

## **Sustainable Local Economic Development (LED) and Rural Land Reform Challenges and Prospects in Post-Apartheid South Africa—A Policy Perspective**

**Sultan Khan**

*University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus, Durban, South Africa  
Telephone: +27762382067, E-mail: khans@ukzn.ac.za*

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**ABSTRACT** One of the many grievances behind the struggle for liberation in South Africa was the question of land. In the post-apartheid era the priority is on rural land reform to promote local economic development. Rural land reform has been criticised for not reaching its multiple objectives of historical redress, redistribution of wealth and opportunities for economic growth. Particular weaknesses include the land tenure system prevalent on White owned commercial farms and communally owned land. The paper is informed from a participatory case study of different stakeholders within a district municipality in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. This is corroborated with similar research undertaken on rural land reform and LED projects in different parts of the country. It concludes with the view that for LED projects to be effective, rural land needs to be viewed as both as a means and mode of production since it is inextricably linked to economic growth in rural parts of the country.