

The path to food sovereignty in Keiskammahoek (not exactly the platteland)

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What are we doing?

- Ntinga Ntaba kaNdoda a rural movement
 - 350 members
 - 42 villages in Keiskammahoek/5 municipal wards
- A local development institution
 - Servicing 35 cooperatives
 - 5 trained facilitators
 - 5 trained master farmers
- Part of Inyanda National Land Movement
 - 25 groups of agroecology farmers in E.Cape, Free State, Limpopo & W.Cape
 - 5 seed banks
 - 100 trained master farmers in agroecology: An Agroecology Learning Network
 - Agri-processing using low-cost technology (Mopani)
 - Local markets

What are we doing?

- Sizakuzondla Plan

- Shaped by local farmers
- Strategy & business plan for food sovereignty in Keiskammahoek
- Based on ecologically sustainable agriculture = agroecology
- 2016-2025: 1,000 local jobs; 1500 hectares returned to production
- Beyond agriculture: food processing, other rural industries
- Using the logic of a solidarity economy (a local cooperative economy)
- Building a local Keiskammahoek Solidarity Economy Fund
 - Long-term saving & self-financing
 - Requires initial seed grant, developing, piloting & mentoring
 - Currently doing feasibility study

How & achievements

- Sizakuzondla Plan
- Training & support to coops
 - Agroecology training (including seed saving)
 - Demonstration farm for agroecology
 - Coops training
 - Water harvesting training
 - Business planning
- Monthly farmers' market
 - partnership with Fort Hare & Keiskammahoek Farmers' Association
- Broader marketing strategy
 - In-principle agreement from Rhodes University for fresh produce from small farmers
- Eastern Cape Rural Development Agency
 - lobbying for a rural development hub of a special type – an Agroecology Hub

Difficulties

- Agroecology absent in government policy
- Extension programme imposes expensive industrial agriculture
- Funding
 - Agroecology, food sovereignty & solidarity economy not understood by most funders
 - Jobs Fund: "your proposal does not demonstrate sufficient systemic change"
- Difficulty to access low-cost & appropriate inputs

Lessons, support needed & next steps

- Continuing with current work
- Need for government policy on agroecology including public funds
- Development of appropriate low-cost inputs
 - Own initiative: organic compost for local sales
 - Nursery for local sales
 - Local tractor maintenance programme
 - Need for support for mass production of appropriate inputs
- Need for curriculum & advanced training in agroecology (including agronomy), marketing, & processing
- Skilled mentors & experts
- Funding needed – R75 million over 10 years to develop 1000 ha of agroecology in Keiskammahoek
- Access to secure & diversified markets

THANK YOU

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