A critical assessment of policy coordination in the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme: The case of Riemvasmaak

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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I confirm that I have seen/have not seen the final version of Annelie Maré's dissertation and that it is submitted for examination with/without my approval.

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Abstract

Rural development has been a part of South Africa's policy agenda since the country's transition to democracy, but it has enjoyed new prominence since the ANC's policy conference at Polokwane in 2007 (ANC, 2008). This renewed interest in rural development as a policy priority culminated in the establishment of the new Department of Rural Development and Land Reform and the adoption of its flagship strategy, the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP), in 2009.

Even in its earliest incarnations, rural development was classified as a crosscutting policy problem beyond the scope of a single South African government department, therefore requiring horizontal coordination across sectors like land reform and agriculture, as well as vertical coordination with provincial departments serving concurrent functions. On the vertical plane, local government is also considered to be vital not only in identifying the needs of communities, but in their contributions to integrated planning processes.

This study aims to examine the policy coordination mechanisms of the CRDP, including the new lead department tasked with its implementation, since the crosscutting nature of the policy problem necessitates such a wide variety of stakeholders coming together and taking a coordinated approach. The dissertation will focus on the town of Riemvasmaak in the Northern Cape as a case study, following a site visit and a series of semi-structured interviews conducted with officials from different spheres of government involved in the implementation of the new programme.

The findings suggest that, despite the benefits of having a new national department, political support and financial resources at its disposal, policy coordination in the CRDP is not functioning as it should. The line between rural development and agriculture's mandates are becoming blurred, risking duplication between the two departments, while the CRDP's own chosen mechanism at grassroots, the Council of Stakeholders, seems to be duplicating existing Integrated Development Planning (IDP) processes at local government level. The findings also suggest that none of the chosen mechanisms proved adequate for resolving or overcoming conflict and other complexities hampering coordination at community level.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 | Background

Rural development has been a part of the South African policy landscape since the country's transition to democracy in 1994. Apartheid policies created extreme inequality in access to all forms of opportunity, with the stark contrast between developed urban centres or "well-developed, white-owned commercial farming areas" and largely rural "Bantustans" or homelands serving as an extreme example of the system's intended outcomes (RSA, 1994:7). As such, rural development emerged as a priority in the country's earliest plans to address these disparities.

However, these early ambitious, broad strategies aimed at targeting rural development seemed to fall by the wayside while the government focused on reducing the budget deficit in the tough economic climate of the 1990s. More incremental approaches through interventions like land reform and support for smallholder agriculture were favoured instead.

Nevertheless, following the ANC's policy conference in Polokwane in 2007, the rural development agenda suddenly enjoyed much greater prominence (ANC, 2008:28). A new national Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) was established after the 2009 national elections, incorporating the former Department of Land Affairs, but expanding its mandate to include a much broader view of rural areas and the interventions needed to stimulate economic activity and employment in these areas. Rural development also continued to feature prominently as one of the national government's 5 key priorities, along with education, health, job creation and lowering crime rates (Zuma, 2010).

The Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) was developed as the new department's flagship policy for tackling the issue nationwide. It was framed as a collaborative effort, an exercise in policy coordination aimed at bringing government resources to bear on areas where they were needed most – the target was simply too great and too complex for a single department to take on (Nkwinti in PMG, 2009a).

In short, the CRDP is considered a strategically important programme for the current ANC government, feeding into land reform priorities and attempting to tackle a number of strategic objectives simultaneously in order to better the lives of South Africa's rural population. Policy coordination is also a central part of this programme and is considered key to the CRDP's success. This dissertation will therefore aim to contribute to the understanding of policy coordination

dynamics in the implementation of the CRDP, while also placing the policy in context by providing an overview of past rural development efforts.

1.2 | Research problem and objectives

This dissertation will explore the policy coordination mechanisms of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) by studying the programme's implementation at Riemvasmaak in the Northern Cape. Riemvasmaak has a long history of development efforts, since its residents lodged one of the country's first successful land claims in the early 1990s, after being forcibly removed from their land by the apartheid government two decades earlier. It was also selected as one of the CRDP's first two pilot sites in 2009, and so remains one of the CRDP's longest-running active sites.

The research conducted will consider horizontal coordinating efforts across national departments, or between sector departments at provincial level. On the vertical plane, the study will assess the level of buy-in from provincial government and local role players, both from municipalities and in the so-called Council of Stakeholders, which is meant to be representative of beneficiaries and other partners in CRDP projects.

The CRDP is by no means the only attempt at policy coordination in national government, and so it is also important to interrogate how the programme's coordinating structures add to or are incorporated in existing attempts at integrated planning between different sector departments, and across the three spheres of government. Policy coordination is about promoting efficiency and avoiding duplication (Peters, 1998) – it would be contradictory to its own intentions if the CRDP duplicated existing development planning mechanisms.

Even though the outcomes of the CRDP at Riemvasmaak will not be systematically evaluated, successful coordination is used as a proxy for successful implementation in this case, since the DRDLR framed the CRDP as a policy that would necessarily rely on the coordination of contributions from other departments, spheres of government, non-governmental organisations and from communities themselves (DRDLR, 2009a: 4).

The primary research question and sub-questions to be answered in this study are therefore as follows:

- How has the implementation of the CRDP been influenced by its co-ordination mechanisms?

o To what extent do the CRDP's coordination arrangements align with existing mechanisms at local government level, such as Integrated Development Planning processes?

o If coordination efforts did break down during the implementation of the CRDP at Riemvasmaak, what are the dynamics that contributed to such a breakdown?

1.3 | Layout of thesis structure

This dissertation is divided into six chapters, including this introductory chapter.

Chapter 2 provides a detailed overview of the policy context that preceded the development of the CRDP. It demonstrates an early emphasis on rural development in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (1994) and continues to explore many enduring themes in rural development that are expressed again in the CRDP. This includes the crosscutting nature of rural development as a policy problem, the need for a strong lead agency or department to implement such a programme, the problematic nature of cooperation between the Land Affairs and Agricultural portfolios and some of the complications that arise from the chosen land reform mechanisms up to date.

Chapter 3 offers various insights from the available literature on policy coordination, including past attempts at collaboration between the Departments of Land Affairs and Agriculture, integrated rural development efforts and South Africa's track record in taking this approach, specifically through the implementation of the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (2000).

Chapter 4 outlines the chosen research methodology followed in this thesis, with the emphasis on qualitative methods and tools like semi-structured interviews. It also sketches the scope of information gathered, and potential limitations of this material.

Chapter 5 delves into the findings of the practical research conducted for this thesis, exploring common themes emerging from interviews with several officials involved in rural development at national, provincial and local government level. The information outlined in this chapter is ultimately used to answer the stated research question and sub-questions in **Chapter 6**.

This dissertation is by no means an exhaustive study of the CRDP, but offers a detailed look at the policy coordination mechanisms that form such a key part of the policy's chances of success.

Chapter 2: Policy overview of rural development

2.1 | Introduction

This chapter aims to give a policy chronology of the initiatives aimed at rural development that preceded the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP), which was adopted by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) in 2009. This overview also includes a discussion on the relevant legislation, White Papers and other documents that make up the broader policy context in which these programmes were introduced.

2.2 | The Reconstruction and Development Programme (1994)

As the development roadmap for the first democratically elected government of South Africa, the RDP emphasised the need to extend basic services to *all* citizens, often singling out rural communities as lagging the furthest behind in access to water, social grants and other forms of physical and social infrastructure (RSA, 1994: 27). In fact, an earlier version of the RDP, then still a policy framework of the African National Congress, estimated that as many as 11 million of the 17 million South Africans thought to be living in poverty at the time resided in rural areas (ANC, 1994).

In an attempt to address these backlogs, the Presidential lead projects outlined under the RDP's rural development agenda focus on rural water provision, land reform pilot programmes, land redistribution and restitution, as well as small-scale farmer development (RSA, 1994:43). These initial priorities – improved service delivery in rural areas, land reform and support for small-holder agriculture – would later be formalised in sector-specific policies as well as rural development strategies.

They also illustrated for the first time the inherent crosscutting nature of rural development, involving different national departments such as Water Affairs and Land Affairs, as well as departments with competencies divided between national and provincial level, such as Agriculture. It also touched on service delivery and infrastructure issues under the purview of local government, such as electricity, water and sanitation services.

Starting with the RDP pilot projects and its characterisation of service delivery backlogs in rural areas, rural development is therefore not considered a standalone issue, but a product of combined interventions across different policy sectors and spheres of government. The RDP also mentions the need to formulate an "integrated", cross-sectoral rural development policy (Ibid, 41), with the Presidency and the Departments of Water Affairs and Land Affairs acting as lead ministries (Ibid, 49).

2.3 | The Rural Development Framework (1997)

While the RDP sketched the first outline of rural development as a policy priority, the Rural Development Framework (DLA, 1997) offered a more thorough, focused overview of the practicalities of tackling such a crosscutting policy problem. The document was originally drawn up by the Rural Development Task team within the RDP office, but was finalised and published under the Department of Land Affairs.

The Rural Development Framework attempts to define a role for the state in shaping and promoting rural development, while remaining committed to the fiscal austerity outlined in the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR, 1996) programme. The framework highlights two main areas of concern – providing physical infrastructure and access to various social services, as well as creating the conditions that allow for economic development, job creation and industry as a means of improving the lives of citizens in rural areas.

In the mid-1990s, it was estimated that as much as 75% of the country's poor could be found residing in rural areas. Among rural citizens, roughly 73% could be classified as poor, compared to a poverty rate of 40% in urban areas, and as low as 20% in metropolitan areas (DLA, 1997, quoting an RDP office report).

Rural areas, in this context, are defined as "sparsely populated areas in which people farm or depend on natural resources, including the villages and small towns that are dispersed through these areas". The framework also notes that this represents a change from older definitions, which focused mainly on sparsely populated areas, but since this would include certain peri-urban settlements and hostels accommodating migrant workers, the old definition may have served to inflate average rural incomes (DLA, 1997).

Note that settlement in these "sparsely populated areas" was also greatly influenced if not wholly determined by apartheid legislation such as the Group Areas Act (1950), which specified which race groups would be permitted to live in certain areas. Settlement and migration patterns in South African rural areas are therefore not just based on economic opportunity, but determined by carefully engineered apartheid policy.

The importance of policy coordination is stressed early on in the framework, including provincial development strategies and inter-departmental co-operation at provincial level, with local government coordinating at community level, although it is noted that most rural municipalities are ill equipped to perform this function. The need to strengthen the capacity of local government in rural areas is therefore mentioned repeatedly, whether relating to planning, infrastructure,

development or the promotion of economic activities in agriculture, tourism, public works and other commercial ventures.

A wide variety of national departments are also identified as sharing responsibility for different aspects of the framework. In reference to rural infrastructure development, the list includes the Department of Transport (road infrastructure), the Department of Water Affairs (access to water infrastructure), the Department of Housing, the Department of Land Affairs, the Department of Constitutional Development, the Department of Minerals and Energy and the Development Bank of South Africa.

As such, the framework predicts that it may be necessary to place the rural development agenda within the Presidency, or another "cross-sectoral" department such as Finance, in an attempt to ensure effective co-ordination.

Financial contributions are said to be sourced from all three spheres of government, including rates and taxes paid by rural residents themselves, at local government level. This revenue stream has its limitations, however, since it relies on rural residents being able to afford these levies. Provincial government is expected to contribute through sector-specific programmes in, for instance, health and education, while national government will administer grants for infrastructure development. The coordination of these funds is flagged as a possible challenge:

> There is, in any case, expected to be a basic tension between the vertical organisation of line departments and local government attempts at horizontal coordination. Vertical loyalties are much the more powerful, particularly when a local government's coordinating efforts are not buttressed by adequate discretionary funding, i.e. taxes, levies and duties as well as other sources, including subventions from provincial and national government. Indeed, the scope for local level planning will be closely related to the discretionary resources available. (DLA, 1997: Section 6.3 - Issues in local level planning)

Unfortunately, the framework sought mainly to "[describe] the overall policy framework that is emerging" (ibid) and had no legal status as official policy or legislation (Bass & Hearne, 2000), making it difficult to find any evidence of its implementation.

In all probability, the complexity and expansive nature of this rural development agenda was too great to tackle from within the Department of Land Affairs itself, which had a more singular land reform mandate to fulfil. Meanwhile, it would have been very difficult to mount a centrally coordinated, cross-cutting strategy after the closure of the RDP office and with limited financial resources available while the National Treasury aimed to reduce the budget deficit.

As such, rural development had to be addressed more incrementally, through policy interventions in agriculture and land affairs. It was only in the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (2000) that the South African government would return to the more ambitious scope of the Rural Development Framework's original vision for rural development.

2.4 | White Paper on Agriculture (1995)

The White Paper on Agriculture identifies the sector as "a major factor in rural economic growth and development", while also acknowledging the need for support programmes in "broadening the economic and social opportunities of rural and urban people" (DoA, 1995). However, the document states, this potential role for agriculture in rural areas will have to be coordinated between government departments, including the Departments of Agriculture and Land Affairs, non-governmental organisations and the private sector.

In order to address inequality in rural areas, the White Paper argues that access to the agricultural sector will need to be broadened "via land reform", "technical and financial assistance" to emerging small-scale farmers, as well as improvements to rural infrastructure and service delivery (Ibid). In other words, the role of the agricultural sector in rural areas is clearly situated within a broader, cross-sectoral approach to rural development.

Although the interim Constitution of 1993 characterised agriculture as a provincial competency, the White Paper acknowledges the sector's "national character as an integrated sector", with roles for both national and provincial departments. Indeed, the new Constitution (RSA, 1996: 147-8) later defined agriculture as a concurrent competency, sharing responsibility between the two spheres. This implies a need for coordination both at horizontal level, across sectors, and vertically, between the national and provincial spheres.

Other aspects of the White Paper hint at a dramatic transformation already underway in the agricultural sector and the way it would be governed. The once powerful and well-funded national Department of Agriculture was restructured to delegate to and share responsibility with new provincial departments, with a gradually declining budget allocation. In real terms, the national and provincial departments' allocated funds in the year 2001 represented a mere 45% of those ploughed into the corresponding national and homeland departments in 1988 (Vink & Kirsten, 2003:4-6).

As such, it would seem as if emerging black farmers and new land reform beneficiaries hoping to set up productive farms would not enjoy the extensive protection and support afforded to commercial white farmers in preceding decades. Despite the smaller financial allocations, however, the White Paper on Agriculture became one of the first post-apartheid policy documents to prioritise support

for emerging black farmers as a way of developing rural areas – a principle that would later feed into initiatives such as the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (2004).

2.5 | White Paper on South African Land Policy (1997)

There are three parts to the proposed land reform programme outlined in this White Paper, roughly aligning with the principles of land reform and property ownership outlined in Section 25 of the Constitution. These include:

- **Land restitution**, returning land or providing compensation for land that was unjustly claimed as a result of the racially discriminatory laws and policies of the past.
- **Land redistribution**, allowing the poor and disadvantaged to purchase land under the "willing buyer/willing seller" model, e.g. through the Settlement/Land Acquisition Grant.
- **Land tenure reform**, the most complex of the three, according to the White paper, creating a uniform and legal "system of landholding", resolving disputes over tenure rights and supporting those who have been displaced (DLA, 1997:7)

Broadly speaking, land redistribution aims to provide the poor with access to land for purposes of both settlement and for production, whether for subsistence purposes or to supplement existing incomes (Ibid, 12). By committing to the "willing-seller, willing-buyer" principle, however, the White Paper firmly established a market-led land reform process, rather than allowing government to become "directly involved" in purchasing land for redistribution. Instead, it provides grants and services supporting beneficiaries in purchasing land at a market-related price (ibid, 9).

Progress in land reform has been very slow. The initial goal of redistributing 30% of commercially viable land by 1999 quickly fell by the wayside when only 1% could be transferred by the end of the 1990s (Hall, 2007:88). This target was later revised to 30% redistribution by 2014, but recently released data shows that only 10% (or a third of the initial goal) had been transferred by the end of 2012, making it highly unlikely that this goal could be reached (DPM&E, 2013a).

When it comes to what the land is used for after being transferred, the White Paper points to the issue of national and provincial competencies, noting that land reform is a national competency, while the responsibilities relating to agriculture and rural development are shared between national and provincial authorities (RSA, 1996:147-8). As such, "it is the responsibility of provincial governments to provide complementary development support to beneficiaries (of land reform)" (DLA, 1997:21).

The success of the land reform programme is not limited to a percentage of land transferred, but extends to the impact this asset has on the lives of beneficiaries and their communities. The

responsibility for ensuring this success after the initial transfer, however, is shared but largely outside of the purview of a national department tasked with administrating land reform (initially the Department of Land Affairs, and later the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform). This distribution of responsibility therefore necessitates both coordination and "a clear understanding" between national and provincial governments to determine which sphere is responsible for different aspects of land reform, as well as the subsequent support services provided to beneficiaries of the programme (Ibid, 21).

Rural areas are described as "complex and diverse", since land in these areas could serve a number of different purposes. For example, it could be used to grow crops for food, or to graze livestock, on a subsistence scale or as a means of supplementing income from farm work. The need for flexible redistribution programmes that are mindful of these different "needs and circumstances" is therefore also highlighted (Ibid, 52). It follows that support services would also need to be tailored to these very different uses of the transferred land.

As with the RDP and the White Paper on Agriculture, the White Paper on Land Reform therefore highlights the need for both horizontal and vertical coordination. The complexity of these policies in practice, and the need for flexibility in application noted above, would likely also provide a test for these coordination mechanisms – any adaptations made in one area of these interlinked policies and programmes will impact on other policy priorities.

2.6 | SLAG (1997) and LRAD (2001) grants

The principles of the Settlement/Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG) were first outlined in the White Paper on South African Land Policy (DLA, 1997). The grant paid out a maximum of R15 000 per individual or a group of beneficiaries, provided the majority was estimated to be living in rural areas (Ibid, 67), as a means of supporting those hoping to purchase land. The possibility of assistance for poor, rural local governments in acquiring land for use as municipal commonages, broadening access to land in the process, was also raised in the White Paper (DLA, 1997: 73).

The SLA grant remained the main mechanism available to poor South Africans hoping to access redistributed land until 2001, but the system produced a number of complications as it was being implemented.

As a result of the grants' relatively small size, for instance, large groups of beneficiaries often had to pool their resources in order to purchase a sizeable commercial farm. These groups would then have to accommodate a variety of interests, from beneficiaries who wish to continue farming on the land, to those who saw the land purely as an asset to be managed. The grants were also targeted at poor

individuals and households, excluding emerging farmers earning more than the cut-off amount of R1500 per month. This meant that beneficiaries also lacked the capital to continue investing in their new farms, while the Department of Agriculture provided very little support to make up for these deficits (Van den Brink, Thomas & Binswanger, 2007:175; Hall, 2009:26).

The new Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD, 2001) grant, then, hoped to target emerging farmers in higher income brackets, making more money available (R20 000 to R100 000), but requiring beneficiaries to put up a certain amount of capital in order to qualify for this grant (DALA, 2001:1). The funds could be used to cover land acquisition, infrastructure, capital assets and other agricultural inputs, depending on the needs of beneficiaries (Ibid, 4).

By doing so, the LRAD hoped to improve access to land for black South Africans, help improve nutrition and work opportunities for those living in rural areas and stimulate growth in the agricultural sector, all the while speeding along the process of redistributing 30% of the country's agricultural land[1]. The grant was envisioned to contribute to land reform and rural development as well as supporting emerging black farmers. The basic principles of the programme also included greater flexibility and decentralisation of decision-making (Ibid, 3).

To this end, the LRAD shifted project approval processes from the national Minister of Agriculture and Land Affairs to provincial departments, which Van den Brink, Thomas & Binswanger (2007:176) points to as the "main factor explaining...faster delivery" in the roll out of the LRAD. These provincial departments also became more involved in post-settlement support, although all provinces didn't perform their duties equally well (Jacobs, Lahiff & Hall, 2003:26).

Despite success in "faster delivery", however, Jacobs, Lahiff & Hall (2003:26) note that evidence suggests the LRAD did not manage "to overcome the problems associated with SLAG". The often unwieldy large group projects described above persisted under the new programme, at least partly because of high land prices (Ibid, and Hall, 2009:26).

2.7 | The Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS, 2000)

The main purpose of the ISRDS is carefully spelled out in its name – focusing on integrating existing programmes, ensuring better co-ordination between the three spheres of governments and different line departments tasked with rural development, and building on these programmes from

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[1] The LRAD also deals with improving access to municipal and tribal land (commonages) for grazing animals, although the financial mechanisms for such transfers are not outlined in the DALA (2001) document quoted here.

the bottom up, with communities actively participating in the process. Securing community participation in selecting projects and programmes, and sharing responsibility with these communities, are seen as key to creating sustainable projects.

The strategy, later dubbed a programme in its own right, was developed at the start of a second term of office for the ruling African National Congress (ANC), born from a renewed vigour to address rural poverty, but also to improve policy coordination among the different spheres of government (Everatt, 2004:2-3). The mechanism that would join all these different strands together was the newly established Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) legally required at local government level (Ibid, 3).

The ISRDP was envisioned to roll out to selected "nodes", or spatially defined areas. "The concept of nodal development is based on spatial targeting," the policy explains, "where resources are directed to selected areas in response to identified development problems and opportunities (The Presidency, 2000b: paragraph 97). Using targeting criteria from national departments such as Public Works, Water Affairs and Forestry, Environment and Tourism, as well as provincial rural development plans and their focus areas, the potential "problems and opportunities" in specific nodes can be identified and addressed.

Spatial targeting by its very nature, therefore, implies both horizontal and vertical coordination is required in the implementation of the ISRDS in particular nodes. In choosing this strategy, the ISRDS also seems to acknowledge the limitations of a national, crosscutting strategy like the Rural Development Framework when it comes to identifying and addressing needs at local level. Instead of attempting to find a one-size-fits-all strategy with buy-in from across various departments and spheres of government, the ISRDS breaks the problem down to smaller geographically delimited areas. Even though it remains an overarching, crosscutting strategy, it doesn't have to secure cooperation from the outset, across both vertical and horizontal planes, but more incrementally, as it relates to needs at particular nodes.

District municipalities are the preferred spatial targets of the programme, but the possibility of focusing more closely on sub-districts within them, or beyond the boundaries of a particular district, is not ruled out. This flexibility is deemed necessary because the economic linkages that would form part of proposed development strategies (e.g. family members working in an urban centre, sending money home to those living in rural districts) could take on various forms (The Presidency, 2000b: paragraph 98).

As mentioned above, Everatt (2004:5) quotes the Rural Development Framework of 1997 as suggesting the Presidency or another crosscutting department such as Finance be tasked with coordinating such a strategy, with Finance clearly having the additional benefit of being able to oversee expenditure on rural development. In the absence of a national department in charge of rural development, the original ISRDS assigned the Deputy President to drive the strategy nationally, although this function was later shifted to the relatively new Department of Provincial and Local Government (Mbeki, 2001).

Given the key role that local government was envisioned to play in the implementation of the ISRDP and development generally, this decision is not surprising. Even before the ISRDP, the Local Government White Paper of 1998 outlined the role of local government in ensuring integrated development in both urban and rural areas (Dept of Provincial Affairs & Constitutional Development, 1998). However, it is worth mentioning that the DPLG was never involved in the initial formulation or planning process for the programme (Everatt, 2004:11). The DPLG had to coordinate with several other departments at national level, but arguably lacked the authority that the Presidency or the Department of Finance could have wielded to ensure cooperation in all spheres and at all levels of government.

Despite this limitation, the ISRDP seemed to enjoy considerable political support at the time of its development, with the Department of Minerals and Energy and other sectoral departments with a presence or stake in rural areas participating in the process (Everatt, 2004:8-9)

Each selected "node" or municipal district where the ISRDS is implemented was also allocated its own nodal champion (potentially a Minister, a Premier, an MEC or a local mayor). Nodal champions were tasked with providing political leadership, and required to sign performance agreements and report to national government on the progress made. Unfortunately, none of the reports by the DPLG (2008), PSC (2009) and the Independent Development Trust (Everatt, 2004) make any specific mention of these agreements, nor do they stipulate whether they were drawn up, signed or adhered to.

Each nodal champion was also tasked with leading a project team, drawing its membership from national, provincial and local government, local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) as well as the private sector, all led by a delivery manager, who reports to the nodal champion (The Presidency, 2000a: 30,36,38). These teams would then work with and report to Integrated Development Plan (IDP) structures at local government level (Ibid, viii).

In the South African context, the ISRDS notes that government spending during the first 5 years of democratic rule still showed an urban bias in development planning (ibid, 9). Nevertheless, some progress had been made, notably in access to water and electricity infrastructure for individuals and schools, in telecommunications services and in community-based public works programmes providing some work opportunities in these areas (Ibid, 13).

Despite these achievements, development programs were "beset by problems of coordination and communication with frequent complaints that sub-projects do not reflect community priorities and are not well maintained (Ibid, 15)." From The Presidency's perspective, this was because the same line departments that funded these projects also implemented them, while local councils lacked a strong enough mandate to coordinate the relevant priorities and funding, and to align them to local needs. The "major lesson learned" from the first 6 years of democracy, according to the ISRDS, was the "need for integration and co-ordination" at local level (ibid, 16) – a function it hoped to strengthen through new local government structures and through the emphasis placed on Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) drawn up at this level.

In practise, the ISRDS faced very similar challenges to previous programmes, despite outlining potential obstacles so clearly from the outset. A report by the Public Service Commission (2009), specifically investigating integration and coordination in the programme's implementation, struggled to identify the value added by the "new" strategy.

The ISRDS aimed to use "existing institutional, planning, management…mechanisms" (PSC, 2009:16), namely the Integrated Development Plans drawn up by municipalities, and existing funding from municipal budgets, funds allocated by line departments via the IDP process, "commitments from donor organisations and NGOs" and public-private partnerships (The Presidency, 2000b: x). The complications associated with this approach are discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Even though the ISRDS itself did not add new institutional arrangements or funding to the mix, however, it should be noted that it was using an entirely new local government structure and approach to planning as a key mechanism to facilitate change, as well as a new national department (the DPLG) to coordinate these efforts. Perhaps it was overly optimistic to expect the newly established structures to produce a different outcome so soon after implementation.

The concept of developmental local government or development driven by local agendas may have enjoyed some political support, but local authorities still struggled to assert themselves in practice. Without financial or other means of asserting their authority or driving their own agendas, it seems

as if local governments still struggled to make themselves heard under the ISRDS. See section 3.4 for more complete overview of the literature on the ISRDS and its implementation record.

2.8 | Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP, 2004)

During the first 10 years of land reform implementation, support for beneficiaries hoping to use transferred land productively seemed to be lacking, with the emphasis initially placed simply on the amount of land redistributed. In fact, there seemed to be a general disconnect between the land affairs and agriculture portfolios, despite the fact that these departments were combined under a single ministry at the time (Hall, 2007:100). However, the early 2000s brought with it a renewed focus on what happens after land is handed over to beneficiaries, including whether they could extract any benefit from the land in a sustainable way.

Firstly, this translated into the move from the SLAG to LRAD as a means of funding land reform projects, with the clear intention of co-ordinating and integrating the Departments of Land Reform and Agriculture's efforts to establish sustainable farming activity on redistributed land (Cousins, 2013:51). LRAD targeted beneficiaries who were able to invest in projects themselves, with the hope that they would also be able to help sustain these projects successfully in the long term (DALA, 2001:1-4). CASP followed in a similar vein, since it was the first attempt at funding post-settlement support directly, in order to improve land reform projects' chances of success.

Still, the mechanisms chosen to do this proved to be more complex and fraught than initially envisioned. Naidoo (2009: 268) explains that provincial departments were tasked with implementing CASP as a support programme for emerging (black) farmers. Funding was allocated through supplementary conditional grants, separate from provincial departments' core budgets, to be directed specifically towards CASP projects. Conditional grants also came with stipulations about the way these funds should be spent – in this case, at least 70% of the funds had to be spent on land reform beneficiaries, rather than emerging small-holder farmers in general.

Support services were expected to take a variety of forms, from technical advice to setting up physical infrastructure on the farms, but once again the national department provided conditions to the allocation of funds. Physical infrastructure would receive special priority status in the first year of implementation, and remained a priority even after the formal stipulation lapsed (ibid, 272).

In reality, however, these conditions were a simplistic template for very complex real-life situations faced at provincial level. Just as beneficiaries of the R15 000 SLA grants had pooled resources in order to purchase larger properties, beneficiaries under the LRAD grants pooled their contributions (whether in cash or labour provided) to access the more substantial amounts of funding needed to

purchase large tracts of commercially viable land. Within these groups, however, individuals often had different expectations and plans for the land, making it necessary for support officials from provincial agriculture departments to step in and mediate to resolve conflicts and formulate a coherent strategy for the farming operations (Ibid, 269).

While the initial prioritisation of infrastructure was meant to expire after a year, the emphasis remained in place for several more years in some provinces' spending patterns. Even the expanded basket of support services, including technical and financial support and training, proved limited in practice. Provincial officials may have been officially authorised to provide different kinds of support, but the emphasis on previously underserviced land reform beneficiaries meant that constructing certain farm infrastructure was often the most basic and pressing need on these projects. At the same time, the funds available for other services such as training and marketing, were limited under the national Department of Agriculture's Business Plan Framework for CASP (Naidoo, 2009:271).

Provincial officials on the ground had to deal with complex group dynamics and a variety of support needs amongst groups of land reform beneficiaries. With the above stipulations and restrictions in place, they didn't have the necessary room to manoeuvre and adapt the sequencing and prioritisation of support services to their particular conditions (Ibid, 271-3). In other words, the conditions set at national level did not speak to the needs at provincial level. The apparent absence of coordination and feedback mechanisms between the two spheres also didn't allow for the necessary adjustments to be made. One official described it as such (Naidoo, 2009:272):

> I think, what we experience, as I said earlier on, we as a national department have a particular objective with CASP...it could have been that if you looked at these different pillars that a particular provinces says, look...our infrastructure, on farm/off farm is fine, we are dealing with [problems with] financing, we are dealing with production grants...so here we come and we give them supplementary money for infrastructure...it could then be that we are imposing upon them something which is either an opportunity for them, or not an opportunity but some sort of imposition.

Beyond these complications on the vertical plane, horizontal coordination between the Departments of Land Affairs and Agriculture also produced problems. By focusing primarily on post-settlement support services for the beneficiaries of land reform, CASP necessitated cooperation between these two sectors (Naidoo, 2008: 96-97). However, officials from provincial agriculture departments were concerned that this focus on new and often inexperienced entrants into agriculture would not make for sustainable production. Potentially deserving emerging farmers who had not benefitted from land reform programmes would likely be excluded, they argued, even if they were more likely to achieve sustainable production with the support provided (Ibid, 99-101).

Even if they could accept this as a necessary focus of policy, the relationship between the Departments of Agriculture and Land Affairs proved complicated in practice. A difference in timeframes for the allocation of funding in either department meant that CASP monies could often only be made available several months or even a year after beneficiaries received their land allocations through the LRAD programme – a substantial blow to new farmers with limited resources, needing support to ensure productive use of the land (Ibid, 110-111).

There also seemed to be some overlaps between CASP and the LRAD grant process, which allowed for the funding of, among several other aspects of land reform projects, "infrastructure investments" (Ibid, 112). What the difference between this type of planning support and funding allocated under LRAD and similar support services under CASP would be, was unclear.

Coupled with this confusion between departments was further confusion on the ground, where potential beneficiaries of land reform were often not informed of the services available under CASP as part of information sessions around LRAD and other land reform processes (Ibid, 113). Clearly there were some difficulties in horizontal coordination relating to both synchronisation of funding cycles and information sharing, between departments and with beneficiaries.

The coordination of CASP, in other words, proved to be fraught on both the vertical and horizontal planes, especially when it came to coordinating the timing of land handovers and support services, as well as the distribution of information amongst potential beneficiaries.

2.9 | Post-Polokwane policymaking: A new era for rural development?

The ruling African National Congress' policy conference, held in Polokwane in 2007, brought with it a renewed focus on South Africa's development trajectory. Just as continued high levels of poverty, inequality and unemployment inspired new approaches to development in the broader sense, these factors and the slow progress in land reform reinvigorated discussions on rural development.

"Land reform," the conference resolutions read, "has not been located within a broader strategy of rural development or a commitment to supporting smallholder farming on a scale that is able to improve rural livelihoods (ANC, 2008:27)." As a result, the resolutions state, policies up to date had not improved the lives of rural residents in the way intended. Not only was the transfer of land to beneficiaries proceeding slowly, but the intended positive impact on rural communities was also absent.

The resolutions reposition rural development as a "central pillar of the fight against poverty, unemployment and inequality", while also pointing to the need for the integration of rural

development, land reform and change in the agricultural sector within a cohesive and clear strategy (Ibid, 29). Viewing this in the context of the earlier policies surveyed in this section, the need for an integrated approach is not necessarily a new proposition, but it does point to the apparent failure of past, more incremental initiatives aimed at co-ordinating rural development.

Beyond the intention to embark on this integrated programme, the resolutions also detail the need for "stronger state capacity" and new institutional arrangements for driving the new programme. This includes the creation of an "over-arching authority with the resources and authority to drive and co-ordinate an integrated programme" (presumably the intention behind the national Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, established in 2009), building the capacity of local government, ensuring that both government and the private sector provide the necessary support services and reviewing the existing policies and legislation relating to these sectors (Ibid, 31).

Finally, and crucially for this study of coordination in the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme, the resolutions note the need to "improve the co-ordination and synergy between departments and all levels of government to ensure an integrated approach to land reform and rural development (Ibid, 35)." Policy coordination is therefore once again highlighted as a crucial part of the ruling party's approach to rural development.

The renewed emphasis on rural development is not restricted to ANC policy documents and the new DRDLR, but is also included in the overarching National Development Plan (NPC, 2011) produced by the National Planning Commission in the Presidency. The NDP's references to rural development reaffirms the cross-sectoral approach described above, from the need to raise agricultural output (NPC, 2011: 128) to improving service delivery in areas such as water provision (Ibid, 181), health care and basic education (Ibid, 234). The role of the new DRDLR is also acknowledged in relation to spatial planning, along with the need for improved capacity for strategic planning and development at local government level (Ibid, 290).

2.10 | Summary

The national vision for rural development, including land reform, smallholder agriculture and service delivery, has not changed dramatically over the first 20 years of democratic rule. The need for flexibility and capacity to deal with complexity at grassroots level has necessitated a decentralised approach, which in turn requires a high level of coordination – land reform remains a national competency, agriculture is supported primarily at provincial level and local government is tasked with service delivery and coordinating development in response to communities' needs.

The new national Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, along with its flagship Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP), therefore, are the latest in a series of interventions hoping to ensure greater coherence in the way rural development is tackled. It is clear from the policy review above that any lead agency on this issue will need to find a way reconcile different policy priorities within departments, misaligned budgeting and planning cycles, while also remaining responsive to the often complex dynamics at grassroots level.

Chapter 3: Literature review

3.1 | Introduction

This literature review aims to provide an overview of theoretical perspectives on policy coordination, as well as South Africa's efforts at coordinating rural development policies in practice. Since the previous chapter has demonstrated the close link between the land reform and agricultural policies of national government departments and the rural development agenda, this chapter necessarily also considers coordination efforts in these sectors.

The discussion will deal specifically with the impact of competing policy priorities at the already complex grassroots of land reform projects, factors that contribute to the fraught coordination efforts between the departments of Land Affairs and Agriculture thus far, integrated rural development and South Africa's track record in implementing this approach.

3.2 | Policy coordination and implementation

The study of policy coordination has long been a feature of the field of implementation analysis (Hood, 2005). Perri 6 (2004:106) defines policy coordination as the "development of ideas about joint and holistic working, joint information systems, dialogue between agencies, processes of planning and making decisions". It can be considered as a process, as illustrated in the definition above, or as an ideal "end-state" in which policy programmes not only address all problems as intended, but function coherently and avoid duplicating existing programmes in doing so (Peters, 1998:296).

Pollitt (2003:35) lists four underlying motives for the drive towards coordination, which point primarily towards efficiency – eliminating contradictions between different policies and agendas, making better use of resources, improving the flow of ideas and producing better integrated, 'seamless' services to citizens.

Still, there is a rationale for departments sometimes working as separate entities. In fact, this often allows them to specialise and accumulate expertise in certain areas and with particular goals in mind (Hood 2005:22). It does become problematic, however, if departments start operating with "tunnel vision...and (a) preoccupation with defending institutional turf in what were commonly termed 'vertical silos' " (Hood, 2005:22).

This "tunnel vision" is exactly what Public Choice theorists predict to be 'rational' human behaviour, with bureaucrats acting as "self-interested utility maximisers" – they are focused on getting the

maximum benefit (e.g. access to budgets or staff) for themselves, and minimising their own risk of failure, since poor performance might jeopardise their access to these resources. That is their chief concern, rather than the more altruistic goal of achieving effective service delivery (Kavanagh & Richards, 2001:2).

From this perspective, collaboration or coordination with other departments may well be considered a threat, since it may serve to divert a department's effort and funds away from its own key priorities (Kavanagh & Richards, 2001:1-2). This makes it especially difficult to tackle policy problems that cut across departmental boundaries. These so-called "wicked issues", such as poverty or homelessness, are so complex and involve so many different factors and sectors of government that no one department could realistically find a solution on its own – interdepartmental collaboration is considered key in these cases (Ibid, 8).

Perspectives on how best to promote coordination are varied. Peters (1998:298), for instance, describes one conceptualisation of co-ordination in government as a "top-down hierarchy dependent upon central agencies" which functions well, provided that the organisations involved "have a clear mandate about what to do". At the same time, however, a hierarchy that exists in name only (not in terms of influence or power) may very well fail to encourage coordination (Ibid, 299).

O'Toole and Montjoy (1984:492) point to another approach, where coordination is voluntary and the motivations and incentives at play determine whether coordination can work. Role players can choose to collaborate in order to assert some form of authority, to pursue a common interest in achieving the goals of a particular programme or to secure some form of exchange (e.g. cooperation in exchange for a particular benefit, such as funding). Peters (1998:299) refers to this alternative as the network perspective, involving a fair degree of "negotiation and mediation" compared to the "top-down" hierarchical approach described above.

In the South African context, rural development has clearly been conceptualised as a crosscutting or "wicked" issue from the early days of democracy. It would also seem that policy coordination was considered necessary for finding solutions to rural poverty and service delivery issues, whether it was through an overarching authority like the former RDP ministry, or through horizontal collaboration between the departments of agriculture and land reform.

Horizontal coordination is a common objective in South African policymaking, from the RDP through to the National Development Plan (NPC, 2011), with goals involving several different departments often formulated at national level. Vertical coordination is also entrenched in the legislative

framework provided by the South African Constitution (RSA, 1996). More specifically, Chapter 3 of the Constitution provides the guidelines for co-operative governance, which dictates that the various spheres of government should "co-operate with each other in mutual trust and good faith". This includes sharing information and consulting on "matters of common interest", as well as co-ordination of policies and legislation produced to ensure effective and coherent governance (RSA, 1996:25-26).

The Constitution therefore provides not only the mandates for various spheres of government relating to rural development, but the terms of engagement and collaboration across these spheres and national departments as well. The Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act (Act no. 13, 2005:12) builds on this chapter to provide a framework for coordination and policy implementation, with the aim of promoting coherent and effective service delivery, monitoring and evaluation of implementation and, ultimately, the achievement of policy goals with the combined efforts of national, provincial and local governments.

Additional foundations for coordinated development and financial planning are also laid by the White Paper on Local Government (1998), the Public Finance Management Act (1999) and the Municipal Systems Act (2000).

Both the RDP and NDP were established with dedicated institutional capacity at national level, with the RDP administered by its own ministry and the NDP developed by a National Planning Commission from within The Presidency, although arguably neither has succeeded in enforcing their authority and ensuring coordination in real terms. Kraak (2011:351) specifically traces the collapse of the RDP Office, which laboured under an additional challenge – the RDP fund was financed by line departments giving up some of their allocated budget. Not only did individual departments resent having to give up funds, but the arrangement also meant that departments had to secure approval and funding from a body they had effectively funded themselves (Ibid and Blumenfeld, 1997:75).

Following the dissolution of official RDP structures, there were no remaining institutional arrangements aimed specifically at addressing key cross-cutting policy issues listed in the RDP, including unemployment, poverty and inequality (Kraak, 2011:351-2). It was only later, during President Thabo Mbeki's second term in office, that coordination resurfaced as a national priority, with concrete planning and monitoring functions situated within the Presidency (Ibid, 352-3).

The Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS, 2000) seemed to represent a return to this crosscutting approach to rural development. Using Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) drawn up at local government level as a key coordinating mechanism, it also contained a strong

vertical coordination component between the three spheres of government, over and above the horizontal coordination required at national and provincial level.

Despite this resurgence of coordination as a policy priority, however, the establishment of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform in 2009 may be viewed as an indication that rural affairs had not been steered effectively at a national level up to that point. In fact, the move seems to imply that both the Department of Provincial and Local Government (put in charge of the ISRDS) and the Presidency (responsible for coordination at the national level), failed to provide proper guidance on these matters during the first 15 years of democratic rule.

It would seem that there is widespread consensus that rural development objectives can only be achieved through coordinated effort by a variety of different departments on the horizontal plane, as well as different spheres of government on the vertical plane. Even where there is buy-in for coordination, however, different priorities and timelines of the various departments may present obstacles to its achievement (Moseley, 2009:22-23). As such, she argues, "establishing coordination mechanisms is not in itself a solution to cross-cutting public policy problems. Such mechanisms require continual management and nurturing" (Ibid, 23).

This project therefore aims not only to use the concept of policy coordination to study the coordination mechanisms chosen by the CRDP, but also to analyse and understand the driving forces and underlying incentives at play, which may either hinder or facilitate coordination.

3.3 | Coordinating land reform and agriculture

It is no secret that the key policies of the land reform and agricultural sectors have been poorly coordinated to date. In fact, Cousins (2013:47) goes as far as characterising this as the downfall of rural development policy thus far:

> The...fundamental flaw in post-apartheid rural reform policies has been the failure to couple land and agricultural reform in a coherent and effective manner...the state has thus attempted to implement land reform without engaging in meaningful agrarian reform, thus severely constraining its impact on rural poverty and inequality.

This section focuses on policies and programmes in both sectors, but they are grouped together here precisely because their goals, policy content and ultimate outcomes are often inextricable.

Land reform was first formally outlined as a policy priority and a potential key driver of rural development in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RSA, 1994: 43). In the following year, the White Paper on Agriculture (DoA, 1995) also acknowledged land reform as a way of

broadening access to the agricultural sector, with the main tenets of the policy finally outlined in the Constitution (RSA, 1996) and the White Paper on South African Land Policy of 1997 (DLA, 1997:7).

As outlined in the previous chapter, land reform policy has three main objectives – restitution, redistribution and tenure reform. Although each of these has a potential contribution to make in the context of rural development, it is redistribution that has often received the most attention. Progress in this area has been especially slow, with only 10% of commercially viable land being redistributed between the years 1994 and 2012 (DPM&E, 2013a), a mere third of government's stated goal of 30%.

Before any one of these programmes can contribute positively to rural reform, however, there are different steps to the process, each adding a fair degree of complexity that not only complicates implementation but also makes the achievement of any progress seem unlikely.

3.3.1 | Conflicting mandates and policy priorities

Drimie (2003: 39-34) outlines the situation in the Impendle district in KwaZulu-Natal as an example of the true complexities of land reform at grassroots level. The case study suggests that competing policy priorities and conflicting mandates within coordinating structures may scupper plans for cooperation before the overarching goals of rural development even come into play.

In the case of Impendle, the national government had a stretch of roughly 22 000 hectares of land available for redistribution – a property that was initially intended to form a part of the "homeland" of KwaZulu, but could now be repurposed to serve the interests of local communities. Once the state declared its intentions, however, the diversity of potential beneficiaries stepping forward to justify their claims to the land meant that the transfer of the property was delayed for a full six years.

The various competing claims included:

- two separate claims by the *amaQadi* and the *Bhidla* dating back to the respective groups being dispossessed of their land during colonial times (i.e. land reform based on principle of restitution)
- a claim by the traditional leadership of the area, who saw this as a chance to relieve the pressure on overcrowded tribal lands in the area and to secure their authority as leaders who hold the keys to land rights
- former farm labourers who had worked on the land, who had split into different bargaining groups with different demands and were hoping to secure tenure rights
- plans to settle emerging black farmers on the land (i.e. based on the principle of redistribution)

The Department of Agriculture (DoA) had originally been in charge of allocating the land in the 1980s and early 1990s, and had started making plans to settle black farmers on the fertile farmland, serving its own mandate of diversifying ownership in the commercial agriculture sector (Drimie, 2003: 44,53). When the Department of Land Affairs (DLA) took over after 1994, however, its concern was mainly to secure restitution for those who had been dispossessed of their land and to provide alternative sources of livelihoods for the rural poor (Ibid, 44).

With land allocation and post-settlement support being central to the land reform process, the two departments were expected to work together and coordinate their activities, but these different policy priorities necessarily aligned them with different claims. The DoA still favoured the farmers who had been identified for possible settlement on the land prior to 1994, despite the fact that they would have been brought in from outside of the Impendle area. Although the DoA blamed the AmaQadi claim for thwarting these plans in the mid-1990s, Drimie writes that the top-down imposition of their policy objective (settling emerging black farmers) was simply "unworkable" – in truth, it had to be balanced with the need for consultation with broader interests in the area (Ibid, 54).

Meanwhile, the DLA favoured the settlement of former labourers and tenants on the land, as well as the interests of the AmaQadi. The department also wanted to see the establishment of Community Property Associations (CPAs) in order to represent local interests, a type of institution that traditional leaders saw as a threat to their authority over land administration in the area (Ibid, 55).

Land reform policy provided little guidance for prioritising the competing land claims in this instance, as they were all based the principles of reform outlined in the Constitution. Add to this the realisation of the DLA that it did not have the necessary staff or other forms of capacity to deal with and mediate these competing claims effectively, and it seems clear how "well-intentioned" policies would have "unravelled" in the face of the true complexities of implementation at local level (Drimie, 2003:59, 61). Competing objectives, without clear overarching goals and policy priorities, make it very difficult for authorities to coordinate their activities effectively, even more so in the face of these complexities in practice.

Ntshona et al's (2010) analysis of the land reform claim settled at Dwesa-Cwebe in the Eastern Cape offers another interesting example of competing policy objectives within coordinating structures. The local community of Dwesa-Cwebe had initially been excluded from accessing land and its associated natural resources (e.g. water, grazing etc.) in the name of conservation, but successfully pursued a claim in the area in the late 1990s (2010: 356-7).

The communities of the region formed the Dwesa-Cwebe Land Trust as a legal entity to hold land rights, with funds awarded to the trust to be invested in projects that "yield benefits for all members of the community" (Ibid, 357). The land was maintained as a reserve, with the administration of the natural resources of the area co-managed by a committee of representatives from the trust, the Department of Water Affairs, the Eastern Cape provincial conservation authority, the Department of Land Affairs and the local municipality (Ibid, 357). Unlike Impendle, where the coordination issue was primarily on the horizontal plane (between the Departments of Land Affairs and Agriculture), this Co-management Committee (CMC) therefore had to coordinate objectives across both the horizontal and vertical planes.

But different representatives serving on this CMC were there to pursue competing interests – the conservation authority (Eastern Cape Parks) was still pushing for outright bans on access to natural resources, while community members assumed that they would be granted at least some access. Eastern Cape Parks also enjoyed considerable power and influence within the CMC. Ntshona et al (2010:359) argue that it was almost too intimidating for the community to try and assert their rights in a forum of "educated professionals", civil servants who were there representing their departments' interests. Many community members feared that they would simply be excluded from the committee if they attempted to do so (Ibid, 359).

At the same time, conflict erupted among community representatives themselves, with smaller CPAs from each village facing opposition from traditional leaders, for the same reasons put forward by Drimie in the case of Impendle. There was no overarching strategy or a set of principles guiding coordination, so competing objectives and conflict made successful coordination increasingly unlikely. In practice, this simply meant coordination or co-management of the settlement agreement was skewed towards the most powerful players (Ibid, 358).

"The failure of these institutions," Ntshona et al (2010:359-360) argue, "indicates a need to strengthen or clarify them before or at the same time as rights are awarded to people." As such, the authors recommend that a post-settlement strategy form part of all successful claims, clearly setting out priorities and ensuring that the local community benefits as intended (Ibid, 360). This suggests that the broader goals set out by land reform and rural development strategies were not enough to resolve these conflicts, or to strengthen coordination processes at project level.

3.4 | Integrated rural development in South Africa

When considering the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme, it is not just rural development, but *integrated* rural development that is relevant as a theoretical foundation for the

programme. Ruttan (1984:394) notes that the integrated rural development approach drew on at least three different intellectual perspectives on the rise in the early 1970s, the first of which seems to be a necessary outcome of the type of comprehensive definition of rural development chosen earlier in this chapter.

That is to say, if one accepts that economic growth produces some benefits, but will not necessarily result in material benefits, better opportunities or social mobility for *all* rural citizens, a growth promotion strategy must necessarily be combined with other interventions aimed at improving the lives of people living in rural areas (Ruttan, 1984:394). Integrated rural development therefore also emphasises the need for a broadened economic base in rural areas, improving living conditions and basic services such as housing, access to water and road infrastructure, making better use of human resources and establishing closer links between the agricultural and other sectors in rural areas (Leupolt, 1977: 8-9).

Secondly, Ruttan (1984:394) credits the rise of 'systems thinking' as an important influence. Since rural development necessarily involves a combination of interrelated interventions from different sectors and spheres of government, it seemed that the integration of these efforts would necessarily lead to improved outcomes, whether in agricultural production or more broadly in quality of life for rural residents.

Finally, he points to a sense of disappointment in former technocratic approaches to development, which seemed to serve only as a way of controlling rural areas (Ruttan, 1984:394). In contrast, integrated rural development identifies a need for "administrative decentralisation" when embracing the complexity of regional development, since a strategy co-ordinated strictly from the centre may fail to take into account the unique conditions in each region (Leupolt, 1977:9). At the same time, greater participation of rural citizens in decision making processes is required to ensure that interventions address the real and most urgent needs of rural communities (Ibid, 14).

Cohen (1980) is very critical of integrated rural development, mostly because of what he considers to be a lack of theoretical rigorousness in the field, including continuing disagreement about the concept's definition. He also points out that by specifically choosing and promoting a multipronged approach, integrated rural development initiatives may simply overreach themselves and end up achieving nothing (Ibid, 197-8). He quotes Ruttan's (1974) earlier reference to integrated rural development as "an ideology in search of a methodology or technology" – although it might be clear on the reasons why a multifaceted approach is needed, it is less clear on how such an approach is successfully implemented in practice.

Cohen (1980:201) therefore sets out to synthesise the features of integrated rural development from existing policies and projects. Integrated rural development programmes, he writes, tend to focus on promoting agricultural development and food production with an emphasis on small-scale producers, along with simultaneously improving rural residents' quality of life and enhancing employment and other opportunities outside of agriculture.

Furthermore, he finds that IRD efforts are identified by their attempts "to promote comprehensive coordination among a wide range of government, parastatal or private sector actors" (Ibid). Policy coordination, in other words, forms a key part of most IRD programmes. As a result, however, they almost always face problems trying to integrate "fragmented but complementary resources and services" across government and private institutional arrangements, with scarce managerial resources at their disposal, and inevitably expensive resources (ibid, 202).

He goes on to identify some broad, somewhat divergent classifications of integrated rural development from the existing literature – as a combination of specific development objectives (e.g. Leupolt's combination of growth and equity goals), as bringing together different components that support and reinforce the same intended outcome (e.g. different interventions aimed at increased agricultural productivity), as identifiable by specific project characteristics or simply by its emphasis on spatial planning (Cohen, 1980:202-207).

This lack of conceptual clarity, he admits, is probably a result of integrated rural development being more of an "operational rather than a theoretical concept", but he cautions against accepting this status quo. A lack of clarity may, after all, make it difficult to identify the problems that stand in the way of progress or tangible positive outcomes for rural communities (Cohen, 1980: 208-9).

The Comprehensive Rural Development Programme seems to include a number of features that align with both Ruttan's (1984) and Cohen's (1980) understanding of integrated rural development. The programme takes a multifaceted approach, emphasising the agricultural sector as a driver of development, while also encouraging economic activity in the industrial and financial sectors and a broadening of the economic base in rural areas generally. It also aims to expand access to basic services, develop infrastructure and provide development opportunities for rural citizens themselves (DRDLR, 2009a: 13-22), all driven by "proactive participatory community-based planning" rather than simple "interventionist" policy (Ibid, 3).

While it is safe to say that the CRDP takes an integrated approach to rural development, it is also clear that the programme may be at risk of the pitfalls outlined by Cohen (1980) by attempting to do too much at once.

3.4.1 | The Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme

The literature on the practical realities of the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme seems to suggest that coordination was problematic at both the planning and implementation stages of the programme.

Everatt (2004:12), for instance, notes that the ISRDP was implemented shortly after several municipal boundaries were redrawn, so that a number of the nodal regions selected were run by new district municipalities that had barely set up their offices. He also points to a possible contradiction between the intention and likely outcomes of the node selection process. Although it made sense to identify the targeted nodes on the basis of the greatest need, these municipalities necessarily also posed the greatest challenges in terms of capacity and identifying opportunities for economic development, straining the already overwhelmed local authorities beyond their limits and making a successful pilot phase an unlikely result (Ibid, 13-14).

Another mismatch seemed to be evident in the emphasis on anchor projects, chosen as examples of the ISRDP's priorities and plans, which also feature strongly in one of the DPLG's first annual reports after the programme's implementation (DPLG, 2003). These projects, including the building of dams, development of tourism routes or reserves, among others, were chosen because of the positive spinoffs they could potentially bring (PSC, 2009:15). Building a dam could help sustain agriculture in the region while also creating jobs in the construction sector, for instance. It was unclear, however, what set ISRDP anchor projects apart from any other kind of development project (Ibid, 16).

Everatt (2004:14) notes that the programme was in real danger of losing its focus as an overarching strategy to improve coordination across horizontal and vertical planes of planning, in favour of the "low hanging fruit" offered by these more specific anchor projects. Even those tasked with implementing the ISRDS were confused by them, since it made the programme seem more like a regular, stand-alone development agenda than a strategy to coordinate existing projects and programmes (Everatt, Dube & Ntsime, 2004:2). Anchor projects, in other words, provided a distraction from the programme's primary goal, coordination, while simultaneously undermining its perceived efficacy, since its outcomes were indistinguishable from other development initiatives.

Part of this problem seemed to lie in the fact that the ISRDP had no funding of its own. Sector departments like Water Affairs were effectively asked to allocate funds for ISRDP projects that might not further their own objectives – in practice, these departments were more likely to fund their own agendas (PSC, 2009:59-60). The ISRDS had no carrot or stick to offer for sector departments aligning

with its objectives, nor did the DPLG, which also lacked the authority that the Presidency or the National Treasury could have wielded over sector departments.

The ISRDP not only had to compete with sectoral objectives, but also with parallel, funded initiatives such as Project Consolidate, aimed at strengthening and supporting local government in improved service delivery (Ibid, 67). Although the July 2003 Cabinet Lekgotla noted the need for a financing protocol to allocate resources to the ISRDP nodes and attempted to address this inherent weakness, the PSC report is sceptical about whether the programme eventually managed to improve integration and coordination as intended (Ibid, 16-17).

Capacity at local government level was still part of the problem – if the capacity to coordinate a housing or water infrastructure project wasn't available at local government level, the planning function was shifted away from the municipality to sector departments. As such, the report warns of the risk of creating parallel structures for coordination at local level, outside of the existing IDP processes. Since local governments already "lack(ed) the authority to act as an organising nexus", their objectives would easily be sidelined in favour of sectoral departments' in such a scenario (PSC, 2009: viii, Everatt, Dube & Ntsime 2004:8).

This lack of authority also had an impact at other levels of coordination, as illustrated by the performance of individual national nodal champions, most of whom were also national ministers. A 2004 report by the Independent Development Trust to the parliamentary committee on public works noted that ministers ultimately chose for themselves how involved they wanted to be. Some of those who were invested often chose to abandon broader goals for their own department's interests in the relevant node. In these situations, the local government stakeholders were simply outranked and unable to ensure a more holistic approach was taken (PMG, 2004).

Lastly, the "simplistic" coordination mechanisms proposed by the ISRDS, including interdepartmental task teams, seemed to function better as channels for relaying information rather than the coordination of decision-making. These teams ultimately made no strategic decisions around planning, objectives, projects or the allocation of funds, and therefore didn't have much influence on coordination at all (PSC, 2009: ix).

With no new funding allocated and existing structures simply tasked with producing more coordinated implementation, the report summarises the ISRDS's seemingly confusing vision as, "do the same things, only better", without clear guidelines for improved coordination processes (PSC, 2009: ix). Beyond the evaluation of these mechanisms, the programme's practical outcomes were deemed "varied" but "generally...modest".

A 2004 study by the IDT did find that most public servants interviewed thought that the programme had helped them work differently, with clearer guidelines on prioritising local objectives and a greater likelihood of securing funding for certain delivery goals, while also having some technical support available through the IDT and DPLG. But the "idea of inter- and intra-sphere coordination" still needed translation into a clear set of practices for role players from all three spheres to commit to (Everatt, Dube & Ntsime, 2004:28).

Aliber et al (2006:51) also found that some gains were achieved, primarily in redirecting funds to the ISRDS nodes, "fast-tracking infrastructure investment and service delivery" and creating some temporary jobs, but this progress was considered to be relatively uneven amongst the different nodes. In addition, its failures were often a result of poor coordination – its primary goal. Aliber et al (Ibid) also point to a "failure to recognise the limitations of 'developmental local government'" in areas with poor development potential, as well as a lack of skills and "confusion about the roles of actors in the various spheres of government" as key weaknesses (Ibid).

The ISRDS therefore suffered from having no clear line of authority, except where it relied on already beleaguered local government structures to coordinate planning and budgeting processes. Not only did the DPLG fail to coordinate from the top down, but the odds were stacked against local government as an alternative driving force. From a network perspective, referred to earlier, there were no bargaining chips or incentives (financial or otherwise) that could be used to secure cooperation, nor did they enjoy any authority over the other spheres of government. As such, sector departments' behaviour degenerated into departmentalist behaviour, with each role player pursuing their own agenda.

3.4.2 | The role of local government in the ISRDS

The post-1994 vision for local government, specifically developmental local government, was first set out in the White Paper on Local Government (RSA, 1998). This document cast municipalities in a coordinating role, noting that many different agencies, both national and provincial, as well as parastatals, community groups and organisations and the private sector have the potential to contribute to local development. Without proper coordination, however, their collective efforts could come to nothing (Ibid, 24).

More specifically, local government authorities' Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) are considered an important tool for "developmentally-orientated" and coordinated planning by the local, provincial and national spheres of government (Mello & Maserumule, 2010:289). Although local government is seen as close to its constituents and therefore also more likely to identify

communities' needs correctly, the lack of capacity and resources in this sphere of government severely limits its ability to deliver services and drive development as intended (Pillay, 2009).

IDPs, for instance, are defined as five-year strategic plans, reviewed on an annual basis after consultation with communities and other stakeholders (Mello & Maserumule, 2010:289). They're expected to outline strategies for achieving all kinds of ambitious goals, from reducing poverty to improving service delivery, all while improving the efficiency, effectiveness and accountability of local government structures (Ibid, 290). By some estimates, however, almost 90% of municipalities in the country are unable to "develop credible IDPs" to begin with (Ibid, 284). How could they secure collaboration or buy-in for these plans if there is limited or no capacity to even develop them at local government level?

Even if the capacity to develop these plans did exist in all municipalities, Mello & Maserumule (2010) point to several obstacles in the way of effective coordination between the spheres of government. Local government's annual budget cycle begins on the 1st of July, while national and provincial government's cycles start on the 1st of April, for instance. While IDPs are developed for a 5-year timeframe, national and provincial government use the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF)'s 3-year rolling expenditure cycle. Both are significant signs of misalignment and complexity in budgeting cycles alone (Ibid, 291).

With sector-specific departments such as Water Affairs or Land Reform having greater capacity and greater budgetary resources, local government continued to be easily relegated to sidelines by planning authorities at provincial or national level (PSC, 2009:13). Sector departments are also loath to participate in IDP processes, often sending junior representatives with no mandate to contribute or make commitments to participate in the required coordination meetings. It is this lack of participation that creates even further misalignment between local and other spheres (Mello & Maserumule, 2010: 291-2).

Although the ISRDS (2000) sought to utilise IDPs as a means of coordinating the rural development agenda at a local level, the reality proved fraught with many obstacles. A report by the Public Service Commission on the practicalities of the ISRDS and its attempts at improving coordination in rural development traces the difficulties and challenges of coordination back to the Constitution, which created the framework for independent spheres of government.

Even though the Constitution also attempts to balance this out with calls for cooperative governance, an imbalance of power exists, with local government often drawing the short straw in collaborative efforts:

In the context of independent and equal spheres of government, the authority to drive and enforce alignment with common and focused rural development imperatives is absent...The prevailing assumption is that all sectors...would be willing to sub-ordinate themselves to priorities, objectives, and interests that transcend or even diminish current areas of control. Without a strategic framework, and a driver for it, integration and coordination remains a transactional exercise between different spheres and institutions of government and their predetermined plans and budgets. Local government and IDPs, in this context, lack the authority to act as an organising nexus. (PSC, 2009:15)

The PSC report (2009:79) therefore advocates for integrated policymaking at district level as an additional link to local planning processes. The Department of Local and Provincial Government's report on the ISRDS also outlined the important role of so-called nodal champions at district level, although in practice these individuals also had other responsibilities and could not focus solely on ensuring the success of the programme (DPLG, 2008:15, 20).

The ISRDS's vision of using existing projects and institutional arrangements to further the goals of rural development more or less collapsed in the face of capacity shortcomings at local government level and the lack of funding and authority invested in driving the programme's objectives, highlighting the need for investing in both budgetary allocations and institutional capacity for this kind of programme in the future.

A study of the ISRDS conducted by the Independent Development Trust (Everatt, 2004:6) found that 60% of government officials interviewed thought their municipalities lacked the capacity (defined as "technical expertise, administrative skills, project management skills and funding") to implement the programme. Ironically, Everatt (2004:7) points out, initiatives exist for the purpose of building this capacity, but their implementation was badly coordinated, so that most ISRDS nodes never enjoyed the benefits of such a programme.

Throughout the report it is clear that local government struggles "intervening in the planning and resource allocation processes" of both provincial and national spheres (Ibid, 8). It seems to be a continued struggle to get officials from other spheres to participate in IDP processes, to the extent that some local authorities don't even invite them to do so anymore (Ibid, 19-20). As far as political champions were concerned, only two thirds of respondents confirmed that national champions had visited the nodes they were meant to promote (Ibid, 26). Provincial champions' performances were also varied, but ultimately respondents noted positive results where both provincial and national champions became involved (Ibid, 27). The effective participation of political champions therefore seems to mitigate the deficiency in authority and capacity at local government level to some extent.

The lack of alignment in planning and budget cycles is also noted in this study, with local government officials saying that national budgets are often completed before IDPs, so that it's almost impossible to include IDPs in that process (Ibid, 10). When there is money available, it can come in disruptive and damaging forms, as evidenced by "dumping" of provincial budget allocations at the end of the year – funds are allocated to poorly planned projects that might not even be ready for implementation so that they're not forfeited in the next budgeting cycle (Ibid, 11).

IDPs are designed to produce a much more collaborative approach to the coordination of the planning and budgeting processes of the three spheres of government, along the lines of O'Toole and Montjoy (1984) and Peters' (1998) network perspective, outlined earlier in this chapter. Unfortunately, the necessary negotiation does not seem to occur on a level playing field. Even though local government is central to the development of IDPs, it seems to lack the capacity and clout to drive this coordination in practice.

3.5 | Summary

From the above overview of policy interventions and research findings relating to rural development, it is clear that the practical realities of rural areas have proven much more complicated than anticipated by policy makers in the first 15 years of democracy in South Africa. From identifying land reform beneficiaries to finding appropriate land for redistribution, to the support of small-scale farming and changes in the broader agricultural sector – each step adds its own unique challenges to the agenda. Without clear goals, policy priorities and lines of authority, it becomes very difficult for the relevant agencies to coordinate their activities effectively.

Finally, the role of local government has been identified as crucial, but not yet used effectively in practice, whether through the ISRDP or through regular Integrated Development Planning processes at this level. Past experience seems to suggest that some investment in resources and capacity would be needed in order to support coordination of rural development initiatives from this sphere of government. This would also have to be accompanied by a clear lead agency or, at the very least, rewards for participation or penalties for not participating in local planning processes. Clear communication around policy priorities, with coordination as one of these goals, is also essential – where there is confusion, role players tend to default to departmentalism.

Chapter 4: Research methodology

4.1 | Introduction

This chapter will outline the research methods employed in examining policy coordination in the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP). A full-scale study of the national Comprehensive Rural Development Programme and its implementation was neither feasible nor within the scope of this thesis. However, the qualitative approach, research design, data collection and analysis techniques described below were chosen with the aim of providing both an in-depth analysis of one particular case study, as well as relevant information that may apply to the institutional arrangements of the CRDP broadly, not just at Riemvasmaak in the Northern Cape.

4.2 | Research Approach

A qualitative research approach was chosen because of the flexibility it offered, allowing for the initial pursuit of broad, open research questions, which could later be refined during the data collection process (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:136; Cresswell, 2014:4). As is typical of this approach, the study would have to acknowledge and illustrate the complexity of a given situation, while simultaneously using inductive reasoning to build "from particular to general themes" (Cresswell, 2014:4).

This approach would ultimately lend itself to a detailed description of the CRDP's unique institutional arrangements and chosen coordination mechanisms, allowing room for the evaluation of these mechanisms and the way they function and interact in practice and acknowledging the experience of the role players tasked with implementing and using these mechanisms.

4.2.1 | Research Design

Initially, a comparative study of multiple CRDP sites within a specific province was considered. However, this was later deemed neither practical nor feasible given the funds and time available to the researcher. Instead, a single CRDP site was identified as appropriate for use in a case study. Leedy & Ormrod (2010:137) suggest that single cases with "unique or exceptional qualities" can still enhance understanding and "inform practice" in other, similar cases, even though one cannot assume that the findings at one implementation site will be universally applicable to all others.

The town of Riemvasmaak in the Northern Cape, located near the South African border with Namibia, was one of the first two CRDP pilot sites chosen by the new national Department of Rural Development and Land Reform. The community at Riemvasmaak is also the beneficiary of one of the

oldest successful restitution claims in the history of South Africa. The town has subsequently enjoyed a long history of government support and coordinated development efforts.

Although these features make Riemvasmaak quite a unique case, it also presents the opportunity to study CRDP implementation over a longer period of time. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the town's history has given it a political profile probably not common amongst other CRDP sites, while its status as a pilot project likely meant that it benefited from a carefully considered planning process. If political buy-in and planning processes are deemed to be insufficient at Riemvasmaak, in other words, it is probably fair to assume that other CRDP sites won't be doing better on those counts.

Note that the Northern Cape is the largest of South Africa's nine provinces, occupying 30,5% of the country's landmass, but housing the smallest proportion (2,2%) of its population (Stats SA, 2012). Roughly 25% of the province's citizens are estimated to live in the province's rural areas (Stats SA, 2003). Both the region's size and the dispersion of its population across the province therefore pose a considerable challenge for policy coordination.

Although it was not the main consideration at play, the principal language spoken in Riemvasmaak is Afrikaans, which is also the author's mother tongue. If the author were not fluent in Afrikaans, this would've been considered a substantial hurdle in the data collection process.

4.2.2 | Research instruments

The primary research instrument employed in this study is a series of qualitative, semi-structured interviews conducted with officials and stakeholders from the various spheres of government involved in implementing the CRDP, often with specific knowledge and experience of the projects at Riemvasmaak. The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured set of questions, with the intention of exploring the personal perspectives and opinions of the participants as they arose in conversation (Cresswell, 2014:190).

Observations were also recorded during a two-day site visit to Riemvasmaak, while several official documents were reviewed as part of an attempt to trace both the processes and progress of development in the town. This includes, but is not limited to the original CRDP policy framework, a development framework report drawn up by the DRDLR on Riemvasmaak, the CRDP strategy document for the Northern Cape, as well as the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) of the Kai !Garib Municipality.

4.2.3 | Research Participants

Officials at national, provincial and local government level, as well as community representatives (the local ward councillor and trustees of the Riemvasmaak Community Development Trust included) were selected as participants for both face-to-face and telephone interviews. Information gathered in informal conversations with residents was used to adapt and refine the initial set of semi-structured questions for formal interviews, and also proved helpful in verifying certain statements made by officials.

Participant name	Position	Affiliation
Official 1	Director	National Department of Rural Development and Land Reform
Official 2	Chief Director	Northern Cape regional office of the DRDLR
Official 3*	Senior official working in rural development*	Northern Cape Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
Official 4	Director: Planning and Development	Kai !Garib Municipality
Official 5	Ward Councillor	Kai !Garib Municipality
Official 6	Assistant to ward councillor	Kai !Garib Municipality
Official 7*	Senior official working in agriculture*	Northern Cape Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
Trustee 1	Trustee	Riemvasmaak Community Development Trust
Trustee 2	Trustee	Riemvasmaak Community Development Trust

* The participant requested not to be identified by name.

Although most participants consented to being quoted with their names and official positions included in this thesis, the decision was taken not to include all of this information in the text itself. Several participants had mentioned strained relationships between different stakeholders as an issue at Riemvasmaak. Considering that this dissertation will be made available online and quotes easily attributed to individuals directly identified in the text, therefore, their names have been excluded here. Job titles were included or amended to be less specific in the table above, depending on the specifications and requests of the participants.

The direct references in chapter 5 have been amended to show the affiliation of individuals without making them easily identifiable. Their affiliation in this sense remains important, however, as it illustrates whether they are making observations from the perspective of national, provincial or local government.

4.3 | Data collection and analysis

Interviews were conducted over a four week period, with a site visit for the purpose of observation and face-to-face interviews conducted in Riemvasmaak and Kakamas over two days. Official documentation related to the implementation of the CRDP nationally, and specifically at Riemvasmaak, was collected and studied over several weeks and months in preparation of the site visit.

Interviews were analysed by following Tesch's (1990, quoted in Creswell, 2014:198) approach to coding. This involved identifying relevant topics within particular interviews, allocating codes to each topic, and coding all interviews with the intention of finding recurring themes in all the interviews conducted. This proved to be a helpful tool in not only identifying shared opinions on the CRDP, but different perspectives on the same mechanisms, as experienced at local, provincial and national levels of government.

4.4 | Ethical Considerations

As the research involves human subjects, an application for ethics clearance was submitted to and approved by the Department of Political Studies in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Cape Town.

A sample information sheet and consent form are both attached here as appendices. These were presented to interview participants via email or in person and discussed prior to the interview. Participants were asked to stipulate how they prefer to be cited in this thesis, whether by name, position or in a way that will not allow them to be identified by co-workers and colleagues. The majority of subjects were happy to allow their names to be used. Permission to record said interviews was also granted by all participants before proceeding with a particular interview.

Informal conversations with five different residents of Riemvasmaak were used to inform certain questions to interview participants, and to provide context to projects, including the relationship between the two settlements at Riemvasmaak and competing perspectives about particular projects implemented in the communities. It was decided not to follow a formal interview and consent process after the individuals in question indicated that they were not specifically aware of the CRDP as a policy framework. Although their perspectives proved valuable in evaluating the outcomes of the CRDP, it was not deemed necessary to subject them to a full interview, as the object of study was ultimately the coordination mechanisms employed by the CRDP.

4.5 | Possible limitations

The most obvious limitation of the case study as research design is that one cannot assume the findings in a single case are generalisable to other cases – in this context, to other sites where the CRDP is being implemented. However, the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation's (2013b) report on the implementation of the CRDP allows for some comparison between apparent broad trends and the specifics at Riemvasmaak.

The report studies 18 different CRDP sites, the first two launched in each province, including Riemvasmaak itself. It's also based on more than 100 key informant interviews and over 50 focus groups involving as many as 500 CRDP beneficiaries in total. As such, it is a thorough study of the implementation of the CRDP across provinces at a time when the number of active sites was starting to grow rapidly.

Due to time constraints, the site visit component was limited to only two full days in the Riemvasmaak and Kakamas area. Observational data, although very useful in the context of the interviews conducted, offer only a single perspective at a particular time, and cannot address any developments over the long term.

The intended number of key informant interviews was between 5 and 10, with the potential for a focus group of beneficiaries included in that sample. It was decided, however, that the focus group itself may be of limited use if community members did not have direct knowledge of the coordination mechanisms of the CRDP. Although the total number of participants does fall within the intended range (7 officials, 2 trustees), it is still a relatively small sample. There is some danger in extrapolating from individual interviews, for example, by assuming the experience or opinion of a provincial official is representative of all officials at provincial level.

Despite the relatively small sample and the specific focus on officials tasked with rural development rather than other sectors, the chosen participants' positions and direct involvement in the implementation of the CRDP mean they have specialist knowledge of the programme in broad terms and at Riemvasmaak specifically. Participants also demonstrated a willingness to engage critically with the structures of the CRDP, suggesting that the risk of bias in favour of the programme, despite their close involvement, is low.

4.6 | Summary

As the policy review in Chapter 2 has shown, rural development has formed a part of South African policy goals since 1994. It was only as recently as 2009, however, that a national department had

specifically been tasked with this mandate, paired with the long running land reform agenda. Chapter 3's literature review illustrated some of the complications and failures of past rural development efforts, especially when it came to coordinating efforts between departments, and between different spheres of government.

The research methodology outlined in this chapter was chosen to form a critical assessment of the coordinating mechanisms in the new national department's flagship policy, the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme, with a specific focus on the case of Riemvasmaak in the Northern Cape. The aim is to examine the efficacy of the coordination mechanisms used by the CRDP, in view of previous policies that pursued similar objectives.

Chapter 5: Research findings

5.1 | Introduction

This chapter outlines the information gathered in the process of following the research methodology discussed in chapter 4. This includes a descriptive overview of the CRDP's policy design and background information on the history of rural development in Riemvasmaak in the Northern Cape. Most importantly, it provides a detailed overview of the themes emerging from the interviews conducted with key role players in the implementation of the CRDP at that particular site.

5.2 | Descriptive overview of the CRDP

5.2.1 | Establishing a new national department of rural development

Rural development emerged as a key policy priority at the African National Congress' 2007 policy conference in Polokwane. Discussion documents from this conference are critical of previous land reform policies, predicting that they are unlikely to achieve their target of redistributing 30% of viable agricultural land by 2014. Not only did the conference resolve to devise a better, more effective and efficient land reform policy, it also emphasised the importance of locating such a plan within a broader strategy for rural development (ANC, 2008).

After the general elections of 2009, a new national Department of Rural Development and Land Reform was established to spearhead this agenda, absorbing the former Department of Land Affairs (DLA). Although the DLA had functioned as an independent department, this move meant a split from its former partnership with the Department of Agriculture under the same ministry.

The DLA, tasked with the sizeable mission of redistributing 30% of the country's agricultural land by 2014, enjoyed an almost 80% increase in its budgetary allocation over this period, receiving R3,7 billion for its projects in 2006/2007 (DLA, 2007) and R6,6 billion in the year 2007/2008 (DLA, 2008), suggesting a renewed emphasis on the land reform agenda even before the DRDLR was established. Rural development, food security and land reform also formed part of the strategic priorities identified by Cabinet in its 2009-2014 Medium Term Strategic Framework (The Presidency, 2009a).

In the DLA's annual report of 2008, however, the department's Director General argued that even the increased budgetary allocation was insufficient, considering the enormity of the 30% redistribution goal and the cost of appropriating land for this purpose (DLA, 2008: 5). In his last annual report for the DLA and in a briefing to parliament in the same year, the DG also emphasised the need to ensure that redistribution is not the primary goal of land reform, but that the success of

these projects are judged on the appropriate selection of beneficiaries and the effective provision of post-settlement support (ibid and PMG, 2008).

Moving from the last reports of the DLA to the first produced by the new DRDLR, it's clear that the new department was given a more expanded mandate, although the new agenda seems to align with the DG's concerns around a more holistic approach to the land reform process. "Whilst the redistribution of 30% of white-owned agricultural land remains the core objective of the land reform programme," the report reads, "it has now been linked to a clear programme of support and capacity building that would ensure socio-economic development of all land reform beneficiaries (DRDLR, 2010:6)".

Previous DLA reports had referenced the need for coordination (DLA, 2007:9) or implied it, as in the Director General's comments above, but the new department emphasised coordination as central to its mandate and its approach to rural development.

The new Minister of Rural Development and Land reform, Mr Gugile Nkwinti, providing an overview of the new department's expanded mandate to parliament in 2009, noted that the DRDLR would still employ fewer staff members than its predecessor. He explained that the new department was not envisioned as a "standalone" entity taking on this new mission, but that it "had been charged with the mandate to initiate, facilitate and coordinate rural development amongst other departments in order to promote a more...coherent approach to rural development (PMG, 2009a)."

The Comprehensive Rural Development Programme was the DRDLR's flagship project for achieving these objectives, and was described as "being an effective response against poverty and food insecurity by maximising the use and management of natural resources **to create vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities"** (original emphasis, DRDLR, 2009a:9).

In short, the new DRDLR was tasked with a wide range of responsibilities, straddling agrarian transformation, rural development and land reform, with no additional resources allocated, and with the understanding that policy coordination would be essential to whatever strategy it chose to achieve its objectives (DRDLR, 2009a:13).

The importance of policy coordination in this new approach is also implied by the fact that the CRDP is both spatially located (i.e. focusing specifically on rural areas) and 'comprehensive' in its scope. Both of these aspects point to the crosscutting nature of the programme, in terms of its diverse target population and its diverse goals, which stretch across the agricultural, land reform and development sectors.

"Within the CRDP," one passage in the DRDLR's first annual report reads, "the department has played the role of catalyst, coordinator, initiator and facilitator. The focus in each site has been on ensuring coordination between sector departments and tiers of government. In most areas, this has enabled us to achieve our objectives without necessarily spending the funds originally allocated" (DRDLR, 2010: 7).

5.2.2 | Overview of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme

The Comprehensive Rural Development Programme Framework outlines the CRDP's three interrelated objectives and strategies:

– **Coordinated agrarian transformation,** changing the "power relations" between communities and land or other natural resources, and building and developing a vibrant agricultural sector, explicitly for the benefit of the community (DRDLR, 2009a:13).
– **Increased rural development,** which is thought to be at least partly driven by agrarian transformation, particularly when it comes to communities benefiting from the natural resources at their disposal. Beyond agriculture, however, the programme also aims to address infrastructure backlogs, expand access to services, provide leadership training and even promote social cohesion (Ibid, 14-15).
– **Improving on the implementation of land reform policies**. This includes faster redistribution, land tenure reform and settlement of restitution claims, modernising the systems used to administer these claims and expanded definitions of potential beneficiaries. Ideal beneficiaries may include a variety of groups, from black commercial farmers to landless households needing land for subsistence farming (Ibid, 16-20).

Across these objectives, the rural employment creation and skills training model would also aim to meet basic needs, foster entrepreneurial development and eventually establish or grow the rural industrial and financial sectors (Ibid, 21-22).

None of these objectives deviate strongly from past policies' intentions. In fact, the CRDP is very similar in its mission statement to the ISRDP. However, the framework does seek to distinguish the CRDP from its predecessors by pointing out that it will be driven by "proactive participatory community-based planning" rather than simply "interventionist" policy (Ibid, 3). As such, it aims to consult with local communities about the most appropriate interventions and to take the approach most suited to these communities. This is arguably still very similar to the ISRDP, which sought to consult with communities via the Integrated Development Plan process at local government level (The Presidency, 2000a).

The CRDP framework also notes the inherently crosscutting nature of the policy on the vertical plane, pointing out that rural development is listed as a concurrent function of national and provincial government, while local government will also have to be involved in governing the affairs of particular communities (DRDLR, 2009a: 6-7).

Following two pilot projects run at Giyani in Limpopo and Riemvasmaak in the Northern Cape, the CRDP Framework notes that horizontal, interdepartmental collaboration and sharing of resources, as well as coordination and project management duties, are essential to its success. It is also stated that CRDP projects must align with IDPs and other planning processes and strategies, planning must have its basis in community participation and coordination will primarily happen at provincial level, in consultation with local government structures (Ibid, 12-13).

Furthermore, the framework lists the various structures to be involved in the implementation of the CRDP, and their assigned roles, including:

- **political champions**, including the Minister of Rural Development and Land reform at national level, and provincial premiers and/or MEC's tasked with driving rural development at provincial levels
- **a council of stakeholders** in each target area, made up of community members from civil society organisations, ward committees, school governing bodies etc., as well as government representatives from national, provincial and local structures. The CoS is tasked with, among other things, identifying community needs, planning projects accordingly and monitoring progress.
- **technical committees**, implementing the decisions of the COS and fulfilling a project management role. These committees are made up of representatives from provincial sector departments, including agriculture and rural development as well as others, depending on the types of projects being implemented (e.g. if it is decided that there is sufficient need to establish a clinic at a particular site, the department of health will need to be included in this configuration).
- **operational groups / households / cooperatives** are also included in these structures, so that there's a direct link between beneficiaries and the technical committees meant to train them and serve their interests.

Once again, this is very similar to the proposed structures of the ISRDP, including nodal champions that provide political clout and momentum, and project teams, made up of both government representatives and community organisations (The Presidency, 2000a).

5.3 | Rural development in the Northern Cape

The Northern Cape is the largest of South Africa's nine provinces, occupying 30,5% of the country's land mass, but houses the smallest proportion of its population, at only 2,2% (Stats SA, 2012). Roughly 25% of the province's citizens are estimated to live in rural areas (Stats SA, 2003). The

region's size and the dispersed nature of its population potentially pose considerable challenges for policy coordination.

An estimated 63% of the province's total population lives in poverty, compared to the national poverty rate of 56,8% (Stats SA, 2014:31). Where access to basic services are concerned, 51% of Northern Cape households have access to flush toilets, 83% have access to electricity and 71,3% have access to piped water sources provided by government (Stats SA, 2012).

Roughly 18% of its households (55 150 households in total) are engaged in agriculture, contributing as much as 6% of the province's Gross Domestic Product – the highest proportion of any of South Africa's provinces. This suggests a relatively vibrant agricultural sector, despite the province's arid climate.

5.3.1 | Riemvasmaak: A brief history

The town of Riemvasmaak, located close to the South African border with Namibia, offers an interesting case study for land reform and rural development as national policy priorities. Not only was it selected as one of two pilot sites for the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme in 2009, but it is also the location of one of the earliest and most publicised land reform and restitution cases settled in the early 1990s.

Official records note that the inhabitants of Riemvasmaak had settled there by the 1870s, but oral history suggests they had already been living in the area for many decades, mostly likely even long before that (Smith & Bozalek, 1993:3). It is thought that conflict in areas further north, during the earlier parts of the 19th century, had led several Nama, Damara and Herero families to settle south of the Orange river, with Xhosa-speakers driven to the same area by conflict to the south (Ibid, Erasmus, 2003:8).

By all accounts, Riemvasmaak had developed into a vibrant, diverse community by the 20th century. Although the area was never officially designated as Native Trust Land, Smith & Bozalek (1993: 11) suggest that the region was effectively treated according to the principles of such a classification, with the community engaging in and managing farming and grazing activities by themselves.

As a former mission station, the majority of the community considered themselves Christian, and valued the good mission schools in the area. Despite the arid climate, sheep, goats and cattle were successfully kept in large flocks, while the fertile banks of the Orange river allowed for vegetable gardens and other crops to be grown (Erasmus, 2003:13).

By 1973, there were over 1500 people of Damara, Xhosa and mixed origins living together in the community. But Riemvasmaak had been designated a "black spot" under apartheid legislation – a term given to areas where black people were living outside of designated urban or homeland (Bantustan) areas (SPP, 1993).

Being identified for removal, however, also meant that community members were classified according to their racial heritage, in order to determine where they should be resettled. As such, the community was split into three different groups. Those classified as Xhosa were moved 900 km away to the Ciskei in what is now the Eastern Cape, while those of Damara heritage were moved 1 300 km to the Khorigas region in the north of Namibia. Those classified as "coloured" were resettled in the township areas of Northern Cape towns like Upington (SPP, 1993).

Besides the obvious trauma of such an extreme disruption and destruction of community life, Riemvasmakers faced many obstacles in their new homes. Local communities resisted accepting the newcomers, and resented the Riemvasmakers for putting additional strain on resources, while disease killed off their livestock (Erasmus, 2003: 25-26). Meanwhile, their former homeland became a testing site for the South African Defence Force (SADF), with a portion incorporated into the Augrabies National Park.

By the early 1990, the community decided to mobilise to reclaim their land, launching an effective campaign even before South Africa became a democracy, and with their community networks spread hundreds of kilometres apart. The Commission on Land Allocation ultimately found in their favour in February 1994, and the first families returned to the area in January 1995 (Ibid, 34).

The Riemvasmaak Community Development Trust was established to hold and manage the land on behalf of the community, including a portion of land that remains under the purview of the South African National Parks (Sanparks) authority. This trust has been a longstanding source of conflict within the community, including disagreement about the chosen trustees, funding priorities, project management, alleged mismanagement of finances and nepotism (Erasmus, 2003:38-41). The continued unhappiness eventually culminated in the criminal investigation and conviction of two trustees for embezzling roughly R650 000 from the trust (Timse, 2014).

Despite the fact that Riemvasmaak was one of the earliest examples of successful restitution in land reform, which brought with it the promise of development and resources for the area, the town was once again identified as an area in need of development support in 2009. As such, it became one of two pilot sites for the newly designed Comprehensive Rural Development Programme. The community of Riemvasmaak is therefore not only of significance as a result of its remarkable history,

but also because it has a long term perspective on rural development efforts over the first 20 years of democracy.

A proposed draft framework for Riemvasmaak, compiled by the DRDLR before the implementation of the CRDP, notes some progress in terms of the provision of basic services such as housing, water and electricity supplied to the residents. Despite the limited grazing capacity of the arid landscape, the community was already engaged in livestock farming on a subsistence level, as well as a table grape growing project of roughly 10 ha, maintained by the community trust (DRDLR, 2009b:20-22,33-34).

These improvements aside, however, the report estimates that as many as 75% of community members receive social grants (Ibid, 40). In fact, an earlier study suggested that just over 50% of households relied solely on state pensions as a source of income (Erasmus 2003: 40). The DRDLR report suggested that the area's tourism potential (DRDLR, 2009b:39-41), along with further communal agricultural activities (Ibid, 51) should be explored as potential sources of income.

In an overview of existing plans and projects for the area, the report outlines intentions to develop infrastructure, including access roads, rainwater collection and improved sanitation facilities in the area's existing Integrated Development Plan (IDP) (Ibid, 44-46). Sector department plans seem to be limited mostly to the expansion of agricultural activities, with the exception of the Department of Water Affairs, which was planning a water pipeline worth 13,5 million to the area at the time (Ibid, 47-48).

5.3.2 | Riemvasmaak: Observations and situational analysis

Riemvasmaak is made up of two, separate settlements, with the main settlement colloquially known as Sending ("Mission", after the Catholic mission station) and the second settlement, Vredesvallei, located about 16 or 17 kilometres away. Although the whole community was originally resettled at Sending, ethnic divisions and other disagreements seem to have led to the split, with Xhosa Riemvasmakers ultimately moving away and establishing the second settlement in the late 1990s (Erasmus, 2013:35-38).

Sending is located a full 60 km away from the nearest town, Kakamas, and accessible by a relatively good quality[2] dirt road, with the final 8 km stretch of road leading into and through the settlement now tarred. The site visit was conducted soon after heavy rains had fallen in the region, causing substantial damage to the road, with maintenance work still continuing several days later. An interview with the director of planning and development in the local municipality later revealed that,

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[2] The quality of the road is defined here as being accessible by vehicles without four wheel drive capabilities.

although the maintenance of the road was the responsibility of the Department of Public Works, municipal officials had to step in from time when the road is badly damaged, as they did on this occasion (Official 4, Kai !Garib Municipality).

Sending and Vredesvallei are connected by a dirt road, which had been rendered virtually impassable by regular vehicles by the same heavy rains referenced above. Driving from Sending to Vredesvallei therefore meant a nearly 2 hour detour via Kakamas and Augrabies, through the Blouputs farming area, although the route from Kakamas to Vredesvallei was a tar road, which made for relatively fast travelling speeds.

Both settlements are made up primarily of RDP houses and informal corrugated iron structures. Both settlements also boasted relatively new sports grounds and –facilities, including soccer fields. Although the sports facilities at Sending were access controlled, with a locked gate and signage indicating when the swimming pool would be open, the soccer field at Vredesvallei's gates had been left open, with livestock grazing on the small patch of grass growing on the pitch.

Both settlements also have a small municipal office with adjacent postal facilities, a computer centre and small library. Signage listing the contractual details of development projects was dotted throughout both settlements. In Sending, the most noticeable new development was a brand new clinic, although the nursing sister stationed there also has to service outlying areas, so the clinic is not open every day of the week (Officials 5 & 6, Kai !Garib Municipality).

In casual conversations with a handful of residents not employed by the municipality, nobody recognised the CRDP as a specific policy programme, although they were aware of IDP processes and the Community Works Programme (CWP). The CWP, an initiative of the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, employed about 70 people from the community at Sending to help out with odd jobs around town, whether by cleaning the community hall or assisting families during bereavement (Official 6, Kai !Garib Municipality). CWP workers were easy to spot moving around in the town, since they were typically dressed in bright orange overalls provided by the programme.

5.4 | Research findings

5.4.1 | Observations from the DPM&E (2013) report

A recent report produced by the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation on the implementation of the CRDP suggests that the programme has been fraught with a number of complications in practice. Most notably, respondents described the CRDP as a "top down national

initiative" (despite its focus on community-led development) with limited buy-in from other departments, insufficient support from supposed "political champions" at provincial and local level, as well as capacity problems within local municipalities (DPM&E, 2013b:35-36).

Despite its intentions, the CRDP was found to have achieved very little in terms of coordination, at least partly as a result of having a new national department with a perceived lack of authority at the helm, but also because of a lack of political will to drive the programme at provincial level, as originally intended (ibid, 8). A lack of coordination between the departments tasked with land reform and agriculture and the continued misalignment of budget cycles in different spheres of government were also noted – a continuation of dysfunctional coordinating relationships noted in previous policies such as the ISRDP and Integrated Development Plans generally (Mello & Maserumule, 2010:291).

At local government level, the programme was considered an "added burden" rather than a helpful intervention, so that CRDP-related duties were often neglected in practice (DPM&E, 2013b:35). Coordination between community structures and government was also flawed, with Councils of Stakeholders rarely functioning or even holding regular meetings. Moreover, government participation in these structures was haphazard, with junior staff often sent to attend instead of real decision-makers – again, a theme repeated from earlier ISRDP and IDP processes generally (ibid, 9 and Mello & Maserumule, 2010:291-2).

A lack of local consultation or even understanding seemed to be evident in a number of areas, with some fearing that the CRDP was merely implementing "blanket solutions", instead of adapting its use of technologies to reflect local preferences and conditions, particularly in terms of the agricultural interventions chosen (DPM&E, 2013b: 47-48). This approach, coupled with a lack of attention to post-implementation management or maintenance, resulted in a number of "white elephant" projects falling into disrepair (Ibid, 48).

The DPM&E's assessment of the progress at CRDP sites implies that the programme has ultimately repeated many of the mistakes of past coordination-focused programmes, or at least failed to overcome the dysfunctional dynamics of existing coordination structures. It also seems to have forsaken, at times, its own community-driven approach, opting instead for "blanket solutions" and deliverables that soon turn into so-called white elephants.

Although the interviews conducted for this thesis provided some corroboration of these broader trends, it also showed that all of these problems were not necessarily universally applicable across CRDP sites.

5.4.2 | The new national DRDLR: Budgeting and planning processes

Official 1, (DRDLR)[3], said the new department's role was to set targets (with input from both provincial and local role players), manage budgetary allocations and to oversee performance targeting, monitoring and evaluation. At the same time, however, the department partnered with and provided support for provincial sector departments and local governments in meeting these targets. This support could take many forms, including funding, providing additional staff, or hiring technical advisors to assist.

Funds were allocated in an ad hoc manner, with provincial departments charged with conceptualising, planning and "packaging" particular projects that couldn't be addressed within existing budgets. These packaged proposals were then presented to a technical committee within the DRDLR and approved by a Deputy Director General of the same department (Official 1, DRDLR).

Official 3 (Northern Cape DoA: Rural Development)[4] confirmed that technical assistance from national departments had been forthcoming, but was careful to characterise the direct funding of CRDP projects as more of a "stop gap" measure:

> As I indicated...there is this IDP process, which we take and turn into an implementation plan...we take all these particular projects...all those that have budgets, we then consolidate them into what we call the implementation plan, and from there on we monitor the particular process...
>
> ...in terms of resources, in terms of coordination we don't need that much...but in some instances, when we go to communities, they might want to say that we need a water drain there and then, and then we do it from our own budget, but it doesn't necessarily impact or effect existing processes.

Official 5 (Kai !Garib Municipality)[5], said he believed that the CRDP had managed to raise the profile of rural development priorities during budgeting processes at all levels of government, making it easier to coordinate project spending and speeding up implementation.

Although Official 1 (DRDLR) admitted that budgeting cycles across the three spheres often proved difficult to coordinate, good relationships between provincial and local officials usually helped smooth over some of these issues. One way to build and maintain these relationships, she observed, was not to send lower level staff to meetings where decisions are being made, an unfortunate trend

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[3] Telephone interview, 29 January 2016
[4] Telephone interview, 22 January 2016. Note that the official in question is part of the rural development directorate within the Northern Cape Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.
[5] Telephone interview, 20 January 2016 and at Riemvasmaak, 26 January 2016.

observed in the DPM&E (2013b: 36) report with both CRDP and IDP-related gatherings (Mello & Maserumule, 2010: 291-2), since that could easily lead to "miscommunication":

> You need to send competent managers to [meetings involving officials from the various spheres of government, such as IDP forums] and get proper feedback, proper reports. One thing that I found also is that there's poor governance in relation to those structures as well…You know there's no proper minutes of meetings and decisions taken, or you have to wait 2 or 3 weeks [for a report to be produced], especially if you send low level staff to one of those meetings, and then you wait for the next level manager to make a decision on what came out of the meeting, then it also strains relations at that level.

As far as the DRDLR's status as a new national department is concerned, participants did not consider this to be something that had hampered coordination. Official 1 (DRDLR) pointed out that the department's Director-General had co-chaired an implementation forum for the Medium Term Strategic Framework's Outcome 4 (Economic Development), so that the DRDLR was well placed to promote rural development priorities at the national level.

Official 3 (Northern Cape DoA: Rural Development) also referenced the outcomes-based planning approach as a way of securing cooperation from other departments, with programmes of action providing a similarly crosscutting planning mechanism. In this case, the relevant objectives are "Outcome 7: Vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities and food security for all" (The Presidency, 2010), and "Programme 3: "Develop and implement a comprehensive rural development strategy linked to land and agrarian reform and food security" (The Presidency, 2009b):

> We report on, they call it outcome 7…we present the activities of various departments based on the [Medium Term Strategic Framework] MTSF integrated programme that we developed in the province, then also formulated within a programme of action. So there will also be a cabinet lekgotla where we will be expected to provide a report on progress in the CRDP that will be encapsulated within the outcome 7 report that we represent to cabinet and its clusters. Because we usually meet as departments…we then consult on various activities, consolidate the report, we send it to the premier and send it to national.

This kind of objective-based reporting is fed upwards to the MinMEC and MinTech forums, where coordination issues at lower levels would quickly become apparent, and could be addressed from the top down. These forums meet once a quarter, or even as regularly as once every two months if there are urgent issues to address (Official 1, DRDLR). Both Officials 1 (DRDLR) and 3 (Northern Cape DoA: Rural Development) mentioned these forums as channels for escalating problems, whether to secure political buy-in or to ensure coordination between sectors or departments.

Officials 1 and 3 also pointed out that several public servants who had previously worked on the ISRDP under the former Department of Provincial and Local Government had been redeployed to work in rural development. Official 2[6] (DRDLR: Northern Cape Office) even characterised the differences between the ISRDP and the CRDP as largely political, since the ISRDP had been a product of the "Thabo Mbeki era". As discussed earlier, the ANC's renewed emphasis on rural development as a policy priority and the foundation for the new national DRDLR and its flagship policy, the CRDP, have their origins in the party's 2007 policy conference at Polokwane (ANC, 2008:27-31).

Since current president Jacob Zuma replaced Mbeki in a fierce leadership battle at the same conference, it makes sense that it was not politically feasible to continue with a policy that was clearly associated with Mbeki's leadership.

Although the national DRDLR was relatively newly established when it started implementing the CRDP, in other words, it's fair to say that it did not have to justify its mandate from scratch. The department could use existing staff to pursue the same set of priorities, but with renewed political support, so that it enjoyed more influence than most new departments might have.

Despite the positive feedback above, Official 2 (DRDLR: Northern Cape Office) did point to some dysfunction inherent in the new configuration. Pressure to meet its own targets, he said, sometimes created tension between the national departments and provincial sector department. Since the DRDLR is expected to redistribute a certain amount of land, for instance, it may do so without the provincial department of agriculture's approval, despite the fact that the latter will be expected to provide extension services and support farming activities on that land (Official 7, Northern Cape DoA: Agriculture[7]). This tension also makes it tempting for the DRDLR to skip coordination entirely and start dabbling in agricultural services itself, despite the fact that it does not have the necessary expertise at its disposal (Official 2, DRDLR: Northern Cape Office).

Official 7 (Northern Cape DoA: Agriculture) agreed that the line between rural development and agriculture had become blurred at times. He mentioned a vegetable garden planned and implemented by a DRDLR contractor under the CRDP at Riemvasmaak, without any involvement from the provincial department of agriculture, despite the fact that maintaining such a project was not the DRDLR's "strong point".

Although the political support and funding enjoyed by the new department meant it had the option to implement its own projects even without buy-in from other role players, the DRDLR runs a real risk of encroaching on other departments' mandates in doing this, duplicating existing programmes

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[6] Telephone interview conducted on 26 January 2016.
[7] Telephone interview conducted on 10 February 2016.

and overspending in the process. In fact, the estimated cost of rolling out the CRDP to the intended 2920 municipal wards is roughly R61 billion[8], almost ten times the DRDLR's initial annual budget allocation (DPM&E, 2013b: 61).

Official 1 (DRLDR) said her department had to strengthen its own coordination role and look at ways of rolling out the CRDP in a more cost effective way, to "look at cheaper ways of doing things without compromising services in those areas". She said the department was in the process of developing a set of norms and standards that would set out the criteria for selecting, evaluating and prioritising projects more clearly:

> …you need to curb. I think the norms and standards will go a long way, even to silence politicians at that level, who will say *ja* but my town doesn't have this, my town doesn't have that… Then you can tell them stats to say it doesn't make sense, financially, on the fiscus, to have this here. The post office and the library are some of the examples where it's actually a waste of money in some cases, because you just get one or two users that go to them, and most of them are online these days…why do you invest in them? Rather invest in increasing the bandwidth in those areas for cell phones or Smartphone technology, laptops or iPads.

Even where the DRDLR didn't step in, however, the combination of ambitious target-setting and mismatched budget cycles tended to create unexpected tensions. Official 3 (Northern Cape DoA: Rural Development) said his department was under pressure to continuously increase the number of active CRDP sites every year, while the provincial department wanted to ensure progress at specific sites before adding more to the roster:

> You know it takes long to get development, because [it] depends on other stakeholders to budget and to implement some of the projects. So we cannot get these results within a period of 1 year. So what we are saying is that we should be allowed to have a site for 5 years…you cannot just name targets for the purposes of achieving performance outcomes.

5.4.3 | Provincial government: Driving implementation

The previous section outlined the role of the DRDLR, driving a rural development agenda at the national level and providing support for provincial and local government. Most of the practical implementation of the programme, however, fell to the provincial government. Official 3 (Northern Cape DoA: Rural Development) outlined provincial responsibilities as follows:

> [After] a site is chosen, we do a status quo report, whereafter we communicate with the municipality where the site is chosen. We then take the IDP of that municipality and develop what we call the

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[8] Based on an average spend of R3261 per capita at the existing 18 sites at the time (DPM&E, 2013b:61)

CRDP implementation plan, and thereafter we convene a forum called the CRDP technical forum, we then convene all the relevant stakeholders, we then present a particular implementation plan. Because the implementation plan as it is, is determined by the IDP, will then indicate which department is going to contribute with what, on what particular project. And what we then do as coordinating role, we monitor, coordinate and report on activities.

Note that the implementation plan draws from the municipal Integrated Development Plan or IDP (more on this process later). Official 3 made it clear that, even though his department had to take a very key, overarching coordinating role, local government had to be a part of these processes – no development could take place without their involvement, since they were closest to the communities being served.

Outside the DRDLR, the provincial department was the only stakeholder that not only had a specific rural development mandate, but allocated human resources specifically to the implementation of the CRDP:

We have two colleagues, the one is dealing with development planning, that's the person who does coordination of the planning of projects for engagement, then we have another colleague who establishes the structures. The structures, like the council of stakeholders, that is another thing because we didn't want to burden one individual to deal with the policy as well as the practical implementation of the projects. So we have one dealing with it from the policy perspective, and another one from the implementation part of it. (Official 3, Northern Cape DoA: Rural Development)

Even with this dedicated capacity, however, at times it was difficult get all the relevant stakeholders to commit to even meeting, especially when it came to the technical forum convened at provincial level (Official 3). He said this created anxiety within communities, since they had identified projects through the Council of Stakeholders, which were then presented to the technical forum. This raises expectations around the technical committee's ability to deliver these projects.

It was especially difficult to secure commitments from national bodies without provincial representation, such as the Development Bank of South Africa or NERSA (the national energy regulator), he said. This was a recurring problem that he was bringing to the attention of the DRDLR, which he hoped would implement a kind of stakeholder relations strategy that could secure better cooperation from these role players (Official 3, Northern Cape DoA: Rural Development).

5.4.4 | Local government: Frustration at the coalface of development

Officials at local government level seemed to have a very different perspective on coordination and what constitutes adequate consultation and input from municipalities. As such, Official 4[9] (Kai !Garib Municipality) felt the CRDP had "a slight intergovernmental relations problem" in the sense that local municipalities were not always included in the design and planning phases of projects, or even in the choice of projects at provincial and national level. Although municipal IDPs were used a basis for planning, this did not automatically translate into municipal involvement in decision-making.

There were issues with interdepartmental relations as well, and generally the communication and reporting processes were not sufficient (Official 4, Kai !Garib Municipality). Official 2 (DRDLR: Northern Cape Office) noted that there was always a kind "subtle tension" between municipalities and provincial sector departments when it came to joint planning or coordinating implementation. Different role players and departments wanted to be seen delivering projects, he noted, so they might not be delivering what was needed, or coordinating their efforts with others. Official 4 (Kai !Garib Municipality) said local government had to help prioritise and plan appropriately:

> When we need to decide what to do, the municipality must be a part of that, because we are…we're on the ground, we hear directly from the people. Otherwise it's the white elephant plan – you plan the wrong project in the wrong place, then it should have been here and not over there, but it also shouldn't have been that thing in the first place.

Ideally, he added, the CRDP should have a project manager based at Riemvasmaak, operating from the municipality, who could coordinate and report on different projects and activities.

> The problem is with the management of the thing, it's too loose. There isn't control, or sufficient control. In other words, there isn't enough reporting happening. So if there were someone driving or coordinating on the ground, it would be better. You can't manage a project [at Riemvasmaak] from Kimberley.

Official 2 (DRDLR: Northern Cape Office) even questioned why rural development was conceptualised as a national competency, and said he might have suggested that rural development directorates are created at municipal level instead, with sufficient oversight to ensure that the money allocated for rural development is not spent elsewhere. That would help eliminate projects that "[don't talk] to one another". When asked why he thought local government was not given the opportunity to drive the CRDP agenda in the programme's current format, he said that municipalities are often thought of as "not necessarily [being] well staffed", or suspected of

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[9] Interviewed in Kakamas, 26 January 2016.

misappropriating the funds allocated to them – in short, they were not being trusted with such a role.

Part of the reason why this caused frustration with municipalities was because the maintenance of many of these new assets in the community was left up to them[10]. The planning process for the sports grounds built at Vredesvallei, for instance, had not considered maintenance at all. "We asked someone to go look after it," Official 4 (Kai !Garib Municipality) said, "But there's no groundskeeper because there are no tools or equipment – you need [specialised equipment] to irrigate a field like that." Official 2 (DRDLR: Northern Cape Office) agreed that this was a problem, and said projects were not being conceptualised properly. "If your conceptualisation was correct," he said, "you will take care of it, you will ask yourself your question, who is going to take care of that?"

The computer centres at Sending and Vredesvallei seemed to be further examples of such coordination failure. The latter was not functioning at the time of the site visit because the centre did not have electricity. The centre at Sending had also had issues with its internet service provider, so that neither could be used for their intended purpose. Official 5 (Kai !Garib Municipality) said he was looking for alternative service providers that were based nearby, since the original one was in Cape Town, which made it difficult to fix the problems they encountered quickly.

Official 1 (DRDLR) said she was aware of the fact that municipalities regard this kind of expenditure as "unfunded mandates", and that Memorandums of Understanding or Intergovernmental Relations protocols attached to projects would probably help resolve some of this tension. She said that this had worked well at other projects, including one in Beaufort-West in the Western Cape:

> You can't just say we're building something here but it's going to be handed over…what is your role and what is my role going forward? Then you need to agree before the ground is dug up for any kind of work, you need to agree on who is doing what once the structure is up and running.

Besides preventing this kind of oversight during planning, Official 4 (Kai !Garib Municipality) also suggested that involving local government could help departments prioritise better, as opposed to just picking projects they'd prefer from the Integrated Development Plan. He pointed to the impracticality of including a swimming pool in the sports facilities at Sending, for instance, when the town had to have its water pumped in from almost 40 kilometres away and the already arid farming region was suffering from widespread drought. Instead, he said, the money could've been used for

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[10] Although these projects may feature in the municipality's IDP, Official 4 (Kai !Garib Municipality) pointed out that municipalities "can never fund [the entire] IDP". Since they rely on sector departments to fund certain projects, the assumption seems to be that maintenance costs are included in those departments' budgets, or the lack of budgeting for maintenance costs at IDP level could also be a result of poor communication around the selection of projects at provincial level.

proper sanitation, land development in preparation for additional RDP houses or by extending the tar road into the town by a couple of kilometres – all projects that would've been highly valued by the community.

Despite these problems, Official 3 (Northern Cape DoA: Rural Development) had acknowledged the importance of municipalities as the "nearest representatives of their communities", as mentioned earlier. Official 5 (Kai !Garib Municipality) also felt that local government and the community at Riemvasmaak had been informed about projects and involved in the planning processes, at the very least through the use of the IDP already drawn up by them. It is possible, in other words, that local government had not deliberately been excluded, but the questionable prioritisation of certain projects seems to indicate that they had not been given the opportunity to apply their local knowledge and experience in more holistic, integrated planning processes.

Even if the above problems were addressed, however, the CRDP still put municipalities in an awkward position with their own development planning processes. "[It] creates a type of inequality within the municipality," Official 4 (Kai !Garib Municipality) said, "Since some areas are being privileged, while others are not."

5.4.5 | The role of political champions

When asked about the role of political champions, participants indicated that politicians could contribute greatly to the implementation of the CRDP, but their involvement also generated some negative side effects.

Official 5 (Kai !Garib Municipality) shrugged off the question when asked how often political champions had visited Riemvasmaak, saying it was not necessarily important for politicians to be involved:

> …Even if the president never comes to Riemvasmaak, it's local government that's responsible for holding IDP meetings, community meetings, that has to provide feedback at council meetings where resolutions are made. That's the process.

On the whole, Official 5 (Kai !Garib Municipality) felt that "the lines of communication are open" for him as ward councillor, and any other councillor, if they're willing to take things up with the right people:

> …we have an open door relationship with officials at local government, at district level or provincial level. The link of communication goes through that channel, and the channel forwards it and forwards

it. I have direct contact with the executive mayor of the district, I have direct contact with the premier of the province…from my side, I can contact anyone…with the premier or the MEC.

Official 2 (DRDLR: Northern Cape Office) said that political champions like MECs and mayors could help ease some of the tensions between officials by securing "compliance" from all government departments. The risk still exists, he added, that these role players could use their influence just to promote projects that made them look good – it depends on that particular politician's worldview.

It is possible that Riemvasmaak's history had given it a political profile not likely to be matched at other CRDP sites. According to Official 3 (Northern Cape DoA: Rural Development), the fact that this had been the first site in the Northern Cape meant that both the premier and the MEC were involved in workshops around the original implementation plan. In fact, he said that both the MEC and the national minister had become involved in conflict resolution within the community after disagreements arose over certain "community projects", although he clarified that this had not been related to CRDP projects specifically.

It has also been reported that both the Minister and Director-General of the DRDLR had visited the community during the disputes and legal action taken against trustees of the town's Community Development Trust (Timse, 2014). The disagreements are discussed in more detail below, but serve to illustrate that political champions have been quite actively involved at Riemvasmaak at various junctures of planning and implementation. It seems unlikely that these officials would ultimately be willing or able to offer this kind of hands on support at hundreds of CRDP sites.

5.4.6 | The Council of Stakeholders (CoS)

At the time these interviews were conducted, the Council of Stakeholders at Riemvasmaak had not met for about 6 months (Officials 4&5, Kai !Garib Municipality). According to Official 5, this had not always been the case:

> [Initially], the momentum was good, good, good, but lately it's been moving slower and slower, until now we can see that there is a gap. It's a problem, but the gap doesn't mean that we don't have contact with each other, but it is important for role players to sit around the same table to discuss things. Everything over the phone isn't always as comfortable as when everyone is looking each other in the eyes, so there is a gap [where the meetings were].

Official 4 (Kai !Garib Municipality) felt that good project management practice required monthly meetings, but this was unlikely to happen in the current setup. Before CoS meetings, he said, officials would often have to send out staff to check on the progress of certain projects first, so that a report could be compiled, and then various reports would be presented at the meeting and

compiled into one before being presented to the community. This creates the impression that those reporting at the meetings did not necessarily have up-to-date, first-hand knowledge of what was happening on the ground, which also limited how useful the forum could be.

Official 2 (DRDLR: Northern Cape Office) remarked that it seemed as if Riemvasmaak was being run through the provincial technical committee rather than the CoS, but that if the CoS was operating properly, the CRDP intended for things to be the other way around. At the time of the site visit, Official 3 (Northern Cape DoA: Rural Development) also happened to be involved in a workshop with trustees of the Riemvasmaak Community Development Trust to discuss the functioning of the CoS and community representation in this forum, suggesting that they were hoping to improve the way the council functions going forward.

Although most officials interviewed did not consider lack of attendance from any particular stakeholder to be an issue, as it had been flagged in the DPM&E (2013b) report, the CoS was not functioning as intended. It is also not clear what value the CoS added in terms of community representation, considering that the ward councillor was already running IDP meetings on a regular (almost monthly) basis, according to Officials 5 & 6 (Kai !Garib Municipality). Official 6 said community members also attended these meetings regularly, because they knew "if they don't attend, the council won't know what their needs are…[this way] we reach outcomes faster."

Official 5 (Kai !Garib Municipality) also pointed out that local IDP representative forums included the district municipality, provincial departments, representatives of the MEC's office and sometimes even national departments, if they needed to report on specific projects in the area. In other words, both community participation processes and reporting structures for coordinated development already existed outside of the CoS.

Official 1 (DRDLR) said she thought it was time to re-evaluate the role of Councils of Stakeholders in the CRDP:

> We shouldn't be setting up alternative structures to what already exists in the province, especially if it's working well, even though it may not be in our control[11]. So for instance I'm referring to IDP structures, where we, in fact, are supposed to plan with local government through their structures, in order to get coordination and the timing right as well. So I would think then we need to strengthen those structures and build cordial relations within those structures.

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[11] Although the CoS is arguably not under the 'control' of the DRDLR either, the department may enjoy more influence in a forum that is explicitly focused on the CRDP and the rural development agenda, compared to broader development planning.

Even if these systems were not working properly, she added, it was important to figure out what was going wrong before setting up new structures. She said she was aware that most IDP processes did not involve sufficient community participation, but that the precise issues needed to be identified:

> You need to know why you are doing this, what are the problems here, so you don't go and put structures upon structures, and then those people don't know what they're doing, and why they're doing it… If it's strong enough and it's working in that area, leave it alone, there's no reason to interfere, we need to work with them, align with them and integrate.

Official 1 (DRDLR) also noted that the CoS, tasked with identifying the needs of communities at CRDP sites, planning and monitoring progress, has no legal status of its own, while IDP forums and even Communal Property Associates or trusts like the one at Riemvasmaak are legislated bodies. CPAs and trusts often already had relationships with local municipalities, so that the CoS was just another, parallel structure on top of that.

She recounted other types of problems experienced with Councils of Stakeholders across the country. In certain areas of the Western Cape, for instance, conflict between supporters from different political parties made it difficult for the CoS to function. There were also incidents of "elite capture", where an influential person such as a chief or business leader may attempt to use the CoS to steer government funding towards projects they themselves would benefit from. Setting up the wrong kind of structures in the wrong way, in other words, could play into local conflicts rather than resolve them.

Trustee 2[12] said that the CoS needed to keep everyone informed, and that this would reduce conflict in the community. In fact, the CoS could play a key role in bringing together the trust and municipal officials, who were both there to represent the community's interests. While the municipality took responsibility for service delivery in Riemvasmaak itself, the trust was ultimately responsible for the development of the surrounding land, which it owned (Official 5, Kai !Garib Municipality).

Official 5 said the trust and local authorities worked well together and they would help each other when possible. For example, the cemetery at Sending had recently been expanded using leftover wire from a fencing project on the trust's land. During the interview with Trustee 2, however, he said one thing that shouldn't happen, is that leaders from local government and the trustees "shouldn't criticise one another in public", suggesting that there had been some tension between the two bodies after all.

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[12] Interview conducted in Kakamas, 26 January 2016.

In a way, then, it seems as if the CoS not only duplicated existing structures, but provided a new platform for competing interests to play out, which in turn made it difficult for the CoS to fill its intended role as coordinating mechanism.

5.4.7 | Tensions within the community

There are a number of complications evident at community level that cause conflict and adds a level of complexity to project planning and implementation in forums like the Council of Stakeholders. As mentioned earlier, Riemvasmaak is made of two separate settlements, at Sending and Vredesvallei.

Trustee 1[13] explained that Riemvasmaak was really made up of two separate communities, and that those who were supporting the community can't duplicate all projects at both settlements, which created tensions that spilled over to the trust and to government departments involved in these projects. Official 2 (DRDLR: Northern Cape Office) also said there was a "thick line of division" evident in the community. "Even today when you go to a meeting there," he said. "If the meeting is at Sending, the people from the other area will say to you no, they cannot come."

Official 4 (Kai !Garib Municipality) described the community as "divided" and "prone for conflict". One of the flagship projects of CRDP coordination and collaboration, the brand new clinic at Sending, has been a source of great unhappiness in Vredesvallei, for instance. Although there were plans to upgrade the mobile clinic services at Vredesvallei (Official 6, Kai !Garib Municipality), they currently had to make do with receiving health services in an old shipping container.

Both Officials 1 (DRDLR) and 2 (DRDLR: Northern Cape Office) said that poor communication could be a part of the problem. If government and community leaders did not communicate clearly about what was being done, why and how, this easily led to "restlessness" and conflict. Official 2 also felt that the trust had poor track record when it came to doing this, fuelling suspicion of mismanagement. Trustee 2, however, said it seemed like the trust "never wins", no matter what it chooses to do – there were lots of competing opinions about how the trust should manage its assets and income.

Still, Official 5 (Kai !Garib Municipality) felt that the distance between the two settlements should not be a factor, and said it was his responsibility to hold quarterly meetings at Vredesvallei (he is based at Sending). In the meantime, residents were welcome to lodge complaints or report problems at the municipal office there, which he aimed to resolve on a biweekly basis. Although he admitted that there were sometimes "interpersonal issues", he said the community knew that they would lose out if they didn't stand together. "You'll never get everyone to agree 100%, but in any

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[13] Interview conducted in Kakamas, 26 January 2016.

case, the government's approach is that we keep going," he said. "You can't stand still because of 3, 4 or 5 people, and then development stands still [at the same time]."

Official 4 (Kai !Garib Municipality) felt that these conflicts simply reflected the lack of opportunities and dire circumstances in the town. "Poor people and unemployed people remain unhappy people, stay angry people, and they remain injured," he said. "They remain aggressive."

Official 3 (Northern Cape DoA: Rural Development) said that instability meant departments were becoming wary of investing in projects because they were afraid the structures might be vandalised. He said the same staff member who dealt with establishing the Council of Stakeholders and similar structures for the functioning of the CRDP was tasked with addressing social cohesion and development in the area:

> …our analysis is, if you keep them busy you know, with the projects and engagement, then there will not be those tensions emerging in the community. So what we are trying to do is to make sure that we engage with the community much more aggressively in ensuring that everyone benefits, and is happy around the processes.

5.4.8 | Physical infrastructure vs. Development projects

During the interview process, most participants with direct knowledge of developments at Riemvasmaak repeatedly referenced physical infrastructure – the clinic building, the new prefabricated buildings that will hold the new police station, the section of road that had been tarred into Sending, the flush toilet system at Vredesvallei, the pipeline providing water from Khamkirri on the Orange river to Sending when residents had previously had to rely on boreholes.

While the CRDP did aim to address infrastructure backlogs and expand access to services, Officials 2 (DRDLR: Northern Cape Office) and 4 (Kai !Garib Municipality) pointed out that this was only a part of the programme's intended impact:

> The service delivery component is fine, but the poverty issue hasn't been addressed…employment hasn't been addressed, which means per capita income remains the same, zero base or whatever, and the household incomes remain low. (Official 4, Kai !Garib Municipality)

With a small, poor community like that, he pointed out, there is no point in trying to establish large businesses where there is no market for them. "In a community like this, there's nothing else, it has to be agriculture," he added. Community members had been divided up into cooperatives, with sectoral focuses like tourism, mining and agriculture, but Official 5 (Kai !Garib Municipality) said everyone within a cooperative didn't always work together to get the help available to them. Riemvasmaak had also received kraal facilities for livestock farmers, who could use them when they

had to bring animals in from the veld to be branded or dipped, but these had fallen into disrepair (Official 6, Kai !Garib Municipality).

Official 4 (Kai !Garib Municipality) felt that the issue with these projects was an operational one. The community at Vredesvallei have had a small vineyard right next door since the late 1990s, on the banks of the river running by the settlement, but during the site visit the vines were bare in comparison to other vineyards in the area, where grapes had clearly been harvested for the production of raisins:

> Now it looks like people weren't trained properly, that they don't have this farming thing in their hearts. Someone might want to go into business, might want the land, but he can't work the land – that's another thing. Can you manage and use the land efficiently? That's the problem you see there. And that thing's main goal was to generate income, economic empowerment for the people there. And that's the gap, it didn't happen. (Official 4, Kai !Garib Municipality)

Official 7 (Northern Cape DoA: Agriculture) said he wouldn't necessarily say that the community didn't take ownership of the project, but those who were looking after the vineyard wanted to earn salaries doing so. "When it came to harvest time," he added, "anybody could cut the fence and take a few bags full and disappear. They never really managed to generate much income from it." Without some form of income being generated, community interest in the project dwindled. The department ultimately stopped investing in it when the high electricity costs associated with the project's water pumps became prohibitive.

Official 2 (DRDLR: Northern Cape Office) agreed that the agricultural component was "the only thing that is bothering [government] at Riemvasmaak…there is nobody sustaining it, it is like we have all moved out. Probably if we could sustain the momentum we would've gone a little bit [further]."

Official 7 (Northern Cape DoA: Agriculture) pointed out that projects targeting existing farmers, such as the 46 000 ha land allocation handed over to livestock farmers at Riemvasmaak, worked well and needed little input from the department after an initial investment in infrastructure on the farms. However, he said, projects involving groups of people rarely worked, because self-interest usually took over.

As an example, he mentioned another, recent project also aimed at growing table grapes near Vredesvallei. Intended to benefit a newly established community cooperative, the project had failed to get off the ground after the beneficiaries had insisted to be made owners and "not just labourers". The provincial department had initially planned to appoint a contractor to run the project, with a handover or exit strategy planned after training the beneficiaries over time, but the

land would ultimately still belong to the trust, which left the beneficiaries unhappy. His department decided that it was too risky to invest millions of Rands in a project that may soon be abandoned anyway, and nothing more ever came of it. It was not that these projects were not being considered or budgeted for, in other words, but they clearly ran into difficulties when it came to negotiating terms with the community and specific beneficiaries.

In attempt to start their own businesses and create jobs outside of agriculture, some of the younger community members had clubbed together and applied for government tenders as contractors or subcontractors, usually related to the construction work like building road infrastructure or constructing government buildings. They were not considered to have enough experience, however, or high enough ratings to qualify for these contracts, so that the jobs available to Riemvasmakers were mostly low level, as labourers (Official 4, Kai !Garib Municipality).

In short, the benefits of the CRDP and other development programmes at Riemvasmaak were limited to improved service delivery and physical infrastructure, while real long-term improvements in economic opportunities for Riemvasmakers were still missing.

The findings of the DPM&E (2013: 45-47) report seemed to indicate similar issues arising at other CRDP sites. Concerns around the types of jobs being created were the same in all of the sites studied, from the short-term nature of employment to the low wages. It was also not clear that beneficiaries were developing skills that would make them more easily employable in the future.

Some interventions, such as community food gardens, seemed effective in producing positive results, specifically improving household food security. Broad-based agrarian reform and expanded land reform both seem out of reach of this particular programme, with agricultural interventions mostly focusing on subsistence producers (ibid, 46-47).

5.5 | Summary

This chapter provided a thorough overview of the CRDP and its intentions, its implementation track record so far, and specifically the way it had been implemented in Riemvasmaak, in the Northern Cape. Participants seemed confident that, even though the national department was newly established, rural development was enjoying substantial political support as a policy priority. Joint planning and reporting processes also seemed to provide the department with opportunities to make its voice heard and to secure cooperation from other stakeholders.

Although provincial government had succeeded in driving the implementation of the programme, it might have done so at the expense of local government involvement. A senior local official pointed

to several issues with planning and prioritisation, with local government often left to deal with the consequences. A dedicated project manager at municipal level may well help to keep the CRDP's focus on delivering the most important services, projects and other interventions.

As unique instruments of the CRDP, political champions seemed to fulfil their role much more effectively than the Council of Stakeholders. The council was branded a duplication of existing structures, and one that provided additional kindling to fuel conflict within communities rather than communicating clearly and driving development on behalf of the community.

The fact that the community was, in fact, divided into two separate settlements, and had other long-standing sources of disagreement amongst themselves, was a complication left unaddressed by CRDP structures. The programme ultimately delivered some improvements in service delivery and physical infrastructure, but officials were doubtful that the programme had made a long-term impact in residents' economic prospects. Although it was not the aim of this study to evaluate the impact of the CRDP at Riemvasmaak, it is worth pointing out perceived failures where they may be attributed to coordination problems.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 | Introduction

This final chapter considers the findings detailed in Chapter 5 and places them within the broader policy context and literature on rural development in South Africa. Did the CRDP succeed in promoting coordination in the pursuit of rural development as it intended to, and if not, why not?

6.2 | Discussion of findings

RESEARCH QUESTION: How has the implementation of the CRDP been influenced by its co-ordination mechanisms?

Unlike earlier policies like the ISRDP, the CRDP was driven by its own national department, at a time when rural development was touted as one of the national government's 5 key priorities, along with education, health, job creation and lowering crime rates (Zuma, 2009-2013). The CRDP also had its own budget, even though these funds were allocated on a relatively ad hoc basis (Official 1, DRDLR). Previous development efforts under the RDP and the ISRDP had similar structures, driven at national level by the RDP Ministry and the Department of Provincial and Local Government respectively, which fits with Peters' (1998:298) "top-down" conceptualisation of coordination.

In the RDP's case, however, its national structures were dissolved in the mid-1990s, leaving the policy without a clear driving agency or ministry. Even while the RDP ministry was active, the RDP Fund was made up of contributions from individual line departments' allocated budgets, creating some resentment among these departments and undermining the RDP office's ability to use the money as a bargaining chip for cooperation and coordination. After all, sector departments were applying for funding from a budget they had effectively funded themselves (Kraak, 2011:351 and Blumenfeld, 1997:75). The ISRDP also struggled to enforce coordination from the top down, partly because it lacked any funding of its own, and partly as a result of the DPLG's perceived lack of authority to enforce coordination from the top down (PSC, 2009:59-60).

In contrast, therefore, the CRDP had a better carrot (budget allocations) and stick (political fallout for non-compliance) to drive coordination. Unfortunately, this created a new challenge – where the DRDLR couldn't secure cooperation, it was possible to step in and simply fund its own interventions instead (Official 2, DRDLR: Northern Cape Office). This might have been useful to ensure progress on particular projects, but also made the programme seem unaffordable and wasteful, duplicating existing functions already housed in other departments.

This will be even more of a liability going forward, as recent State of the Nation addresses focus more strongly on broader issues like slow economic growth and job losses, and no longer make direct references to rural development programmes (Zuma, 2013-2015). The 2015 State of the Nation Address did mention a new DRDLR initiative called "Agri-Parks", which focuses on stimulating and supporting agricultural production, agro-processing and other related activities in rural areas (Zuma, 2015) – a mandate that sounds very similar to the gaps in economic development and job creation identified in the CRDP by officials interviewed, but one that also hinges heavily on buy-in and cooperation from the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF). This programme was allocated R2 billion in its first year, which represents nearly 25% of the DRDLR's annual budget of roughly R9,45 billion (Nkwinti, 2015).

Although Official 1 (DRDLR) said that Agri-Parks and the CRDP should not be conflated, with the latter taking a much broader view on rural development while the new programme focused specifically on agricultural activities, it does seem like a risky and expensive addition to the DRDLR's agenda when the true long-term cost of the CRDP has not yet been formally evaluated. It also seems to perpetuate a dysfunctional expansion of the DRDLR's mandate in lieu of effective coordination with DAFF and provincial departments of agriculture.

As far as other policy coordination mechanisms go, the provincial technical committee seemed to fulfil its steering role effectively, although it would have benefited from more consultation with local government. A project manager at local government level, or even improved coordination with municipalities, would go a long way to ensuring that planning and prioritisation match the community's needs, without burdening local government with unwanted or badly planned projects to manage (Official 4, Kai !Garib Municipality and DPME, 2013:85). This would also be in keeping with Leupolt's (1977:9,14) conceptualisation of integrated rural development, which favours "administrative decentralisation" as a way of embracing complexity at the local government level and ensuring that development efforts remain relevant to the needs of rural communities.

Political champions also seemed mostly to serve improved coordination, although it was noted that Riemvasmaak enjoys a political status perhaps not common among CRDP sites. It is not clear at all that political champions are as effective at promoting coordination at other locations.

The Council of Stakeholders, on the other hand, seemed clearly redundant, if not destructive in its design and implementation. Officials agreed that the councils were duplicating existing IDP structures and processes, despite the fact that policy coordination literature emphasises efficiency and avoiding duplication (Peters, 1998:296). The fact that its efforts were poorly coordinated also undermined its position as a communication channel for the residents of Riemvasmaak, fuelling

existing tensions and conflict in the community and making it even harder to coordinate effectively with the beneficiaries of development efforts.

SUB-QUESTION 1: To what extent do the CRDP's co-ordination arrangements align with existing mechanisms at local government level, such as Integrated Development Planning processes?

Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) were still relatively new when the CRDP's predecessor, the ISRDP, was implemented, but the programme identified these plans drawn up at local government level as a key mechanism for coordination. Unfortunately, it seemed these structures struggled to overcome obstacles like mismatched budget cycles, predicted by theorists like Moseley (2009:22-23), limited capacity and resources at municipal level and local government's general lack of authority when it came to securing contributions from provincial and national government (Mello & Maserumule, 2010 and PSC, 2009:15).

Still, the IDP process came up continuously in discussions around the implementation of the CRDP at Riemvasmaak. The community was aware of how the IDP functioned and purportedly participated in its processes on a regular basis (according to Official 6, Kai !Garib Municipality). The ward councillor was also active in organising community meetings and had confidence that the IDP representative forums would offer opportunities to engage with provincial and national department officials (Official 5, Kai !Garib Municipality). Outcomes-based planning, Mintech and MinMEC forums also featured clearly as effective forums for escalating coordination issues, in interviews with both Officials 1 (DRDLR) and 3 (Northern Cape DoA: Rural Development).

It would seem as if the CRDP was mostly integrated very clearly into existing planning processes and structures, with the exception of the Council of Stakeholders, which seemed like a less effective version of existing IDP processes.

Perhaps integrated planning processes have improved since the implementation of the ISRDP, although admittedly Mello & Maserumule's (2010) findings indicate that, as a rule, IDPs still don't generally function effectively as tools for joint planning by the different spheres of government. Even so, Official 1 (DRDLR) still considers the CoS a needless duplication – it makes more sense to focus on strengthening and supporting IDP processes where they are weak, than to duplicate them via this flawed forum. Experience from the ISRDP also suggests that creating parallel structures outside of existing IDP processes tends to undermine the role of local government, which "lack(s) the authority to act as an organising nexus" in those non-IDP forums (PSC, 2009: viii).

It should be noted that the CRDP might not have integrated as well with existing forums without widespread political buy-in around rural development as a policy priority, or without a national

department to raise its political profile. It is not clear that the programme could have been implemented through existing structures without them, or without at least some budget of its own to spend.

SUB-QUESTION 2 : If coordination efforts did break down during the implementation of the CRDP at Riemvasmaak, what are the dynamics that contributed to such a breakdown?

The most obvious case of coordination failure seems to have occurred on the vertical plane, with limited involvement and consultation with the local municipality. Although the exact cause of the breakdown is not clear, it would seem as if longstanding misalignment between the land reform / rural development and agriculture portfolios, outlined by Cousins (2013:47), has also continued under the CRDP. Now that rural development had its own budget, however, it seems tempted to jump in and invest in agriculture itself. Sustained support of those efforts in the long run, however, is still out of reach of the department's current resources.

It remains to be seen whether new initiatives like Agri-Parks will secure better cooperation between the two departments, or if the DRDLR is simply duplicating efforts by the national Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, despite its own lack of expertise in the field.

The conflict within the community at Riemvasmaak is also a sizeable obstacle for any coordination efforts to overcome, and still falls outside the scope of the policies like the CRDP. This type of complication is not new, as was documented in the discussion of dynamics at Impendle (Drimie, 2003) and Dwesa-Cwebe (Ntshona et al, 2010). There is no evidence that the CoS at Riemvasmaak was undermined by competing policy objectives, as coordinating mechanisms in these examples were, but a combination of divisions within the community, a history of disappointing development efforts and mistrust in the management of the town's financial affairs meant that some projects were halted, while resources and political capital had to be expended to resolve these conflicts.

All of these factors added a new dimension to development efforts that most officials were not prepared for. Without dedicated capacity for resolving these conflicts at grassroots level, most stakeholders withdraw or give up rather than risk investing in failed projects. Perhaps the suggested addition of a project manager at local government level may serve to address these recurring obstacles in development efforts, if not directly through project management efforts, then at least by improving communication at grassroots level.

6.3 | Conclusion

Considering the above findings, it is clear that the coordination mechanisms at Riemvasmaak did not successfully promote policy coordination in the implementation of the CRDP. Further research by the DPM&E (2013b) also suggests that some of these observations ring true at other CRDP sites across all nine provinces. At the very least, it is important to consider the suggested improvements to CRDP structures outlined in these findings, including:

- Dissolving the Council of Stakeholders as coordinating mechanism and providing support for improved Integrated Development Plans to be drawn up at local government level.
- Improved involvement of local government officials through these strengthened IDP processes, as well as during planning and implementation at provincial level.
- Appointing a dedicated project manager at local government level, serving as an improved communication mechanism with the community, while also monitoring progress on the ground.

Continuing with the CRDP as it stands is risking a substantial financial investment in an ineffective policy programme.

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Appendix A

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA · UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Political Studies

Information Sheet for Research Participants

Title of research project:

A critical assessment of policy coordination in the implementation of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme.

Nature of the research:

It is my intention to investigate and understand the implementation of the CRDP in the Northern Cape province specifically, including any new institutional arrangements put in place, as well as policies or structures aimed at promoting collaboration between government departments. I am also aiming to compare the CRDP to previous cross-cutting initiatives that would have required a high level of coordination between government departments from the local, provincial and national government spheres, such as the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme (2001).
I am interested in rural development and the CRDP in particular because of the policy's status as the flagship initiative of a relatively new national department, hoping to improve the lives of some of South Africa's most vulnerable communities.

Name of researcher:

Annelie Maré			
Telephone	082 394 2137	**Email**	anneliemare@gmail.com

Name of researcher's thesis supervisor / course lecturer:

Dr. Vinothan Naidoo			
Telephone	(021) 6503381 / 3916	**Email**	Vinothan.Naidoo@uct.ac.za

Department address details:

Room 5.33, Leslie Social Science Building, Upper Campus, Rondebosch, Cape Town, 7701	
Telephone	(021) 6503381 / 3916

What are the implications of your involvement in this interview / project?
*** The researcher may explain these to you verbally in more detail, if needed ***

The research will form part of a dissertation submitted to the University of Cape Town in partial fulfillment of my degree requirements and will therefore be publically accessible both in the UCT library and online. As such you may stipulate in what capacity you want to be quoted in the dissertation, whether I may identify you personally by name, by position or in some other, less specific capacity, since the publication of the dissertation will create a degree of public exposure to you personally.

You are free to withdraw your participation at any point during our correspondence, and may also choose not to answer certain questions. I should not require more than an hour of your time and will schedule the interview at a time that is convenient to you.

Information should include: how long it will take, how the information will be used, participants' roles and rights (including the right to skip questions or withdraw without penalty at any time), any anticipated risks/benefits which may arise as a result of participating, any costs or payment involved (stipulate, even if none).

Appendix B

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA · UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Political Studies

Informed Consent Form

Name of researcher:

Annelie Maré, 082 394 2137, anneliemare@gmail.com

Title of research project:

A critical assessment of policy coordination in the implementation of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme.

By answering the questions put to me:

- I agree to participate in this research project.
- I have read this consent form and the information it contains and had the opportunity to ask questions about them.
- I agree to my responses being used for education and research on condition my privacy is respected, subject to the following: - *(tick as appropriate)*

	Yes	No
My name may be used in the published research		
My personal details (e.g. age, occupation, position) may be included in the published research		
My responses can only be used in a way that I cannot be personally identifiable		

- I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in this project.
- I understand I have the right to withdraw from this project at any stage.
- I understand that this research might be published in a research journal or book. In the case of dissertation research, the document will be available to readers in a university library in printed form, and possibly in electronic form as well.

Name of Participant
(or Guardian if participant is under 18)   :

Signature of Participant
(or Guardian if participant is under 18)   :

Date   :

The researcher must supply you with an *Information sheet* which provides his / her contact details, outlines the nature of the research and how the information will be used and explains what your participation in the research involves (e.g. how long it will take, participants' roles and rights (including the right to skip questions or withdraw without penalty at any time), any anticipated risks/benefits which may arise as a result of participating, any costs or payment involved (even if none, these should be stated))				
Has this been provided?	**Yes**		**No**	
Have your received verbal confirmation/explanations where needed?	**Yes**		**No**	