Interview: Thati

1. Date: 2021-02-22
2. Time: 2 pm

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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 in understanding your farming practices and experience and 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? Thati  RQ2: Where do you live? Mohlakeng.  RQ3: What is your highest level of qualification? College (Teacher)  RQ4: Gender: Female  RQ5: Age: 37 | | | |
| RQ6: Do you have another job? | | No |  |
| RQ7: How long have you been on this farm? | | +13year |  |
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| RQ8: Where do you farm? | | Thusanong farms | Merafong. |
| RQ10: What do you grow? | |  | Maze and keep livestock. I also have patches of cabbage and tomatoes. |
| The Thusanong farms were transferred to beneficiary families under the Department of Land Affairs land redistribution program, in 1996. +- 600 hectares were allocated to a Communal Property Association’s 20 members, representing 60 households (She does not know how much the state paid). The land was officially transferred by the Gauteng Government in 2014. The community registered the Merafong Cooperative to start business operations on the farm. | | | |
| RQ11: How many hectares do you farm? | | 1. hectares |  |
| RQ12: How did you obtain this land, and under what tenure? | |  | The land was transferred following a land redistribution application by the Mohlakeng CPA. |
| The CPA has since stopped functioning because of continuing infighting among members, lack of commitment, and poor post-settlement support by the government. She is the only remaining member who continues to farm the land. | | | |
| RQ13: Have you always produced and sold the same things? | | Yes | Sometimes more of one or the other, depending on growth. |
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| RQ14: How did you start farming? | I have no previous farming experience, but always had a fascination with working the land as a farmer and started attending training sessions and workshops organized by various entities. | | |
| RQ15: How did you learn about this farming? | I got involved when our community came together and applied for the land, I saw a great opportunity for myself. | | |
| RQ16: Where did you obtain the capital? | The government bought the land for us, but now I use my own resources. | | |
| RQ17: How many people are employed, temporarily and full-time? | There are no people employed on the farm, when there is hard work to be done I ask local people to come help. I pay for them with my own money. | | |
| 14: What are your main inputs? | For the vegetables, it is the seed and fertilizer; for the animals, it is the feed and the dip. I had to repair the damaged borehole and fence to keep thieves off. | | |
| 15: Where do you sell? I sell mostly in the township; the livestock goes to funerals and big weddings. | | | |
| RQ9: What are the sources of your livelihood | |  | I’m a teacher and live off my salary and income from the farm. |
| RQ10: Are you aware of the state support programme to emerging black, 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? | |  | Yes, I know about the programmes, I saw the adverts and what it does to support black farmers. I visited on site to ask for support such as equipment and implements I can use on the farm. I was assured that the programme does help off-site farmers but were unable to help me due to shortages within the facility. |
| RQ11: Did you do anything to be allowed to participate, if so, what? Do you know why you were not included? Is any other member of your family benefitting, if so how? | |  | I asked to benefit from the training and development programmes. I was unable to get support because these services were not available when I asked for them. No, none of my family member benefit from the programmes. |
| RQ12: In what way can Agriparks be improved, do you have any recommendations? Are there any other issues that you suggest I should look into? | |  | The reality currently is that the government is functioning for the benefit of wealthy individuals with finance and corporate connections and their shareholders. There is no commitment to ensuring parity or the provision of services that benefit black farmers. Agriparks need political commitment and support, they can work well if properly resourced and managed. As it is, many of the things that are mentioned in the policy document are not available. The infrastructure is poor and the facilities are not available, we need the state to get more involved in making changes. We need funds and loans to survive. |
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| RQ13: Did you about Covid-19 and how did you hear about Covid-19?   * How did Covid 19 affect you? * How did you respond to the government’s lockdown? * How did you hear about the government’s response and how did you benefit? | |  | I learned from the news and tv broad cast, I was not affected much. The farm is isolated and could without any trouble.  I was really not that much isolated, I could still work.  I did not benefit in any way. |
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Notes: She run the farm alone having been abandoned by the community, she is committed to make a change, she participates in a number of workshop and training programmes. She once applied for a bank loan but the member of the CPA would not sign. She says, as an individual I do not have a chance with the banks, I feel frustrated when I get rejected for no clear reason.