

Challenges Brought about by Integrating Multiple Stakeholders into Farm Management Mentorship of Land Reform Beneficiaries in South Africa

Authors : Carlu Van Der Westhuizen

Abstract : The South African Agricultural Sector is of major socio-economic importance to the country due to its contribution in maintaining stability in food production and food security, providing labour opportunities, eradicating poverty and earning foreign currency. Against this reality, this paper investigates within the Agricultural Sector in South Africa the changes in Land Policies that the new democratically elected government (African National Congress) brought about since their takeover in 1994. The change in the agricultural environment is decidedly dualistic, with 1) a commercial sector, and 2) a subsistence and emerging farmer sector. The future demands and challenges are mostly identified as those of land redistribution and social upliftment. Opportunities that arose from the challenge of change are, among others, the small-holder participation in the value chain, while the challenge of change in Agriculture and the opportunities that were identified could serve as a yardstick against which the Sectors' (Agriculture) Performance could be measured in future. Unfortunately, despite all Governments' Policies, Programmes and Projects and inputs of the Private Sector, the outcomes are, to a large extent, unsuccessful. The urgency with the Land Redistribution Programme is that, for the period 1994 - 2014, only 7.5% of the 30% aim in the redistribution of land was achieved. Another serious aspect of concern is that 90% of the Land Redistribution Projects are not in a state of productive use by emerging farmers. Several reasons may be offered for these failures, amongst others the uncoordinated way in which different stakeholders are involved in a specific farming project. These stakeholders could generally in most cases be identified as: - The Government as the policy maker; - The Private Sector that has the potential to contribute to the sustainable pre- and post-settlement stages of the Programme by cooperating the supporting services to Government; - Inputs from the communities in rural areas where the settlement takes place; - The landowners as sellers of land (e.g. a Traditional Council); and - The emerging beneficiaries as the receivers of land. Mentorship is mostly the medium with which the support are coordinated. In this paper focus will be on three scenarios of different types of mentorship (or management support) namely: - The Taung Irrigation Scheme (TIS) where multiple new land beneficiaries were established by sharing irrigation pivots and receiving mentorship support from commodity organisations within a traditional land sharing system; - Projects whereby the mentor is a strategic partner (mostly a major agricultural 'cooperative' which is also providing inputs to the farmer and responsible for purchasing/marketing all commodities produced); and - An individual mentor who is a private person focussing mainly on farm management mentorship without direct gain other than a monthly stipend paid to the mentor by Government. Against this introduction the focus of the study is investigating the process for the sustainable implementation of Governments' Land Redistribution in South African Agriculture. To achieve this, the research paper is presented under the themes of problem statement, objectives, methodology and limitations, outline of the research process, as well as proposing possible solutions.

Keywords : land reform, role-players, failures, mentorship, management models

Conference Title : ICFMAB 2016 : International Conference on Farm Management and Agricultural biosecurity

Conference Location : Los Angeles, United States

Conference Dates : April 05-06, 2016