

Vumelana Advisory Fund welcomes R9.3bn allocation to land restitution claims

The Vumelana Advisory Fund has welcomed the R9.3bn allocated over the next three years to finalise 1,409 land restitution claims, as recently announced in the Budget Speech.



Peter Setou, chief executive, Vumelana Advisory Fund

“Reduced budgetary allocations, lack of adequate post-settlement support and limited resourcing for land reform continues to hamper the ability of the state to address historical injustices resulting from massive land dispossession and its ability to attain more equitable land ownership patterns in South Africa,” says Peter Setou, chief executive of the Vumelana Advisory Fund, a non-profit organisation that was established in 2012 to help beneficiaries of the land reform programme put their land to profitable use by establishing commercially viable partnerships between communities and investors.

“It is encouraging to also see that the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development has been allocated R896.7m for post-settlement support, an area that has always contributed to the high failure rate of the land reform programme,” noted Setou.

He says, “In addressing post-settlement support, it is important to assess what has worked, what has not worked and why it has not worked. An approach that introduces new interventions without looking at a few pockets of success is unlikely to produce the desired results.”



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Post-settlement support priorities

“Lessons can be drawn from the work that has already been done by role players in the land reform space, including work done by Vumelana, around post-settlement support priorities as this can play an important part in enabling government

efforts to achieve effective post-settlement support,” highlighted Setou.

Both the high-level panel report, often referred to as the *Motlanthe Report*, as well as the Presidential Advisory Panel on Land Reform have highlighted issues that need to be addressed to achieve successful land reform. These must be addressed to ensure the success of the programme.



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Setou highlights that it remains crucial that the targets that have been set over the next three years be closely monitored and measured. Of importance is to ensure that funds allocated for post-settlement support are used for the purposes for which they have been allocated.

“Without a doubt, a collaborative approach between government and land reform role players should be emphasised in order to attain a successful and sustainable land reform programme,” Setou said.

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