

Food-for-Peace Success Story

Young Farmers in Gwanda Beat Youth Unemployment through Livestock Farming



"I see goats everywhere- brown, black and white on this farm, others hopping in the pens." –

Makhosini's Dream

With his income, he started a personal cattle pen fattening project to further boost his income. He also plans to enroll in a local college, Esigodhini College for a diploma program in Agriculture.

With 67.7% unemployed youths and 60% of Zimbabwe's population at the risk of dying of hunger, livestock production, the backbone of most communities in dry and marginalised areas, has the capacity to absorb many unemployed youths and improve the food security situation in the country. Lack of knowledge and expertise, however, remains a stumbling block for many young people trying to make a breakthrough in the sector.

"I never thought livestock farming could really transform my life. Raising livestock was just a tradition."- Makhosini Ncube

"We share 20% of our profits and the rest is invested back into the business. This has been helping us to take care of our needs at the same time growing our business. Personally, the project has given me a job. I am now employed by this enterprise and I am now able to take of my family," - Makhosini Ncube

In Gwanda, Sukwe village, where thousands of residents live in abject poverty, relying on seasonal rainfall-fed agriculture in a drought-prone area, livestock farming has become vital, especially for youths who struggle to find decent work in these food insecure areas.

At an 8-acre, small informal settlement in Sukwe, a tiny farm is starting to form shape. A dip tank has been constructed and paddocks have been cobbled together with discarded wood, corrugated iron, and bricks. Makhosini Ncube, 22, could not further his studies despite successfully completing his secondary education in 2013. *"Though I had been doing my best, I had not been able to find a decent job or earn sufficient money. I had tried looking for a job in the city with nothing meaningful coming out of it."*

Makhosini, with his father and 3 of his friends, decided to start income generating projects to earn a living. Running by the name MTAK, the group started in 2017, selling chickens to raise money for their projects. The group started with 50 chickens and grew from there. Now, the group members are earning a steady income and supporting their families.

Life started to change for the group in September 2017, after Makhosini attended a livestock management training program by Amalima. Amalima was training Lead Framers and Paravets to provide veterinary services to local communities while also teaching livestock management practices like disease prevention, supplementary feeding, and improved breeding.

At the end of the training, equipped with newfound knowledge and confidence, he convinced his group to start a goat farming project. With the profit from the chicken business, the group bought a boer buck. Each member also contributed 10 goats into the enterprise and that same year, with 50 goats and a boer buck the group started MTAK GOAT Breeders.

MTAK is now a renowned goat seller in the village. Makhosini credits the success of the enterprise to the Amalima training, which he passed on to his group members. *"We take care of almost everything on the farm. We know the importance of vaccination for prevention of diseases. We vaccinate the goats on our own and we also dip our goats."*

The group's biggest market is Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), an NGO based in Matabeleland South, so far supplying 100 goats and making a profit of approximately 4000 USD equivalent. The group also supplies Ok supermarket in Gwanda with an average 450kgs (30 goats) of meat per month, profiting approximately 600 USD equivalent.

Plans are in the works to expand their operations. With 2 boer bucks and over 160 goats housed at a communal farm and facing dangers like wild animals, the enterprise is in need of their own bigger and protected space with proper sheds for the goats. To speed up the plan, the group has applied for a loan with CBZ Holdings through Amalima's loan facility program. Though nothing has materialized yet, the enterprise aims to keep raising funds for their expansion plan and, in the distant future, MTAK aims to be an established brand.