

Inkqubela

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Quarterly stakeholder publication whose purpose is to relay information to our customers. This quarter we focus on ecrda annual results



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Co-ordinated approach to rural development

Over the last three years, the Eastern Cape Rural Development Agency (ECRDA) has undergone an exciting transformation process that is steadily positioning the organisation as an authoritative voice on the rural development landscape.

Thozi Gwanya
Chief executive officer

This positioning exercise is given further impetus by the successful integration of the Eastern Cape Rural Finance Corporation (ECRFC) and the Accelerated Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (AsgiSA-EC) into the ECRDA. This integration process provides for a co-ordinated approach in dealing with the numerous challenges facing the rural hinterland.

I am deeply encouraged by project participants who have demonstrated a willingness to take charge of their own destiny. As Sikoko Sobutyu, the chairperson of a

primary cooperative in the Ncora Irrigation Scheme says: "The unity of members creates a sense of ownership. People must feel like they are the government in their

This edition of Inkqubela, should be a welcome addition to our increasing mix of communication tools. It will increasingly become an important tool to relay important communication to stakeholder groupings and to keep them informed on developments within the agency.

Three years later ECRDA is beginning to ramp its communication efforts to reach out to its varied stakeholders who have a direct and indirect interest in the continued success of the organisation. This edition of Inkqubela, should be a welcome addition to our increasing mix of communication tools. It will increasingly become an important tool to relay important communication to stakeholder groupings and to keep them informed on developments within the agency.

own communities and therefore are responsible for their own development. They must view themselves as a tier of government."

I am equally excited with the introduction of ECRDAs RED Hub concept which prioritises the village as the centre of operation. It links three market elements of production, processing and marketing to boost the competitiveness of rural economies and communities. The result is that production receives the market support it needs to flourish and money is kept 'alive' and circulates within a community as long as possible.

Although in its infancy, ECRDAs people possess real and valuable experience and expertise in helping build vibrant rural economies, reducing poverty, food security as well as empowering disenfranchised communities. I believe that with this edition, you will be pleased to note the strides we have made toward the achievement of what is a daunting yet rewarding mandate. ECRDA has already made remarkable progress in helping rural communities take the preparatory steps toward the achievement of vibrant rural economies. We have achieved this through the continued provision of innovative and focused rural loan finance instruments as well as the facilitation and implementation of high impact priority programmes (HIPPS). These HIPPS are made up of rural finance, agro-processing, forestry development, livestock development and alternative energy. These programmes are aimed at ensuring that rural communities become owners of their own development and active participants in the creation of a robust rural economy.

2014/15 HIGHLIGHTS

3rd unqualified audit opinion.
R210 million grant funding.
10% increase in asset base.
20% increase in cash and cash equivalents
R8 million increase in loan book
post impairments

Major commercial sheep production drive

Eastern Cape Rural Development Agency rolls out major commercial sheep production drive in Ntabankulu



The Eastern Cape Rural Development Agency (ECRDA) handed over 80 sheep rams to 95 livestock farmers in the third quarter of 2014/15 in a major commercial sheep production drive in the Eastern Cape village of Mnceba in Ntabankulu some two hours from Mthatha.

The commercial drive is based on improving the poor genetic material of the local sheep, improving weaning rates, balancing the flock structure, changing the mating season and introducing vaccination programmes over a five – year period. The aim is to ensure that local livestock farmers can compete favourably with commercial farmers and to receive market related income for their stock.

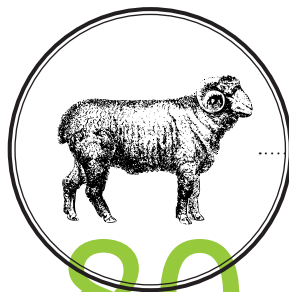
The Eastern Cape possesses the most significant potential for livestock development. The Eastern Cape has the highest number of cattle, goats, chicken and horses in South Africa. However, emerging or communal farmers

are largely unable to tap into and exploit the opportunities that exist within the commercial livestock development sector.

“After an assessment of the sheep flock in Mnceba, ECRDA realised that the sheep of local farmers is of poor quality with backward farming methods. ECRDA intervened after the subsistence sheep farmers approached us through the Mnceba Methodist Church for help. ECRDA conducted an analysis of the situation and decided to introduce sheep with better genetic material. The sheep were of poor quality, they were sickly, weaning rates were low, the flock structure was not balanced which meant there were too many male sheep which compromised reproduction rates. There were no vaccination programmes, sheep were small-framed and therefore could not compete with commercial farmers.

“ECRDA therefore introduced 80 sheep ram to mate with their existing 2 900 ewes (female sheep) to improve the genetic material and quality of their stock. The 80 rams are based on a ratio of 3% of the 2 900 female sheep in the area. This means each of the 80 rams will mate with 30-35 of the 2 900 ewes. They should now be able to fetch better prices for their sheep in the market. In addition, we have introduced a general sheep production training programme for the next five years to change the subsistence culture to a commercial one. ECRDA has also introduced a veterinary programme, sheep shearing as well as a new mating season,” says ECRDA livestock specialist Mathemba Mapuma.

Mapuma says this commercialisation drive is crucial because the Eastern Cape is importing sheep from the Free State province because commercial farmers are losing their sheep to stock theft among other things. In Ntabankulu, there exists an opportunity to instil a commercial culture to local farmers where theft is not prevalent. This calls for deliberate state intervention to improve infrastructure and production parameters. State interventions should encourage the growth of calving rates of communal farmers from the current 30% to 60% and above.



80

Sheep Ram
to mate with



2900

Existing Ewes
(Female Sheep)

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The introduction of vaccination programmes to livestock losses is crucial to cushion the vulnerable communal sector. In addition, there needs to be a concerted effort to improve the genetic material of communal livestock owned by communal farmers which the market regards as inferior. Furthermore, government interventions should be aimed at encouraging the commercialisation of this sector in order to increase rural outcomes, participation in the mainstream

economy and ensuring food security. Mapuma says the sheep shearing programme for wool is still a challenge because there is currently no shearing shed. The Ntabankulu Local Municipality has committed to build a shearing shed in the new financial year. The construction of the shed should provide a clean environment for shearing as well as enough space for sorting and baling of the wool.



RED Hubs Overview

In 2014/15, ECRDA expanded its Rural Enterprise Development (RED) Hub footprint to include Lady Frere and Mbizana. The RED Hubs have a special focus on primary production, processing and marketing with the view of keeping money circulating within the community for as long as is possible. The RED Hub therefore prioritises the establishment of mechanisation units with machinery and implements such as tractors, harvesters for production.

During the year, ECRDA began establishing an additional two RED Hubs as well as the development of storage and processing facilities, mechanisation units and trading centres in Mqanduli, Ncorha, Lady Frere and Bizana in the OR Tambo, Chris Hani and Alfred Nzo district municipalities respectively.

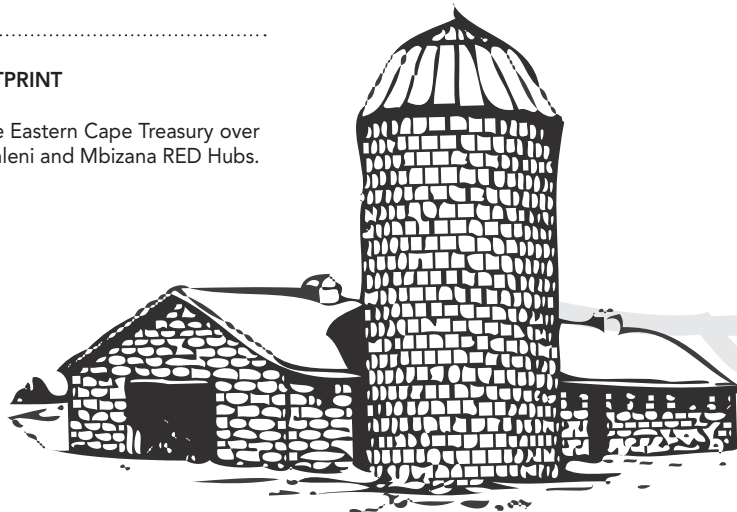
Two Silos with 2000 ton capacity in Ncora and two 1500 ton capacity silos in Mqanduli

3500

Ton capacity in both hubs

EXPANDING RED HUB FOOTPRINT

R100 million injection from the Eastern Cape Treasury over a three-year period for Emalahleni and Mbizana RED Hubs.



NCORA

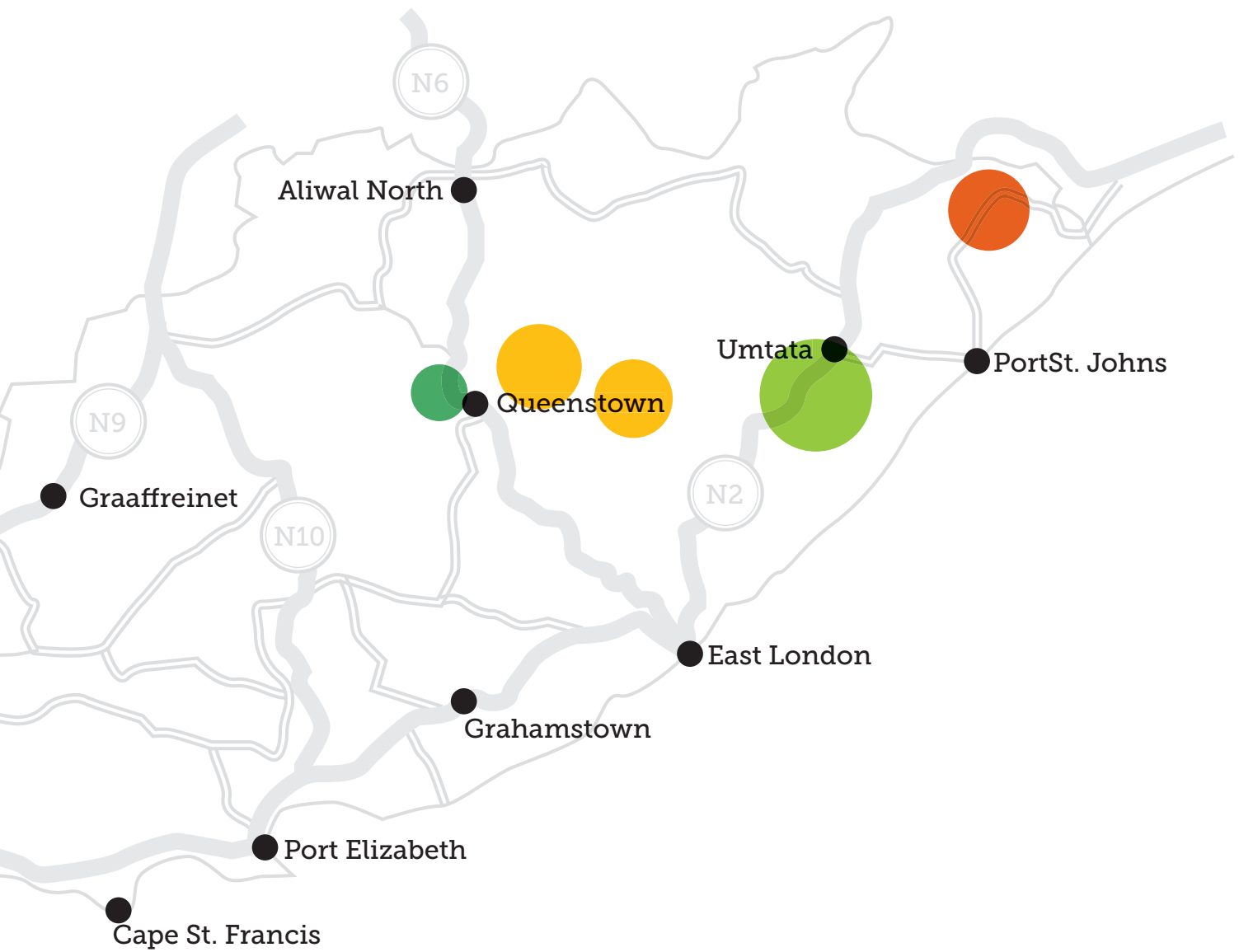
- 1000 ha of white maize planted
- 10 participating cooperatives
- 51 people employed
- 220 temporary workers employed
- 2 silos with 2,000 ton capacity established
- Purchase of a new one-ton-per-hour processing capacity mill for Ncorha

EMALAHLENI

- 829 ha of grain sorghum planted
- Six participating cooperatives
- 574 beneficiaries
- Establishment of mechanisation unit

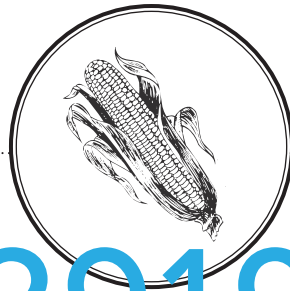
MQANDULI

- 936 ha of white maize planted
- Six participating cooperatives
- 36 people employed
- 80 temporary workers employed
- 2 silos with 1,500 ton capacity established
- Service of existing 1,5 ton-per-hour processing capacity mill in Mqanduli



MBIZANA

- 983 ha of white maize planted
- 13 participating cooperatives
- 1,112 beneficiaries
- Establishment of mechanisation unit



2919

hectares of White Maize planted



87

Permanent jobs & 80 temporary jobs



2013/14 Harvest Update

Reaping solid returns

The Ncora and Mqanduli RED Hubs harvested a combined 2,302.38 tons of white maize in the second quarter of the 2014/15 financial year. This harvest is a result of the 911ha and 955ha of white maize planted in 2013/14 in Mqanduli and Ncora respectively.



2302tons
of White Maize harvested
by the Ncora & Mqanduli
RED Hubs in the 2nd
quarter of 2014



R4.4m
total sales between the
2 hubs with each ton of
maize being sold for
R2000

According to ECRDA agronomist Luvo Qongqo, the Mqanduli site returned a 564,38 ton yield while Ncora yielded 1,738 tons. The Ncorha site had 706 beneficiaries who are the landowners as well as 256 in Mqanduli. ECRDA is working hard to resolve challenges related to late planting which also led to late harvesting. In addition, crop damage by livestock and theft from surrounding villages has also been a challenge coupled with the outbreak of American Bollworm which severely affected the Mqanduli area.

"In Ncorha maize was sold at R2,000 per ton with total value of sales at R3,3 million versus Mqanduli's R1,1 million. In order to avoid crop damage, maize in Ncorha was sold to the Ncorha Dairy Trust because storage facilities were not yet completed. In Mqanduli maize was sold to the mill which is owned and operated by the secondary cooperative," Qongqo says.

Products sold at the Mqanduli mill include super maize meal, samp and hominy chop as stock feed. Total sales of R194 000 by the end of March were recorded. The products are sold to the community via trading through informal stores as well as those in the community.

Former civil servant finds joy in maize farming

Farming has always been a mainstay for the people of the villages in Mqanduli. As such, in 2006, 16 locals joined hands to establish the Ntsimbini Maize, Fruit and Vegetable Cooperative, which now boasts 50 members and 300 hectares of land to plough. The establishment of the cooperative formalised what they had already been doing individually. The establishment of a legal structure such as a cooperative was a calculated move to turn their individual efforts into a profitable maize farming operation.

"I have always loved farming. From an early age I displayed an interest in both shepherding livestock and planting crops as I grew up in a farming environment," says Ntsimbini cooperative member Mzwandile Boozi.

The married father of three and former civil servant who traded his service to the public in 1994 to focus his attention on his passion for farming, says he has never looked back since, as he now lives what he describes as his childhood dream.

"Prior to establishing the cooperative, each of us tended to our own farms and focused on our own crops. But through the cooperative, we were able to produce enough crops to sell within the community and in the process, creating temporary jobs for some of the locals," Boozi says.

Presently, the cooperative has received assistance from the ECRDA with planting and harvesting their crops. In the process, they were able to provide employment for 20 locals during the harvest season.



Situated in the rural and fertile outskirts of Fort Malan, in the former Transkei, Masikhule Beef Production has dedicated much of its existence towards encouraging better farming practices amongst local informal breeders with an aim of penetrating the commercial meat industry.

Established in 2007, the project has brought "light" to the community through its innovative animal feeding operations (AFO), better known as 'feedlots'. This project cares for cattle over a three month period to guarantee their health through the provision of vaccines and feed.

"Local farmers usually bring their cattle to the AFO when they have decided that they would like them nurtured for the market. We then care for the herd for three months and later sell them to slaughter houses, giving the largest portion of the returns to the owner," says one of the project's directors, Nikilita Apleni.

Masikhule Beef Production was one of the projects to benefit from ECRDAs livestock development programme. Masikhule, which means "let us grow", received five Brahman bulls over a two year period from ECRDA.

The Fort Malan-based project is currently responsible for a herd of 25 cattle which has hired 15 temporary staff members to secure the parameters of the 1ha feedlot.

"The livestock development programme committed its R 2,3 million budget during the review period toward the implementation of programmes which respond to the challenges facing the small-scale and emerging livestock farmer.

ECRDA embarked on a livestock marketing drive with plans to take 5,000 livestock to the market by the end of the review period. Currently, in the former Transkei livestock marketing is almost non-existent and people continue to suffer the effects of poverty although they have cattle. ECRDA therefore embarked on a measured drive to encourage livestock owners to sell their livestock and make a living out of them. To encourage this culture change, ECRDA built an auction pen in Fort Malan and in Dudumashe in the Mbashe and Mquma local municipalities," says ECRDA livestock specialist Mathemba Maphuma.

Maphuma says ECRDA also secured the services of livestock marketing agents in the former Transkei area.

In the other areas of the province, such as Ngqushwa, King William's Town villages, Makana Local Municipality and Nkonkobe villages auctions took place and about 5,300 cattle, goats and sheep from eleven formal auctions and in the community.

Rural beef farmer eyes commercial market



R2.3m

for livestock development

5300

cattle, sheep & goats sold from 11 formal auctions

2

feedlot sites identified in Ncora and Mqanduli

3

programmes established – sheep training, veterinary and sheep shearing

80

sheep ram handed over to 95 beneficiaries in Ntabankulu



Successful land claim yields productive results

A result of a land claim dispute spanning over a period of 12 years, the establishment of Sinawo Communal Properties Association (SCPA) in 2007 brought the community of Mbizana together in an effort to reinstitute their forestry plantations and put their land into productive use.

The initiative, made possible through the government's land reform initiative, saw the return of 10 000ha of land to its rightful owners having lodged their first claim in 1995.

"The association has been functional since 1995 when we first made attempts to claim back our land and we received our certificate of incorporation in 2007. It is in the same year that we were finally granted the rights over our land, taking over from the previous owner who utilised it for ploughing sugar cane and gum trees,"

"The association has been functional since 1995 when we first made attempts to claim back our land and we received our certificate of incorporation in 2007. It is in the same year that we were finally granted the rights over our land, taking over from the previous owner who utilised it for ploughing sugar cane and gum trees," says SCPA chairperson, Lenford Gampsa.

Out of the 10 000ha of land, gum trees have been planted on 1 400ha with the remaining land set aside for vegetable production. According to Gampsa, the South African Pulp and Paper Industry (SAPPI), based in Umkhomazi in Kwa-Zulu Natal has been its main client.

"We have raised much of our revenue through selling our harvest to SAPPI, ensuring self-sustenance for the association. Furthermore, we have been able to purchase a new tractor and two vans to assist with operations and improve production," Gampsa says. SCPA is one of five projects who benefitted from R19 million committed by ECRDA in 2014/15

for new plantations in Izinini (Mbizana), Mkambathi (Flagstaff), Sixhotyeni (Maclear) and Gqukunqa (Qumbu).

"During the review period, planted an additional 840 hectares on top of the 340ha planted in 2013/14. ECDC and DAFF-funded Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) consultants have been appointed in Mkambathi and Sinawo for 2,400ha in order to accelerate the afforestation process. Already a total of 394 permanent jobs have been

created on the implementation stage of the five projects. The funds were utilised for planting operations, clearing of bush, procurement of fertiliser, stock-absorbers, herbicides, preparation of land, planting equipment, controlling weed competition, machinery and equipment such as tractors and trailers," says ECRDA forestry specialist Nkosiphendule Quvile.

All these projects have strategic partners which have signed off-take agreements. This means that while trees take eight years to mature, there will already be a buyer available on harvesting. The proceeds of the sale of timber will be paid into community bank accounts.

Quvile says the future plan is to ensure that communities add value addition activities in their value chain to improve income generation. ECRDA is actively investigation means to ensure that communities are able to secure equity in the operations of these strategic partners.

2014/15 Forestry Development Highlights

R19m
spent in 2014/15

840ha
of new forestry
plantations

5 projects
– Izinini, Sinawo, Mkambathi,
Sixhotyeni, Gqukunqa

394
permanent jobs created

Sinawo CPA Pitting Operation



ECRDA R15 000 loan a game-changer for poultry farmer

After his retrenchment from the police force in 1992, life was at a crossroads for Bhunga Gerald Matewu of Eluphondweni Village outside King William's Town. Although a serious knock for him and his family, Matewu channelled his energy toward setting up his own poultry business.

For over a decade, Matewu supported his wife and two children through his poultry operation until the establishment of the Sivuseni Cooperative in 2004. The establishment of Sivuseni was a game-changer as he and four other members jointly pursued their passion for farming chickens.

"Although my exit from the force was a painful one, I found solace in farming which saw me venturing into the poultry trade. I had inherited farming skills during my childhood, so raising and taking care of livestock came naturally," says Matewu.

It did not end there for 62 year-old Matewu as he went on to establish yet another venture, Bhunga Matewu Project in 2006. After assuming all operational cost for both his entities, in 2013, Matewu approached ECRDA for loan finance.

"The costs of purchasing chicks and feed became burdensome due to the increase in prices. I resorted to engage with ECRDA after hearing about their rural finance programme and my application was approved," Matewu explains.

The R15 000 ECRDA loan allowed me to buy 200 chicks, feed and vaccines which helped sustain his business and customer base while ensuring that he became one of 473 small businesses in 2013/14 that benefitted from the agency's rural finance packages.

"Through its rural finance tools, ECRDA intends to ensure that rural communities become meaningful participants in the economy rather than consumers. The organisation provides loans and technical assistance to rural entrepreneurs who are dedicated to changing their material conditions.

"In 2014/15 R11,6 million was approved for disbursement for 92 loan applications from individuals, legal entities or informal groups. Actual disbursement amounted to R13,3 million which is higher than the approved figure. This is because of loans approved in the previous year



which were only disbursed in the period under review. A total of R1,1 million went to 58 MAFISA loan beneficiaries. A total of R10,9 million in ECRDA agricultural loans went to 220 enterprises whose activities vary from poultry, livestock or crop production among others," says ECRDA rural finance specialist Dumisani Makhubalo.

A total of R1,3 million ECRDA non-agricultural loans went to 11 qualifying enterprises. This means of the ECRDA loans, 82% went to those involved in agricultural activities and 18% to those in non-agricultural activities such as hawkers.

"ECRDA finances agricultural and non-agricultural activities through affordable finance products. The disbursal of these funds is monitored through a tight credit and collections policy. These policies are designed to ensure the interests of beneficiaries as well of those of the corporation are protected.

"However, because of its developmental objectives, ECRDA provides support to those generally regarded as high-risk by private lenders. For this reason, the organisation strikes a delicate balance between its higher risk appetite and responsible lending practices," Makhubalo says.

ECRDA breathes life into R3 billion bioethanol project

ECRDA is expected to promote the cultivation of at least 80,000 hectares of sorghum to feed into a planned 261,000 ton feedstock aggregator for the R3 billion Cradock Bioethanol project.

According to ECRDA executive manager for renewable energy Roak Crew much of 2014/15 was spent on moving the Agricultural Research and Development Agency (ARDA) Cradock Bioethanol project to ECRDA.

"The organisation has a serious role to play in helping overcome obstacles in the implementation of the high impact R3 billion project. The most critical of these challenges has been the finalisation of incentives by government for biofuels producers. From a national perspective, the bioethanol industry is not sustainable without a substantial subsidy plan.

National government is therefore still in the process of taking a decision on the subsidy issue. In the expectation of a positive decision from government, the IDC as the main project funder engaged ECRDA with the intention of setting up a feedstock aggregator to source 261,000 tons of sorghum to be used as feedstock for the Cradock Bioethanol project. Plans are in place to ensure that an aggregator will be in place in the new financial year. To source the required feedstock, ECRDA will need to promote the cultivation of at least 80,000ha of sorghum," says Crew.

It is expected that it will take two years to build the bioethanol plant with construction only expected to commence once the subsidy matters have been finalised. The cost of implementation for the entire project is R3 billion of

which roughly R2 billion will go toward the construction of the factory.

At capacity, the plant will produce 100 million litres of bioethanol a year from 261,000 tons of grain sorghum. The by-products of this process will be fertiliser, animal feed and carbon dioxide gas. Bioethanol will be blended into the South African fuel pool. Crew says it is expected that 170 jobs would be created in the factory. Some 3,500 jobs linked through downstream industries will also be created.

During construction, a total of between 800 to 1,000 jobs will be created. The bulk of the sorghum will be sourced from black farmers. The factory will be owned by the IDC, ECRDA, the Central Energy Fund and a technical partner which is yet to be identified.

The IDC also intends to make part of its 50% shareholding available to black farmers and business. Already, between the Eastern Cape government and the IDC about R200 million has been spent on promoting the project. This covers agricultural trials and development, factory designs, engineering, acquisition of factory site, EIAs as well as construction on site for preparation

work. Eskom has also been paid to supply electricity to the site.

In addition, ECRDA has built and commissioned a bio-digester and an eco-garden at Rabula in Keiskammahoek. There's a community that's wants to produce vegetables and the bio-digester is now being used to process agricultural waste. The waste provides fertiliser for the vegetable garden while also producing methane gas as energy for a training centre. It is also used for cooking and lighting. ECRDA invested R500 000 into this project. There are 25 households already benefitting from this project.

R500 000

invested in Keiskammahoek bio-digester project

25

households beneficiaries of Keiskammahoek bio-digester project

Bio-digester and eco-garden built in Keiskammahoek



Kangela citrus farm breaks even!

ECRDA is delighted to announce that its subsidiary, the Kangela Citrus Farm in the Sundays River Local Municipality broke even in the 2014/15 financial year!

According to ECRDA chief executive officer Thozzi Gwanya, Kangela improved the production of cartons by 6,7% to 219 614. Revenue from the sale of citrus increased from R20,6 million to R28,7 million in the period under review.

"There is an additional 55ha of redundant orchards available for redevelopment, thus rejuvenating the area called Oranjezicht. A further 31,6ha is available for redevelopment of the farms of Kangela and Silveroaks. The cost of this will be much lower as we already have most of the infrastructure. A total of 200 casual workers were employed during harvesting," Gwanya says.

In 2014/15 a total budget of R6,64 million was allocated to Kangela. Actual expenditure amounted to R5,5 million. These funds were used for planting 15ha of new citrus trees, farm and tractor implements and for the development of a security trench of 4,9km. Kangela currently has 115ha of matured citrus trees.

Government, through ECRDA, owns 51% of the Kangela Citrus Farm. Kangela is a land reform programme aimed at empowering its 30 beneficiaries who own a citrus farm in Addo near the Sundays River Local Municipality. These beneficiaries are organised around the Kangela Empowerment Trust. ECRDA provides governance, operational and financial support to Kangela.



ECRDA ramps up support for associated entities

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Agricultural research and development agency (ARDA) integration update

ECRDA is pleased that it successfully managed the integration of its subsidiary the Agricultural Research and Development Agency (ARDA) into the overall operations of ECRDA. This is a notable highlight which has led to the creation of a renewable energy unit within ECRDA.

The establishment of the unit extends ARDA's previous focus on the Cradock bio-ethanol project to other forms of alternative energy such as wind, solar and biogas digestors. This is a crucial milestone that seeks to exploit the Eastern Cape's potential to generate about 5,000 megawatts of energy from these sources. ECRDA is already investigating public private partnerships in this regard.

With the integration, the ECRDA family welcomed 18 new members from ARDA. ARDA, which had been wholly-owned by ECRDA, was integrated into the overall operations of the organisation.

Meet ECRDA Social Facilitators



Team Manager
Zingisa Somlotha

Social Facilitators



Nokuphela Klaas



Athini Ndabankulu



Philile Makanda

ROLES

- Interaction with the communities
- Promoting ECRDA and other programmes
 - Community Awareness
- Social Facilitation and Socio-economic development
- Capacity Building and business support and advisory services
- Development of Rural Development Clusters
 - Support to Rural Markets

For enquiries and support contact: Mr Zingisa Somlotha on 060 991 2422 or e-mail somlothaz@ecrda.co.za





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