Poverty and hunger are inextricably linked. One third of South Africans go hungry on a daily basis. Lack of proper nutrition restricts people’s intellectual development and keeps them and their families trapped in poverty.

DRDGOLD understands its responsibility towards people living in disadvantaged communities within its operating footprint and in 2015, took a firm stance to help alleviate hunger, poverty and joblessness.

As one of its social and labour plan commitments, DRDGOLD partnered with Umsizi Sustainable Social Solutions to establish and implement the Broad-based Livelihoods Programme – an urban agriculture initiative to help people living within DRDGOLD’s operating footprints, use land available to them, sometimes just their own gardens, to at least grow enough food for their own needs – and better still – to produce a surplus to sell in their communities.

The Broad-based Livelihoods Programme is open to all regardless of gender, race, age, education and financial situation. It provides participants with hands-on skills training, knowledge transfer, monitoring and mentoring – and equipment such as growing tunnels.

The Broad-based Livelihoods Programme dramatically reduces suffering from food insecurity, equips people with the knowledge and tools to feed themselves, builds self-sufficiency and empowers people, ending their reliance on aid.
Training, which typically runs over a production season of about six months, involves structured sessions and learning groups. It incorporates content on household agricultural production, specifically tailored to include low-cost organic production techniques.

Although the programme starts with small-scale agriculture, there is no ceiling for expansion for committed growers. With an ever-growing market for fresh produce, these growers have the opportunity to enter the economic mainstream by selling directly to consumers in their communities at favourable profit margins.

Food security gives people access to enough, safe and healthy food to meet their dietary needs to lead an active and healthy life.

**Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality Broad-based Livelihood Programme**

DRDGOLD’s Ergo operation signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality prior to the start of the first organic food production programme in 2015.

To date, the Ekurhuleni programme has benefited hundreds of households. More than 1 700 people have been given the opportunity to secure access to healthy food and an income. This far exceeds the initial target of 250 people over a three-year period.

In early 2017, the Business Tools Workshop initiative, another component of the Broad-based Livelihoods Programme, was implemented. This focuses on business planning.
CITY OF JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY
BROAD-BASED LIVELIHOOD PROGRAMME

On 28 September 2018, following extended stakeholder engagement with the Department of Social and Economic Development, Ergo and the City of Johannesburg signed an official memorandum of understanding to launch the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality Broad-based Livelihood Programme.

The introduction of the programme, generated much interest in several communities: Riverlea, Soweto, Doornkop, Braam Fischerville, Sol Plaatje, Tshepisong and Kagiso. By the end of September 2018, 229 community members were already participating. By the end of 2018, it is anticipated that some of the committed households will receive their first vegetable tunnels.

Urban farmers provide year-round food for the table and emerging entrepreneurs sell their surplus, building an income stream, growing the local economy and freeing them from dependency on others.

Providing a vegetable tunnel not only provides protection against pests, animals and the elements, it increases the owner’s income earning potential and creates visible interest, systematically mobilising additional participants.
FAR WEST GOLD RECOVERIES MERAFONG BROAD-BASED LIVELIHOODS PROGRAMME

DRDGOLD is implementing the Broad-based Livelihoods Programme model, initiated so successfully in Ekurhuleni, across its new footprint, Far West Gold Recoveries, in the West Rand, giving more people hope for the future. The Far West Gold Recoveries Merafong Broad-based Livelihoods Programme aims to similarly empower the impoverished communities of Merafong and surrounding areas by teaching them to grow their own food and sell additional production as an income-generating business.

Already, there are five learning groups across the Merafong area and some 52 tunnels have been supplied to committed households.

Far West Gold Recoveries Merafong Broad-based Livelihoods Programme as at end October 2018

- Participants on the database: 423
- Training sessions completed: 50
- Monitoring and mentoring visits conducted: 287
- Participants implementing: 75
- Participants reported selling: 14
- Tunnels constructed: 52

Training is facilitated through structured, hands-on sessions.

ABOUT DRDGOLD

DRDGOLD is a South African gold producer and a world leader in the recovery of gold from the retreatment of surface tailings. DRDGOLD sustainably and profitably mines, through reclamation, what has been left behind in the legacy tailings of the Witwatersrand, moving historic mining waste to a world-class tailings facility, and opening up valuable land for development.


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