

Privately initiated land reform projects in South Africa – a case study from Botshabelo, South Africa

This study investigates an initiative to make commercial farmland plus training available to emerging black farmers in the Free State, South Africa. Under this initiative, ten commercial farms bordering on the communal grazing areas surrounding the township of Botshabelo have rented out about 2500 hectares of their farmland to ten emerging farmers to set up their own farms. In addition, the commercial farms committed themselves to provide fencing, irrigation equipment and training in farming to the new farmers. This tenure arrangement was initiated by the white commercial farms involved. One motivation was the recurrent violation of these commercial farms' grazing land by black herders. These incursions were expected to remain a constant source of conflict between commercial farmers and the inhabitants of the communal area. Beyond this, the initiative aims to contribute to the creation of economically viable and independent farms in black ownership. The thesis should evaluate the first results of this project, and look into the motivations and expectations of lessors and tenants to agree to the deal. Interest in Institutional Economics with a focus on common pool resources would be helpful for interested Master students.