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Exploring the perceived factors contributing to the unsustainability nature of primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong, Ekurhuleni- South Africa

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ABSTRACT

Cooperatives promote sustainable development and advance economic and social progress both in rural and urban communities. These entities especially primary agricultural cooperatives have the potential to minimise unemployment, eradicate poverty and end hunger. However, in South Africa, more than 20 years after democracy cooperatives seem not to be yielding results they are intended to. These self-help groups are legally registered however, even though this is the case, majority of them are unsustainable and therefore do not last long. It is therefore against this backdrop that the aim of this research report was to explore the factors that contribute to the unsustainability of primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong township, Ekurhuleni municipality. The study was qualitative in nature, and it employed a case study as a research design. Purposive sampling was used to select 15 participants who were members of primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong township. A semi-structured interview schedule was used as a research instrument, with in-depth face-face interviews used as a method of data collection. Data collected during the interviews was analysed using thematic analysis, while participants' demographic information was analysed using descriptive statistics.

The main findings revealed that some of the factors that led to unsustainability of primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong township were lack of access to land, lack of suitable agricultural equipment, lack of cooperation within and between cooperatives, lack of reliable markets, poor managerial skills, misuse of financial resources and corruption. Recommendations relates to future collaborations and research.

Keywords: Cooperatives; primary agricultural cooperatives; perception, unsustainability, Katlehong-Ekurhuleni- South Africa.