

More genuine transformation initiatives needed to empower Black female farmers

According to Nonie Mokose, South Africa needs to amplify the policies of transformation to empower Black female farmers and force the gender agenda into the mainstream through deliberate actions. Mokose serves as an independent trustee and chairperson of the investment committee at the Kgodiso Development Fund - an independent fund founded by PepsiCo Sub-Saharan Africa.



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“Looking at the different metrics of gender transformation, it is evident that South Africa has performed relatively well in closing the gender-parity gap. However, we must continue to be deliberate in implementing a broad range of transformation initiatives to deal with issues affecting women and the youth, such as land tenure and property rights, and also changing gender roles for women in the agricultural sector,” says Mokose.

She believes that for the country to progress the agriculture transformation agenda, it has to provide Black women (and other previously disempowered people) with access to productive land and other resources for sustainable development and farming activities.



Toyota Kwanalu Young Farmer of the Year 2022 winner announced

22 Sep 2022



Struggle to access funding

She explains that many Black farmers without land struggle to access funding from formal financial institutions because they don't possess collateral. Land access provided to farmers, as a solution employed by the government, does not work as collateral because farmers in some instances are leasing this. This constrains Black farmers from growing and participating in mainstream markets and competing with and participating as commercial farmers.

During her career, Mokose has taken part in a number of strategic initiatives aimed at empowering smallholder farmers and facilitating their transition into the mainstream of the agricultural economy. It is this track record in agriculture and its associated services that allows Mokose to speak with authority on what is required to transform South Africa's agricultural economy.

"I'm excited to be part of the Kgodiso Development Fund and hence mandated to look at creating 'shared value' solutions that ultimately help build a sustainable food system. We are looking to increase inclusivity in agriculture, create local employment opportunities, and boost local procurement and supplier diversity within the PepsiCo supply chain," she comments.



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'Takes a village'

Mokose adds that, "Sustainable food systems cannot be established and maintained by any one entity or sector. It literally takes a village. Partnerships between the private sector, governments, NGOs, and the communities in which all operate are required to work together to create these by transforming the way we grow, process and consume."

The Kgodiso Development Fund has ringfenced R300m to support Black emerging farmers. "But importantly, it is not just about funding. The partnerships the fund is leveraging provide mentoring, and technical skills, innovation in farming techniques and access to markets to these emerging farmers. The combination of which is set to transform our country's food systems," concludes Mokose.

The Kgodiso Development Fund aims to support and advance the broad socioeconomic imperatives of education, SMMEs, emerging farmers and enterprise development across PepsiCo's value chain.

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