

WFP to Remake the World for Women, Communities

By Carmelicia Erasmus

05 September 2022

Women on Farms Project (WFP) is an organisation that works with women in commercial agriculture, mainly in the Western Cape province. The project emerged through Lawyers for Human Rights initiative held in 1992 that aimed to meet the needs of women who live and work on farms. The organisation aims to empower and improve the capacity of women who live and work on farms to claim their rights and grant their needs.

“We are a women organisation and do not have occupations such as chairperson, deputy chairperson etc. We are activists and we work together,” said Bettie Fortuin, 59-year-old woman from the Women on Farms Project in the De Doorns, in the Cape Winelands District, Western Cape.

WFP recently assisted 25 young people who had been evicted from a labour course and assisted them with getting back into work and discussed their salaries as well as hosting a local women’s day in their area.

Fortuin said that their biggest challenge is organizing farmworkers without contacting their bosses due to the electric fences and gates restricting them access and preventing entry.

“The struggles in our community are still the same and we are still working on that” said Fortuin when asked if there has been any change in the struggles that they are facing.

After attending the 23rd Annual Winter School hosted by Khanya College, Women on Farms are planning to do an activist campaign in their community so that the people in their community know who the activists are. WFP also decided that they will be taking on the work of reclaimers as women and organize women throughout to do recycling.

“A lot of women that we work with has (sic) already started collecting waste to do the reclaiming work”, said Fortuin.

“We have been keeping contact with all the comrades that we met at the Winter School, we text on WhatsApp and even share our work and stories on the group,” said Fortuin.

The 59-year-old also said that they recently met to discuss their reclaiming project and will be making contact with Eva Mokoena from the African Reclaimers Organisation (ARO) to visit De Doorns; assist and guide Women on Farms Project and the women in their community with the recycling project going forward.

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