Interview: Mme

1. Date: 2021-02-25
2. Time: 13H00

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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? Mme  RQ2: Where do you live? Rooiwal and she is a single mother of two children.  RQ3: What is your highest level of qualification? below-matric  RQ4: Gender: Female  RQ5: Age: 40 | | | |
| RQ6: Do you have another job? | | No |  |
| RQ7: How long have you been in this job? | | +2years |  |
| Mme started working with three other women who have since left her alone. They were in the process of registering a cooperative but is she now thinking of registering a PTY (ltd). | | | |
| RQ8: Where do you farm? | | Rooiwaal Agripark | The size is about 4 hectares of dry open land. |
| RQ9: What do you grow? | | High-value crop | Spinach, pepper bells, lettuce, carrots |
| Sometimes during the winter season, they grow pumpkins and kale. | | | |
| RQ10: How many hectares do you farm? | | 1. hectares |  |
| RQ11: How did you obtain this land, and under what tenure? | |  | One of the women I started with responded to an advert and applied for the land. |
| A contract to use the land, which is owned by the local municipality, is valid for 3 years, renewable. Farmers have to move to their own land. The land belongs to the local municipality. The farming project is supported by the Department of Agriculture. | | | |
| RQ12: Have you always produced and sold the same things? | | Yes | There is very little variety given the limited resources that I have and the support that I receive. |
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| RQ13: How did you start farming? | I only started when my friend applied for the land and we got here. I’m happy now, I have support from the other woman farmers. | | |
| RQ14: How did you learn about this opportunity? | It is my friend who came up with the idea, I’m happy about it. | | |
| RQ15: Where did you obtain the capital?  RQ16: What are the sources of your livelihoods?  RQ17: How do you support your family? | At first, we put money together but now I use my own funds for the operations.  I live from the earning of the farm, and the child support grant.  I often take some of the produce home to prepare as relish, it brings the family costs down. | | |
| RQ19: How many people are employed, temporary and full-time? | I do not use the entire land at all times, I cultivate where I can. Even for that, I rely on the other women here, at one time I brought in immigrants to come and help. I asked them to keep more than 80% of the product but I still made some money. | | |
| RQ20: What are your main inputs? | Seedlings, water, pesticides, fertilizers, nets, and improvised equipment. The work is labour-intensive. | | |
| RQ21: Where do you get your inputs from? Mainly from the Agripark, I was given seedlings and fertilizer by the management. All other services like bore water and equipment belong to the Agripark  Where do you sell? Community stalls, bakkie off-takers, and door-to-door sales. Many of my friends in the township pre-order from me, and I produce for them. | | | |
| RQ22: What do you supply? | |  | Spinach, pepper bells, lettuce, carrots |
| * How often? | |  | Once a week, it depends on the seedlings. |
| * How did you get the market? | |  | Buyers come here, we share information around here, it’s word-of-mouth advertising. |
| * Are produce collected or delivered? | |  | Most are collected, except when doing door-to-door. I transport the products by taxi. |
| * What quantity or value of each crop produced? * What market works best, and why? | |  | It is unstable, it depends on the yield, which is sometimes good or bad.  I do not know much about the other markets but I’m satisfied with what I have. I’m discouraged by the high cost of transport to the markets. |
| * What could be done to make markets work better? | |  | At one time there was talk of the Agripark buying the product from us at a fixed price and selling to other markets. That would have been best, I think. |
| * Have you sold your product elsewhere before, if so, where? | | No |  |
| RQ23: Are you part of an organization or group? No. I only work with members of the cooperative, there is an informal support network within the Agripark.   * Do you have any other collaboration, individual or group? No.   RQ24: What concerns and issues have arisen concerning the Agripark? How have they been resolved? I’m grateful for the land, though I do not use all of it, but I do think support in the form of subsidies would be helpful. I think management is detached from our daily concern of fencing and security around here.  RQ25: What improvement has been brought? I take this as an opportunity that I want to pass on to my children, I feel I have developed as a person. I have gained a sense of independents.  RQ26: In what way can Agriparks be improved, any suggestions? We must never stop speaking up on the damage poor land redistribution is doing to black people, the economy, society, and culture. We need land and the state to fund black farmers. | | | |
| * Has then been any changes in your farming? | |  | I’m a better farmer now compared to the time I came here. I now better understand good practices and developed skills. I think I can survive as a commercial farmer. |
| * 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? | |  | Mostly from the radio, tv, and community, it was described as dangerous to society.  I was frustrated by all the restrictions and stayed home. As soon as we were allowed to return I did. I took all the precautions.  We had to change the way we bought and consumed food.  I was told by the management about relief grant, there was not a lot of information. I did not apply for the relied grant. |
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Notes: She is determined but struggling given the amount of land she has. She cannot explain why the land was not reallocated to others but is confident in getting other people to join her. She has established mutual bonds with another farmer, and this is to her advantage. She has spoken to people about getting bank loans but is discouraged by the onerous requirements.