Interview: Xoli

1. : 2021-01-25
2. Time: 11: Am

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| Hello, I am Zakes Hlatshwayo, I am a Ph.D. candidate doing an academic study on: Emerging black farmers’ practices and state support to them: a study of three government Agriparks in South Africa. This study will explore the practices of emerging black farmers and their successes and challenges in three selected areas where Agriparks exist. Thank you for your willingness to participate. We are interested to understand your role and experience. Information will be used only for academic and research purposes. You do not have to give your name if you don’t want to and can decline to answer any question. I appreciate your assistance and request you provide as much information as possible to help me understand your work.  The research study has been approved by the University of Pretoria’s Research Ethics Committee. Your privacy and confidentiality will be secured. No direct reference will be made to you, I will use a pseudonym, codes and categories to keep information about you confidential, and to protect it from unauthorized disclosure, tampering, or damage. You are not required to use your name, do not write your name on any of the documents. The data will be kept for 15 years in a password protected format and used for University of Pretoria research only.  For the purpose of this research I will use semi-structured questions, with your permission I will record the interview and take notes. The interview will not be longer than 50 minutes. Hopefully, the information will help policymakers, practitioners, officials and managers to make informed decisions on such programmes in the future. | | | |
| RQ1: What is your name? Xoli  RQ2: What is your occupation? Researcher and community worker  RQ3: In what capacity? Policy research, land and agrarian reforms.  RQ4: How long have you been in this position? 16 years  RQ5: What is your highest qualification? Masters  RQ6: Gender: Male  RQ7: Age: 44 | | | |
| RQ8: Are you involved with Agriparks? | | Yes |  |
| RQ9: How are you involved? | |  | I work for an NGO we focus on land and agrarian issues, rural development, social movements and gender issues. |
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| RQ10: How did you get involved? | |  | I’m a lobbyist and advocate for land rights and rural reform, we spoke on those terms. |
| RQ11: What is the background of the Agriparks that requires them to support emerging black farmers? | |  | In the South African emerging black farmers’ rights to state support are more often described in non-contradictory relations, that do not take into consideration issues of class formation under apartheid. Our Constitution obligates government to overhaul pre-existing racial land dispossessions and alienation of rights in land and resources, an acknowledgment of the deficits that exist across society. |
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| RQ12: What policy changes influenced the establishment of Agriparks? | |  | Neoliberal market-based approaches, such as Agriparks, are based on the global deregulation and decentralisation of agriculture, privatisation free trade to generate growth and prosperity. State-driven approaches have varying degrees of inbuilt market-oriented mechanisms |
| RQ13: What are the present functions of Agriparks? | |  | A key function is that the state acquire the capacities necessary to implement land and agrarian reform and to engage in effective coordination and policy alignment across the various agrarian sectors. It brings land reform and agriculture under one roof, so as to coordinate production and distribution. |
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| RQ14: What are the priorities of the Agriparks? | |  | The industrialisation and commercialisation of rural and small-scale agriculture for profit purposes. Agriparks assimilate different small-scale farmers into various global networks and values chains. |
| RQ15: What are Agriparks perceived efficiencies in fulfilling their functions? | |  | The assembly of various agriculture stakeholder and role-players to enhance value networks. |
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| RQ16: What do you believe are the main success of the Agriparks? | It is a recognition that the state is important for the development of the sector, just like under apartheid. It is a hub of state activities and farmers, which will hopefully influence policy. | | |
| RQ17: What are the challenges, if any, that you see concerning land ownership, agriculture, and poverty alleviation? | The historic challenges of racially segregated agricultural systems, institutionalised racism and bias free-market reforms in an unequal society. The question of agriculture desegregation and the value of single sector sites is not merely one of historical significance but of great contemporary importance as the realignment of our nation’s sectors’. | | |
| RQ18: What processes are put in place to deal with the challenges? | The Agripark face challenges, the main one being funding without it not much can change. | | |
| RQ19: How are emerging black farmers identified and recruited to be part of the programs of the Agriparks? | The farmers come through various farmer organisations, some are recruited through advertisements there are different ways. | | |
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| RQ20: What are the main farming practices of emerging black farmers? | |  | In rural areas people make use of communal land to grow maize and keep livestock. In the urban areas most people use backyard gardens or open public spaces. |
| RQ21: What legislative reform justified the emergence of the Agripark to provide support to emerging black farmers? | |  | It is a political issue, the growing pressure for land reform and rural development. The CRDP based in the district can better contain this pressure from communities. |
| RQ22: Who decides on the type of support and services given to emerging black farmers? | |  | Agriparks are state drive programme influenced by commercialisation, that is how decisions are take and implemented. |
| RQ23: How are decisions communicated to emerging black farmers? | |  | The management and extension service are the main communicates of state decisions. |
| RQ24: How do emerging black farmers participate in the decision-making on priorities of Agriparks? | |  | There minimal spaces for genuine participation hence the protest actions from time to time. |
| RQ25: Are emerging black farmers given plans about the priorities of Agriparks? | |  | Agriparks plans are available in district officers or the economic development units. |
| RQ26: Are women and youth benefitting from Agriparks? If so, how? | |  | Women and youth are well represented. |
| RQ27: What are the challenges of the Agriparks? How are these challenges dealt with? | |  | Mainly departmental inefficiency and lack of coordination, the support systems and service are not clearly defined. It is difficult to organise farmers into social movement that can challenge the system. |
| RQ28: What are the successes of the Agriparks? How is success determined? | |  | Very minimal, but with improved coordination things can change. |
| RQ29: What are your recommendations for the future of Agriparks and wider support to emerging black farmers? Are there any other issues that you suggest I should look into? | |  | The state cannot escape it obligation of bring change, especially the empowerment of rural people and farmers. It is powder keg for future revolts. |
| RQ30: How did you hear about Covid-19? | |  | Radio and tv news |
| RQ31: How did Covid 19 affect you?  RQ32: How did you respond to government’s lockdown, did you benefit? | |  | I worked from home.  I did not benefit in any way. |

Notes: He lambaste the marginalisation of black farmers by bank, relates a story of farmer who was denied a bank loan.