



Land Reform and Socio-Economic Dynamics in Lesotho: A Qualitative Inquiry into 2011 Context

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Abstract

Land reform has been a contentious issue in Lesotho, particularly following the Land Act which aimed to address land tenure issues and promote economic development. Qualitative research methods were employed, including semi-structured interviews with stakeholders such as government officials, community leaders, and land users to gather insights into the implementation process and impacts of the Land Act. Interviews revealed that while the majority of respondents supported the principle of land reform, there was significant resistance from traditional authorities who felt their customary rights were being undermined. The proportion of former communal lands converted into private ownership stood at approximately 15% in the first three years after the act's implementation. The qualitative data indicates that although the Land Act aimed to enhance agricultural productivity and reduce poverty, its success is contingent upon addressing cultural sensitivities and ensuring equitable land redistribution. Policy recommendations include engaging more deeply with traditional leaders in the planning process and providing targeted support for small-scale farmers to facilitate successful transition to private ownership.

Keywords: *Land tenure, agrarian reform, qualitative inquiry, socio-economic dynamics, cultural norms, indigenous knowledge systems, customary law*

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