

**ECONOMIC IMPACT OF HIV/AIDS ON SMALLHOLDER
AGRICULTURE IN MOPANI DISTRICT OF
LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

BY

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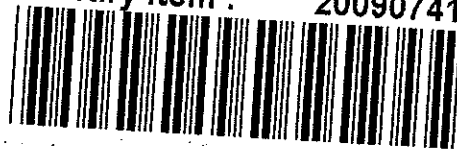
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ABSTRACT

In South Africa the smallholder sector constitutes a major component of the agricultural industry and this sector provides livelihood for the majority of the rural population. The HIV/AIDS is a generalized epidemic in South Africa that extends to all age groups, geographic area and race. South Africa has a serious HIV/AIDS epidemic, with the millions of its people living with the disease. In settings where this subsistence agriculture is a norm, HIV/AIDS retards agricultural production, and threatens food security, in several ways.

This study has attempted to go beyond the official statistics and the general literature to capture information on the economic impact of HIV/AIDS on smallholder Agriculture in Mopani district of Limpopo province. The objective of this study was to assess the impact of HIV/AIDS and other related socio-economic variables on agricultural labour (as the integral part of agriculture) among smallholder farmers in four municipalities in Mopani district of Limpopo province and to identify the coping strategy adopted by HIV/AIDS affected smallholder farmers to mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS.

Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and ordinary least square regression analysis were used to analyse data on one hundred and fifty seven (157) smallholders' farmers in Greater Tzaneen municipality, one (100) hundred smallholders' farmers in Greater Giyani, ninety two (92) smallholders' farmers in Greater Letaba and fifty one (51) smallholders' farmers in Ba-Phalaborwa who were randomly selected to make a total sample size of four hundred (400).

The findings of this study reveal that, HIV/AIDS has a negative impact on the smallholder farmers in the four municipalities namely: Greater Tzaneen, Greater Giyani, Greater Letaba and Ba-Phalaborwa in terms of labour reduction due to the death of household members and chronic diseases suffered by different household's members. Household farm labour shortages

as the integral part of farming had a negative impact on the agricultural operations and this led to a reduction in farm income and farm output.

The coping strategies adopted include a reduction in farm area cultivated and a shift from labour intensive crops to labour saving crops. The findings in this study suggest the need to develop and promote appropriate and life changing policy frameworks and mitigation programmes, to meet the urgent needs of the smallholder farmers affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic.