



# **The role of agriculture in rural economic transformation**

*Presentation to Operation Phakisa:  
Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development*

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28<sup>th</sup> September 2016

# Renewed interest in Agriculture

- Employment

Average employment in	Agriculture
Mid-income countries	16%
South Africa	2%

- Export earnings

High-value Crops in great demand; good opportunities

- Food security

Estimates vary: perhaps 30% of population go to bed hungry

# Commercialization of smallholder agricultural sector: some emerging understandings

- Climate smart agriculture is essential
- This is capital intensive
- Full value chain development is key

# 3 Propositions from our experience

- The Social anchors the Economic
- We need to create a Culture of the Land
- Unbounded Organizing is the key

# The Social anchors the Economic

“an island of prosperity in a sea of poverty will be submerged”

- Social threats: theft, land occupation...
- Pay attention to nutrition, health
- Youth initiatives: sport, art & culture, youth mentorship, schooling

# A Culture of the Land

- African agricultural systems in South Africa swept aside; industrial farming with chemical fertilisers. Limited and unskilled employment
- Rural settlements with no economic base
  - => no 'reflex' of agriculture; youth disdain it
- Link school gardens to value chain; so too small scale farmers & 'projects'; start local markets & local processing
- water harvesting schemes, water conservation practices, build soils to retain water
- Tree planting linked to households; 'dispersed orchards'

# Unbounded Organising is the key

Work with the whole activity system; involve all social actors

- Design **institutional** innovations at the same time as **economic** and **social** initiatives
- Consult church groups, youth activists, women organizations, community leaders and elders; forge a shared vision and commitment
- Align government programmes e.g. CWP and EPWP

# How do we do all this?

Surely there are many ways:

“let a thousand flowers bloom” (then spread the seeds of the most viable)

An example from 2015/2016 is

The Gold Alliance Agricultural Programme  
initiated by Sibanye Gold Ltd and Gold Fields Ltd.





# Phase 1: Westonaria Organisation Workshop (the “WOW”) 14 Oct to 25 Nov 2015

- Over 6 weeks 411 participants learnt new repertoires of organization, to deal with social challenges and to manage economic enterprises
- Participants learnt to move from *organizing against* to *organizing for*
- Cultural change was catalysed, creating new activities and enterprises and transforming organizational life



# Some outputs from the WOW

- Anchor Farm: an AgriPark
- School Gardens at 11 schools
- 2000 trees planted through the township
- A community centre created from a derelict mine hostel
- 11 enterprises formed providing more than 200 jobs.
- Shared services company formed

## Social & Institutional

- A Development Round Table
- ECD association formed & training provided
- Crèches repaired
- School kitchens built or repaired
- CWP aligned to agric plans
- Youth initiatives conceptualised:  
Football 4 Youth, Youth Mentorship
- Conflict prevention & mediation network launched



# Phase 2: The GAAP

- Anchor farm supports four 'OutGrowers' of 100 hectares each (inputs and marketing)
- OutGrower is a partnership: commercial farmer invests in land and mentors emerging community group intensive agriculture on 20% of land; after year 1, community takes 40%. (all Land held in trust for community)
- Smaller agricultural projects link in to the system
- School gardens started, with awards
- Food Security programme being started by Shared Services company (bulk buying of basics, planned planting at OutGrowers for local distribution and consumption)



- Processing facilities planned for year 3

