Interview: Aslam

1. : 2021-02-25
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? Aslam  RQ2: What is your occupation? Community Development worker  RQ3: In what capacity? Policy research and analyst, land and agrarian reforms.  RQ4: How long have you been in this position? 7 years  RQ5: What is your highest qualification? Masters  RQ6: Gender: Male  RQ7: Age: 58 | | | |
| 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, land and agrarian refroms, social movements and gender issues. |
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| RQ10: How did you get involved? | |  | We support black farmers to access land another resources for the development.. |
| RQ11: What is the background of the Agriparks that requires them to support emerging black farmers? | |  | Government is responding to two challenges, the first is to transform the agriculture sector and make inclusive and representatives of the population, the second is to compete in the global agriculture markets. . |
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| RQ12: What policy changes influenced the establishment of Agriparks? | |  | Neoliberal market-based approaches, such as Agriparks, are premised on the free enterprise system, farmers have to participate and compete in the free markets. |
| RQ13: What are the present functions of Agriparks? | |  | The state has to rethink its development model, consistent with the national plans. In this regard Agripark provide the site for the state to support grow and development of farmers. |
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| RQ14: What are the priorities of the Agriparks? | |  | The priority is to mobilise resources and invest in agriculture as a sector with the potential to grow the economy and close the poverty gap. For this the state needs to concentrate it investment into the Agriparks. |
| RQ15: What are Agriparks perceived efficiencies in fulfilling their functions? | |  | On paper the bring concentrate resource in a few select projects for maximum impact, coordinate interdepartmental operations and involve the business sector and communities. |
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| RQ16: What do you believe are the main success of the Agriparks? | Agriparks provide emerging farmers with immediate access to land, water, infrastructure, facilities and extension officers. All of these interventions are very important in the development of emerging black farmers. | | |
| RQ17: What are the challenges, if any, that you see concerning land ownership, agriculture, and poverty alleviation? | There are many challenges, it is no easy to implement a project of this scale within a short time, interdepartmental coordination is a challenges and white farmers are often reluctant to engage with black farmers. Agripark promise to provide land to successful farmer and this is important, however farmers do not seem to get out of the system. I think the focus is more on the business side than poverty alleviation. | | |
| RQ18: What processes are put in place to deal with the challenges? | The Agripark structure provide many spaces for intervention but not of these are functional. I think the national department should take to the lead in these matters. | | |
| RQ19: How are emerging black farmers identified and recruited to be part of the programs of the Agriparks? | We have supported and applied on behalf of farmers. 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? | |  | Agriparks follow a decentralised district-based approach. 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? | |  | The structure of the Agripark allows for inputs at various levels, in this way communities and NGOs can influence decisions. |
| RQ23: How are decisions communicated to emerging black farmers? | |  | The Agriparks structures serve the purpose of input and output farmers gather information through participation in these structures. |
| RQ24: How do emerging black farmers participate in the decision-making on priorities of Agriparks? | |  | It is important that farmers participate in these structure so as to influence decisions. Otherwise regular meeting is important. |
| RQ25: Are emerging black farmers given plans about the priorities of Agriparks? | |  | Agriparks plans are made available in district officers or the economic development units. |
| RQ26: Are women and youth benefitting from Agriparks? If so, how? | |  | Both women and youth are single out as the main beneficiaries. |
| RQ27: What are the challenges of the Agriparks? How are these challenges dealt with? | |  | The challenge is to build the capacity of farmers and community member to participate in these structure and influence decisions. As NGOs we assist black farmers to understand their role and organise themselves for maximum impact. |
| RQ28: What are the successes of the Agriparks? How is success determined? | |  | We have seen improvement in farmer practices, such as how they manage their farms and take responsibility. |
| 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? | |  | In the future Agriparks should be transferred to local communities for that we need to build their capacity to take over. The main challenge is to get the private bank institutions involve with this will come the participation of big farm owners. |
| 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: The NGO has assisted black farmers to get loans, he argues that banks are not ready to take the risk and support black farmers.