



CASE STUDY

JOBS FUND PARTNERSHIP ENDS ON A HIGH

Tongaat Hulett believes in partnering with stakeholders to address the socio-economic challenges in the areas in which the company operates. The recently completed Jobs Fund partnership assisted in addressing these challenges and meeting several of the SDGs in northern KwaZulu-Natal, which has high rural unemployment and poverty rates.

Tongaat Hulett, in partnership with the Jobs Fund created 3 019 new jobs in less than four years, against an initial commitment to create 2 874 jobs through the life of the project. The project assisted in the creation of 27 cooperatives, with more than 3 000 members, and encompassed areas overseen by 15 different traditional councils.

Some 10 972 hectares of rain-fed sugarcane were planted since commencement on 1 August 2014. The project initially planned to plant 12 000 hectares of dryland sugarcane, but this was adjusted downwards to 10 600 hectares (9 600 and 1 000 hectares of dryland and irrigated sugarcane, respectively) after the region experienced the worst drought in over 100 years during 2015 and 2016, which constrained planting activities in those years. In spite of this reduced planting area, the partnership was still able to exceed original projections of both the number of jobs created and the number of beneficiaries trained.

The R305 million initiative, supported by the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, the KZN Provincial Planning Commission and the Ingonyama Trust Board, was jointly funded by Tongaat Hulett (R155 million) and The Jobs Fund (R150 million). In addition, Tongaat Hulett has spent R103,2 million on in-kind contributions, which included community social facilitation work, overall project management and SED initiatives.

The in-kind SED contributions addressed issues such as food security, education and training, access to water for communities and livestock and cattle management. These initiatives were implemented through a range of partnerships with multiple stakeholders including community members, Municipalities, Traditional Councils, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, and the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. Some R5 million was spent on bursaries and training-related programmes over the project period.

Training formed an important element of the project and 1 285 local community members were trained, exceeding the revised estimate of 1 095 individuals by 17 percent. The training ranged from multi-year tertiary qualifications in farm management, to certificate courses and on-the-job training initiatives - which covered a wide range of roles from manager and supervisor level to planters, weeders and harvesters. Partnerships to address skills upliftment and training included the Owen Sitole College of Agriculture, the South African Sugar Research Institute and the Mfolozi Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College.