Interview: Solly

1. : 2021-02-25
2. Time: 15: 00

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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? Solly  RQ2: What is your occupation? Manager  RQ3: In what capacity? Farmer Development.  RQ4: How long have you been in this position? 3 years  RQ5: What is your highest qualification? Degree  RQ6: Gender: Male  RQ7: Age: 60 | | | |
| RQ8: Are you involved with Agriparks? | | Yes |  |
| RQ9: How are you involved? | |  | I coordinate the department and Agri-SETA, I’m am are responsible for the identification, recruitment and training of emerging black farmer. |
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| RQ10: How did you get involved? | |  | I’ am an employee. |
| RQ11: What is the background of the Agriparks that requires them to support emerging black farmers? | |  | Agriculture is an important and stable sector for economic growth, employment creation and ending poverty. It is important to invest in the agriculture sector, transform it and make representative of society. |
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| RQ12: What policy changes influenced the establishment of Agriparks? | |  | Farmers and agriculture is important in province like ours with high unemployment and poverty. For that purpose, it needs huge investments. |
| RQ13: What are the present functions of Agriparks? | |  | Agriparks function are drives for change and transformation in agriculture, it affirm the role of small-scale farmers in economic development and creation of employment. |
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| RQ14: What are the priorities of the Agriparks? | |  | Farmer support at a local level is important for decentralised economic growth and creation of work opportunities. Agriparks support the creation of agriculture based secondary industries which link to various networks and value chains. |
| RQ15: What are Agriparks perceived efficiencies in fulfilling their functions? | |  | At a strategic level they function as units of change and development, coordinator of multiple activities. In this regard, Agripark are catalyst of change and distribution of essential resources. |
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| RQ16: What do you believe are the main success of the Agriparks? | Basic access to land, water, infrastructure, facilities and extension officers. Agripark provide learners with spaces of experimenting and experiences in farming. | | |
| RQ17: What are the challenges, if any, that you see concerning land ownership, agriculture, and poverty alleviation? | The programme is fraught with quarrels and disagreement, especially concerning the allocation of resources. It is difficult to see how land ownership and poverty alleviation will be best served. | | |
| RQ18: What processes are put in place to deal with the challenges? | Various department are discussing the relaunch of the programme, this still a long way off. | | |
| RQ19: How are emerging black farmers identified and recruited to be part of the programs of the Agriparks? | I work mostly with student from TVET colleges, whom are paid a stipend for being allocated to a farm. | | |
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| RQ20: What are the main farming practices of emerging black farmers? | |  | It is mainly livestock farming and pocket of horticulture, famer use own resources. We have allocated students to a few wine yards. |
| RQ21: What legislative reform justified the emergence of the Agripark to provide support to emerging black farmers? | |  | The failures of the state to institute land reform and agriculture transformation influenced the conceptualisation of Agripark programme. The idea is to attract black farmers into the system and allocate them land. |
| RQ22: Who decides on the type of support and services given to emerging black farmers? | |  | Student follow an academic curriculum and choose their causes accordingly. Farmers in consultation with the department decide on what the priorities are. |
| RQ23: How are decisions communicated to emerging black farmers? | |  | The economic development unit at local level engages with stakeholder and shares information on developments. |
| RQ24: How do emerging black farmers participate in the decision-making on priorities of Agriparks? | |  | A broad consultative process preceded the development of the Agripark plans, farmers and stakeholder were consulted. |
| 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 targeted groups. |
| RQ27: What are the challenges of the Agriparks? How are these challenges dealt with? | |  | Brining together of various government and non-governmental actors in one forum is a challenge as well as the lack of resources. There is a need to reorganise the sectors differently for greater cohesion and unity of purpose. |
| RQ28: What are the successes of the Agriparks? How is success determined? | |  | We still have not taken-off. |
| 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 should find way of coercing white farmers and bank to support the initiative. For now, Agriparks are considered by the private sector as peripheral to development initiatives. |
| 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 indicates that most graduates from the TVET colleges are unable to raise money with the banks to start farming. He suggest either the state makes the capital available or create a fund together with the banks that will subsidise new farmers.