issue engendered amongst respondents at Ncorha and Gxwalibomvu CFPs was illustrated by one local farmer who indicated that:

> *'When the CFP opened, a lot of us in the community put our animals there. But there was no feed for some time, and our animals died. From that time, most of us are afraid to utilise the CFP. They are risky'.*

This feed challenge was compounded by the difficulties communal cattle, raised on relatively poor rangeland, had in adapting to commercial feed. Cattle brought to CFPs were mostly older animals accustomed to communal grazing, and hence took longer to adapt to grain-based commercial diets than commercial breeds would. A sufficient period of adaptation is essential for ruminal microflora to adjust to the new high grain diets. High grain diets require appropriate management and gradual adaptation to feed, as cattle may develop ruminal acidosis among other disorders (da Silva et al. 2018). The situation was exacerbated by veterinary drug and dipping chemical shortages at the CFPs. For instance, Lower Hukuwa, Kamastone and Lahlangubo CFPs experienced lack of veterinary drugs and dipping chemicals for long periods, and often resorted to asking owners of the animals themselves to supply these when animals were sick. CFPs also reported that they did not have adequate access to extension and veterinary services, relying on the knowledge of CFP supervisors for animal health-related challenges.

Ncorha, Gxwalibomvu, Lugangeni, Kamastone and Lower Hukuwa CFPs also reported problems with their water supply. At Gxwalibomvu CFP, water used for animals was connected to the local water supply, hence the CFP experienced water supply problems when there were pipe bursts in the local community, which sometimes took a long time to be fixed. Ncorha CFP, which was supplied by a windmill, experienced water supply problems due to continuous windmill breakdowns. Ngangegqili CFP did not have an on-site water supply and instead relied on water being brought to the CFP by a water truck at considerable cost. More recently, animals at Ngangegqili CFP were utilising a nearby river for water.

The infrastructure at some of the CFPs has also become dilapidated. For instance, the roof leaked at Ncorha, Gxwalibomvu and Ngangegqili CFPs, allowing water into feed troughs during the rainy period, resulting in feed spoilages and risk of aflatoxin poisoning. Ngangegqili CFP had spaced strands of barbed wire as boundary fencing, which allowed chickens, pigs and sheep from the community to access the CFP and consume feed meant for enclosed animals. Some of the water troughs were leaking causing muddy conditions that increased risk of foot-rot in animals. CFPs also lacked electricity. Consequently, data capture and storage at communal CFPs involved use of hand-written records kept in hard-copy notebooks. In some cases, former CFP supervisors had left employment and taken these hard copies of CFP records with them, affecting continuity of operations.

4.5 Discussion

It is clear that CFPs represent a useful starting point in attempting to increase participation of communal farmers in market sales of cattle, but many issues are constraining them from realising their full potential.

A key issue remains the very limited ability of communal CFPs to engage with the formal market, which is central to national agrarian support policies. A major limitation here is the highly rigid red meat carcass classification system in the formal system, which provides much lower prices for the older cattle that communal farmers sell. It appears that for this group of farmers, most of whom own non-descript crossbred and indigenous cattle (Marandure et al. 2016a), there is currently limited value in utilising CFPs to channel animals into the formal marketing system. Some gains might be possible through more rigid enforcement of restrictions on age and sex of the animals at intake, but this would

still not overcome the limitations imposed by animals being of mixed breed and might further discourage participation by some communal owners. Thus, unless alternatives to the current beef carcass classification are sought e.g. by developing a natural pasture-fed smallholder-produced beef brand (Marandure et al. 2016b) or establishing an alternative regional beef carcass classification system (Chingala et al. 2017), the motivation for even the larger communal producers will continue to be to use the communal CFPs as platforms to sell informally to other local buyers, thereby attaining higher prices.

Nonetheless, in terms of the objective of 'systematising' informal markets, it is clear that communal CFPs are successfully being used by some communal farmers to realize better cattle prices in the informal sector. CFPs have increased cattle offtake to over 16%, unlocking the exchange market value of cattle. CFPs are able to encourage wider participation by communal farmers in the informal cattle market by complementing the way communal cattle production systems work. Specifically, enabling communal owners to sell older animals after they have already realised their non-income value, is important value addition to rural livelihoods. CFPs go beyond collective, co-operative marketing in smallholder systems, acting as systematised livestock hubs or 'geographical clusters' (Staal 2015) which have the potential to enable a more consistent supply of cattle from the traditionally irregular offtake of smallholder farmers, if properly supported. Systematised informal marketing encourages vertical integration into organised markets through reduction of transaction costs (Staal 2015).

However, it is also clear that many communal farmers, even those with cattle, are not engaging with CFPs. Rather, it appears that the benefits of CFPs are mostly being realised by male communal farmers, particularly those with larger herds and the ability to transport their animals to the CFPs - a form of rural elite capture. Mansuri and Rao (2004) found that most community-based projects in developing countries are successful in targeting poor communities but are less successful in targeting the actual poorer and marginalised households within those communities. Those respondents who appear to be most marginalised in terms of CFP engagement are from poorer (in terms of livestock holdings and livestock income) and female-headed households and there is considerable overlap between the two. Participation of women in livestock development initiatives of this type is often constrained by the strongly gendered nature of cattle ownership in African societies (Njuki and Sanginga 2013). However, where women are *de facto*

owners of cattle (e.g. widows who inherit cattle from their deceased husbands), more needs to be done to empower them to make independent marketing decisions that enable them to benefit directly from CFPs. CFPs should be encouraged to adopt gender transformative policies in their design (e.g. Chanamuto and Hall 2015). Ensuring awareness among women of the purpose and function of the CFPs will be an important part of this. Many of the agricultural technicians seconded by government to support CFPs are women, hence they have the potential to play an important extension role in this respect. The exclusion of poorer households with relatively few cattle (and of course those with none) is an inevitable consequence of this type of government-driven intervention, which naturally favours wealthier households with more cattle to dispose of. This underlines the need for complementary sets of interventions that address alternative livelihood sources such as poultry, small-stock and crop production, which might better assist these poorer households.

Interestingly, there are also other reasons for the lack of engagement of households with CFPs, which do not relate directly to wealth or gender, but rather to the level of perceived risk to livestock associated with CFP utilisation (which tends to be higher amongst owners with fewer livestock) and a lack of understanding amongst some communal farmers of the main production objectives for creating the CFPs. The lack of understanding of the objectives of CFPs amongst communal cattle owners suggests a lack of clear communication of the role of CFPs by both government and the local institutions responsible for their operation. It also underlines a potential issue with knowledge ownership/capture by local elites, which enables these elites to be best-positioned to take advantage of CFPs based on their greater understanding of the 'rules of the game'.

Lack of participation due to perceived risk can be directly linked to challenges with CFP functioning, owing to the poor and disconnected government and stakeholder support, which results in greater levels of risk being borne by the communal farmers themselves. In communal CFPs that have experienced serious problems, particularly with animal death/theft without compensation, participation from neighbouring communities is low. Clearly, greater participation of communal livestock owners in CFP initiatives is contingent to some extent on reducing the perceived level of risk to cattle in the feedlot facility, and a key part of this will be ensuring there is the local capacity to ensure continuity of feed and water supply as well as adequate veterinary and animal husbandry

support (see recommendations). There may also be the possibility of introducing a livestock insurance scheme at limited additional cost to participants, which would lower the risk for poorer households. Such schemes already exist at commercial feedlots in South Africa. Furthermore, Khan et al. (2012), Xiu et al. (2012) and Bishu et al. (2018) reported that over 60% of smallholder farmers studied in India, China and Ethiopia respectively, were willing to insure their cattle. Promoting knowledge and awareness of cattle insurance as a risk management strategy might encourage more farmers to participate in CFPs.

Significant differences between CFPs in farmer cattle sales, can be explained by differences in herd size, but might also be related to awareness of marketing opportunities. For example, farmers in Lower Hukuwa and Kamastone, as well as having large herds, seemed more aware of the benefits of marketing cattle, possibly through earlier marketing initiatives and contact with middlemen. Further research to understand in more detail what underpins this greater awareness of market opportunities will be important in terms of potential extrapolation to other CFP communities.

4.6 Conclusions and recommendations

This analysis of eight communal CFPs in Eastern Cape Province, underlines the potential they have in 'systematising' the sales of cattle into the local, informal market. However, there remain key challenges to their sustainability related to inadequate support from local and national institutions that are tasked to provision them, which contributes to limited participation by more marginalised groups of communal farmers and elite capture. We suggest that to overcome this will require a focus on two main areas.

1. Strengthening community participation in CFPs: The vital labour and feed subsidy elements of CFPs means that they remain vulnerable to changes in government support which affects their sustainability. The risk associated with CFPs is mainly due to lack of feed, which results in animal deaths and discourages participation from local communal farmers. Mitigating this risk might therefore involve CFPs and their associated communities playing a more active role in establishing alternative feed sources, such as using communal plots to grow crops for feed. CFP participants could potentially provide or pay for labour at the plots, while the CFP co-operative provides: a) seed, fertiliser and agrochemicals using the fixed fees contributed by participants; b) manure from the CFP

to fertilise the communal plots; c) expertise in fodder crop management and feed formulation. This might also involve supplementation of feed using browse-tree leaves, grass hay from rangelands and crop residues. This approach also means that local communities are more closely integrated with CFPs, which promotes communal ownership; sustainability of CFPs and continuous innovation. Building local capacity to continue to operate the CFPs is essential given that the official government support for the CFPs is only for a 5-year period beginning in 2013. This strengthening of community input must also be coupled with coherent and improved linkages with the governmental departments and associated institutions, such as NAMC, that support CFPs.

2. Widening participation of marginalised groups: Inclusion of women, youth and other marginalised groups in livestock development programmes remains a major challenge in communal areas. While CFPs might not have the scope to widen participation of women and youth through altering livestock ownership rights, there is certainly greater scope to ensure that female headed households with cattle are better supported to engage with CFPs. Women usually have power and ownership rights over small stock (Chanamuto and Hall 2015), hence CFPs might become gender-transformative, inclusive and empower women by coupling marketing of cattle with marketing of small stock such as sheep. This is being trialled at Ngangegqili CFP. According to Datta (2003: 362), the empowerment of women is often achieved through effective organisation and grassroots activism, and '…in developing countries, where resources are scarce, government policy is often a necessity in empowering women'. For households with smaller cattle herds who may currently feel that the risk of placing their cattle in feedlots is too great, communal CFPs can try to mitigate risk by providing cattle insurance within the fees that farmers pay. This has already been successfully implemented at Ikhephu commercial CFP (servicing emergent farmers with access to private farms), also in Eastern Cape, which allocates a premium of ZAR100/animal of the standard fee paid by the farmer to cover livestock insurance in the event of cattle death/theft in the CFP. Communal CFPs can also widen participation by addressing the perceived lack of understanding of the main goals of CFPs by some farmers. Knowledge of what CFPs aim to achieve and how to participate must be clearly disseminated in communities by CFP representatives at general meetings to ensure membership is not elitist.

Poor institutional design has been demonstrated to allow elite capture in community projects and this could be minimised by rethinking the institutions associated with CFP programmes to ensure more equitable resource distribution (Mansuri and Rao 2004, Wong 2010). Policy reforms that adopt 'co-opt elite' approaches (Wong 2010) in the CFP committee selection process might be beneficial. For example, a 'co-opt elite' approach employed by a community water project in Uganda involved the mandatory selection of a representative from each of: a) farmer's group, b) chief or chiefs' council, c) youth group, d) religious or political group, e) women's group; to the local committee and further required that 'at least one out of the three local representatives must be female' (Wong 2010:10). Such representation within CFPs, might help to increase the participation of women and other marginalised groups.

Thus, the next, critical step will be to learn from the operational and social constraints that have been identified with the current CFP model and for it to be rethought on a more inclusive and sustainable basis. Only then can its full potential for improving household income amongst smallholder cattle farmers within South Africa, and possibly beyond, be effectively realised.

CHAPTER FIVE

5 Balancing democracy with service delivery: power relations, politics and accountability in cooperatives supporting emergent livestock farmers in South Africa.

This chapter appears as the following article submitted for publication in the International Journal of the Commons:

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5.1 Abstract

In South Africa, cooperatives are the primary institutions through which delivery of governmental agricultural support programmes for rural communities is realised. Although these cooperatives are governed by clear national guidelines that encourage transparency and accountability to their membership, in reality their ability to realise this may be compromised by an imperative to achieve service delivery in an environment of limited governmental support. Drawing on empirical research undertaken at five agricultural cooperatives in the Elliot area of Eastern Cape Province, we examine the extent to which they are able to balance democratic function with effective programme delivery. We show that the limited capacity of local government to reach out to rural areas promotes heavy competition between cooperatives for government programmes, resulting in a highly skewed distribution of benefits determined primarily by how effectively each can 'reach up' to local service providers to secure them. This encourages cooperatives to elect powerful actors to represent them because they are perceived to have the greater political 'connectedness' required to access these benefits. However, these powerful actors are often less accountable to membership and therefore more likely to disburse benefits to suit their own vested interests. We suggest that, under current conditions, the process of creating effective and legitimate cooperatives must balance strong leadership with a high degree of accountability and transparency to ensure that benefits are disbursed as widely and appropriately as possible to members. Separating executive, judicial and legislative power structures associated with the securing and

disbursement of resources to ensure processes are transparent, might be the most practical way of achieving this. Ultimately, if the capacity of the state is strengthened to enable them to 'reach down' to cooperatives more effectively, the need to vest leadership in powerful actors and risk compromising accountability and egalitarian service delivery, might be reduced.

Keywords: *Cooperatives, democracy, leadership, accountability, emergent smallholder farmers.*

5.2 Introduction

Cooperatives are 'democratic organisational structures' or institutional arrangements created for efficient and equitable resource management while contributing positively to social capital growth, poverty reduction, logistical support, market access and sustainable social transformation (Spear 2000, Streifeneder 2015: 1). A cooperative is defined as a democratic and voluntary autonomous institution designed to meet mutually shared social, cultural and economic targets of its members (Allahdadi 2011, FAO 2012). They are distinguished from investor-owned businesses by control and ownership by their members and democratic governance (Mellor 2009). Institutions such as cooperatives draw on collective action theory and social theory to sustainably manage resources and collective production (Ostrom 1990, Dietz et al. 2008, Streifeneder 2015, Singleton 2017). In developing countries, as part of efforts by governments to 'democratically decentralise' administrative, political and fiscal governance (Wittenberg 2006), cooperatives have often been employed as platforms to collectively manage productivity, particularly in agriculture.

Social and territorial capital, and equally public policy or institutional support are key in the effective functioning of cooperatives i.e. strong member engagement, efficient apex organisational support, policy or actor networks, and facilitating local and regional context (Barham and Chitemi 2009, Mellor 2009, McGinnis 2011, Streifeneder 2015). Apex organisations are second tier organisations that support, promote, unite and develop co-operatives. Competing or conflicting interests, poor management skills and untenable power relations in cooperatives can result in disparities in resource allocation between differently positioned members (Cook 1994), with benefits often accruing to a small number of actors who have authority and power, through the process of elite capture (e.g.

Olowu 2003). Understanding how this form of decentralisation is vulnerable to elite capture is important in efforts to improve cooperative governance. Importantly, this process cannot be perceived to be entirely a result of inadequate 'checks and balances' within institutional structures, as actors who are socio-politically advantaged may sometimes be democratically elected into positions of power due to the perceived benefit that their 'connectedness' brings to a cooperative, through so-called 'benevolent' elite capture (Arnall et al. 2013). The outcome of the decentralisation process is dependent on how trust and power relations; rules and regulations or sanctions; group inter-connectedness; and internal accountability (Olowu 2003, Ribot 2004) are structured in the cooperative. Of key importance in determining the performance of these institutions are the elements of leadership, legitimacy and governance structure.

Decentralisation, defined simply as 'bringing government closer to the people' (Wittenberg 2006:4) or 'accountability of state to society' (Ribot 2004:18), refers to the devolution of political, administrative and fiscal functions from central state to local institutions, and is a key component of socio-economic development that enhances downward accountability, participation and democracy. Democracy and accountability are interlinked, democracy being defined as 'leadership that is accountable to the people' while 'governments are accountable if citizens can sanction them appropriately' (Ribot 2004:17). Democracy and accountability are key to participation, representation and empowerment of local actors and democratic decentralisation is defined by strong electoral mechanisms that enhance downward accountability. However, it has been argued that in many parts of Africa, effective democratic decentralisation and downward accountability, have not been adequately achieved (e.g. Olowu 2003, Wittenberg 2006, Koelble and Siddle 2014). Indeed, there has been a general lack of willingness by African governments to fully 'decentralise' political power, instead maintaining central power structures that are characterised by 'elite capture' (Olowu 2003). Smoke (2003) and Cabral (2011) argue that decentralisation in Africa often takes forms of privatisation or de-concentration instead of devolution, such that transfer of power is to central government agents locally rather than to local people. To this end, accountability and power relations remain key institutional and political challenges to democratic decentralisation in African local governance structures.

This is particularly true of South Africa where it has been argued that efforts to decentralise have been ongoing in some form since the Union of South Africa was created in 1910 (Wittenberg 2006, Koelble and Siddle 2014). In many former homeland areas of South Africa, these decentralisation efforts have been particularly vigorous in the post-apartheid period, attempting to create effective local governance systems to fill the institutional vacuum left by the demise of previous traditional governance structures. However, although a model framework for the creation of a democratic, decentralised governance system is enshrined in the 1996 constitution e.g. CPA Act No. 28 of 1996, Koelble and Siddle (2014) suggest that this remains largely unrealised due to a lack of institutional capacity amongst the local provincial governments mandated to deliver it, particularly so for cooperatives which remain dependent on the state support for service delivery or some level of state control. The increasing resurgence of traditional authority i.e. chiefs or traditional leaders, in rural South Africa has also served to undermine efforts to achieve democratic decentralisation in former homeland areas (Ribot 2002, Bennett 2013, Bennett et al. 2013).

In South Africa, the primary role of cooperatives is now focused on enabling socio-economic development through income generation, employment creation and broad-based black economic empowerment. Cooperatives are legal entities in South Africa under the Cooperatives Act no.14 of 2005, amended by Cooperatives Amendment Act no.6 of 2013 (RSA 2013) and are encouraged to be 'viable, autonomous, self-reliant and self-sustaining cooperatives' (Chibanda et al. 2009: 294), for the specific purpose of enabling producer groups to access state support for agricultural production. Here, the state plays a key role in provisioning services through cooperatives, cooperatives often being setup to be 'funnels' for government service delivery rather than operating on an independent 'sound business practices' and principles basis (Mellor 2009: 24). Cooperatives have thus been designed as the primary conduits for the delivery of agricultural improvement programmes to their members, which brings into question their independence from the state, as decreed by the guiding principles of good governance for cooperatives. These principles include, amongst others, voluntary participation; autonomy and independence; and cooperation among cooperatives (RSA 2015). Another unfortunate corollary of this focus on cooperatives as the primary locus for agricultural service provision is that although membership is voluntary, non-members are effectively excluded from accessing government-disbursed programmes and benefits (Ortmann and

King 2006, Kanyane and Ilorah 2015). Furthermore, the degree of local government support received by cooperative members is largely dependent on how effective their cooperative is in accessing and distributing these programmes and benefits (Streifeneder 2015) i.e. it is not a level playing field either within or between cooperatives. This stems partly from a lack of adequate capacity within local government to deliver services to communities (via cooperatives) and a resultant tendency for them to prioritise those who can make their case most strongly. Therefore, questions remain as to the extent to which these decentralised institutions can deliver benefits to local recipients in an equitable and democratic manner, as well as the transparency of the processes cooperatives are employing to access these programmes in the first place. To what extent might the political prominence of cooperative leaders have a bearing on the amount of resources they can access? Does this then influence which actors cooperative members are willing to elect to such positions and how their behaviour is held to account? This sets up a potential tension between cooperative performance in terms of delivering the programmes they were designed to engage with and upholding the democratic principles of their constitutions.

In Eastern Cape Province, South Africa, cooperatives have been created to facilitate commercialised smallholder livestock production, as part of the broader aim of delivering agrarian reform through land redistribution (Mtero 2012). To achieve this, agrarian reform has redistributed land to emergent livestock farmers on either a freehold or leasehold basis, and these farmers are clustered into cooperatives organised around CFPs, a market-oriented initiative designed to add value to livestock (Sotsha et al. 2017). In Elliot, these emerging livestock farmers are clustered into five primary cooperatives under an umbrella secondary cooperative. Using the five cooperatives as case studies, this article aims to examine some of the key questions that pertain to the performance and function of cooperatives in relation to both their service delivery and democratic remits and whether democracy is a necessary precursor for them to be able to deliver benefits to their members in an inclusive way. Specifically it aims to: i) outline the differential performance of the five cooperatives in relation to securing benefits from government and disbursing these to their membership; ii) analyse the key factors that might be affecting this performance and thereby their ability to function democratically; and iii) draw on best practice from within the cases and beyond to develop recommendations for cooperative structure and function that help to balance both accountability and effective

service delivery. In doing so we draw primarily on the ideas of legitimacy, power relations and accountability that have been used by scholars to frame the structure and function of decentralised institutions (e.g. Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2004, Ribot 2004, Chibanda et al. 2009, Lawrence 2016, Martins et al. 2017).

5.3 Methodology

The study was carried out in Elliot (31º31'30" S, 27º83'70" E) located in Sakhisizwe Local Municipality, Chris Hani District, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. Chris Hani District has pioneered collective marketing initiatives in the form of cooperatives and CFPs (NAMC 2013) for livestock marketing, servicing the relatively large community of emerging livestock farmers. The article draws on in-depth interviews, key informant interviews and FGDs done between 2016 and 2017 with emerging livestock farmers who are organised into five cooperatives, anonymously designated here by the codes TVPC, BKPC, CNPC, ITPC and UMPC (summarised in Table 5-1), which are further clustered under a secondary cooperative. Two FGDs involving 6-10 farmers were held with each primary cooperative (n=10), to broadly discuss the governance structures and performance of the cooperatives. Based on the FGDs, 12 farmers were purposefully sampled from each primary cooperative (n=60) and in-depth interviews conducted. Key informant interviews (n=12) were also held with the secondary cooperative board members, extension officers, veterinary practitioners, DRDAR and DRDLR staff and local authority staff.

To describe and understand the differential performance of the cooperatives, and how these are related to legitimacy, power relations and accountability, the analysis draws on the principles of democratic decentralisation and governance of institutions (Agrawal and Ribot 1999, Ribot 2004). We base our analysis on the premise that '…an understanding of the powers of various actors, the domains in which they exercise their powers, and to whom and how they are accountable' is critical to understanding democratic decentralisation (Agrawal and Ribot 1999: 476). We further contextualise the outcomes by drawing in places on the principles for good governance of cooperatives (RSA 2015) developed by the government of South Africa.

Table 5- 1: Livestock and land ownership among five case study cooperatives in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa (n=155)

Metric	Cooperative				
	TVPC	**BKPC**	**CNPC**	**ITPC**	**UMPC**
Number of farmers	34	28	28	35	30
Mean cattle (± SEM)	79 ± 6.5	38 ± 4.9	77 ± 13.5	51 ± 7.9	69 ± 7.9
Min–max cattle numbers	10-250	9-115	4-398	5-185	11-168
Mean sheep (± SEM)	126 ± 20.1	70 ± 13.5	114 ± 31.6	44 ± 13.7	28 ± 21.5
Min-max sheep numbers	0-486	0-350	0-700	0-328	0-425
Mean land size (ha±SEM)	457 ± 41.2	310 ± 23.8	429 ± 49.1	442 ± 61	433 ± 43.6
Min-max land size (ha)	9-850	120-520	315-1200	4-1600	179-839

5.4 Results and analysis

5.4.1 Accountability

5.4.1.1 Cooperative membership criteria

From the focus group discussions, a farmer's inclusion in, or membership of a cooperative was understood to be based on the location of their farm in terms of the geographical boundaries of the cooperative. This meant that a farmer who had multiple farms under different cooperatives, was entitled to access programmes and benefits from all of these cooperatives. The few farmers who had access to or owned multiple farms, were usually part of a well-connected elite (Table 5-2). Their socio-political influence stemmed from them having considerable financial capital; strong social and political networks; and commanding positions of power in the hierarchy of the cooperative committees (Gwiriri et al. 2019a). There are three farmers, who were originally members of a particular cooperative by virtue of their primary farm locations, but who have deliberately targeted the lease of additional farm(s) in a more 'effective' cooperative (in terms of distribution of benefits to members) because they knew that the benefits from being part of this cooperative would be greater. This is a shrewd strategy as it enables them to make use of the additional equipment and infrastructure secured from this cooperative on any of their farms. In essence, these influential farmers, are able to 'play the system' to their advantage and simultaneously access resources and programmes from the cooperatives under which they lease a farm as well as their original cooperatives.

Table 5- 2: Key indicators of legitimacy, transparency and accountability among five case study cooperatives in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

Indicator	TVPC	BKPC	CNPC	ITPC	UMPC
Membership	Cooperative membership officially determined by farm location, but some socio-politically connected actors are also members of other cooperatives.	Cooperative membership officially determined by farm location. Some socio-politically connected actors have also benefitted from programmes from other cooperatives.	Membership of cooperative based solely on geographic location of farm.	Membership of cooperative based solely on geographic location of farm.	Membership of cooperative based solely on geographic location of farm.
Access to services and benefits by members	Overall there was equitable access to resources and programmes by members. Members participated in the process of selecting those who benefitted from each programme	Committee members capture most of the benefits and services (multi-programme access). Members participate in selecting beneficiaries, but this is not honoured by the committee.	The committee and members who are closely linked to the committee members accessed most of the programmes.	Committee members captured most of the programmes. Some members were unaware of some of the programmes that the cooperative benefitted from.	Committee members accessed most of the few programmes that the cooperative engaged with. The cooperative accessed fewer programmes than the other cooperatives.
Selection of leaders	Leaders are selected by regular elections. Term lengths are adhered to. Non-performing leaders can be recalled by members	Leaders are selected by regular elections. Term lengths are not adhered to. Members do not have ability to recall leaders.	Elections and term lengths are irregular. Elections were poorly participated in by members. Members lack power to recall leaders.	Elections are attended poorly attended and were irregular. Term lengths are irregular and variable. Members lack power to recall leaders.	Leaders are selected by elections. Elections and term lengths are irregular. No record of members recalling committee members
Democratic member control	Cooperative meetings held regularly. Constitution and rules amended by those who attend meetings, but this often does not include more marginalised	Meetings are irregular. Constitution and rules amended by those in attendance at meetings. The members do not have the power to enforce disciplinary procedures.	Meetings are irregular. Attendance at meetings is poor, hence constitution and rules amended by the few who actually attend the	Meetings are regular, but poorly attended. The committee amends the constitution and rules with minimum consultation with	Meetings are irregular and poorly attended. Crucial decisions are made by committee members without consultation of members. No record

	members. Disciplinary procedures are implemented but outcomes are not always enforced.		meetings. There are no records of disciplinary cases.	members. Members disregard disciplinary action; the committee does not have power to enforce procedures.	of any disciplinary procedures.
Leadership value and legitimacy	Members respect power of leaders. Leaders were able to deliver multiple programmes. Financial and administrative powers are separated and delegated to non-committee members i.e. the role of the committee is transparent.	Leaders have limited legitimacy amongst membership and a generally poor record of programme delivery. Financial and administrative powers are controlled by the committee, and rarely delegated. Limited delegation of power and responsibilities to other members	Members do not respect power of leaders. Leaders had a poor record of programme delivery. Power and responsibilities lie entirely with committee members; hence committee is not transparent.	Members do not respect power of leaders. Leaders performed poorly in delivering programmes. Power and responsibilities centralised in leadership. Administrative and financial functions are not separated.	Members do not respect power of leaders. Members did not expect programme delivery from leaders. Administrative and financial functions are centralised and controlled by members. No functions are delegated to other members.
Responsibility	Multiple accountability layers: Financials are audited regularly. Committee provides members access to financial and audit records. Members are involved in decision making. Each committee has clear key assigned roles and duties, and members have the power to recall committee members who do not perform.	Accountability was partial, limited to financials only: Financial records were available but not audited regularly. Members lacked financial matters knowledge. A few selected members were involved in decision making. Duties and roles for committee members were not clearly defined. Members did not have the power to audit committee member performance or recall non-performing committee members.	There were no accountability measures in place. Financials were controlled by committee and no records of audits were available. Committee roles were not clearly defined, and members lacked power to recall non-performing committee members.	Financial transactions were not transparent and there were no records of audits. Members could not hold the committee accountable e.g. in terms of suspected financial or resource distribution irregularities.	There were no mechanisms for members to hold committee members accountable. Financial control was limited to committee members. No records of audits were available.

Inclusion in a cooperative is based on payment of a [7]ZAR2-3 000 (US$146-219) fee annually, which entitles the member to: training; utilisation of the CFP for cattle marketing; use of cooperative equipment and implements and cattle and infrastructure programmes channelled through the primary cooperative from DRDAR or the secondary cooperative. This means that, about 20 poor and marginalised emergent farmers who cannot afford membership fees are excluded. The premise underpinning service delivery to emergent farmers in South Africa is that all government programmes should be channelled through cooperatives, and farmers can only benefit from a programme if they are a member of a cooperative. Thus, even though membership appears to be non-discriminatory - termed 'voluntary and open membership' (RSA 2015) - most members indicated that they continue with their membership because they feel they have to be in order gain access to government programmes, even though in some cases they have seen relatively little benefit, as illustrated by one BKPC farmer:

> *The cooperative is not helping me at all, and I have been subscribing for years. I just subscribe because even though I have not yet benefitted from any programme, I will have lost out if I leave without having benefitted anything from my money. I am not sure I will get anything, because those who benefitted keep benefitting, we are always left out.*

Thus, some emergent farmers are completely excluded from joining these cooperatives and accessing agricultural support simply because they cannot pay the membership fees, and even those who can afford membership fees often feel that cooperatives bring them relatively little benefit. Poor service and benefit delivery seemed more pronounced in CNPC, ITPC and UMPC, where resources were more likely to be captured by elites. In contrast, in TVPC, members appear to have experienced better service delivery and access to benefits. For this reason, as indicated earlier, the more influential members strategically leased farms under TVPC and BKPC. The level of perceived benefit and probability of fairness in benefit distribution from cooperative membership, can be a strong determinant in members' participation a cooperative (Machethe 1990).

[7]ZAR is the official South African currency, the South African Rand. The current official exchange rate (as at 01 February 2019) of 1 South African Rand equivalent to 0.073 United States Dollars was used to convert ZAR to US$ in this article.

5.4.1.2 Committee leadership

Actors who possess, influence or control certain powers, in this instance cooperative leaders, become elements of an accountability system, beginning with how they are elected. For electoral processes to encourage participation and downward accountability, the processes need to be analysed for suffrage; how candidates are chosen; lengths of terms; and means of recall of elected officials (Ribot 2004, Mohammed and Inoue 2013). With the exception of TVPC and BKPC, the committee election process does not seem to effectively include all members of the cooperative (Table 5-2). Despite suffrage being based entirely on residency and membership within each cooperative, leadership elections were consistently poorly attended in CNPC, ITPC and UMPC, as members indicated that they believed their vote would not influence the outcome of the process. Committee member elections involve a member being nominated or self-nominating for a position and winning by garnering the highest number of votes. They then serve on the committee for a period of two years. In three of the five cooperatives, the current committee had served two consecutive terms (of two years), and committee members were generally the most socio-economically advantaged who had financial capital from non-agricultural businesses they were involved in. In some cooperatives, elections were not regularly held, and committee members served for a longer time.

Generally, members felt they were powerless or did not have the required understanding of the process to recall ineffective committee members. Even though constitutions provided for procedures to recall non-performing members, there was, with the exception of TVPC, no clear indication of the roles and duties of each committee member against which performance could be evaluated. This has been the basis for poor accountability in these institutions. Furthermore, the process for removal of a committee member is a difficult and slow process, which requires a thorough understanding of the cooperative constitution to implement. After the successful recall of the chairman at TVPC, spearheaded by a member who had knowledge of constitutional procedure from their previous employment role, the constitution of TVPC was amended by its membership to expedite the process of leadership recall, as well as clearly outlining the key roles and responsibilities against which leaders can be evaluated. This process has not been followed by the other cooperatives. In the other four cooperatives, members felt that they did not have the power to hold the committee accountable. Communities often lack

power; information and procedures to hold actors occupying positions of power accountable (Olowu 2003). Fulton and Giannakas (2007) argue that members often do not possess power over actors once they are elected. Ribot (2004), argues that although 'single-purpose' or 'narrowly-focused' institutions can be democratic, some studies indicate that they are less likely to be accountable and transparent than multi-purpose institutions. The RSA (2015: 8) cooperative principles indicate that governance of cooperatives should include 'fairness, participation, accountability, responsibility and transparency', elements which are present to some extent in TVPC but weak in the other four cooperatives.

Members are governed by rules in the cooperative constitution, meant to be regulated or enforced by the committee. The secondary cooperative drafted a basic constitutional template for all the primary cooperatives, which each primary cooperative adapted and modified according to their local needs. In the cooperatives, modification of rules is done through a general meeting, where rules are ratified, and voting by members confirms the amendments. According to Ostrom (1990), democratic institutions enable individuals affected by the rules to participate in their modification, although this does not seem to be apparent for most of these cooperatives. Except for TVPC, which has regular general meetings to discuss financial performance, administrative issues and ratifications to rules and the constitution; members indicated that meetings were poorly organised, irregular, poorly advertised and thus poorly attended. Furthermore, when meetings did occur rules were modified by the respective committees in the absence of most or all members, even though the rules in the cooperatives' constitutions required a minimum number of members (usually a minimum of five non-committee members) to be present to vote on any amendment. Thus, it can be argued that the extent of 'democratic member control' (RSA 2015) is weak in these four cooperatives. In South Africa, cooperatives where crucial decisions are made without the participation of members often result in poor accountability by leaders to members (Machethe 1990). In one FGD at ITPC it was suggested that:

> *We hold meetings here and there, the last one was two years ago. Some of us cannot read and write, so we do not normally attend. Sometimes we do not hear about when and where the meetings are being held, and most of us do not have*

transport or the money to attend the meetings. They are mostly held in Elliot and we cannot go.

Unlike the other four cooperatives, meetings at TVPC were better organised and a larger proportion of members attended the meetings. However, even here poorer members of the cooperative often failed to attend the meetings due to lack of transport and funds. Thus, all five cooperatives lack effective mechanisms for the inclusion of marginalised members in decision-making processes, and this inability to capture the 'voice' of these marginalised members is problematic in terms of their recognised democratic function (German et al. 2018).

5.4.1.3 Accountability, power relations and transparency

To prevent elite capture, multiple accountability measures and efforts to ensure that they operate as transparently as possible are critical in institutions (Olowu 2003, Ribot 2004, Mohammed and Inoue 2013). One way for institutions to achieve this is to clearly separate judicial, legislative and executive powers, such that different groups of actors are responsible for each. However, in local institutions with polycentric tendencies, these powers are often not separated, but rather all vested in a single actor or a small group of actors. In these cooperatives, with the exception of TVPC, all three of these power components were controlled by the committee leadership, which severely limited the ability of the membership to hold these actors accountable.

The amendment of the constitution at TVPC enabled the membership to hold the committee accountable for the decisions they exercised as part of their executive power, through two important processes. Firstly, the membership influenced the constitutional amendment process i.e. legislative powers. Secondly, the membership were empowered to recall poorly performing leadership i.e. judicial powers. Thus, following reform of the TVPC constitution, the judicial and legislative components of power became controlled far more by membership. As an added level of accountability, TVPC further decoupled the executive power of the committee, such that they continued to hold primary responsibility for securing benefits and programmes on behalf of the cooperative but retained no power over how these were distributed within the cooperative. This distribution role was given to an independent administrator, who was not only

accountable to the membership, but was also monitored by an ordinary member who was appointed on a rotational basis. Further, TVPC cooperative members were able to monitor who benefitted from the programmes through the freely-accessible beneficiary register kept at the offices.

This might explain why a larger proportion of TVPC members participated in election processes and were able to access benefits (see Table 5-3), as they realised that their participation had an influence on how benefits were distributed. This has had a positive effect on the legitimacy of the committee, reflected in TVPC members recognising the roles, functions and power vested in the committee members and being more confident in the accountability of the committee to them. Accountability and transparency are enhanced when powers are devolved to lower-tier members or actors, particularly if this is accompanied by clear measures for holding actors accountable (Mohammed and Inoue 2013). Thus, when internal accountability is promoted, such institutional reforms can promote participation, transparency and reduce elite capture. As Olowu (2003: 46) suggests, '…the key is to create an institutional framework that provides opportunities for the elite while constraining them from exploiting the system of local governance for their private interests'.

In BKPC, CNPC, ITPC and UMPC, the members indicated that they had limited confidence in their committee, citing challenges linked to poor accountability and transparency. Most notable here was the perception of skewed allocation of programmes and benefits in these cooperatives. These programmes included cattle loan schemes, e.g. LIS, AsgiSA programme and the AST scheme; stock fence and farm implements from DRDAR and the Biomass Fodder Production Assistance (BioMASS) programme. Most of these programmes were accessed by the committee and the more influential members, with many of them benefitting from multiple programmes, while the less influential members were consistently excluded. One BKPC member indicated that:

> *In our cooperative, we got fence from the DRDAR. The chairperson gave it to farmers whom he knows, and these farmers already had fence. The same people who got the fence, are the ones who got AST cattle last time. These people are already rich, and they do not need the fence. The government should come directly*

to the farms and assist, through the cooperative people like me will never get anything.

Even though BKPC has a register of beneficiaries, double-dipping by the elite (DAFF 2018a) remained a challenge in the cooperative. Thus, the process for disbursement of benefits to members was not being effectively controlled to ensure that it was fair, it was simply just being documented (i.e. administration without power of control). In contrast, TVPC was able to effectively combine these two processes.

Financial transparency was also a key factor for cooperative members in determining the accountability of cooperative committees. Unlike TVPC which has financial control measures that are regularly audited, the other cooperatives lack financial transparency and are rarely audited. TVPC employs a secretary who doubles as a book keeper and keeps records of most financial transactions. The committee audits these financial records, giving it a degree of fiscal accountability, and non-committee members of TVPC can also request to look at the financial records at the cooperative offices.

5.4.2 Leadership and its legitimacy in relation to service delivery

Cooperative performance can be influenced by its governance structure and may also be strongly dependent on the socio-political capital of its leadership. Cooperative performance can be assessed both in terms of the number of programmes accessed and the proportion of members who benefit from these (Table 5-3). The effective performance of a cooperative and the participation of its members can be influenced by resource allocation decisions made by leaders (Fulton and Giannakas 2007, Liverpool-Tasie 2014), which reflect the dynamics of power relations and influence (Fiedler 2008). This is illustrated by the performance of TVPC following the constitutional amendments it enacted. The case study below highlights the case of TVPC:

TVPC Case

The newly elected TVPC leader, was Mr X. Based on Mr X's knowledge and influential previous roles in the South Africa Farmers Union (SAFU) and National Association of Farmers Unions (NAFU), he was very familiar with the processes involved in rural service delivery and was 'connected' to the DRDAR, DRDLR, Eastern Cape Rural Development Agency (ECRDA), Eastern Cape Development Cooperation (ECDC), SAFU and NAFU. He utilised these socio-political connections to access government programmes such as the LIS, AsgiSA and AST schemes; DRDAR farm implements and BioMASS, at national, provincial and local level. Through these programmes, TVPC members received tractors, tillage equipment, fencing and livestock production equipment, chainsaws, cattle (through loan schemes), transport (in the form of a lorry) and an office in Elliot. TVPC was the only cooperative that accessed a lorry, tractors and equipment, and they were able to generate income from hiring out the tractors and the lorry to other cooperatives. Due to access to these resources, the farmers had improved productivity. Eight of the 12 farmers interviewed in TVPC indicated that they had benefitted from infrastructure or training in the cooperative.

Fulton & Giannakas (2007) argue that cooperatives that provide a conducive environment for leaders to enhance member benefits, are likely to elect a leader with such a focus and enable more members to participate in the selection process of that leader. This environment is encouraged in democratic cooperatives where the community capitals i.e. political and social capital, are enabled (Kaswan 2014).

Table 5- 3: Comparison of service delivery among five case study cooperatives in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

Indicator	TVPC	BKPC	CNPC	ITPC	UMPC
Number of programmes accessed	Eight programmes	Five programmes	Four programmes	Four programmes	Four programmes
Level of programmes accessed	National, provincial and local programmes	Only local programmes	Local programmes only through secondary cooperative.	Only programmes through secondary cooperative were accessed by the cooperative.	Cooperative accessed local programmes only
Access mode	Programmes were accessed through 'connections' of the leader to national unions i.e. leadership utilised socio-political 'connections' to access programmes.	Programme access was based on socio-political 'connections' of the leader i.e. chieftaincy, and his active lobbying for programmes	Leaders were socially connected, but this had no political influence on access to programmes	Leadership had no socio-political influence and did not lobby independently for programmes	The cooperative leadership did not independently lobby for any programmes and had no socio-political connections.
Beneficiaries	58% of interviewed members benefitted from programmes. At-least half of the beneficiaries were ordinary members.	41% of interviewed members benefitted from programmes. Most beneficiaries were committee and other influential members of the cooperative	33% of interviewed members benefitted from programmes. Most beneficiaries were committee members	29% of interviewed members benefitted from programmes. Most beneficiaries were committee members	About 25% of interviewed members benefitted from programmes. Most beneficiaries were committee members

The story is different for the other four cooperatives. For example, BKPC elected their chairperson, Mr Y, due to his chieftaincy position and thus his perceived ability to realise service delivery through his political connections. Mr Y was able to mobilise the

cooperative to develop their own cattle fattening programme, and the cattle were later marketed through the secondary cooperative, generating funds internally. Mr Y was also able to access the local cattle programmes cascaded through the secondary cooperative, farm implements from DRDAR, while also accessing local government programmes earmarked for chiefs. However, it was suggested that Mr Y was not transparent in the distribution of the materials secured through these programmes, with members alleging that some equipment accessed through the cooperative was distributed to Mr Y's home village to help garner support for his chieftaincy. One BKPC member indicated that:

> *As a chief, our chairman is very powerful and is 'connected' to top people. But we do not benefit from that. Actually, we got some fence in the cooperative, but the chairperson also distributed some of the fence to his village where he is a chief. We raised the matter with the secondary cooperative, but our chairperson also sits on that board, so nothing came out of it.*

Mr Y's service delivery focused primarily on organising the fattening programme within BKPC, but his delivery of external programmes to BKPC was compromised by the need to also benefit the rural village he represented as a chief. Mr Y was effectively trying to deliver benefits to both sets of beneficiaries he is accountable to. While the members should have utilised the power enshrined in the constitution to hold Mr Y accountable, it became clear they lacked knowledge of how to do this. Others felt that their power was inadequate and opted to escalate the matter to the secondary cooperative, which did not take any firm steps towards dispute resolution, largely because it might have lacked the institutional structures to hold powerful individuals such as traditional leaders accountable. Thus, the constitution of the primary cooperative could not hold Mr Y downwardly accountable to his members, which was exacerbated by the reluctance of the secondary cooperative to hold him upwardly accountable - a classic case of power without accountability (Ribot 2004). In reality, it appears that Mr Y's upward accountability is primarily to traditional leadership within the area. He is also attempting to serve the interests of multiple membership groups and is thus compromised in his ability to represent any of these particularly effectively. On this basis it is questionable if Mr Y is best placed to achieve the level of service delivery that the BKPC membership is

expecting. Ribot (2002) demonstrates how the vested interests of customary authorities pose a threat to effective decentralisation.

In contrast, members of the other three cooperatives indicated that their chairpersons were either not 'connected', or in the case on CNPC, were connected but did not utilise these connections effectively, resulting in them only accessing local programmes channelled through the secondary cooperative. This was explained by an ITPC member who suggested:

> *We made a blunder, we should have chosen Mr Z as chairperson. He is successful and is connected to some relevant people. Our chairperson does not know anyone, and this is why we don't have resources like TVPC. These committee members only look after their own welfare, they are content with the few programmes that come up because they benefit from them, therefore they do not make efforts to go to the higher offices to get more programmes so that there is enough for everyone to get a chance.*

The key point in these examples is that the political power and perceived 'connectedness' of the chairperson of the cooperative is considered by members as being of fundamental importance in accessing and delivering services to the cooperative, despite the clear risks of enshrining responsibility in an actor who is already so powerful.

5.5 Discussion and conclusions

Cooperatives in South Africa are the primary conduits for resource delivery to rural farmers to help facilitate agricultural development. Essentially, they are setup to be reliant on the state for functional support, rather than as independent business entities that add value to the members through their functional roles. This means that even though the state might not directly control cooperatives, there is still a requirement for state involvement, which necessarily limits their ability to be independent of the state. However, given the limited capacity of local government to reach 'down' to rural communities through extension officers who can help link local cooperatives to available programmes to, it becomes incumbent on the cooperatives themselves to use their own networks to reach 'up' to local government and associated governmental organisations to secure service

delivery. Due to poor extension services and programme structure, government programmes such as CASP; MAFISA; AsgiSA and Recapitalization and Development Programme (RADP) have been poorly accessed by most cooperatives and their impact has been limited (e.g., see Cousins 2013, Sikwela and Mushunje 2013). In 2010, only eight percent of cooperatives in South Africa accessed funding from the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and only 10 out of a total of 106 cooperatives in the Eastern Cape province accessed MAFISA loans (DAFF 2010). Studies by Devkota et al. (2016) in India and by James and Joshua (2014) in Nigeria have also attributed poor service delivery to weak local institutional capacity. This suggests that under current conditions not having 'connectedness' via leadership really limits the degree of service delivery possible to smallholder farmers in South Africa, a conclusion borne out by the current study. The importance of such connections in securing service delivery is also supported by Banerjee et al. (2001: 145), in their study in India, who reported that cooperative leaders were often larger farmers who had 'connections' in government that enabled them to have advantageous access to resources.

However, this study also shows that even where cooperatives in rural South Africa have leadership that is 'connected', this does not guarantee that these leaders will act to disburse the benefits it secures in a transparent and fair way to members (as in the case of BKPC), or that they will utilise their 'connections' to gain access to an effective range of programmes, as in the case of CNPC (Table 5-3). Rather, it may encourage elite capture of resources by leadership to further their own ends and subvert the process of democracy to ensure they remain in power. Specifically, the persistent danger in countries such as South Africa, of electing traditional leaders into leadership positions within cooperatives lies in the difficulty of them being held accountable because of the power vested in them through their (unelected) traditional role. In many post-colonial countries in SSA, traditional leaders have been given formal powers over local governance (Holzinger et al. 2016), and in South Africa this is legitimised by the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003 (DCGTA 2018). This creates a challenge of 'institutional multiplicity and competing claims to social and political legitimacy' (Beall and Ngonyama 2009: 1) or 'institutional layering' (Bennett et al. 2013: 34), which arises from the contentious duality of state actors and traditional leadership (Ntsebeza 2005). As Ribot (2002) points out, electing traditional authorities into positions of power in

cooperatives undermines democratic processes. The South African government acknowledges the problem of elite capture of resources by a few individuals (DAFF 2018a), and poor coordination between government departments that are mandated to support cooperatives (DAFF 2010), but its policies remain unclear on how to deal with these challenges.

Moreover, we would argue that linking (albeit inadvertently) service delivery for emergent farmers to the political and social capital of a cooperative's leadership is also fundamentally opposed to the process of democratising service delivery in South Africa in the first place. How democratic can the overall process of agricultural service delivery be if it is premised on competition between devolved cooperatives and results in those with the most powerful and 'connected' leaders securing most of the benefits? This also runs counter to principle six (cooperation among cooperatives) of the principles of good governance for South African cooperatives (RSA 2015). We suggest that if the capacity of the state was built sufficiently to enable it to 'reach down' to these cooperatives more effectively, for example through establishing embedded relationships between local or provincial agricultural extension officers and apex organisations, who can link cooperatives with available programmes, then the need to vest leadership in powerful actors and risk compromising accountability and egalitarian service delivery would be reduced. In this, the state assumes coordination of the policy or actor network as discussed by McGinnis (2011). Further, the role of cooperative apex support organisations, such as the secondary cooperative, can be strengthened to put in place structures to support a democratic leadership selection process and facilitate development of management and leadership skills through training in primary cooperatives, promoting good governance (Mellor 2009). The secondary cooperative should also couple this with structures to hold powerful individuals accountable. This might also give cooperatives the opportunity to entrench rules that enable them to select leaders who are more inclined to be transparent e.g. through a level-shifting strategy (McGinnis 2011). The increased use of apex organisations rather than direct government involvement might help to reduce the risk of state patronage and promote good governance, an opportunity that is currently missed.

However, if the current situation demands strongly connected and powerful leaders to access resources, then we suggest that this must also be aligned with strong democratic

processes within cooperatives to ensure fair disbursement of benefits to members and try and mitigate the potential for capture by elites. The cases we analyse, particularly that of TVPC, suggest a linkage between democratic governance and effective service delivery to cooperative members. As Table 5-3 indicates, TVPC was able to deliver programmes to a larger proportion of its members, which we believe is directly related to the strong accountability and legitimacy of its leaders. It is largely accountable to its membership which ensures that it operates in a transparent and fair way in the disbursal of benefits and helps to legitimise its leadership. Thus, there was evidence of representative and participatory democracy (Kaswan 2014) in TVPC, which was lacking in the other cooperatives. A higher proportion of TVPC members also tended to participate in elections. Kaswan (2014) argues that member apathy in participation is an indication of a weak democratic ethos. Importantly, TVPC was also able to separate power elements within the committee structure, effectively separating the role of securing resources from that of disbursing them. This holds wider potential as an effective way of encouraging accountability in other cooperatives.

Based on this analysis, we suggest that for smallholder cooperatives in South Africa to adhere to the principles of good governance and be effective in delivering to their membership, the single most important factor that must be addressed is power relations. Autonomy, voluntary member participation and democratic member control all depend on the power relations in cooperatives. To achieve this balance of power relations within rural cooperatives in South Africa requires three main issues to be addressed. Firstly, ensure that cooperative leadership is strong but fully and solely accountable to its membership. Part of this will involve putting in place checks and balances to ensure that individuals cannot be elected if they already hold similar roles, such as in traditional leadership, which might constitute a conflict of interest and institutional multiplicity. This will minimise the chance for external vested interest to compromise how cooperatives function. The national good governance principles for cooperatives in South Africa need to explicitly address this issue and each cooperative constitution should include a clause that prevents those who already hold leadership positions that represent a potential conflict of interest, from running for leadership elections. Further, opportunities for training in management and leadership skills are key areas of intervention (Cook 1994,

Mellor 2009, Francesconi and Wouterse 2019), a role that can be facilitated by the state or apex organisations.

Secondly, ensure that democratic process is observed in all aspects of the functioning of cooperatives but particularly in the process of benefit sharing amongst members. This will require a careful focus within cooperative structures on the separation of executive, judicial and legislative power such that only the former becomes the main prerogative of leadership. Important also here will be measures to separate the individuals involved in the securing of benefits from those involved in their disbursement to try and ensure greater transparency in the process and avoid the problem of elite capture.

Thirdly, greater effort is required by the state to develop connections between extension services and apex organisations that can effectively connect rural cooperatives to the government programmes that are available to them. Currently, the limited role of the secondary cooperative in enabling good governance and dispute resolution presents a missed opportunity. It is difficult to service the heterogeneity of farmers (smallholder, emergent and large commercial farmers) using a single extension approach, hence building state service delivery support might require a balance between current diffusionist approaches and the adoption of more flexible and demand-driven pluralistic territorial approaches (Yang et al. 2014, Klerkx et al. 2016). Multi-actor and inter-institutional approaches that effectively connect institutions and actors at the local level to higher level institutions have enjoyed a degree of success in Latin America (Klerkx et al. 2016). Strengthening extension capacity and the role of secondary cooperative would help to minimise the current focus in cooperatives on electing leaders who are politically connected and thus not only help to level the playing field between cooperatives in terms of the programmes they access but also minimise the possibility of connected leaders being less accountable to their membership.

Finally, the setting up of cooperatives to function as funnels of government programmes rather than as fully independent business entities presents a serious limitation. These cooperatives should be setup on a business footing to begin with, based on sound business operations, competitive service provision and management underpinned by financial stability, comprehensive insurance and asset growth (Mellor 2009). With viable business

plans, these cooperatives may be able to access financial loans and also form strategic partnerships with the private sector. This will reduce reliance of the cooperatives on the state and promote independence and sustainability. However, cooperatives might still be inclined to appoint powerful leadership (based on the perception of them bringing benefits to the cooperative), which means emphasis has to be on the cooperatives putting structures that are able to mitigate the misuse of this power. As suggested earlier, separating powers between sourcing resources and how they are disbursed remains key. Further, this will be dependent on unique management skills required to deliver on socio-economic services.

CHAPTER SIX

6 Between resilience and vulnerability: Understanding the livelihood strategies of emergent livestock farmers in Eastern Cape Province, South Africa.

This chapter appears as the following article to be submitted for peer review:

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6.1 Abstract

In the context of current agrarian reform efforts in South Africa to transition subsistence farmers into small-scale commercial production, this paper analyses the livelihood trajectories of 'emergent' farmers in Eastern Cape Province. We apply a rural livelihoods framework to three classes of emergent cattle farmers (subsistence farmers on private land; small-scale commercial farmers; and fully commercialised farmers) to understand the different capitals they have drawn upon to transition into their current class position. We also use this framework to evaluate whether their current livelihood strategy has enabled them to become more resilient to the shocks and stresses they currently face. The analysis shows that for subsistence farmers very little 'transition' is actually evident and farmers are currently drawing on largely the same capitals to survive as previously. They are resilient on the basis of continued reliance on social grants. In contrast a definite trajectory is apparent for the small-scale commercial farmers, who have drawn primarily on financial, human and social capitals. However, in doing so several of these farmers have borrowed large amounts of capital and put themselves in a more vulnerable position than previously. For the final group of highly entrepreneurial farmers their 'trajectory' of livelihood change is less associated with moving from one class to another and more focused on diversifying the investment of their external financial capital into farming enterprises to enable them to spread risk. We conclude that whilst the livelihood trajectories associated with small-scale commercial farmers are most representative of the type of changes that agrarian reform in South Africa is attempting to facilitate, the way

this class transition is being realised is making these farmers more vulnerable to sets of shocks and stresses they have limited capacity to deal with.

Key words: *Livelihood strategies, agrarian reform policy, livelihood capitals, resilience and vulnerability*

6.2 Introduction

Agrarian reform in Africa is the subject of considerable debate as to what this should primarily be aiming to achieve. On the one hand many scholars have suggested that the primary focus of agrarian reform should be on providing access to land for as many smallholder producers (peasant farmers) as possible to enable them to create secure and resilient livelihoods, as part of which many will also be able to sell excess produce into local markets (e.g. Lipton 2006, Lahiff et al. 2007, Hall 2009, Cousins 2010, Vetter 2013, Aliber 2019). More recently, however, in the context of concerns about food and nutrition insecurity in Africa (HLPE 2012, FAO 2015, HLPE 2017), agrarian reform approaches have become much more closely aligned with neo-liberal agendas focused on the commercialisation of smallholder agriculture and related approaches such as the provision of secure land rights through land titling (De Soto 2000, Peters 2009). Protagonists of these approaches argue strongly that food insecurity in Africa can only effectively be addressed through a greater focus on commercial production linked to local and international markets (Deininger 2003, World Bank 2007, 2008). However, commercialisation of smallholder agriculture as a mechanism to effectively address rural poverty, improve livelihoods and food security in Sub-Saharan Africa remains heavily contested for a number of reasons (Poole et al. 2013, Hall et al. 2017, Hakizimana et al. 2017, Kabiti et al. 2017).

Firstly, the ability of smallholder agriculture to be commercially viable has been questioned (Aliber and Hall 2012, Sitko and Jayne 2014). Smallholders farmers remain excluded from competitive markets due to poor yields, limited knowledge, lack of appropriate technology and inherent market risks precipitated by ineffective institutional and market linkages (Havnevik et al. 2007, Kabiti et al. 2017). Secondly, many scholars have suggested that a focus on transitioning smallholder farmers into commercial agriculture, particularly where this is linked to provision of private farms, does little to improve livelihoods for the rural majority who are inevitably excluded from the

commercialisation process due to lack of land (Poole et al. 2013, Vetter 2013, German et al. 2018, De Satgé and Cousins 2019). Furthermore, in several countries within SSA, where attempts at broadscale commercialisation are already underway, the process has been criticised for doing relatively little to enable the required transition to occur amongst the subsistence farmers it was primarily designed to support. Instead it has inadvertently created a spectrum of farmer classes with access to private farmland, among them smallholder subsistence farmers who have failed to make the commercial transition; medium-scale commercial farmers; and elite emergent black capitalist farmers (e.g. see Hall and Kepe 2017, Gwiriri et al. 2019a for South Africa; Sitko and Jayne 2014 for Zambia; Scoones 2015 for Zimbabwe; and Hakizimana et al. 2017 for Kenya). This has only served to intensify the debate as to whether the commercialisation of smallholder agriculture in Africa can really achieve effective and inclusive food security (Sitko and Jayne 2014).

South Africa provides a case in point. Here, agriculture and land holdings remain contentious and dualistic (Lahiff 2016), a legacy of the colonial system (Hebinck et al. 2011). The ambitious objectives of agrarian reform, in South Africa, have been to encourage smallholder farmers into commercial agriculture (Aliber 2011), reduce rural poverty and resolve the skewed colonial distribution of land (O'Laughlin et al. 2013) but the focus has changed at different stages of the reform process. Initial efforts in the 1990s, through the SLAG (Settlement and Land Acquisition Grant) model, focused primarily on the redistribution of private farms to enable historically disadvantaged poor people to secure access to land for their own production needs. However, since 2000 LRAD (Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development) and later PLAS (Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy), has placed much greater emphasis on production, which has shifted the redistribution of farmland towards better-off black entrepreneurs (Lahiff 2007, De Satgé and Cousins 2019). This latter focus has broadly aimed to create medium-scale capitalist farmers - so-called 'emergent' farmers - who are able to expand beyond petty commodity production into capitalist productivity through access to freehold or leasehold farmland (Hall 2009, Cousins 2010, Hebinck et al. 2011, Gwiriri et al. 2019a). However, due to the relatively slow pace of land redistribution, weak post-resettlement support and the precarious livelihoods of many land reform recipients, as well as the opportunities it has afforded for elite capture, the achievements of the process remain contentious (e.g.

O'Laughlin et al. 2013, Lahiff 2016, Okunlola et al. 2016, Hall and Kepe 2017, Vink and Kirsten 2019).

Moreover, there is now genuine concern that putting commercialisation at the centre of agrarian reform policy in South Africa, is exposing emergent smallholder farmers to unfamiliar sets of shocks and stresses, which they have limited capacity to overcome, potentially undermining livelihoods. In particular, the changing focus of agrarian reform policy in South Africa, makes it unclear whether land reform retains any focus on securing access to land to support livelihoods or is solely about commercialising production. This leaves land reform beneficiaries in a precarious position, as they try to strike a balance between engaging with commercial production and creating secure livelihoods for themselves, within the context of a frequently unfamiliar socio-economic environment. When confronted with shocks and stresses, smallholders attempt to diversify their livelihoods to buffer risk and reduce vulnerability from declining livelihood returns (Twine 2013, Tittonell 2014). Hall et al. (2015: 470), for example, shows how small-scale farmers in these situations have demonstrated 'illusive inclusion' i.e. receiving land from the state that they do not have the capacity to farm, and instead generating income by renting it out to commercial farmers. This raises important questions about the types of livelihood transformations emergent smallholder farmers in South Africa are making in response to the current agrarian reform process and whether a narrow focus on commercialisation might actually limit opportunities for livelihood diversification amongst smallholder farmers and thus undermine their resilience.

A number of studies have identified livelihood trajectories of smallholder farmers in different contexts (e.g. Sallu et al. 2010, Borras and Franco 2012, Huot and Pain 2017, Cottyn 2018). A particular focus in SSA (e.g. Werner and Odendaal 2010a, Aliber and Cousins 2013, Matenga and Hichaambwa 2016, Scoones et al. 2018), has been on understanding the livelihood dynamics of smallholder farmers after agrarian reform. However, there has been less focus on identifying the different livelihood assets that smallholder farmers have drawn upon in shaping their livelihood trajectories and facilitating their transition for one livelihood position to another. Understanding the processes through which smallholders have brought about these livelihood transitions, and whether as part of this they have become more or less vulnerable than previously, is

fundamental in providing a grounded critique of current land reform policies in South Africa.

This article seeks to understand the livelihood trajectories of emergent livestock farmers in South Africa, in relation to their transition from subsistence production to semi-commercial or commercial production as part of agrarian reform. We seek to deepen this understanding by addressing three broad questions: i) to what extent is a recognised transition being made by smallholder livestock farmers from one production strategy to another? ii) how are they effecting these transitions in terms of the key livelihood capitals they are drawing on and how they are using them? iii) do these transitions enable these farmers to become more resilient or make them more vulnerable to the shocks and stresses they currently face?

6.3 Methodology

6.3.1 Study site and data collection

The study focused on 60 'emergent' livestock farmers who, as part of agrarian reform, have been resettled on private farms surrounding the small town of Elliot (31°31'30" S, 27°83'70" E), in Eastern Cape Province (Figure 6-1). The farmers were selected from a broader cohort of 155 emergent farmers in the area, by purposive sampling (Palinkas et al. 2015) within four strata based on: (i) the land reform model they benefitted from (SLAG, LRAD or PLAS); (ii) the primary cooperative they belonged to (one of five); (iii) whether they farmed individually or as part of a group; and (iv) farm characteristics i.e. farm size and location. Data collection was through a semi-structured interview with each of the 60 farmers, which was framed around the key capitals they had access to before and after agrarian reform. This was augmented by information from focus group discussions held with groups of farmers from each of the five primary cooperatives supporting the agrarian reform process (see Gwiriri and Bennett 2019), interviews with key informants and use of secondary data sources, to provide a broader quantitative and qualitative understanding of the local socio-political scenario and livestock dynamics.

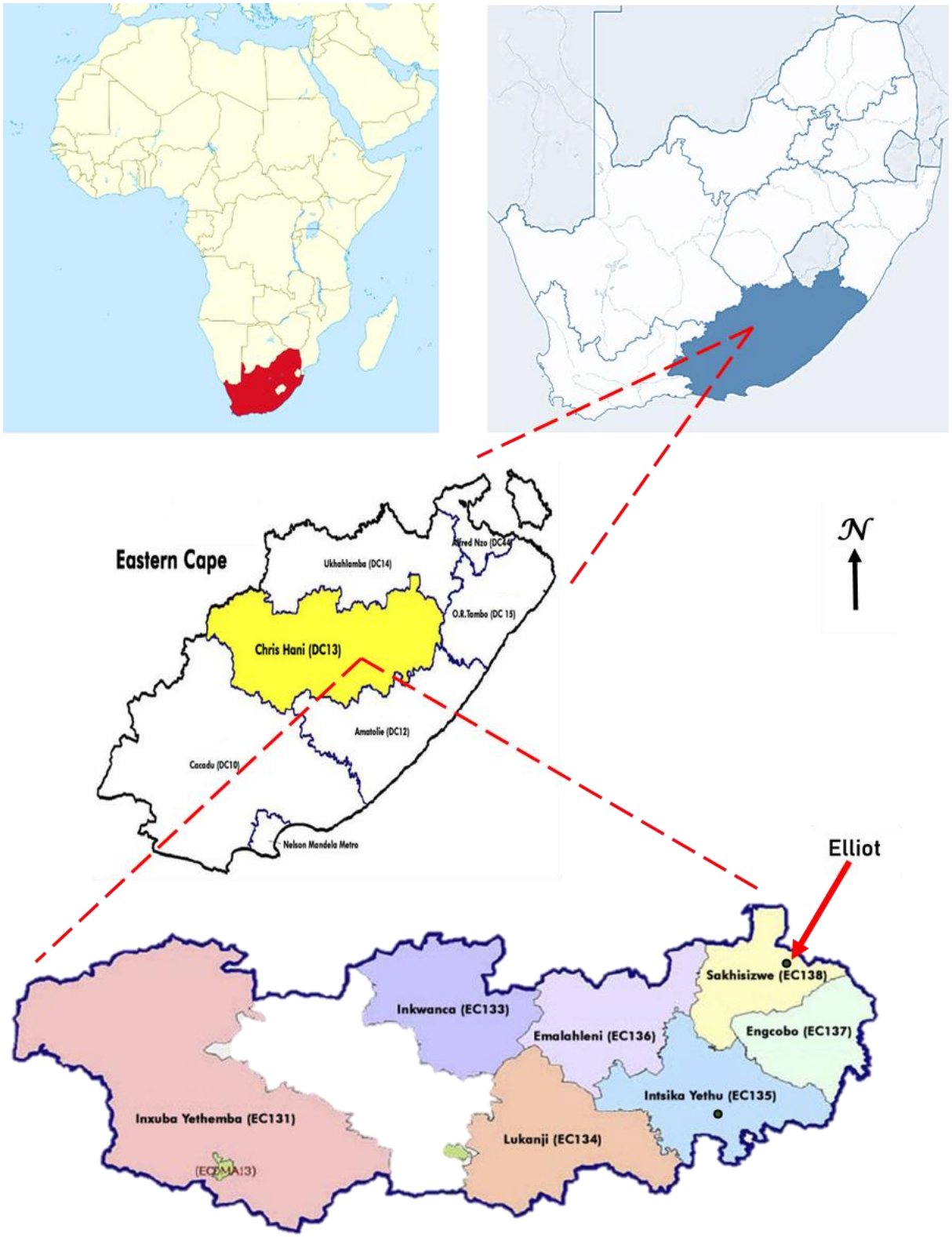

Figure 6- 1: Map indicating study site (Elliot) in Eastern Cape Province, South Africa ***[Source: Maps adapted by author from ArcGIS]***

6.3.2 Data analysis

We frame our livelihood analysis around an existing class analysis of these same 60 emergent livestock farmers (Gwiriri et al. 2019a). This identified three broad classes of farmers: subsistence farmers on private land; small-scale commercial farmers; and fully commercialised farmers and we analyse the livelihood trajectories and strategies within each of these classes. Data were coded and analysed using NVivo release 21.1 (NVivo 2018) through data indexing to identify emergent themes and understand factors that shaped livelihood decisions and strategies. We use the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) (Chambers and Conway 1992, Scoones 1998) to understand the livelihood trajectories of the emergent farmers within these three broad classes, primarily by identifying the different capitals they have drawn upon to facilitate their transition from one class position to another, and also whether they have become more resilient or vulnerable as a consequence. We further exemplify this through the use of selected cases.

6.3.3 Theoretical underpinnings

A livelihood is conceptualised to be sustainable when it can maintain or enhance its capabilities in the context of social-ecological change i.e. cope and recover from shocks and stresses (the vulnerability complex) without depleting its natural resource base (Chambers and Conway 1992, Scoones 1998). Consequentially, livelihood resilience stems from coping with the vulnerability complex, which is largely dependent on the different combinations of livelihood capitals/assets and activities i.e. the livelihood strategy (Sallu et al. 2010, Yuliati and Isaskar 2018). Several authors (e.g. Adger 2006, Obrist et al. 2010, Meybeck et al. 2012, Ekblom 2012, Ifejika Speranza et al. 2014) define resilience as the capacity of systems or actors to cope, adjust or bounce back from a shock or stress and maintain structure, function and identity in terms of buffer capacity (ability to absorb change), self-organisation (adaptive capacity) and learning capacity (modification or transformation). Furthermore, Sallu et al. (2010), Obrist et al. (2010) and Ifejika Speranza et al. (2014) demonstrate that the concept of livelihood sustainability as captured within the SLF can be effectively linked to this conceptualisation of resilience. Buffer capacity is framed by the livelihood capitals or assets available; self-organisation is framed by the institutions and networks that determine how assets are accessed to adapt to the adversity; and learning capacity defines the knowledge that underpins decisions on combinations of assets and activities arrived at in adapting to the vulnerability complex

i.e. the livelihood strategies. The SLF is therefore appropriate in terms of its ability to use the capitals to explain the transition process, understand the institutions and networks that determine which assets are accessed, and explain the strategic decisions that households make to cope with shocks/stresses and perceived risk to sustain livelihoods. We frame this understanding as indicated in Figure 6-2 below:

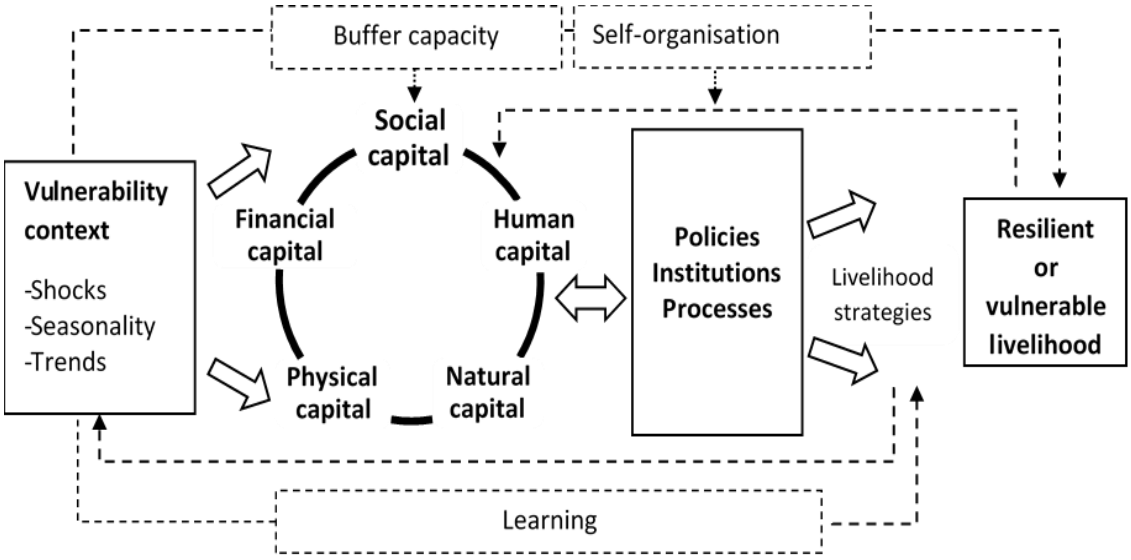

Figure 6- 2: The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework through a resilience lens ***[Source: adapted by author from DFID 1999]***

6.4 Results and analysis

6.4.1 Land-based livelihoods before accessing private farmland.

Prior to accessing private farmland between 1995 and 2010 as part of agrarian reform, the 60 emergent farmers included in this study were located in various communal villages and towns in the area e.g. Mthatha, Tsomo, Gxwalibomvu, Ncorha, Cofimvaba, Cala, Ngcobo; with 85% of them having existing access to small fragmented land parcels of less than three hectares in size. Based on the resources they had access to and their production strategies, two distinct groups were evident (Table 6-1): a smaller group of nine smallholder farmers producing surplus agricultural products and engaging with markets, akin to expanding commercial smallholder farmers (Cousins 2010); and a larger group of 51 farmers who were subsistence-focused and producing little if any surplus for market.

6.4.1.1 Expanding commercial smallholder farmers

According to Cousins (2010: 5), expanding commercial smallholders are farmers who '…already farm commercially on a small-scale, but are constrained by lack of land and other resources'. The nine expanding smallholder farmers had access to more than three hectares of land prior to their engagement with land reform. Six of them achieved this by accessing additional land through local lease arrangements (average land holding 15-20 ha) and three through having access to private-farms (farms were 67 ha, 142 ha and 230 ha in size) purchased between 1971 and 1995. The six farmers who leased land, did so primarily to engage in horticultural production, producing cash crops such as potatoes, carrots, spinach and cabbages for sale in local markets, along with maize for sale and livestock feeding. Leased land enabled them to begin to engage in small-scale capitalist production, keep larger cattle and sheep herds and accessing external markets. For instance, one farmer leased 10 ha that he paid for with 1 cow/per year for a 10-year period and produced potatoes and maize for sale in the shop he was running in a nearby town. Another farmer leased grazing land on a nearby private farm and was able to use this to keep over 50 cattle, regularly marketing them. More importantly, the larger part of their livelihoods was supported by substantial non-farm income, mostly from non-agricultural businesses they were running. They were able to utilise their financial capital to buffer risk e.g. they bought chemicals and vaccines against animal diseases, and to cross-subsidise between agricultural and non-agricultural livelihood portfolios. They engaged with asset clustering and substitution (Scoones 1998, Fischer and Chhatre 2016) to enable accumulation and diversification of their livelihoods, as summarised in Table 6-1.

Table 6- 1: Livelihood strategies pursued by the emergent farmers before land access in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

Component and strategy	*Expanding commercial smallholder farmers (n=9)*	*Subsistence-oriented (n=51)*
Natural capital	Access to large land holdings purchased or rented (>3 ha and up to 230 ha). Strategic conversion of financial capital into more land to engage in capitalist production	Access to small land holdings (up to 3 ha) and communal grazing. Usufruct tenure prevented them from accessing formal loans using land.
Human/social capital	Not formally organised, although some were members of unions. Above average education and market awareness. Family labour and employed extra labour to expand productivity.	Not formally organised. Average education with limited agricultural knowledge/training. Family labour. Important family and cultural ties.
Financial assets	Income diversification. Relatively high agricultural income, average above [8]ZAR15 000 (US$1 035)/annum. Up to 10 animals sold per year, through access to external markets. Substantial non-farm income e.g. from businesses. Loans raised through their business and/or private farms. Able to substitute/combine financial assets with other assets.	Diversified income: Low and irregular agricultural income, averaging ZAR7 200 (US$497)/annum. Up to 3 cattle sold/year, mainly to local markets. Agricultural income augmented by social grants, remittances and wage labour. Conversion of assets is limited.
Productive assets	Cash crops and larger herd sizes for marketing (mean 23, range 10 - 51 cattle). External inputs e.g. dipping chemicals and infrastructure e.g. vehicles to markets.	Small herd sizes (mean 9, range 2-24 cattle; mean 17, range 9-30 sheep) and subsistence cropping for household consumption. Limited external inputs, vulnerability to drought and disease burden.

[Source: Authors' fieldwork]

6.4.1.2 Subsistence-oriented farmers

The 51 farmers who had access to three hectares or less prior to land reform, engaged mainly in subsistence agriculture supplemented by income from petty commodity production, waged labour and receipt of grants and remittances. Opportunities for them to expand their agricultural production within the communal system were limited. One farmer said:

[8] ZAR is the official South African currency, the South African Rand. The current official exchange rate (as at 17 March 2019) of 1 South African Rand equivalent to 0.069 United States Dollars was used to convert ZAR to US$ in this article.

'*We were limited in the numbers of livestock we could produce because land for grazing was small, especially in winter the animals practically had nothing to graze. The grazing there is for everybody, and not just for you. So, having a lot of cattle was difficult'*.

Most farmers coped with limited livelihood options, asset endowment and adversity through income diversification, particularly non-farm income. Due to the communal land tenure system, which does not provide legally secure access to land (Alden-Wily 2018), farmers were unable to access formal loans against land-holdings to expand productivity. Although they had local cultural and social networks, they were not collectively organised in ways that enabled access to structured farmer support programmes. Consequently, almost half of the farmers relied on social grants as the main source of their income. A further 13 farmers gained some limited income from wage labour or remittances from employed family members. In total, 80% of farmers owned less than 20 cattle and sold no more than 3 cattle annually, a few sheep and occasionally wool. Cattle sales were limited to older cattle in response to a particular cash need and therefore cattle served as a capital 'sink'. However, when a cash need arose, cattle marketing was difficult and limited to local spot markets, with a relatively low average selling price of ZAR3-4 000 (US$209-278), recorded between 1995 and 2000. This is similar to prices reported by Musemwa et al. (2010) for the same region and period. The farmers also produced subsistence crops such as maize, potatoes and cabbage for home consumption, hardly marketing any of this produce at all.

6.4.2 Emergent farmer livelihoods after accessing land

After agrarian reform, the two categories of farmers in the previous section (nine expanding smallholder farmers and 51 subsistence smallholder farmers) transitioned into three broad categories (43 subsistence farmers on private land; 12 small-scale commercial farmers; and five fully commercialised farmers)(Gwiriri, et al. 2019a), as represented in Figure 6-3.

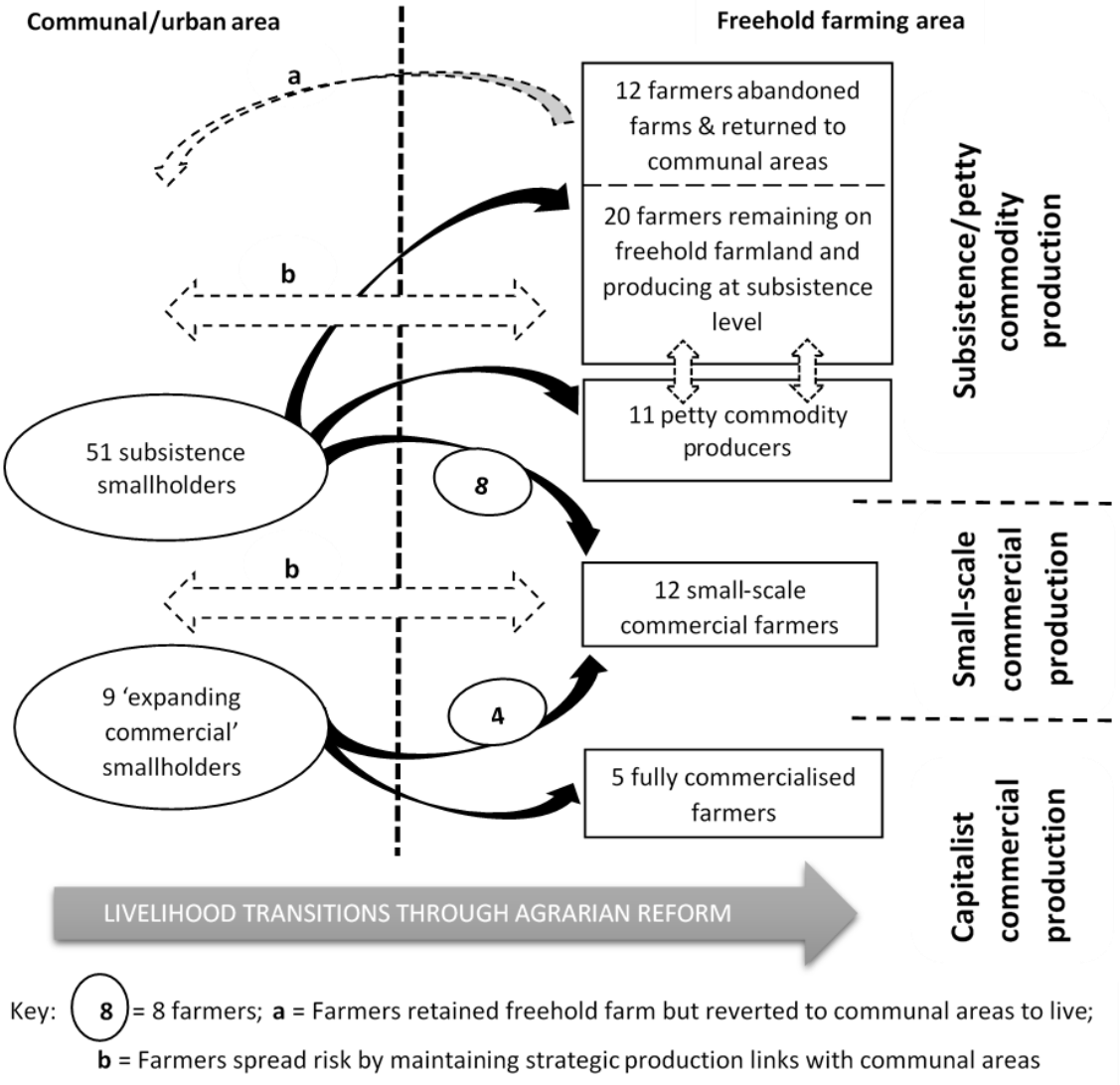

Figure 6- 3: Livelihood transitions of 60 'emergent' farmers facilitated by accessing freehold farmland through agrarian reform in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa [*source: Author's field work*]

6.4.2.1 Subsistence farmers on private land

This group, consisting of 43 farmers, accessed freehold land ranging from 10 to 379 ha through LRAD and SLAG, but demonstrated little or no transition from their original subsistence mode of production (see Table 6-1). Farmers who received land on a small group basis (four farmers in this case) eventually separated from one another leaving only a single family or smaller number of individuals on the farm, primarily due to challenges associated with production strategies, benefits sharing, hegemony and poor post-resettlement government support. Challenges with group dynamics have been extensively reported in previous studies of agrarian reform beneficiaries (e.g. Jacobs et al. 2003, Valente 2009, Lahiff 2007, 2016). Within this group of subsistence farmers, two broad

sub-groups were also apparent reflecting varying degrees of engagement with the private farmland that they had acquired and associated levels of petty-commodity production. However, it should be noted that these sub-groups were not static but represent a continuum with farmers intermittently moving from one sub-group to another at different times.

'Hanging-in' on private farms or reversion to subsistence farming in communal areas

The first sub-group consisted of 32 farmers and included a smaller group of 12 farmers (7 male: 5 female) who were unable to sustain themselves on the farms they were allocated and had returned to live in their communal areas, and a larger group of 20 farmers (16 male: 4 female) who had remained on their farms but were unable to move much beyond subsistence production. For the 12 who had effectively abandoned their farms, the only continuous connection they maintained with these farms was through the livestock they grazed there and a worker or relative left to take care of the animals. There was no livelihood trajectory or obvious transition from one form of production to another for either group. There are a number of potential reasons for this which can be explained through their limited ability to draw on important sets of capitals when they were on these farms.

Firstly, in terms of natural capital some farms were relatively small in size (mean 69 ha, range 10 to 250 ha for those who abandoned farms; mean 172 ha, range 98 to 250 ha for those who remained on the farms) and had limited grazing capacity to support livestock numbers at levels compatible with commercial agriculture. Most of the farms also lacked key physical assets such as functional dams, forcing farmers to rely on seasonal streams and neighbouring farms with dams, to water their livestock. This meant that times of additional water stress associated with drought, severely affected these farmers and resulted in substantial livestock deaths. Most farms were also without electricity or irrigation infrastructure, which meant that farmers relied on rain-fed agriculture and were further prone to climate vulnerabilities. They also lacked cattle handling and loading facilities; functional farm equipment and infrastructure e.g. tractors, ploughs and bailers; boundary and internal camp fencing. Lack of fencing contributed to uncontrolled livestock breeding and stock-theft. Critically, many of the farms were also difficult to access, the dirt roads connecting them being dilapidated and effectively unusable during

the wet season, and transport operators hired to market their animals charged them excessively as a consequence. These farms were an average of 42 kms (range 25-68 kms) from Elliot markets and only five of these farmers had their own vehicles to transport livestock.

Secondly, five out of the 12 abandoned farms also bordered communal areas, which was problematic because they experienced greater levels of stock-theft (see Case Study 1) and boundary conflict with communal farmers, who frequently accessed parts of these farms for grazing prior to them being redistributed. This meant that it was not only difficult for them to hold onto their land and livestock, but also given their dislocation from their own communal areas, to forge new social networks with the communal farmers they were in conflict with. This limited their social capital, which was further weakened by a lack of support from their respective cooperatives and extension services. Collectively, these farmers were organised under one of five local cooperatives. However these often failed to access many of the agrarian support programmes available from government or, where they did so, to disburse the benefits evenly to the farmers within them (Gwiriri and Bennett 2019). Indeed, of the 32 farmers in this group, only one farmer had benefitted directly from the cooperative they were a member of, receiving 10 cattle from a livestock programme and fencing.

Thirdly, these farmers had very little prior understanding of commercial agriculture (human capital) and drew primarily on basic farming experience gained through communal production. Lastly, none of these farmers had the capacity to access formal financial capital or had insurance. A few accessed informal loans, but they were unpopular due to their very high interest rates. This prevented them from effectively investing in their farms to improve infrastructure or from engaging with mechanised crop production.

Thus, these 32 farmers were limited in their attempts to expand their production base primarily by poor physical capital (on-farm infrastructure) and an inability to raise the financial capital necessary to address this. This was exacerbated, particularly for the 12 farmers who ended up returning to their communal areas, by a dislocation from the communal networks they could normally draw on for assistance and an inability to replace

these with alternative, local production networks such as cooperatives or reciprocal relations with neighbouring farmers.

Ultimately, the potential of all of these farmers to make any recognisable transition to commercial production has been compromised by their inability to absorb the level of change required i.e. limited buffer capacity, particularly with regard to physical and human capital, and limited self-organisation due to inability to engage with the networks and institutions they could draw upon. This is underlined by Case 1 below.

Case 1 - Farm abandonment

Farmer Celani originally had a small 0.9 ha garden plot in Verganoeg communal area, where he produced maize, potatoes and cabbage for home consumption and grazed 6 cross-bred cattle and 29 sheep on communal pasture. He sold 1 cow and 2 sheep and lost 2 cattle and 4 sheep to diseases and stock-theft between 1999 and 2001. The household relied primarily on wage labour and social grants for survival. In 2002, he individually accessed a 112 ha farm through LRAD with the goal of using it to generate income from livestock sales. The farm, which had no electricity, incomplete boundary fencing, no internal fencing and one dysfunctional dam, was 38 km from the nearest town, Elliot. He moved his animals to the farm in the hope of increasing livestock production but ran into many difficulties in doing so. As the partially-fenced farm bordered the communal areas of Ngcobo, he lost a bull and five sheep in the first year at the farm due to stock-theft. Due to the fields being infested with invasive black wattle and lack of agricultural equipment, he could not produce food crops and relied instead on food produced in his former communal area. Despite problems with theft he managed to expand his herd to eight cattle, but due to lack of feed during a period of drought, coupled with limited capacity to treat parasites, two young animals died. He struggled to market cattle due primarily to a lack of transport and the virtually inaccessible road to his farm, and between 2007 and 2008, sold just one cow for ZAR7 500 (US$518) and four sheep at ZAR1 000 (US$69) each, all in the communal areas of Ngcobo. The farmer was part of a cooperative, but was unable to benefit from any livestock programmes, equipment or training and received no visits from extension personnel. During this period farmer Celani continued to rely mainly on social grants for his livelihood. In 2008, he gave up his attempts to farm commercially and relocated back to his communal area. He now only makes use of the farm to rent out part of it to a neighbouring farmer.

Despite any clear trajectory away from subsistence production, it can be argued that access to these farms has, nonetheless, improved the livelihood security of most of these farmers with the majority having been able to expand their livestock holdings or rent their farms out for cash income. Since accessing their farms these farmers have increased their mean cattle holdings from nine (Table 6-1) to 25 (range 8-40) animals, and their sheep flocks from an average of 17 to currently 58 (range 30-70) animals, which are used to generate cash income when the need arises. These livestock, predominantly indigenous breeds, are resilient to local diseases but unsuitable for the formal market, hence farmers occasionally sold up to one cow and five sheep annually through social networks they maintained within communal areas. This livelihood stream was supplemented by social grants and remittances. For those farmers who have remained on their farms, three sets of capitals appear to be important in achieving this.

Firstly, these farmers have continued to rely on their social networks within former communal areas for access to cattle and sheep markets. Indeed, 18 of these farmers still retain livestock and undertake crop production in their former communal areas. Secondly, they have been able to diversify their productive assets. Their farms now effectively function as an extension of their former communal production systems, enabling them to increase their natural capital i.e. livestock numbers, in most cases. Much of their focus has been on building up sheep numbers, as these are easier to sell to cover urgent cash needs, reflecting their continuing reliance on livestock as a store of wealth. This also underlines their ability to adapt to relatively poor cattle markets through knowledge of market dynamics, exhibiting a capacity to learn. Thirdly, these farmers also demonstrate clear income diversification to mitigate risk. Although they continued to derive steady streams of income from social grants and remittances and occasional animal sales, seven farmers now augment this income with wool sales from their larger sheep herds. A further three farmers earn income from wage labour and ten occasionally lease out part of the farms, providing greater financial security. This underlines the ability of relatively poor farmers to draw on existing capitals to develop important multi-stranded livelihood strategies to ‘hang-in’ as they struggle to sustain precarious livelihoods (see Dorward et al. 2009, Scoones et al. 2011 for Zimbabwe, Valbuena et al. 2015 for Kenya).

Table 6- 2: Resilience and vulnerability factors for emergent livestock farmers attempting to transition to commercial agriculture in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

Trajectory		Assets they drew on	Vulnerability factors	Resilience factors
Subsistence farmers on private land	Hanging-in on private farms or reversion to communal areas	No significant change in assets they draw on beyond increase in natural capital (access to farmland and associated increase in livestock holdings). Maintain social, marketing and production network linkages with former communal areas. Diversified income sources (wool, leasing land and wage labour). Increased sheep marketing (market knowledge).	Poor buffer capacity (limited access to all asset groups). Poor self-organisation capacity (inability to adapt from communal networks to unfamiliar production and market networks, poor support from cooperatives). Limited production knowledge.	Use of resilient, indigenous breeds. Secure income from social grants. Diversified financial sources e.g. leased land. Slightly increased livestock numbers provide greater security. Networks with former communal areas.
	Petty commodity producers	Increased natural (land) and productive (improved livestock breeds) capital. Have developed new (positions in cooperatives and accessing benefits) and retained former (communal) social and market networks. Greater human capital.	Limited buffer capacity due to persistent physical (infrastructure), financial (loans, insurance) and market capital limitations.	Some formal market access. Socio/political capital (cooperatives). Greater human capital. Income diversity (wool, leasing land). Continue to draw on social grants.
Small-scale commercial producers		Access to financial capital (loans, personal funds, formal markets). Expanded physical (land) and productive (livestock) assets. Strong current (cooperative) and former (communal) socio-political linkages for most farmers. Strong human capital (market awareness, and production knowledge).	High levels of financial indebtedness in some cases. Limited buffer capacity due to poor physical capital (e.g. irrigation to supplement livestock fodder) and market price volatility.	Strong socio-political capital. Human capital (production process knowledge, hired labour). Balance risk between farms and communal areas.
Fully commercialised farmers		Large physical, human and productive capital. External financial capital, strong socio-political linkages.	Market monopoly and market price volatility.	Access to capitals. Extensive socio-political networks. External businesses/capital.

[Source: Author's fieldwork]

Petty commodity producers

This group of 11 farmers (9 male: 2 female), demonstrated a clearer although sometimes intermittent transition from subsistence production in their livelihood strategy than the previous group, through more widespread engagement in petty commodity production. They generally had access to larger farms than the other group, averaging 293 ha (ranging from 216 to 379 ha) in size. They also had more livestock with an average of 41 (range 40-50) mixed-breed cattle and up to 100 sheep, marketing an average of five cattle and 20 sheep annually. Whilst they still relied heavily on selling sheep to cover urgent cash needs, they were now drawing on additional capitals to the ones they previously relied on. The farms were located at an average distance of 25kms (range of 10 to 34kms) from the Elliot market and five of the farmers owned their own vehicle, allowing them to market their cattle through both the formal and informal markets. Those who did not have their own vehicle, hired transport or marketed their animals through neighbouring farmers who did.

The transition from pure subsistence production could be related to changes in two main capitals they were able to bring about. Firstly, these farmers had strengthened their social capital, retaining their links with communal areas but beginning to augment these with stronger networks within their respective cooperatives, particularly for those who became committee members. As such, three of these farmers received between 10 and 29 cattle from livestock programmes and fencing from DRDAR through their cooperatives. However, links to communal areas remained important for them, with four of the farmers still engaging in subsistence livestock and crop production using land in their former communal villages and primarily using their farms to generate additional produce to sell - a clear indicator of progression towards petty commodity production. Secondly, several had been able to expand their human capital, with four of the farmers receiving some form of training in more intensive livestock production and husbandry through their cooperative, and one had received a formal education in agriculture.

However, the challenges associated with physical capital on their farms outlined for the previous group, still persisted. Three of the farms lacked all essential physical assets and a further three, despite being connected to the electricity grid, were not utilising it because of high costs. More importantly, a lack of financial capital to enable them to invest in improving productive capital was a clear barrier to them moving beyond petty commodity

production. Despite selling a larger number of animals relative to the subsistence farmers, this group still marketed irregularly, mostly in response to a cash need, hence a sizeable part of their income still remained social grants and remittances, with three also selling wool once annually. Three of the farmers also occasionally leased out part of their farms for extra income. None of the farmers had any form of insurance, and two farmers had unsuccessfully applied for loans. The critical limitation financial capital lack imposes in preventing these petty commodity producers from expanding their production is illustrated by Case 2:

Case 2 - Supplementing on-farm subsistence with increased livestock sales

Farmer Gundla previously owned 15 mixed breed cattle and 22 mixed-breed sheep in Ncorha communal area, with access to 3 ha of arable land. He engaged in maize and vegetable production using the local irrigation system and a hired tractor, which he sold locally to augment income from his pension and other social grants. He sold one bull and 2 sheep in 2001, before individually accessing a farm in 2002 through LRAD. The 369 ha farm, located only 15 km from Elliot, had electricity but the farmer could not afford the ZAR12 000 (US$828) monthly bill. The farm had a partial external boundary fence and was partly divided into three paddocks. It had two functional dams and make-shift cattle handling facilities. The farmer had 48 cattle and 87 mixed-breed sheep. As with other committee members in his cooperative, he had received 19 cattle through the AsgiSA livestock scheme and fencing from DRDAR. The farmer maintained 12 of the cattle at his former communal area, and utilised the communal shearing shed there for wool production. He produced rainfed maize on five ha of the farm to supplement the animals, hiring a tractor from the neighbouring cooperative. The road to the farm was inaccessible during the wet season. The farmer owned an old truck he used to transport livestock for sale to local markets.

The farmer sold three cattle at ZAR7 900 (US$545) each and 17 sheep at ZAR1 300 (US$90) each in the informal market, and one cow for ZAR5 800 (US$400) into the formal market in 2016, in a once-off transaction to finish constructing a house on the farm. The farmer had unsuccessfully applied for a bank loan. He recorded no extension visits in 2016 and was not formally trained in agriculture. The farmer still relied primarily for his livelihood on social grants, as he only sold animals, particularly sheep, to cover urgent capital cash needs. When asked why he did not sell more livestock, begin to accumulate and produce beyond subsistence farming, the farmer said:

> *'My cattle are of mixed breed, the local abattoir that has a ready market does not buy them at a good price, if at all. I do not want to change to these new breeds, they need more care and money, which I do not have. Most of the ones I got through AsgiSA died, and I am still paying for them. It is a risk'.*

6.4.2.2 Small-scale commercial producers

The analysis also identified a group of 12 farmers where a clear livelihood trajectory from subsistence farming into small-scale commercial production was apparent, such that their

livelihoods now depended primarily on sales of crops and livestock. The farms accessed by these small-scale farmers averaged 416 ha (range 343-510 ha) in size, located at an average distance of 14kms (range of 8 to 21kms) from Elliot. To a lesser extent they were still subject to some of the same problems with physical infrastructure as affected the subsistence farmers, particularly with respect to fencing, electricity and dams, but had considerably larger mean livestock holdings of to 133 (range 46-50) cattle and 216 (range 84-564) sheep. This was mainly facilitated by their greater ability to access financial capital than the previous group. To maximise productivity, they capitalised on former social networks, producing crops and livestock in their former communal areas to spread risk, and developed new networks that enabled them to access physical infrastructure through their cooperatives. They drew on these new social networks to help improve their understanding of market dynamics (human capital), through which they refocused their on-farm activities towards sheep production and the production of specialised cattle breeds to market in the formal sector.

For this 'middle' group of 12 farmers, two main starting points for these livelihood transitions were apparent, involving eight farmers who transitioned from the original 51 communal subsistence farmers and four farmers who transitioned from the nine expanding commercial smallholders (Figure 6-2). However, there were several different paths these farmers followed to transition from these two livelihood classes into small-scale commercial production (Table 6-3).

For the eight farmers who transitioned from communal subsistence farming, two pathways were apparent within this transition (Table 6-3). The first pathway involved five farmers who, although ostensibly communal subsistence farmers, were employed either locally or in more distant urban areas and were able to utilise financial capital in the form of pension packages, personal savings or acquired loans to purchase their freehold farms independently. This was primarily due to two reasons. Firstly, some of these farmers had failed in trying to access their farms through LRAD, partly due to the lengthy process (Vink and Kirsten 2019), and instead used substantial levels of personal savings or loans to purchase them. Secondly, some farmers engaged with agrarian reform post-LRAD, and not being keen on the PLAS leasehold approach (whereby government ultimately owns all improvements made to the farm by the leaseholder) opted instead to purchase their farms on the open market.

Table 6- 3: Pathways followed to transition from communal subsistence farming to small-scale commercial production by 'emergent' farmers in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

Trajectory	How farms were accessed	How productive capital was accessed	Vulnerability
Pathway 1	Purchased farm using own/borrowed financial capital	Either a) Borrowed additional financial capital for production purposes; or b) Occupied or forged strategic socio-political positions and accessed programmes/resources for production	The risk from borrowed financial capital (loans) made them vulnerable to market failure and price volatility. Those that partially substituted financial capital with resources accessed through cooperatives using social capital were slightly less vulnerable.
Pathway 2	Accessed farm through LRAD grant or PLAS.	Either a) Occupied strong socio-political positions and accessed programmes/resources for production; or b) Utilised borrowed or own financial capital for production purposes	Less vulnerable because by partially substituting required financial capital with resources accessed through strategic socio-political capital, financial risk was minimised.

[Source: Author's fieldwork]

Three of these five farmers were unable to cultivate sufficiently strong links within their respective cooperatives to enable them to access resources available from government programmes. Therefore, having already utilised much of their capital to purchase their farms, they were forced to acquire further loans to develop the physical infrastructure of the farm and invest in natural capital such as cattle and sheep. By acquiring critical financial capital to expand production, these farmers hold an average of 130 (range 98 - 147) cattle and 281 (range 160 - 510) sheep. As these farmers did not occupy positions of power in their respective cooperatives, they were forced to rely instead on existing social networks in former communal areas, where they had marketing and production linkages. These farmers also drew on human capital i.e. commercial livestock production knowledge and acquired improved cattle and sheep breeds through loans, and thus were able to engage with both formal and informal markets, at times through established small business market outlets. However, by utilising such large amounts of their own financial capital or loans in this way, these farmers were in a precarious financial situation, being vulnerable to risk from market failure and price volatility. These farmers struggled to repay these loans and were forced to use the majority of their income from crop and livestock sales to service them, which prevented them from using this income to reinvest

in the farm, making them more vulnerable in the process. They marketed 11-20 cattle and 15-40 sheep annually, occasionally marketing larger volumes when loans were due.

The other two farmers, having acquired their farms through loans or own capital, were able to occupy strategic socio-political positions (Table 6-3, pathway 1). These farmers were able to utilise socio-political capital to access additional resources, thereby partially substituting for the financial capital required to invest in natural and physical on-farm assets to be productive. They therefore acquired smaller additional financial loans for productive purposes than the previous farmers. They held 62 and 123 cattle; 148 and 300 sheep respectively and because they held smaller loans, they are relatively able to service these loans from livestock sales and also reinvest surplus revenue in the farm, hence becoming slightly less vulnerable than the previous group. They also drew on old communal networks thus taking best advantage of both social systems to improve farm productivity and spread risk. This group is exemplified by Case 3:

Case 3: Moving from communal subsistence production to small-scale commercial production

Farmer Ramotshe grew up farming on a 2.9 ha plot in Cofimvaba, owning 14 cross-bred cattle and 32 Sheep. At 18 years of age, farmer Ramotshe found employment in Alberton, Johannesburg for 36 years. He utilised his income from employment to buy sheep in the communal areas, and by 1995 when he retired, he had accumulated 62 sheep. The farmer sold an average of two cattle and five sheep annually in the communal area. The farmer wanted his own farm and unsuccessfully applied for an LRAD grant and bank loan to fund this, eventually using his own savings to purchase the farm, which has placed him under considerable financial pressure:

> *'One of the challenges is that the South African banks are not talking the language that we farmers understand. I banked with Bank X, but they had their technicalities and they eventually failed to finance me to purchase the farm for ZAR2 million. Instead I took all my savings and bought the farm. Then I was left with no money to make the farm productive'*

After accessing the farm, he increased his livestock holding to 62 cattle and 300 sheep. The farmer acquired 11 Bonsmara cattle from AsgiSA and nine Drakensberger cattle from AST livestock programmes. He also demonstrated considerable initiative in forming a cooperative with farmers in his former communal area, through which they accessed three tractors (one from Eastern Cape Development Cooperation, and two from DRDAR). The farmer made use of these tractors to produce 120 tonnes of maize in 2016 on his freehold farm. The farmer earns income from sheep and maize sales made through a shop he operates in Ngcobo, through cattle sales in the formal and informal sector and through wool sales. In 2016 the farmer earned ZAR108 000 (US$7 452) from agricultural sales, which he reinvested in a second-hand truck, internal fencing and repairing the road to the farm. The farm has three functional dams and two perennial rivers but lacks electricity and irrigation equipment to utilise these for crop production. The limited farm infrastructure was identified by the farmer as an impediment to expanding production:

> *'The challenge is that the farms we received require a lot of work for us to begin to make it. This means the money we make goes into acquiring infrastructure, instead of expanding production. We still have a long way to go to become commercial.'*

The second pathway from communal subsistence to small-scale commercial farming involved three farmers who accessed farms through LRAD or PLAS (Table 3, pathway 2). They then used either strong socio-political linkages they subsequently established with their respective cooperatives through holding positions on cooperative committees (Gwiriri and Bennett 2019) to access various livestock programmes and equipment, or utilised own or borrowed financial capital to expand production. As with the earlier group, because the productive assets received through cooperatives were not adequate to fully provide the resources required to engage in commercial production, they also had to acquire additional loans to further expand physical capital and productive assets. However, having not taken on considerable financial loans to initially purchase farms, and by partially substituting the financial capital required to access productive assets through use of socio-political capital, they minimised financial risk and were less vulnerable than their previous counterparts. This was largely driven by drawing on strong social capital in the form of new and previous social networks and human capital e.g. knowledge of financial and programme systems enabling them to apply for certain programmes (see case 4). They held an average of 116 (range of 78-132) cattle and 189 (range of 84-293) sheep. Those that accessed their farms through PLAS were forced to use their limited financial capital (pension or own savings) to expand their production, as they were unable to access any loans against a PLAS farm. Although these farmers did not have to rely on external financial loans, they are still putting themselves at risk financially and have little incentive to invest in the physical infrastructure of the farm due to the insecure nature of the leasehold arrangements for accessing PLAS farms (Hall and Kepe 2017).

Another group of farmers had a less apparent transition into small-scale commercial production, having previously been identified as expanding commercial smallholders or petty commodity producers, already owning greater levels of existing natural, physical and human capital (primarily pathway 2 Table 6-3). This group consisted of four farmers, two from employed smallholder farmers who were renting extra-land and engaging in petty commodity production in the communal areas and two family farm owners. Although the two family farm owners already had previous access to private land (67 and 230 ha), access to larger farms (468 and 501 ha) through LRAD enabled transition to greater levels of commercial production. Two of them managed to get into committee positions, and partially substitute the financial capital required for commercial production

by accessing resources by using socio-political capital to access government schemes and expand their natural capital and production. However, the resources were not adequate to support commercial production, and they ended up also acquiring small loans. The other two farmers who failed to access productive assets through cooperatives were forced to resort to larger financial loans to be able to expand natural capital and production. Both groups further drew on existing commercial production knowledge and both new and old communal networks to become slightly more resilient and accrue average holdings of 141 (range 72-150) cattle and 184 sheep (range of 162-300) from a previous average of 23 cattle in the former communal areas (Table 6-1). Therefore, even though some are able to partially substitute financial capital through socio-political capital, financial capital still plays a critical role in enabling these farmers to transition into small-scale commercial production. The type of transition characterising this group is exemplified by case 4:

Case 4: Moving from expanded petty commodity production in communal areas to small-scale commercial agriculture

Farmer Thangwe worked in an agricultural bank for 16 years, while farming on a 15 ha communal plot in Mthatha, 12 ha of which was rented form other local farmers. He owned an old tractor that he used to produce crops for sale locally. He also had 17 cattle and 30 sheep, selling about five cattle and 10 sheep annually in the communal area. The farmer retired and utilised the networks he had developed through the bank to join Mthatha Farmers Union and later the provincial South African Farmers Union. The farmer engaged in petty trade in agricultural products and augmented household income through buying sheep locally and reselling them through links provided through union membership. He received a 510 ha LRAD farm in 2002, located 27 km from Elliot. The farmer became the chairperson of the cooperative his farm was part of, through which he accessed 30 cattle from AsgiSA and cattle handling facilities through DRDAR. The farmer increased his livestock to 72 cattle, 164 sheep and 27 goats and utilised the cooperative tractor and equipment to produce maize and potatoes on 20 ha of the farm. The famer continued to produce irrigated horticultural crops at his homestead in Mthatha using a small water pump (purchased through pension funds) and supplies to local schools and markets. He also acquired a small loan through which he purchased improved sheep breeds for his farm (e.g. Dohne Merino and Dormer). However, due to water and fencing challenges, the Lucerne crop that the farmer had established to supplement the sheep failed, and most of the improved sheep breeds did not survive. The farmer now buys the specialised breeds in from commercial farms in Dordrecht for resale, coupled with his mixed-breed local sheep trade in Mthatha. The farmer said:

> *'I want to improve my sheep breeds and production because I have noticed a market for sheep, I can make easier money. The major challenge with farming is liquidity, that is working capital when you need it. Sheep are easier to sell and get income quickly than cattle'.*

Very shrewdly, during his tenure as the Land Reform Committee chairperson, he made use of his understanding of the system, to turn his farm into a co-operative involving his son and daughter as co-managers. On this basis, he applied for a RADP grant in 2011 through which he accessed 16 cattle, 92 sheep, a tractor and implements, a vehicle and stock fence. He is now marketing 19 cattle and 35 sheep annually.

We suggest that critical to all of these farmers engaging in small-scale production has been their ability to draw on financial capital and/or to expand their social capital within new social networks such as the primary cooperatives that are designed to support them. However, those who rely solely on borrowing financial capital to access farms and expand their natural and physical capital become financially vulnerable. Partial substitution of financial capital with socio-political capital minimises financial risk but, as a consequence of the skewed way the service delivery system currently operates, is largely limited to those who are able attain politically influential positions within their respective cooperatives (Gwiriri and Bennett 2019). Those who accessed farms through government grants and have subsequently drawn primarily on social rather than financial capital to access the resources needed to operate them, have the greatest potential to re-invest in production and reduce their vulnerability. Thus, they have transitioned to small-scale production by effectively balancing socio-political capital with external financial capital. Furthermore, all of these farmers seemed to have more commercial 'know-how' (human capital) than their subsistence counterparts and also rely on their former communal networks to spread risk.

6.4.2.3 Fully commercialised farmers

This group of five farmers, although they were previously involved in expanded commercial smallholder production in one form or another, derived a larger proportion of their capital from non-agricultural businesses. Based on this, we suggest that they have not necessarily 'emerged' from one class to another, but rather have always been entrepreneurs who have used commercial agriculture as an alternative means of investing their financial capital and transitioning from one form of enterprise to another (see Gwiriri et al. 2019a). They have developed strong buffer capacity by converting their non-agricultural financial capital investments into considerable natural (large farms ranging from 491 to 1600 ha, either purchased or accessed through LRAD, located within 25kms of Elliot) and physical capital, which has enabled them to increase their productive assets to upwards of 150 cattle and 300 sheep. Importantly, this greater ability to invest in the physical infrastructure compared to small-scale farmers has enabled them to realise the full productive potential of their farms, which the former could not. They have invested in their human capital by developing specialised knowledge of production using improved breeds of cattle and sheep e.g. two farmers were stud breeders of Bonsmara and

Simmental cattle, and one farmer specialised in breeding the Dormer sheep breed. It is noteworthy that most of them had little prior knowledge of farming, and so many of their early farming attempts were very much on a trial and error basis and resulted in financial losses. However, they were able to buffer these losses in the short term using non-farm income to enable them to acquire the commercial production knowledge they need, over the longer term. They had strong self-organisation capacity (they were socio-politically connected and accessed multiple programmes through their respective cooperatives) and learning capacity to adapt to the environment they existed in. However, we suggest that in accessing multiple programmes using their strong networks within cooperatives, these farmers were also denying access to these resources by other farmers in the same cooperatives and potentially exacerbating their vulnerability. This is particularly problematic for those small-scale commercial farmers who are marginalised within their cooperatives and are currently having to draw on loans for all of their farm development.

6.5 Discussion

Our findings demonstrate that agrarian reform beneficiaries exist as part of a continuum of class differentiation and have followed a diversity of livelihood trajectories, drawing on different combinations of capitals, to achieve their current class positions. At the lower end of the continuum are a large number of farmers who demonstrate little or no trajectory from a subsistence livelihood to small-scale commercial production despite access to private land. Here limited class differentiation is evident, the majority continuing to pursue largely subsistence-based livelihoods either on or off land reform farms, but a smaller number are beginning to engage in limited petty commodity production. They lack access to most capitals and hence have limited buffer and self-organisation capacity (Ifejika Speranza et al. 2014). However, there is clear evidence of a smaller 'middle' group of farmers who have employed a wide range of different livelihood strategies to transition from communal subsistence production into recognisable forms of small-scale commercial production.

Given the recent emphasis within government policy in South Africa in making this transition, drawing from these individual cases to understand how these transitions have been made, will provide a useful evidential basis for how best to support such farmers to be able to continue producing for commercial markets whilst buffering potentially increased levels of risk. Importantly, it will also enable broader reflections on the potential

for those who have not been able to make this transition to do so and how best to support those who are unlikely to make this transition at all.

6.5.1 Enabling the transition to commercial production

The transition to commercial production amongst those farmers who have achieved it, has been broadly grounded in an accumulation strategy (Sallu et al. 2010) or 'stepping up' (Dorward et al. 2009, Scoones et al. 2011a, Valbuena et al. 2015). Critical to this transition has been an ability to draw on combinations of financial and socio-political 'connectedness' at various stages to facilitate both the acquisition of their farm and the investment required to transition it into commercial production and combining the latter with an adequate understanding of how to achieve this (human capital). Research by Muyanga et al. (2019) indicates that emergence into small-scale production through agrarian reform in Africa is primarily driven by financial and socio-political capital. Given the current focus of PLAS policy on farmers as tenants (rather than owners) of farms, there seems limited value in discussing the different ways in which farmers in our case study took ownership of their farms under the previous LRAD framework. However, the examples do serve to underline that farm acquisition through LRAD was a very unclear process with little transparency in terms of why some farmers received farms from the state at no financial cost whereas others had to draw deeply on either savings or bank loans to achieve this. Thus, eliminating this lack of transparency is at least one achievement of PLAS, even if it creates a range of other issues associated with farmers now being tenants rather than farm owners (Hall and Kepe 2017).

Clearly, access to financial capital plays a critical role in the ability of farmers to transition into commercial production (Muyanga et al. 2019) and may become even more important in the future as emergent farmers who do not wish to be subject to the tenancy constraints of PLAS attempt to purchase freehold farms. Indeed, of the 60 farmers in our study, only two had chosen to do so through PLAS, whereas the rest either accessed them through an LRAD grant or purchased their farms independently. The continuum evident in the agrarian reform beneficiaries involved in this study, from subsistence production on private land to fully commercialised production seems to reflect an increasing ability to access financial capital. Indeed, even the majority of subsistence farmers who have remained on the farms have done so primarily by relying on existing (e.g. social grants) or new (e.g. leasing their land to others) streams of external financial capital to sustain

livelihoods on the farms. This has been observed in other studies (e.g. Scoones et al. 2012 in Zimbabwe, Hakizimana et al. 2017 in Kenya). However, these small financial streams are insufficient to engage with commercial production, hence financial capital is a limiting factor to their transition. Consequently, one of the key pre-requisites for most of the small-scale commercial farmers analysed here to make the transition from either subsistence or petty commodity, has been an ability to draw on substantial financial capital. This resonates with research findings across Africa (Muyanga et al. 2011, Scoones et al. 2012, Sitko and Jayne 2014, Hakizimana et al. 2017, Muyanga et al. 2019). However, this has put many of them in a precarious and vulnerable position, particularly those who borrowed large loans to purchase their farms as well to expand physical capital and production. Vink and Kirsten (2019) argue that taking out loans to augment agrarian reform grants is problematic. The struggle with loans and indebtedness under agrarian reform has also been observed in Namibia (Werner and Odendaal 2010a) and Kenya (Hakizimana et al. 2017).

Those emergent farmers who managed to strengthen their socio-political capital during or after their transition, managed to reduce their vulnerability by at least partially replacing financial capital with social capital to access labour as well as physical and natural capital, primarily through cooperatives. They were able to draw on this greater self-organisation capacity (Ifejika Speranza et al. 2014), and use it to buffer risk. Therefore, the ability to forge new socio-political linkages within cooperatives is also a key step in the transition to commercial production, certainly if individual financial risk is to be minimised. Occupying a position of power in the cooperative hierarchy (e.g. being in the committee) determined the extent of resources accessed through socio-political capital for several farmers. This was also determined to some extent by the cooperative that the farmers belonged to, with those belonging to cooperatives that had fairer resource distribution having a better chance to access resources (Gwiriri and Bennett 2019). However, it is clear that resources accessed through socio-political capital were not always adequate on their own to expand productive capital to commercial levels, and hence financial capital remains key in making this transition for the majority of farmers. The study did identify a few farmers (e.g. Case 4) who have made it into commercial farming with very little financial risk simply by being very clever about exploiting the networks available to them both in the commercial and communal environments, and their human capital. However, these are a very small group and fairly unique group.

Furthermore, most small-scale commercial farmers maintained strong links with their communal areas to try and minimise the risks they are exposing themselves to, particularly where they are financially exposed through large bank loans. Linkages with their communal areas provide a source of labour they can draw on when required and an informal market for livestock.

Human capital, particularly know-how about commercial farming and knowledge of 'systems', has also been key for many smallholder farmers in this transition. Most of the farmers who made the transition from subsistence into forms of commercial farming already had some background in petty commodity production in communal areas and brought these skills onto their farms. Furthermore, most of the farmers have subsequently acquired and utilised some form of agricultural education, described as 'knowledge identification capability' by Ifejika Speranza et al. (2014: 115), through a strong desire to learn. They have also actively developed their social networks through interaction with other farmers (peer-to-peer learning) as part of cooperatives to improve their farming knowledge. Saint Ville et al. (2016) and Pratiwi and Suzuki (2017) argue that informal social networks between farmers are important platforms for knowledge transfer and exchange, which have potential to facilitate access to resources and link farmers' social capital to human and financial capital. This improved capacity to learn, instrumental in recognising threats and potential opportunities (Ifejika Speranza et al. 2014), is reflected in the response of farmers to market dynamics or market feedback mechanisms. All of these factors help to buffer the risk associated with the very considerable step from petty commodity production within a communal farming system to small-scale commercial farming on a private farm. Human capital also supported livelihoods on these farms in two other specific ways:

a) *Breed diversification* - Through exposure to commercial markets many small-scale commercial farmers have learnt to adapt their production by adopting improved, as well as indigenous cattle breeds, which has enabled them to maximise their market opportunity by selling into both the formal and informal markets. They acquired knowledge to be able to manage improved breeds.

b) *Sheep production* - As with most agrarian reform beneficiaries, small-scale commercial farmers have quickly learnt that sheep offer more opportunity than cattle

for realising quick income returns in local markets and so have tended to expand their sheep flocks. Sheep also contribute to income diversification through wool sales; and have a higher tolerance for resource constraints. Resource poor farmers tend to keep more sheep and goats than cattle as a resilient coping mechanism (Mworia and Kinyamario 2008).

The importance of social, human and particularly financial capital in facilitating commercial production amongst 'emergent' farmers is perhaps most clearly demonstrated by the small number of fully commercialised, black entrepreneur or investor farmers (Jayne et al. 2015, Kay 2015, Hall and Kepe 2017, Tilzey 2017). Access to these capitals has allowed them to buffer risk and strengthen their capacity to learn, a process which afforded them the flexibility to experiment and make mistakes whilst they are developing their farming knowledge without becoming as financially vulnerable as some of the smaller-scale, emergent commercial farmers in the short term. Although they are not representative of the type of class transition agrarian reform is attempting to encourage (rather they are transferring capital from one enterprise to another), they have been able to take advantage of the agrarian reform process to develop themselves as commercial farmers, and perhaps in the process prejudice the ability of more vulnerable small-scale commercial farmers to access resources through elite capture. Here, the key lesson might be that agrarian reform needs to be nested and connected with other enterprises and value chains, allowing and supporting diversification. Critically, given the ability of these farmers to access capital from other enterprises and their strong external networks, these farmers can play an alternative role. Their role within cooperatives could be shifted from net beneficiaries (elite capture) to facilitating resource access i.e. they can act as the links to source materials which are then disbursed to smaller producers within cooperatives. This might also require strengthening their managerial capacity (Francesconi and Wouterse 2019), enabling them to be downwardly accountable in disbursing resources. With PLAS now framing how farms can be accessed by prospective commercial farmers, it appears that agrarian reform no longer offers large-scale, investor farmers opportunities for farm acquisition but their ability to draw on both financial and social capital remains important in terms of maximising their potential to produce from the land they already have and augment this through additional land purchases on the open market.

6.5.2 Overcoming barriers to transitioning out of subsistence production

With only their previous communal social networks to draw on, limited financial capital or knowledge of commercial farming and limited natural and physical capital on their farms to enable buffer capacity and self-organisation (Ifejika Speranza et al. 2014), there is no realistic way that the majority of subsistence farmers on private land can transition to commercial farming in the short term. This prevents the value embedded in the natural capital within their farms from being fully unlocked. Instead these farmers are forced to continue to rely on their own resources and limited networks, in their struggle to maintain vulnerable on-farm livelihoods or abandon their farms altogether. Similar outcomes have also been observed in agrarian reform activities in other parts of Africa e.g. Scoones et al. (2011) in Zimbabwe and Hakizimana et al. (2017) in Kenya. Due to limitations in the capitals necessary to buffer their on-farm livelihoods these emergent farmers fail to accumulate, and instead rely on alternative off-farm financial capital (Hakizimana et al. 2017), mainly in the form of social grants, remittances and renting out part of the accessed land. For the majority of subsistence farmers in this study, using these alternative sources of income as the basis of their livelihoods, augmented by opportunistic livestock sales from their farms affords them some stability, certainly more so than attempting to rely primarily on livestock sales as their main source of income. Arguably such an approach can form the basis of a resilient livelihood strategy (Sallu et al. 2010, Scoones et al. 2011a), and finds parallels in the case of former farm labourers outlined by Scoones et al. (2018: 19).

Nonetheless, there remains the potential for some of these farmers, primarily we would suggest those who are able to persist on their farms, to begin the process of accumulation and in so doing make the transition to petty commodity production, if they are properly supported. Part of this will be enabling them to maximise their ability to forge and draw on new socio-political capital and networks. This is clearly very difficult where farms are located a long distance from markets, linked by poor access roads and particularly where these border communal areas and are prone to incursion and livestock theft. Arguably, dislocation from communal social networks and an inability to forge networks with new communities adjoining farms are critical barriers to achieving this and encourage farm abandonment. Clearly, even within the current PLAS model there is a role here for government in addressing this as part of the resettlement process, by trying to ensure that more vulnerable farmers are allocated farms as close to their previous communities and

as near to road networks as possible. For farmers who are already settled on farms bordering communal areas, there might be a role for their local cooperatives to help broker ties with these new communities as a basis for developing reciprocal relationships that enable them to co-exist. Furthermore, there is also a role for these local cooperatives in trying to ensure a more level playing field amongst their membership, such that service delivery and assistance with physical and natural capital is also provided to more vulnerable farmers (Gwiriri and Bennett 2019), particularly with transport to market for those further from markets. Critical to this will be finding a way to address elite capture of resources by those farmers who are already doing well. Finally, if the government wants to encourage farmers to remain on their farms and begin to engage with petty commodity production, it can help considerably by taking greater responsibility for maintaining the access roads that service them to enable access to local markets for their produce. All this can be done without increasing the risk to the farmers themselves.

Further, strengthening or building on the strategies they are already drawing on might be a starting point to nurture these smallholders to move towards greater levels of petty commodity production. This might include a focus on:

a) *Greater recognition of indigenous breeds* - Indigenous livestock breeds are the mainstay of smallholder farmers, but they are not favoured in formal markets, presenting a sales barrier for many emergent farmers. Addressing this will require a combination of formal markets with systematised informal marketing approaches (Gwiriri et al. 2019b) and alternatives to the current beef carcass classification system e.g. regional beef carcass classification or a pasture-fed naturally produced beef brand (Marandure et al. 2016b, Chingala et al. 2017).

b) *Alternative finance models* - Brokering alternative financing models such as the Land Reform Fund or graduated financial assistance (Vink and Kirsten 2019) might encourage farmers to attempt to produce at scale, rather than currently just renting their land out to generate income, a common poverty escape route for poorly supported farmers (Shepherd et al. 2018: 4).

c) *A greater focus on sheep production* - Small stock represent a resilient asset for resource poor farmers (Mworia and Kinyamario 2008). Given the challenges with physical assets for the majority of subsistence producers, supporting sheep production and the inclusion of sheep in formal and systematised informal livestock marketing channels such as CFPs (Gwiriri et al. 2019b), which are currently focussing on cattle only, could be a more realistic goal in the short term.

For the few subsistence farmers who are already engaging in petty commodity production, it is equally important to identify the barriers to moving to greater levels of commercial production. While access to larger pieces of land through agrarian reform is an important factor in expanding livestock productivity, persistent barriers to market entry mean livestock cannot be easily converted to other forms of assets to support livelihoods (Dorward et al. 2009). Limited physical and financial capital means these farmers will continue to focus on hardy indigenous breeds, which are not suitable for the formal market. Poor market infrastructure and long distances to markets also inhibit marketing opportunities (Muyanga et al. 2011), important in supporting commercial production. Without these challenges being addressed, the potential to utilise the formal market supported by the commercial Ikhephu CFP, will remain beyond the reach of most emergent farmers located around this CFP.

Finally, it must also be acknowledged that some of these farmers simply may not have the desire to take the next step to produce at a commercial level. The aptitude or willingness to engage with alternative production strategies is shaped by market incentives, risk mitigation and complex human and social capital factors such as knowledge, networking, community values and culture (Havnevik et al. 2007). As Poole et al. (2013) suggest, 'research needs to understand local determinism: maybe not every smallholder will want to be a commercial farmer'.

6.6 Conclusion and recommendations: Can agrarian reform transition all emergent farmers to commercial production?

It is important for agrarian reform policy to begin to recognise the considerable differentiation that exists between emergent farmers (Gwiriri et al. 2019a) and to try to tailor support appropriately. This might realistically entail supporting some emergent farmers on private land to consolidate and derive resilient livelihoods from subsistence

production rather than encouraging them to adopt a more commercial focus. This will require a broader policy focus for emergent farmers that places a greater emphasis on livelihoods and minimising vulnerability. Critical to this will be a recognition of the multi-stranded nature of their subsistence livelihoods and how state support can most effectively dovetail with this.

Clearly, livelihoods on these farms are not being sustained by agriculture alone, requiring external capital for support. For those that access this external capital through provisions by grants or other businesses, they are able to draw resilience from this source. In contrast, those who have acquired this external income through loans, the risk that comes with this increases livelihood vulnerability (Werner and Odendaal 2010a, Hakizimana et al. 2017). Provision of land (natural capital), without support to access the remaining capitals, as current agrarian reform policies in SSA seem to focus on, results in precarious livelihoods and systems that allow benefits accrual by those who can access non-risky external capital or elite capture (Hall and Kepe 2017). Therefore, it will be important for government to look at options for alternative finance models (Vink and Kirsten 2019), and necessarily revisit the numerous challenges associated with the financing of PLAS model beneficiaries (Hall and Kepe 2017, Kepe and Hall 2018). Perhaps, this is not feasible for all land reform beneficiaries and might require a focus on petty commodity and small-scale producers, who have demonstrated potential to engage with a neoliberal approach and utilise market opportunities. This means that, rather than adopting a universal neo-liberal approach with a narrow focus on commercial production for all agrarian reform beneficiaries, an alternative approach focussed on balancing production and provision of secure livelihoods for those that might never make it into commercialisation is necessary. This finds resonance with current debates on who should be targeted by agrarian reform; whether land reform should redistribute smaller pieces of land to those that are looking to engage in secure subsistence livelihoods; and the appropriate approach to achieve this (Aliber 2019, De Satgé and Cousins 2019, Vink and Kirsten 2019).

There is a key role for cooperatives that is not operationalised in current agrarian reform policy. Currently, cooperatives are doing very little to support beneficiaries in securing livelihoods on the farms due to failure to support market opportunities and by perpetuating skewed access to resources (Gwiriri and Bennett 2019). The current neo-liberal approach to agrarian reform and commercialisation of smallholder agriculture

benefits the few better-off farmers who are strategically positioned to harness their socio-political connectedness or engage in 'institution shopping' (Lanz et al. 2018: 3) and invest in accessing natural and physical assets through non-agricultural capital. Beyond democracy and accountability measures, cooperatives can coordinate access to markets, e.g. through lobbying for and provision of transport from government programmes, which might stimulate petty commodity production from subsistence producers on private land. The role of cooperatives needs to be strengthened to move beyond just equitable resource access, but also to enable farmers resettled next to new communities to establish reciprocal relationships as they move from familiar shocks and networks, a critical role in reducing conflict and farm abandonment.

Further, there is need to revisit the type of cooperatives agrarian reform is currently encouraging to be formed. The current cooperatives are set up to be funnels through which state resources and programmes are channelled to farmers (World Bank 2008, Francesconi 2009), making them prone to elite capture, rather than being setup as businesses that attract external funding and marketing opportunities for its members (Mooney 2004, Ruben and Heras 2012). For instance, cooperatives on a business footing can access non-risky finance for their members and access local and regional markets through their bargaining power. This can also function to strengthen the role of apex organisations (McGinnis 2011) such as Ikhephu commercial CFP to effectively market not only improved breeds, but also indigenous breeds into both formal and informal livestock markets.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7 General Discussion

Agrarian reform policy debates in Southern Africa have largely been dominated by the need to try and balance delivering secure livelihoods and poverty alleviation for the rural majority, with broader issues of national food security. Achieving both of these concomitantly has proved problematic and has frequently involved a contrasting emphasis at various stages between attempts to commercialise smallholder agriculture through provision of private titling (De Soto 2000, Peters 2009) and an associated focus on neo-liberal market approaches (Deininger 2003, World Bank 2007, 2008), with attempts to provide secure livelihood outcomes premised on keeping as many smallholder or peasant farmers as possible connected to the land (Lipton 2006, Lahiff et al. 2007, Hall 2009, Cousins 2010, Vetter 2013, Aliber 2019). Agrarian reform policy in South Africa has recently been strongly associated with a neo-liberal focus on creating commercially-oriented farmers, but the way this has evolved has been contentious, particularly in achieving land-based livelihoods for the rural majority.

Critical to achieving production and livelihood outcomes for smallholder farmers within the agrarian reform process are the policies and institutional environment that has been provided to support them in the transition process. For those who have benefitted from the agrarian reform process, critical questions remain about who these farmers are, the emerging class dynamics prevalent amongst them, and the degree to which they have been able to engage with commercial agriculture. Furthermore, questions about the effectiveness of the policies and local institutions to support this process, and whether in doing so, they become more or less vulnerable, are pertinent. The purpose of this research has been to try and address some of these research questions and knowledge gaps to provide a detailed empirical basis to enable a grounded critique of current agrarian reform policy in South Africa.

7.1 Agrarian reform

The aim of agrarian reform in South Africa has been to create a class of emergent farmers that bridge the historically dichotomous agricultural production divide. This process has often been characterised by shifts in policy from a focus on addressing historical injustices to an economic or neo-liberal commercial focus, and with it associated shifts in

accumulation strategies. Similarly, scholars in Zambia (Sitko and Jayne 2014, Jayne et al. 2015), Zimbabwe (Marongwe 2011, Scoones et al. 2011, Scoones 2015), Kenya (Neven et al. 2009, Hakizimana et al. 2017), Namibia (von Wietersheim 2008, Werner and Odendaal 2010b, Melber 2019), Lesotho (Fogelman 2018) and South Africa (Lahiff 2007, Cousins 2010, Aliber and Hall 2012, Hall and Kepe 2017) have demonstrated that agrarian reform policy in their respective countries has shifted from supporting a focus on accumulation from below, associated with the creation of an autonomous peasantry, to accumulation from above and neoliberal production driven by capitalist farming models which emphasize efficiency and viability. Central to this discourse is the premise that smallholder agriculture has to be transitioned to viable commercial agriculture (Cousins and Scoones 2010, Thebe 2017), particularly through land markets (Deininger et al. 2017) and models of farm size increase (Muyanga et al. 2019).

This study demonstrates that this approach to the agrarian reform process in South Africa has resulted in an array of 'emergent' farmers at different production levels, with the majority of them unable to fully transition into commercial production. Certainly, this has been observed in many other parts of Africa (e.g. Scoones et al. 2012, Hakizimana et al. 2017, Thebe 2017), and fully understanding these emerging agrarian dynamics is key in supporting this transition. One of the key challenges highlighted by the current study, has been that agrarian reform policy in South Africa has been homogenous in its approach to characterising, identifying and supporting emergent farmers. This continues to be broadly reflected in current policy (DAFF 2018a), where post-resettlement support remains insufficiently differentiated to adequately support emerging class dynamics. Further, the policy shifts at different points in the agrarian reform process both in South Africa and elsewhere in Africa, have encouraged the entry of elite or resource-endowed farmers who already have political, social and financial capital, resulting in elite capture and skewed allocation of post-resettlement resources (e.g. von Wietersheim 2008, Hall and Kepe 2017, Melber 2019 in South Africa; Masiiwa 2004, Scoones et al. 2012 in Zimbabwe; Fogelman 2018 in Lesotho). This is also reflected in the current study, where much of the resources afforded by the agrarian reform process often ended up in the hands of the few socio-politically influential and already commercialised livestock farmers, impeding the ability of poorer farmers to transition beyond petty commodity production.

Importantly, understanding the factors responsible for those farmers that have been able to transition from subsistence into small-scale production holds key lessons to agrarian reform policy. Muyanga and Jayne (2019) identify socio-political and financial capital as key factors in enabling the transition to small-scale commercial productivity. In this study, farmers who were able to transition into small-scale production often drew on their own limited financial and social capital, with little support from government, which curtailed their progress to full commercial production. This means that agrarian reform should be coupled with means to access financial capital, within an appropriate socio-political support framework that enables farmers to minimise risk in undertaking this transition. This can be understood that within appropriate policy and institutional frameworks that broadens the process to provision livelihood opportunities (Aliber 2019), agrarian reform holds potential to shift subsistence production towards small-scale commercial agriculture.

It can thus be argued that the failure of agrarian reform policy to be cognisant of the class dynamics prevalent in the 'emergent farmer' class, has played a significant role in the failure of the majority of these farmers to access the necessary support to facilitate their transition to small-scale agricultural production. In particular, the suggestion in current South African agrarian policy to base classification and support structures for these on financial turnover and production capacity, perpetuates the exclusion of the poorer farmers, further limiting the chances of transitioning the large group of subsistence farmers on private land into small-scale production. Thebe (2017) also argues that the emphasis of agrarian reform in Southern Africa on productivity and efficiency, excludes the poor, given its limited acknowledgement of class dynamics. Collectively, these failures suggest that supporting farmer transition into 'emergent' farming, requires a more differentiated and nuanced approach in agrarian reform policy focussed on fully understanding the class differentiation that exists within them both before and after their engagement with agrarian reform.

A vital part of this will be effective class-tailored post-resettlement support, which aids those farmers able to produce at scale to be competitive in markets. This can draw on key lessons from similar studies on class differentiation in developing countries (e.g. Scoones et al. 2012, Hakizimana et al. 2017). However, while aiming to be as inclusive as possible, agrarian reform policy should also be informed by the argument that not all farmers will

be able or might be willing to make this risky transition into small-scale commercial production (Poole et al. 2013), hence a blanket neoliberal approach to agrarian reform and land access might be inappropriate. Analysis of agrarian dynamics in Nigeria and Kenya (Muyanga and Jayne 2019) indicates that very few farmers who had access to small land holdings were able to transition into medium scale production.

The implications of the class analytical approach employed in this study is that, a more nuanced approach to agrarian reform enables clearer identification of the successes and failures of different producers, and has potential in resolving the contention between livelihood security, poverty reduction and historical land injustices (Moyo 2011) on the one hand, and market-oriented production on the other. Recent research (e.g. Aliber 2019, Muyanga et al. 2019) highlights the persistence of this polarity in African agriculture. In the short term, the required differentiation in policy might mean continuing to support those farmers who fail to transition to secure sustainable livelihoods to produce at basic subsistence levels, while supporting those who manage to transition into emergent farmers to progress into capitalist production. Furthermore, measures to reduce elite capture of resources by those farmers who are already farming at a commercial level and to effectively channel these resources to those that need it more, will also be key.

7.2 Institutions

Commercialisation of smallholder agriculture in Southern Africa is underpinned by neoliberal agricultural development discourses, that emphasize formal commodity marketing (Deininger 2003, World Bank 2007, Havnevik et al. 2007, World Bank 2008). However, this has not always proved easy to achieve as reflected in the numerous regional studies that have highlighted the challenges for smallholder farmers in accessing formal markets (Kyeyamwa et al. 2008, Covarrubias et al. 2012, Enkono et al. 2013, FAO 2018). The approach commodifies livestock production and marketing, thus excluding the smallholder sector where livestock have multiple socio-cultural roles (Ainslie 2013, Staal 2015, Nyamushamba et al. 2017) and marketing is irregular. Exclusion from these formal markets is often exacerbated by the high transaction costs associated with them (Gong et al. 2006, Shiimi et al. 2010, Sotsha et al. 2017, Mapiye et al. 2018). Thus, the focus on encouraging smallholder farmers to engage in formal markets, while offering potential for some better-placed smallholders, critically misses the opportunity to engage with the considerable informal marketing opportunities that occur in Africa (de Haan et al. 1999,

Meissner et al. 2013a, Vetter 2013, Eid 2014, Mpairwe et al. 2015). Effective marketing for smallholder systems therefore demands marketing approaches that are compatible with smallholder production systems, and derive value from the socio-cultural roles and non-economic livestock value (Ainslie 2013).

Critical to achieving these production, marketing and associated livelihoods improvements for smallholder farmers within the land reform process is the institutional environment that has been provided to support them in the transition process. In South Africa this includes a variety of government departments and related initiatives for devolving agriculture support to farmers both on private farmland and in communal farming situations. This study critically examined two of these which have been of particular importance for emergent smallholder livestock farmers, namely CFPs and agricultural cooperatives. For CFPs, the findings suggest that while they are not particularly effective in encouraging smallholder farmers to engage with formal markets, they are much more effective in supporting the 'systematised', informal marketing of livestock in rural areas through reducing transaction costs and enabling the marketing of non-descript or indigenous cattle breeds that are prevalent in smallholder systems. Reduction in transaction through collective marketing plays a key role in agricultural development (Holloway et al. 2000, Markelova and Mwangi 2010, Fischer and Qaim 2012, Verhofstadt and Maertens 2014), meaning that CFPs can potentially have a wider application both in South Africa and in other developing countries. This is particularly important as non-descript or indigenous breeds are suitable for low-input smallholder livestock systems in developing countries, but are not preferred in the current meat classification systems in Africa (Chingala et al. 2017, Nyamushamba et al. 2017). Further, the trade-offs inherent in smallholder cattle marketing decisions as a result of the multi-functional roles of cattle, mean that smallholder farmers prefer to sell older cattle on an irregular basis (Soji et al. 2015), something that the 'systematised' CFP approach in South Africa is able to support. Effective marketing for smallholder systems thus requires the types of marketing approaches currently demonstrated by CFPs that are compatible with smallholder production systems

There is evidence that similar approaches are being implemented and adding value in communal livestock systems in other parts of Africa. For example, a Value Chain Analysis for Resilience in Drylands (VC-ARID) approach applied in Uganda, which

underpinned the role of the informal sector, gender and 'fattening lots' in semi-arid environments (Carabine et al. 2017: 28) effectively structures policy interventions that harness formal marketing with informal routes and rural livestock-based livelihoods. Furthermore, Salmon et al. (2018) suggests the hub model in low and middle income countries, which is similar to how CFPs function as cattle hubs where buyers and sellers interact. Hubs have the advantage of reducing reliance on one buyer, but on the other hand require significant management and expertise. The development of a natural pasture-fed beef brand in South Africa (Marandure et al. 2016b) or a regional beef carcass classification system (Chingala et al. 2017) could also be harnessed to support these initiatives, and encourage participation of smallholder farmers in livestock marketing.

Despite their success with encouraging informal marketing, one limitation with CFPs is that they are not effectively engaging with other stakeholders pertinent in smallholder livestock production, which is characteristic of many projects in Africa. In this instance, use of innovation platforms to effectively engage with stakeholders might be useful. Innovation platforms are strategic and interactive platforms that connect actors in a value chain e.g. public and private service providers, producers, market intermediaries or agents, technical experts through facilitated meetings to foster information exchange; marketing arrangements or solutions; and strengthen capacity of local actors (Staal 2015).

Agricultural projects in Africa often end up excluding marginalised groups in communities, thus require a critical analysis of who gets left behind. Agrarian reform policies, institutions and programmes are consistently ineffective in addressing gender, social dynamics, elite capture and provisioning opportunities for disadvantaged groups (Kinati and Mulema 2018). Aregu et al. (2016) indicate that women are excluded in decisions in local social institutions such as communal grazing institutions, which determines how they own livestock and participate in livestock initiatives. The current study has highlighted that another limitation of current CFP initiatives, is that the poorer and marginalised community members are largely excluded from participating. Women and youths who do not own cattle, poorer farmers who do not have their own means of transport, and farmers with smaller herds who could not absorb the risk that comes with engaging with CFPs, all had lower participation in the CFPs. In Africa, livestock-based interventions often exclude women due to structural gender inequalities with regards to livestock, capital, labour, marketing, land and natural resource ownership and access

(World Bank 2009, Njuki and Sanginga 2013, Must and Hovorka 2017). This gender-asset gap persists in low and medium countries (Miller 2011, Sanginga et al. 2013, Quisumbing et al. 2015, Akter et al. 2017, FAO 2018), and requires bespoke, gender-transformative approaches and frameworks to empowering women (Chanamuto and Hall 2015, Akter et al. 2017).

In the short term, where women and poor households tend to have access, decision-making power or ownership of poultry and small ruminants (Njuki and Sanginga 2013, Chanamuto and Hall 2015, Must and Hovorka 2017, Kinati and Mulema 2018), and interventions that include small ruminants are more likely to encourage participation of marginalised community members. For instance, small ruminant breeding schemes (Kidoido 2014) and asset-based approaches (Mulema et al. 2017) hold great potential in encouraging participation of marginalised groups. Inclusion of small ruminants might also work to reduce risk for those poor farmers who own smaller herds of large ruminants, enabling them to take on more risk and engage with markets. Improved gender equity has been demonstrated to improve socio-economic and poverty outcomes (Kinati and Mulema 2018, Westholm and Ostwald 2019). Regardless, provision of livestock insurance for smallholder farmers (AMFI 2010, Khan et al. 2012, Xiu et al. 2012, CTA 2018, Bishu et al. 2018) remains key in reducing their risk in livestock production and marketing.

The other key institution that the research engaged with was the agricultural cooperatives that were introduced in South Africa to support agrarian reform beneficiaries. Cooperatives remain the most common mode of organising farmers and linking them to input and output markets (Markelova and Mwangi 2010, Fischer and Qaim 2012, Francesconi and Wouterse 2019). However, cooperatives often face challenges of ineffective governance and operational inefficiencies as a result of weak democratic decentralisation (Markelova and Mwangi 2010). Democratic decentralisation remains poor in Africa (Olowu 2003, Smoke 2003, Cabral 2011), and state interference, poor accountability, transparency and leadership remain a challenge for democratic governance of institutions mandated with service delivery. As the current study highlights, which finds resonance with may institutions in SSA, this might give rise to two challenges. Firstly, institutions such as agricultural cooperatives are often then set-up as conduits for delivery of government programmes, which makes them not only

reliant on government for resources and service delivery but creates competition for resources between the cooperatives. This structuring of cooperatives has been observed in some developing countries (e.g. World Bank 2008, Francesconi 2009). This then leads to the second challenge, given the poor service delivery record of African governments, cooperatives tend to select powerful individuals into leadership positions who are able to reach out and secure resources from governments. However, these powerful leaders often cannot be held downwardly accountable, culminating in poorly governed institutions and elite capture. Evident in the current study, cooperatives serving emergent farmers, and CFPs alike, elect socio-politically powerful leaders to enable them to access government resources, resulting in elite capture in both scenarios.

The challenge of powerful but unaccountable leadership in institutions is exemplified by the election of traditional leaders into these positions, facilitated by the institutional ambiguity that often pertains around land governance and service delivery in rural areas in Africa (Ribot 2002, Ntsebeza 2005, Beall and Ngonyama 2009, Bennett et al. 2013, Holzinger et al. 2016, Koenane 2018). A World Bank (2008) report indicates that elites elected to lead agricultural cooperatives in developing countries often lack managerial capacity. In the short term, where cooperatives are setup as conduits for delivery of government services, it will be difficult for cooperatives not to elect powerful leaders, because most African states remain ineffective in their ability to reach down to farmers and this might be the only feasible way for them to be able to compete with other cooperatives for scarce resources. Francesconi (2009) terms it cooperation for competition. However, there might be scope in training these leaders on how to be downwardly accountable, transparent and engaging with democratic principles to underpin commercialisation of smallholder agriculture. Mellor (2009) and Francesconi and Wouterse (2019) evidence positive outcomes of training in democracy and the performance of cooperatives in developing contexts. More importantly, separation of judicial, executive and legislative power is a fundamental step in enabling democratic governance and downward accountability in agricultural institutions (Agrawal and Ribot 1999, Ribot 2004, Chaddad and Iliopoulos 2013). Critically, this must be combined with increasing engagement and capacity of apex support organisations that facilitate democratic leadership selection, policy or actor network coordination and effectively link cooperatives with resources and service provision, which might reduce the need for cooperatives to elect powerful leadership in the first place (McGinnis 2011).

Scholars have observed that cooperatives in developing contexts are set-up as policy implementation instruments (e.g. World Bank 2008, Francesconi 2009). They function as conduits or funnels for resources or subsidies, creating collective dependency rather than market-oriented businesses ethos aimed at increasing agricultural market competitiveness and commercialisation. As the current study demonstrates, this encourages commercialisation to occur on an individual basis outside the cooperative system. There is need for a refocussing of policy to help support the formation of cooperatives as business units if these institutions are to effectively support farmers to engage with commercial agriculture and move away from reliance on government-provided support. Authors Mooney (2004) and Ruben and Heras (2012: 466) argue that cooperatives should be a 'hybrid combination of a voluntary association and a business firm', able to bridge political and economic spheres through a democratic ethos. Set-up on a business footing, cooperatives can collectively access competitive commercial financial capital, which is a key limitation in transitioning these farmers to small-scale commercial productivity (Muyanga and Jayne 2019). This can also be instrumental in enabling cooperatives in developing contexts to select leadership that has genuine business acumen rather than politically powerful leaders who are connected to government.

7.3 Livelihood dynamics

The transition to sustainable forms of agricultural production is dependent on which capitals are accessed, and how they are accessed (Dorward et al. 2009, Scoones et al. 2012). In particular, emergence into commercial production is determined by access to financial and social capital (Muyanga and Jayne 2019), the access to these capitals being primarily the basis for the differentiation in smallholder transition into commercial production observed in the current study. Those who have poor access to livelihood capitals become more vulnerable on transferred land and remain reliant on subsistence production to support their livelihoods. In their studies in Botswana, Sallu et al. (2010) conclude that due to financial and social barriers to more sustainable livelihoods, resilience for many smallholders is drawn from social systems such as social grants and falling back on established social networks within local communities, agriculture playing a peripheral role.

The present findings indicate that financial and social capital are key in unlocking the physical and natural capital essential in the transition to small-scale commercial

production, complemented by an adequate knowledge (human capital) of how to do so (Figure 7-1). Several scholars identify forms of external financial capital as being key in enabling smallholder farmers to transition to various forms of commercial production that agrarian reform is trying to achieve in SSA (e.g. Muyanga et al. 2011, Scoones et al. 2012, Sitko and Jayne 2014, Hakizimana et al. 2017). Furthermore, the current study demonstrates that, how financial capital is accessed and invested in agriculture, determines the vulnerability of the farmers in the long term. Risky financial capital, in the form of loans, while enabling some farmers to transition into small-scale commercial production, often resulted in precarious livelihoods for these farmers. These findings resonate with those of other studies (e.g. Werner and Odendaal 2010a in Namibia) which indicate that many agrarian reform beneficiaries who get loans struggle to repay them, becoming more vulnerable in the process. Less risky finance, particularly in the form of off-farm income from diversification of farm activities and wider livelihood strategies in agrarian reform in SSA, enables a more secure transition to sustainable agriculture (Scoones et al. 2012, Hakizimana et al. 2017), but may still not be adequate to support sustained small-scale commercial production in the long term. Therefore, the provision of graduated financial assistance or setting up alternative finance models such as a Land Reform Fund (Vink and Kirsten 2019) could be fundamental in agrarian reform supporting and buffering livelihoods in the transition to small-scale production.

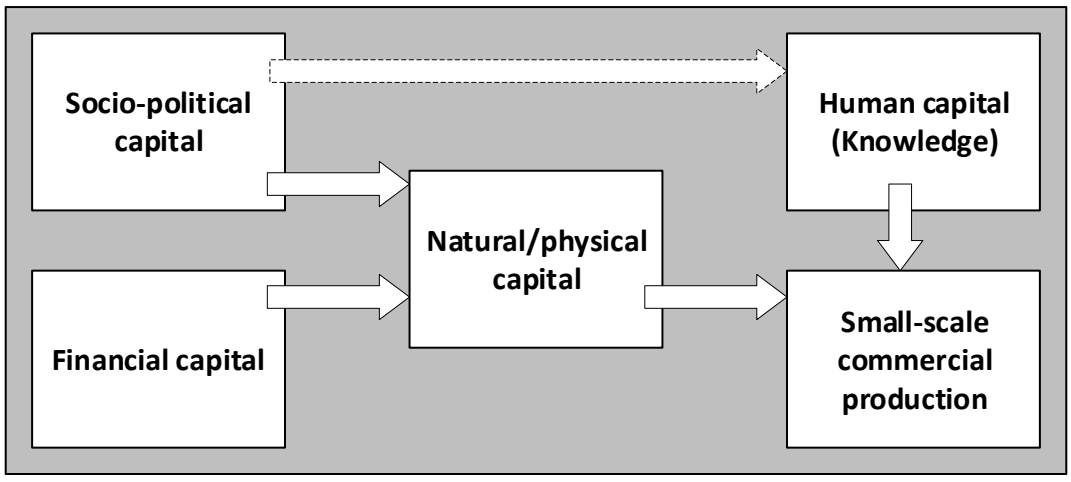

Figure 7- 1: **The inter-linking of the livelihood capitals in the transition to small-scale commercial agriculture under agrarian reform in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa [*source: Author's field work*]**

In the current study, those smallholders who were able to partially substitute financial capital by using social capital available through institutions were able to acquire resources to aid in their transition to small-scale commercial production. These smallholders connected with new social structures such as cooperatives that facilitated access to physical and natural capital pertinent to agricultural production. Socio-political capital plays a key role in enabling the transition to commercial forms of agriculture (Muyanga et al. 2019, Muyanga and Jayne 2019). The pivotal role of social capital in agricultural accumulation and livelihood resilience has since been established by several scholars (e.g. Obrist et al. 2010, Sallu et al. 2010, Nyamwanza 2012, Scoones et al. 2012, Ifejika Speranza et al. 2014, Valbuena et al. 2015, Muyanga et al. 2019). Those that have limited socio-political capital exhibit limited self-organisation (Ifejika Speranza et al. 2014).

The current study concludes that the majority of agrarian reform beneficiaries in South Africa still rely primarily on social networks within the communities they have emerged from to buffer their livelihood strategies, and within the new farming system they transitioned into, they have limited ability to draw on the other livelihood capitals they need. Consequently, they have limited buffer, self-organisation and learning capacity to recover from, or buffer against shocks and stresses. As part of this, a lack of access to knowledge and knowledge transfer systems (Saint Ville et al. 2016, Pratiwi and Suzuki 2017) means they have limited human capital and capacity to learn about small-scale commercial production. Small-scale farmers often rely on inadequate and unreliable public extension systems for information (Gebru et al. 2017, Mapiye et al. 2019, Sebeho and Stevens 2019). The current study identified human capital as being vital in complementing social and financial capital and helping to enable effective engagement with small-scale production. Enabling greater participation of smallholders in cooperatives would help facilitate farmer knowledge-exchange and enhance human capital critical in understanding of how best to make most of the physical and natural capital in small-scale commercial production (Figure 7-1).

Critical to the process of building secure livelihoods with the agrarian reform process is an understanding of policy and key debates on the linkages between agrarian reform, food security and livelihoods (see Holden and Ghebru 2016, Sender 2016, Yaro et al. 2017, Hall and Kepe 2017, Aliber 2019, De Satgé and Cousins 2019, Vink and Kirsten 2019, Chimhowu 2019). Critically, in South Africa the shift in agrarian reform policy from a

livelihood focus to a neo-liberal approach in SSA, encouraged a shift from accumulation from below to above, and with it elite capture. A market-focussed approach requires adequate and appropriate financial and social support to transition petty commodity production to capitalist small-scale production. In the absence of such support, livelihoods formed through agrarian reform become precarious and vulnerable, and the majority of beneficiaries fail to make the required transition. In particular, the current agrarian reform approach in South Africa and several other countries in SSA, which enables access to land but with limited access to the other livelihood capitals in the forms required, undermines the buffer, self-organisation and learning capacity (Ifejika Speranza et al. 2014) of the majority of agrarian reform beneficiaries, increasing their vulnerability.

7.4 Policy recommendations and future research work

The current research contributes to debate on agrarian reform, institutions and livelihood dynamics of emerging agrarian reform beneficiaries. It highlights the tensions and constraints that emerge as agrarian reform and agricultural policy attempt to support the emerging class and livelihood dynamics within the prevailing institutional context of smallholder livestock systems. In particular, the research draws out the following overarching conclusions, and suggests areas for policy reform through which agrarian reform might contribute to rural development and livelihoods.

- A class analysis of agrarian reform beneficiaries indicates that they exist as a class spectrum, from subsistence to fully-fledged commercial production. Therefore, current policy approach in South Africa (DAFF 2018a) and indeed more broadly within SSA, to view them as a single group of emergent farmers, rather limits the ability of post-resettlement support to effectively reach the marginalised and poor farmers who most require this and are attempting to accumulate from below, and instead encourages elite capture of resources by those who least require support and primarily accumulate from above. The first step in addressing this might be further research to unpack the wider class dynamics prevalent in agrarian reform beneficiaries, to gain a greater depth of understanding of who these farmers are, the challenges each class faces and knowledge gaps in how policy can be reframed to better support each group to overcome the hurdles they face in transitioning into petty commodity production. While earlier work on class dynamics and agrarian change (e.g. Scoones et al. 2012, Sitko and Jayne 2014, Scoones 2015,

Hakizimana et al. 2017, Hall and Kepe 2017, Muyanga et al. 2019), and indeed this current research, demonstrate skewed resource allocation and elite capture in this process, there is no clarity on how this can be dealt with. There is need for further research on how policy can be reframed to reduce this.

- Institutional analysis identified how institutions that are mandated to support the transition of smallholder farmers into small-scale commercial production are largely ineffective in doing so, as they remain prone to elite capture. There is scope for further research into how institutions such as agricultural cooperatives and CFPs in developing contexts can be better positioned to balance polity and economy (Mooney 2004), and certainly move towards being sustainable business oriented entities that are not state-reliant. For instance, further research into alternative feed resources for CFPs could reduce their reliance on state feed subsidies, reduce the risk that comes with prevalent state failures, and help CFPs be more sustainably embedded in communities and be more inclusive of marginalised groups. As part of this, institutions should be strengthened to support diversified livelihoods by enabling equitable livelihood capital resource access and to enable them to play a pivotal role in reducing gender and economic disparity. This should be grounded in policy reforms that help balance democratic decentralisation with service delivery. There is need to expand the analysis of the CFPs to include those CFPs with a commercial focus. Furthermore, there is scope in investigating how the CFP model can be adapted for wider application beyond South Africa.

- The livelihood analysis undertaken indicated that the agrarian reform process is not effective in enabling equitable access to key livelihood capitals, with very few smallholder beneficiaries able to shift production strategies towards small-scale commercial production through this process and the majority facing precarious livelihoods. In addressing these issues, firstly, it is important to recognise that not all smallholder farmers are able, or indeed within the current constraints they face are willing, to commercialise (Poole et al. 2013). It is therefore necessary to focus research on how policy can be more effectively tailored to support those farmers currently unable to make the transition to be able to derive resilient livelihoods

from subsistence or petty commodity production, at least in the short term. This might mean broadening policy from its narrow neoliberal focus on commercial viability, to encompass more inclusive livelihood approaches. This can build on current debates on how agrarian reform can best support a range of different livelihood outcomes for smallholders (e.g. Aliber 2019). Secondly, for those who are able to make the transition to small-scale commercial production, policy research into how to enable these farmers to access less risky financial capital is key. This can build on multi-stakeholder models suggested by De Satgé and Cousins (2019). There is also a need to further build the socio-political capital of these farmers. It is fundamental for agrarian reform in developing countries to engage as many farmers as possible with existing and new support networks such as cooperatives to enable greater self-organisation to help unlock the necessary physical and natural capital to make the transition to small-scale commercial agriculture, rather than facilitating elite capture. Further, research into enabling access to efficient and reliable information systems (Gebru et al. 2017, Mapiye et al. 2019, Sebeho and Stevens 2019) might also be important for building social and human capital.

- The livelihood analysis could be extended to include the smallholder communal farmers in-order to widen the understanding of who the winners and losers are, and the extent to which the CFPs are contributing to rural livelihoods.

- The research could be expanded to different types of production systems (e.g. crop and irrigated systems) to develop effective agricultural policy frameworks.

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Appendix 1: Schedule for individual interviews with emergent farmers

Background

- Name (to be made anonymous)…… Gender……...
- Farm name…… Mixed or livestock only?.....
- Farm size – Arable/Grazing area sizes Fulltime/part time farming?.....
- History – How was farm accessed? - year farm was accessed and benefit scheme (individual or group)? If financed, source and value of finance, and total cost of farm.

Prior to access to land

- Previous farm size and location (owned/leased)?
- How was livestock produced? – livestock types and numbers?
- How were crops produced and production purpose (household/market/livestock feed)?
- What were the reasons for that production level (limited land, markets etc)?
- What level of agricultural knowledge was relied on?
- Markets: Which markets were accessed, and quantities sold (livestock/crops sold/year, prices)? How were prices determined?
- What were the challenges to livestock production? e.g. drought, diseases
- What strategies (and assets) were used to counter challenges?
- What social networks were accessed, and the benefits associated?
- What were the income sources and what proportion were they of total household income?
- Was income from cattle enough to cover household expenditure/needs? If not, what strategies were used to meet household expenditure?

After access to land

- What are the changes in livestock production?
- What are the reasons for those changes?
- What are the marketing channels accessed (sales, prices and challenges)? Why those markets?
- Market volatility – have there been any changes in the market and how were these responded to?

Challenges/shocks to livestock production

- What are the challenges to livestock production? Have they changed over time?
- What strategies exist/are employed to overcome challenges? Have the strategies worked, or have they been modified to work?
- Are there any programmes that were benefitted from that assisted in overcoming challenges?

Financial assets

- What are the income sources and what proportion are they to total income? (Cattle/crop sales, formal employment, sheep sales, off-farm activities, remittances, wool sales, other).
- Have sources of income changed over time? What are the challenges in accessing some sources of income? Is there fair access to sources?
- Income opportunities – What income opportunities exist, which ones were considered, and which ones were not considered. Why?
- How is income from livestock used? Is it adequate for household expenditure?
- Is farm income adequate for survival? What options were explored?
- Are financial services accessible e.g. loans (formal/informal)? Why?
- In what form are savings kept (e.g. livestock, bank). Why?
- What strategies are employed when there are urgent cash needs?
- Is surplus income reinvested into farming?
- Was livestock or farm insurance available and accessible? Which institutions?

Physical assets

- What are the changes in physical or productive assets? Is the change through purchase or programmes (grants)?
- What determines access to these assets? Is there fair access to these assets?
- What strategies are employed when productive assets are limited?
- How does access (or lack) to productive assets affect livestock production?
- Farm accessibility: Is there reliable/affordable transport and road network? What is the distance of the farm from the nearest markets?

Natural assets

- How was land accessed and were there challenges in access?
- Where is the farm located and are there any conflicts?
- Has access to natural assets enabled increased production? What are the related challenges and changes in the asset? (size of grazing land and herbage quality)?

Human assets – education and knowledge of agricultural process

- What level of knowledge is relied on? How was it accessed (formal education, training, other farmers/networks)? Challenges in accessing knowledge?
- Which knowledge aspects is farmer confident in (production, management, marketing, financial/budgets)?
- What knowledge is lacking? What strategies are engaged to cope with lacking knowledge?
- Where was other relevant livestock production information accessed? Was the information passed on to other groups/individuals?
- Is external labour engaged on-farm? Is labour expensive and what are the challenges with labour (e.g. staff turnover)?

Social assets

- Which cooperative is accesses? What are the membership criteria?
- What are the benefits in being in that cooperative (market/training/info/assets/livestock loans)?
- What are the challenges experienced in the cooperative? How does farmer relate to other members of the cooperative?
- How are leaders selected? What is the level of participation of the farmer in the process? What are the roles of leaders and the challenges with them?
- How are benefits accessed or distributed in the cooperative? Challenges?
- What regular cooperative processes does the farmer know and participate in (meetings, constitutional amendments, disciplinary measures)? What are the challenges to participation?
- Are cooperative decisions and instruments accessible and fair (e.g. financials and audits)?
- How can engagement with the cooperative be improved?

- Is the farmer involved in any other social groups important to production?

Policies and processes

- Which support programmes are/were accessed (asset types and quantities accessed)? How were they accessed? If not, challenges to access?
- Are there any challenges associated with the programmes (programme quality, operational challenges)?
- Are there incentives to support market participation?
- Are services accessible e.g. veterinary, extension services etc? How many visits/year or past year?

Resilience from livestock

- What are the roles of livestock (socio-cultural, economic)?
- What is considered in the decision to sell livestock? Who is responsible for decisions?
- Are livestock easy to sell or convert to other assets?
- When challenges occur, does it take long to recover from challenges? What assets were critical? Which ones could have been helpful, but were not accessible?
- When has it been necessary to transform (change) livelihood strategy to be able to cope? How was it changed?

Functioning of CFPs in practice

- To what extend was the CFP engaged with? Why?
- If any, what were the benefits in engaging with the CFP?
- If any, what were the challenges in engaging with the CFP?
- How can engagement with the CFP be improved?

Appendix 2: Schedule for individual interviews with smallholder farmers

Background

- Name (to be made anonymous)……... Gender……...
- Household size…… Age of household head.....
- Marital status……..... Fulltime/part time farming?.....
- Employment history……..... Education history……...
- What size of land is owned/accessed (leased)?

Livestock production and challenges

- What types and quantities of livestock are owned (calves, cows, bulls)?
- How is livestock ownership aggregated by gender?

Class	Calves (<1 year)	Steers (>1 year)	Breeding females (>1 year)	Bulls
Number				
Breed				

- What markets were accessed (quantities sold/year and prices) before CFP?
- What were/are the reasons for selling livestock?
- What are the challenges to livestock production? Have they changed over time?
- What strategies exist/are employed to overcome challenges? Have the strategies worked, or have they been modified to work?
- Are there any programmes that were benefitted from that assisted in overcoming challenges?

Financial assets

- What are the income sources and what proportion are they to total income? (Cattle/crop sales, formal employment, sheep sales, off-farm activities, remittances, wool sales, other).
- Have sources of income changed over time? What are the challenges in accessing some sources of income? Is there fair access to sources?
- Income opportunities – What income opportunities exist, which ones were considered, and which ones were not considered. Why?
- How is income from livestock used? Is it adequate for household expenditure?

- Is farm income adequate for survival? What options were explored?
- Are financial services accessible e.g. loans (formal/informal)? Why?
- In what form are savings kept (e.g. livestock, bank). Why?
- What strategies are employed when there are urgent cash needs?
- Is surplus income reinvested into farming?
- Was livestock or farm insurance available and accessible? Which institutions?

Physical assets

- What are the changes in physical or productive assets over time? Is the change through purchase or programmes?
- What strategies are employed when productive assets are limited?
- How does access (or lack) to productive assets affect livestock production?
- Is there reliable/affordable transport, road network, energy? What is the distance to the nearest markets?

Natural assets

- What are the modalities of land access? Are there challenges with these modalities?
- Are there conflicts in accessing natural assets?
- Has access to natural assets enabled increased production? What are the related challenges and changes in the asset? (soil fertility, erosion, grazing quality)?

Human assets – education and knowledge of agricultural process

- What level of knowledge is relied on? How was it accessed (formal education, training, other farmers/networks)? Challenges in accessing knowledge?
- Which knowledge aspects is farmer confident in (production, management, marketing, financial/budgets)?
- What knowledge is lacking? What strategies are engaged to cope with lacking knowledge?
- Who provides labour? Is external labour engaged on-farm? What are the challenges with labour?
- Has farmer accessed any information or field days? Why? What role does farmer play at information events (listener, discusser)?
- What new things did you learn from the extension agent?

Social networks and co-operatives

- Number and types of groups/co-ops farmer is a member.
- Number of times and reasons farmer missed group meetings in the last year
- What are the incentives for being part of a group (e.g. assets, income, labour sharing, group tools or infrastructure)?
- Does farmer trust other members of the group or community to lend/borrow money?
- What level of confidence and trust does farmer have in the committee and CFP staff?
- Which problems has farmer discussed with other members? Was it helpful?
- What new skills or methods did you copy from neighbours?

Livelihoods

- What income opportunities exist, which new ones were tried? Why?
- What is the role of livestock? Are there specific livestock types for specific roles?
- Are women and youth involved in farm activities? If not, why?
- Which assets are considered important in agricultural production? If applicable, which assets were used to replace those important assets that are not available?
- Do you have access to services e.g. veterinary, extension services etc? How many visits in the past year?
- Does the farmer have plans for next year's crop and livestock production?
- When has it been necessary to transform (change) livelihood strategy to be able to cope? How was it changed?

Engagement with the CFP

- How did the farmer hear about the CFP? What is the distance to the CFP from the farmer?
- What are the reasons for utilising the CFP?
- What are the sales, sales frequency and prices through the CFP (year, number and age of livestock sold, herd size, average price, total income)?
- How has livestock income and offtake changed due to the CFP?
- What other marketing channels are utilised besides the CFP and prices? Why those channels (distance to market, number and age of livestock sold, herd size, total income)?

- What are the challenges or risks to utilising the CFP? How has utilisation changed over time?
- What are the perceived reasons of why other farmers may not be engaging with CFPs?
- What are some of the suggested solutions to these challenges? Which actors are necessary to support the suggested changes?
- Is the farmer willing to pay for feed and drugs after government support is removed?
- Are women and youth involved in the CFP? What do you think are the reasons for that level of involvement?

Appendix 3: A survey to determine utilisation of Custom Feeding Programmes (CFP) in Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

Name of respondent:…… Community name:……

A. HOUSEHOLD DEMOGRAPHICS

1.	**Age of household head** ……...
2.	**Gender** *1= M* ☐ *2= F* ☐
3.	**Marital status** *1= Single* ☐ *2= Married* ☐ *3= Widowed* ☐ 4= Divorced ☐
4.	**Education level** *1=No education* ☐ *2= Grade 7* ☐ *3= Grade 12* ☐ *4= Tertiary* ☐
5.	**What is your employment status?** *1= Full-time farmer* ☐ *2= Part-time farmer* ☐ *3= Employed off-farm* ☐ *4= Unemployed* ☐ *5= Pensioner* ☐ *6= Other* (specify)…….

B. SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

6.	**What is the average monthly (R/month) income?** …….

7.	**What are your sources of income? (Circle the main one)**	*1= Salary* ☐	*2= Crops* ☐
3= Livestock ☐	*4= Social grants* ☐	*5= Pensions* ☐	

8.	**What is your total land size (ha)?**…… Arable……..…….... Grazing……...			
9.	**Land ownership**	*1= Private* ☐	*2= Leased* ☐	*3= Communal* ☐

10.	**How long have you been farming?** ……..…		
11.	**Do you have any formal training in livestock farming?**	*1= Yes* ☐	*2= No* ☐
If yes, please specify ……			

C. CATTLE DYNAMICS AND MARKETING

12.	**Who decides when and where cattle are sold?**			*1= Community* ☐
2= Father ☐	*3= Mother* ☐	*4= Children* ☐	*5= Other* (specify).……...	

13.	**How many cattle do you own?**					
Class	*1.Calves (<1year)*	*2. Steers (>1 year)*	*3. Breeding females (>1year)*	*4. Bulls*	*Total*	
Number						

14.	**What cattle breeds do you own?**	*1= Nguni* ☐	*2= Bonsmara* ☐	*3= Hereford* ☐
4= Brahman ☐	*5= Afrikaner* ☐	6= *Mixed breeds* ☐	*7= Others* (specify).……..…...……	

15.	**What are your reasons for using those breeds you named above?**
Breed	*Reason for using it*

16.	**How many calves did you get from your herd in 2016?**				
1= None ☐	*2= 1* ☐	*3= 2 - 3* ☐	*4= 4 - 5* ☐	*5= >5* ☐	
17.	**What is the calving interval for your cows?**	*1= 1 year* ☐	*2= 2 years* ☐	*3= >2 years* ☐	
18.	**Where do you get most cattle management advice?**	*1= Extension officers* ☐			
2= Neighbours ☐	*3= Radio/TV* ☐	*4= Corporative manager* ☐	*5= Own records* ☐		
6= Publications (newsletters, periodicals etc.) ☐	*7= Other (specify)*……				

19.	**How many cattle did you sell in 2015?** ……..
20.	**How many cattle did you sell in 2016?**.....
21.	**What were your main reasons for selling cattle?** ……. ……..… ……..… ……...

22.	**Class of animals sold?**			
Class	*1.Calves (<1year)*	*2. Steers (>1 year)*	*3. Breeding females (>1year)*	*4. Bulls*
Number				

23.	**How much income did you get from cattle in 2016 (ZAR/year)?**

24.	**Which marketing channels did you use to sell your cattle in the last 2 years?**				
		Yes/No	**Number sold per year**	**Distance to market**	**Average price**
1= Abattoirs					ZAR
2= CFP					ZAR
3= Butcheries					ZAR
4= Middlemen					ZAR
5= Other farmers					ZAR
6= Other (specify)…….					ZAR

25.	**What are your reasons for using the above-mentioned marketing channels?**
....	

26.	**Do you send animals to the CFP?** *1 = Yes* ☐ *2 = No* ☐ **Reasons** ……..... ……..... ……... ……. ……. ……...

27.	**Were you given adequate information on the CFP?** *1 = Yes* ☐ *2 = No* ☐
If no, what information was missing?..... ……	

28. How do you rate your knowledge in terms of the following on the CFP?			
	1= Poor	***2= Fair***	***3= Good***
Purpose of the CFP			
Prices attained at the CFP			
Advantages/disadvantages of utilising the CFP			
The risks associated with the CFP			

29.	**What do you think are the challenges with utilising the CFP?** …… …… ……
30.	**What can be some of the solutions to challenges with utilising the CFP?** …… …… ……

Appendix 4: Research Information and Informed Consent Form

Participant Information

Title: Agrarian reform, institutions and livelihood dynamics of emergent livestock farmers in Eastern Cape Province, South Africa.

Researcher: Lovemore Gwiriri

Dear Participant,

Thank you for your participation in this research which is conducted by Lovemore Gwiriri of Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience, Coventry University UK. The purpose of the project is to evaluate agrarian reform, institutions and livelihood dynamics for farmers both in communal areas and on agrarian reform farms in Eastern Cape Province. Specifically, the research aims to understand the livelihood trajectories on agrarian reform farms, and constraints to wider commercialised agricultural production. Through a mixed-methods research approach, employing both primary (in-depth qualitative interviews, focus group discussions and a survey questionnaire) and secondary data collection, the study also seeks to understand key socio-ecological parameters which enable communities to self-organise for commercial livestock production including the role that co-operatives and Custom Feeding Programmes (CFP) play in enhancing smallholder farmer livelihoods from livestock. This is an academic research being conducted through Coventry University in the UK in collaboration with Stellenbosch University in South Africa.

1. *Why have I been chosen?*

You have been chosen because you are an emergent or smallholder farmer, who may be involved with your local CFP or cooperative as either a communal farmer or an agrarian reform beneficiary.

2. *Voluntary participation*

Participation in this research is voluntary and you may withdraw participation at any point.

3. *What do I have to do?*

You will be involved in an interview, individually or as part of a group (which may be conducted via a translator), in which I will discuss with you questions pertaining to the study. The interview will generally be conducted in your home or farm, will last about an hour. Permission will be sought from you to record the process using an audio-visual device and photography.

4. *What are the risks associated with this project?*

There are no risks associated with the project. All information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence.

5. *What are the benefits of taking part?*

There will be no direct benefits to you from taking part. You will not receive any form of payment for the interview or discussion. However, your input will be important in understanding agrarian reform, institutions and livelihood dynamics in Eastern Cape Province, South Africa.

6. *Withdrawal options*

You have the option to withdraw from the interview and study at any time. There are no potential consequences to you for withdrawal from the study.

7. *Data protection & confidentiality*

The data you provide will be stored securely in both written and electronic format. It will not be accessible by anybody apart from the lead researchers. The data will be destroyed after the study period (i.e. shredded). Any publications which result

from the research will not name any of the individuals involved or provide information that will potentially lead to the identification of the individuals involved

8. What if things go wrong? Who to complain to?

If you are unhappy about any aspect of the way this research has been conducted, then you have recourse for complaint through Coventry University. Should you wish to make a complaint, please contact: -

9. What will happen with the results of the study?

The results will be written up as a PhD thesis and might also be written up for publication as a journal articles and will be presented at relevant conferences and meetings.

10. Who has reviewed this study?

The study has been reviewed by the Coventry University Ethics Committee.

Before the start of the interviews or focus group discussion, you will be asked to complete a participant informed consent form.

Participant informed consent form

Please tick box

- I agree to take part in the research project. ☐
- I confirm that I have understood the above study (as explained by the researcher and the written information provided) and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason. ☐
- I understand that all the information I provide will be treated in confidence. ☐
- I agree to both audio and visual recording of my participation in the interview or focus group discussion as part of the research project. ☐
- I agree to have my photograph taken as part of the research project. ☐

Name of participant: .....

Signature of participant: ……. Date: ……

Name of researcher:.....

Signature of researcher: …….... Date: .....

Thank you