Interview: Bonakele

1. Date: 2021-11-07
2. Time: 15:00

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| Hello, I am Zakes Hlatshwayo, a Ph.D. candidate at UP, conducting a study on emerging black farmers’ practices and state support to them, the study is conducted in three provinces. This study aims to understand emerging black farmer practices and how they are supported by the state. Thank you for your willingness to participate. I am interested to understand your farming practices and experience, as well as the support you receive. 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 us 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? Bonakele  RQ2: Where do you live? Gathlose  RQ3: What is your highest level of qualification? Post-Graduate  RQ4: Gender: Male  RQ5: Age | | | |
| RQ6: Are you a farmer, what farming practice are you involved with? When did you start? How did you start? Why did you start farming, what informed?  your decision? Where is the farm located? | | Livestock farmer | My father, a former minister in the Bophuthatswana government, is cattle a farmer. He took me to the ranch every weekend and school holiday, I used to resent it but I love it now. I worked on white farms to gain experience and knowledge. |
| How long have you been in this farm? | |  | My parents used the land for generations, I have been here for the past 15 years. |
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| RQ7: Do you own the land? How was the land obtained? Is farming the only source of income, if not what other source exist? How do you sustain your farming practices? Is there a family history to farming? Who decides on land use? | | Communal land | We have a permit to occupy (PTO) from the chief like all other farmers. I consult for other farmers on breeding methods and advice, my wife works. We are a family of livestock farmers, including my sisters. I decide, I farm with Bosmana and Nguni cattle. |
| RQ8: How did you get access to the land where you farm? Do you own it, rent it, have permission to occupy, or another type of right to the land? Who decides on land use? | |  | It was pass on by parents, who also farm here, I have 19000 hectares. We also have a 30 years lease contract until 2046. |
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| RQ9: Where did you learn farming? Have you ever received training or advice on farming and if so from whom? Were your parents farming? | |  | I have always farmers with my father, I learned a lot from the employees and the white’s farmers that I went to during holidays. |
| RQ10: What are the sources of your livelihood (that is how do you support yourself and your family)? | |  | I buy and sell cattle at the auction, consultancy work and my wife work. |
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| RQ11: What forms of labour or equipment do you use, if any? Do you farm for self-consumption, or selling or a combination of both, explain? What form of support do you get and from whom? | |  | I feedlot, shelter, dip and fencing equipment, I have a few farms hand who help with herding and security from theft. It is only for business. My father who is retired helps with finances there is need, e.g. veterinary intervention or medicines. |
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| RQ12: Are you aware of the state support programme to emerging black farmers? If so, how did you become aware of it? Why are you not participating in the Agripark? Did you intend to participate, if not, why not? | I’m aware of the programme, I’m a member of African Farmers Association of South Africa (AFASA), we were briefed by government officials in one of our meetings. I intended to participate both as a farmers and consultant, but it never took off. There is talk of misuse of funds and the chief being reluctant to release the land, it is confusing. | | |
| RQ13: Did you do anything to be allowed to participate, if so, what? Do you know why you were not included? Is any other of your family benefiting, if so, how? | There was nothing to do, the project did not take off. | | |
| RQ14: Do you sell any of your agriculture produce, if so, what do you sell? Where do you sell them? When did you start to sell there? How did you come to sell there the first time? | I farm with livestock I sell at the auction or walk-ins as people come to buy- since Bop time we always sold at the auction. My parents sold here for all these years. | | |
| RQ15: What are your actual experiences? What issues and concerns have arisen in connection with your faming? What efforts are you making address these issues and challenges? How can support to black farmers be improved? | We are crowded in the communal areas, there is encroachment despite allocation which comprise the quality of the livestock and security. People working in the mines buy cattle and dump it here. During Bophuthatswana there was more order, now it is chaotic.  I have spoken to other farmers and volunteered my service to help, this was to protect my own stock and quality. However, we are still seen as part of the old Bop government and are resisted by the ANC guys. It is political. We are farming beyond the carrying capacity of the land, which is not good in the long term.  It is the old land question, until the land question is resolved anything else is bound to cause tension and fights. Penda, Bendel and Deurham are different pieces of land we need GPS coordinates to improve land administration and use. | | |
| RQ17: In what way can Agriparks be improved, do you have any recommendations? Are there any other issues that you suggest I should look into? | They should get them up and running, it is looks good on paper, I need my own land so that I can better control of my farming. I don’t have money to buy land. I need to rotate grazing, I cannot do it now. 60 cows in 1 hectare is too much, the challenge is to keep water and soil resources. Agriparks should support family farming, they will be great to keep livelihoods and the community together.  Agriparks will encourage local markets, buyers will support local producers through the purchase of local products. In Agriparks cooperative can come together, they will grow beyond their small-scale role in the food systems. The development of different initiatives will play a big part in food systems and food security.  There should be a greater distribution of resource for small holders to compete. | | |
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| RQ18: How did you hear about Covid-19? | |  | In the news and newspapers. |
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| RQ19: How did Covid 19 affect you? | |  | It restricted my movement, initially it was struggle to get permission to travel to the farm to tend to the cattle. There was confusion with the issuing of permits. The auction was closed, my wife did not go to work and it was tough. I could not sell at funerals or events, it was difficult. |
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| RQ20: How did you respond to government’s lockdown, did you benefit? | |  | I had to negotiate with the police, most were reasonable and allowed me to go the farm. I have applied but still to benefit from any of the programmes. |
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Thanks for your participating in the research

Comments and Observation: