



Tongaat Hulett, in partnership with the Jobs Fund, is working to create more than 2 850 new jobs as part of a rural development and sustainable job creation initiative.

The 4 year project, which commenced on 1 August 2014, aims to plant 12 000 hectares of rain-fed sugarcane in KwaZulu-Natal, in some of the poorest areas of South Africa.

Although the prevailing drought has resulted in a delay in the planting of the sugarcane in some regions, this will be planted once there is sufficient rainfall. The project is on track to exceed the initial estimated number of jobs to be created, and has already surpassed the number of beneficiaries trained.

The initiative, which is supported by the Ingonyama Trust Board, the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs and the KZN Provincial Planning Commission, will cost some R300 million in direct sugarcane establishment costs, with R150 million funded by the Jobs Fund and R150 million funded by Tongaat Hulett.

This innovative project looks to make a meaningful difference in the lives of the communities in which it is being implemented, and encompasses areas overseen by 15 traditional councils. In addition Tongaat Hulett has committed to in-kind contributions of R71,6 million, which includes socio-economic development initiatives, community consultative work and project management.

Local community members are upskilled to enable them to work in a range of jobs on these projects, at multiple managerial and skill tiers that typically range from farm managers, assistant managers and supervisors to drivers, weeders, planters, and harvesters.

At the launch event on 27 November 2015 Tongaat Hulett CEO, Mr Peter Staude said, “The Sugarcane Development Initiative reflects Tongaat Hulett’s commitment to the future of the South African Sugar Industry through the comprehensive training and development of small-scale sugarcane growers, with the goals of creating independent, viable and sustainable SMMEs and increasing cane supplies to our mills. We believe that the small-scale grower community has a key role to play in the future success of the South African Sugar Industry and the agricultural sector of KZN, and we will continue to look for further opportunities to partner with government in supporting and growing this important stakeholder.

FOOD SECURITY

Food security is an important part of this holistic approach to rural development. Some 55 small family-managed vegetable gardens, of 0,3 hectares each, have been established together with cooperatives located at Eshowe. In order to be aligned with the Agri-Park model, Tongaat Hulett is also working with the Mngampondo Cooperative towards the establishment of 6,8 hectares of irrigated food crops. The produce will be sold to the Uthungulu Fresh Produce Market which is responsible for distributing vegetables to the surrounding schools as part of the schools nutrition programme. Tongaat Hulett provides extension services to these farmers to assist in skills transfer to the local community and to ensure the sustainability if this project.

Commenting on the impact of the initiative on the Ndlangubo Traditional Council, where the Mngampondo Cooperative Irrigation Scheme was established, Mrs Najwah Allie-Edries stated, “This initiative is a leading example of the impact that sugarcane can have on the development of rural economies, and it is one of the reasons why the Jobs Fund recently acknowledged Tongaat Hulett as one of the top three projects that our fund has supported since inception, for its contribution to sustainable job creation.”

WATER PROGRAMME

A number of rural communities have been negatively affected by the drought. In response, Tongaat Hulett has partnered with municipalities, traditional leadership councils and livestock farmer associations and invested resources towards the installation of three boreholes and two windmills in the Mbongolwane, Ntambanana and Mtubatuba area. It is anticipated that the intervention will enable communities and livestock to access water while also improving the quality of life of some 10 000 community members.

EDUCATION

Education plays a fundamental role in uplifting communities and breaking the cycle of poverty. As such, Tongaat Hulett has invested extensively in projects that look to contribute towards improving the quality of education and educational facilities in these areas. These initiatives target learners from primary school age through to post-school education.

BURSARIES AND TRAINING

A total of 26 students received bursaries from the company to study at the Owen Sitole College of Agriculture, 21 to study plant production in sugarcane agriculture, and the remaining five to study animal production. The three year plant production programme includes experiential training on Tongaat Hulett’s estates during the final six months.

Some 343 local community members, employed to work on these Jobs Fund Project sugarcane estates, attended certificate courses at the SA Sugar Research Institute (SASRI), training at the South African Sugar Association’s Ushukela Training Institute or internal training programmes, with more training in the pipeline.

SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

Tongaat Hulett, in partnership with the Department of Education, is working towards accelerating the provision of quality school infrastructure. Since 2012, Tongaat Hulett has invested approximately R10 million in thirteen rural schools in the Ilembe and Uthungulu district municipalities.

JOBS FUND PARTNERSHIP PARTNERING TO CREATE SUSTAINABLE RURAL COMMUNITIES

Key Facts: As at 31 March 2016

Cooperatives formed	27
Area covered	15 Traditional councils

Funding to date:	
Jobs Fund Grant:	R68 750 000,00
Tongaat Hulett funded:	R68 750 000,00
Total:	R137 500 000,00
In-kind contribution	R49 346 637,20

Hectares	
Planned:	12 000 hectares
Planted to date:	3 654 hectares

Jobs	
Target:	2 850
Created to date:	905
Male:	50,2%
Female:	49,8%
< 35 Years:	50,1%
> 35 Years:	49,9%

Training	
Target:	28
Beneficiaries Trained to date:	343
Male:	58,5%
Female:	41,5%
< 35 Years:	50,9%
> 35 Years:	49,1%

The investment has improved the culture of learning and teaching for some 3 965 learners and 136 educators.

One such example was the R435 645 investment in the Mngampondo Primary School for the construction of the ablution facilities and library.

RALLY TO READ

As one of the participants in the KZN North Rally to Read Programme, Tongaat Hulett invested R387 500 towards the purchasing of learning materials. The programme targeted 12 schools in the companies sugarcane growing communities, benefitting some 5 000 learners and 145 educators. The Rally to Read programme is a three year intervention that seeks to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools.

OWEN SITOLE COLLEGE PARTNERSHIP

In 2012, Tongaat Hulett signed a Collaboration Agreement with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in KZN, to cement its relationship with the Owen Sitole College of Agriculture in order to transform the College into a Centre of Excellence. The partnership looks to harness the potential of agriculture in the surrounding rural areas, focusing on:

- The establishment of an experimentation plot to ensure that students obtain hands-on experience in various aspects of sugarcane agriculture.
- Capacity building of the academic staff, with the aim to strengthen the College’s capacity to develop and provide quality and relevant educational programmes, practical assignments and research that will support the local socio-economic agenda.
- Promoting the crosspollination of information through company-led expert lectures.
- Awarding bursaries to high potential students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds with a passion for agriculture.

During his address at the College’s recent graduation ceremony Principal Siyabonga Mazibuko acknowledged Tongaat Hulett’s contribution towards improving the culture of learning and teaching at Owen Sitole College of Agriculture, which to date, includes an investment of R1,1 million.

UMFOLOZI TVET COLLEGE

In 2015, Tongaat Hulett signed a Collaboration Agreement with the Mfolozi TVET College which focused on providing work experience opportunities for students at the TVET College.

Eight students have been supported through this Work Experience Programme.

The TVET College management has been engaging with Tongaat Hulett Felixton mill management, particularly the mill engineers, to share knowledge and information.

CATTLE UPLIFTMENT PROJECT

With sugarcane and cattle being complimentary agricultural operations, the company is partnering with the Department of Agriculture and Tongaat Hulett’s animal feed operations, Voermol, to host cattle farmer information days, to upskill rural cattle farmers.

Partnerships with other donor organisations have facilitated the construction of windmill powered boreholes to provide drinking water for cattle. The company also provides water for cattle dipping in areas where there are no boreholes.

