

Solidaridad



Southern Africa

CHANGE THAT MATTERS

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INCLUSIVITY



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DIGITALIZATION



Data-Driven through Digital 3s

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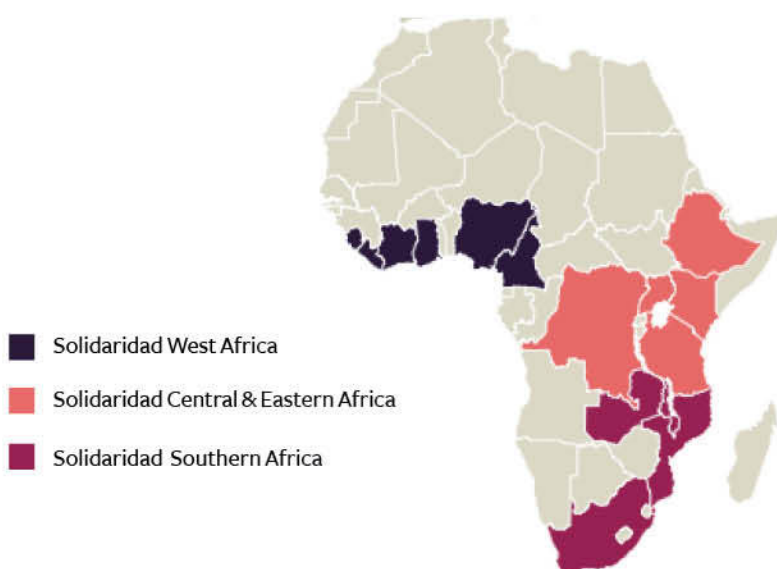
Landscape Innovation

With almost 50 years of experience facilitating the development of socially responsible, ecologically sound and profitable supply chains and a global footprint across 55 countries, Solidaridad Network is a frontrunner in the area of sustainable economic development.

Solidaridad Southern Africa is 1 of 9 Regional Expertise Centres that form part of the Solidaridad Network and is actively working to be a key leader of the change agenda in the region. Working in 9 countries across the region, with a special focus on 5 primary commodities (soy, sugarcane, cotton, fruit and vegetables, and livestock) and 4 secondary commodities (pulses, rice, winter grains and aquaculture), Solidaridad Southern Africa aims to deliver change that matters in some of the region's most significant value chains.

The majority of people living in Southern Africa are reliant on agriculture for their livelihoods and are especially vulnerable to the negative effects of climate change. Solidaridad Southern Africa focuses on supporting smallholder producers to adopt good practices, and have access to robust infrastructure and markets. This work ensures that an enabling policy environment is supported to help all markets actors to grow sustainably.

Solidaridad Southern Africa has a set of cross-cutting enablers - impact investment, climate innovation, digital Solidaridad sustainability solutions (Digital 3S) as well as gender and landscape innovation - that encompass all areas of its work. The organization aims to harness the collective energies of its various partners towards an agenda of delivering sustainability and inclusivity across the value chains it works in.



What we do: **the commodities we work in**



Sugarcane

Sugarcane is produced by 11 out of the 15 countries in Southern Africa, making it one of the biggest contributors to gross domestic product of the economies of the region. The industry has a significant multiplier effect as other industries provide services to it, employing many people in the processing, manufacturing, distribution and allied services along the supply chain.

Smallholder producers grow sugarcane as outgrowers to companies that own mills and also grow their own sugarcane. Sustainable sugarcane production remains a challenge for many of these outgrowers and companies. Production requires the use of large volumes of water

and burning, working conditions and land issues are of major concerns to stakeholders in the sector. Solidaridad Southern Africa works at producer level to equip outgrower farmers and companies with the skills to apply sustainable practices to their operations. Its approach of working with industry-leading stakeholders has seen the integration of bulk water supply management support for outgrowers in South Africa. As a result, smallholder producers have maintained their yields and improved the quality of their crops during the region's worst drought in 90 years. Providing local mills and companies with quality cane has increased outgrowers' incomes by as much as 50 percent.



Fruit and Vegetables

The majority of the fruit and vegetable farmers in Southern Africa are not sustainable and cultivate less than 3 hectares. As a result, smallholder farmers do not produce enough, or to the satisfaction of buyer requirements, and are marginal in modern fruit and vegetable supply chains. Solidaridad Southern Africa, alongside development efforts from government and industry, aims to develop the capacities of entrepreneurial smallholder producers to market readiness, particularly increased yields and improved quality and safety. This

is key to facilitate the longer term integration of smallholders in modern supply chains and facilitate a reliable, quality local supply of produce.

While development programmes exist in the fruit and vegetable sector, focus lies on market integration without enabling farmers to produce sustainably and get produce from the area of production to the market. The result is low returns of investment in current smallholder development programmes. In order to improve

production, marketing capacity and to get farmers market-ready, Solidaridad Southern Africa focuses on establishing an economically viable production unit so that farmers can produce collaboratively, consolidating their harvests to collectively market aggregated produce. Solidaridad Southern Africa understands the importance of resources in the success of farming and facilitates, wherever possible, the provision of access to training and knowledge, technologies, economic resources and market-orientated infrastructure. The

organisations belief in the power of digital innovation has seen the successful pioneering of a digital farmer support tool, the Rural Horizons Fruit Toolkit, for smallholder fruit producers to strengthen good farming practices and build their market requirement capacities. The tool has been localised with the support of key industry and development partners and is benchmarked against relevant local and international standards including SIZA social and Environmental Standards, GlobalGAP and local g.a.p and Fair Trade standards.



Cotton remains one of Solidaridad's key sectors due to its impact on people and the environment. It is an important source of income for hundreds of thousands of smallholder producers in the Southern Africa region. Without proper attention, however, the socio-economic relevance of the sector could easily be eroded by farming practices that harm the environment.

Solidaridad has seen the environment come back to negatively impact on smallholders livelihoods. Given the vulnerability to high temperatures, low and delayed rainfalls, and other weather patterns that smallholders are subjected to, climate smart agriculture has increasingly become important for the sustainability of cotton production as a reliable source of farming income.

Beyond the farm gate, the Southern African cotton industry, with sizable value-adding infrastructure that is now not used to full capacity, has had to reinvent itself to remain relevant in today's global economy. While Solidaridad's work focuses on smallholder producers,

our interventions have chain-wide effects, as we link producers to markets.

A growing demand for sustainable cotton, as evidenced by Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) and Cotton made in Africa (CmiA) activities in South Africa, Mozambique and Zambia, has seen Solidaridad partner with key players in the Southern Africa cotton sector. To contribute to meaningful change, Solidaridad's interventions, aligned to regional thinking, have focused on fostering collaborations: At local smallholder level for better knowledge sharing, innovation and increased productivity; at regional sector level to activate redundant cotton value-adding capacity; and at global level for market linkages. Countries like Zimbabwe and Swaziland, with a history of thriving cotton industries, provide an opportunity for Solidaridad and its partners to play up such collaborations, thus contributing to Southern Africa's successes, like much needed job creation.



Solidaridad Southern Africa trained and supported **29,874** smallholder farmers produce Better Cotton Initiative cotton in Mozambique





Livestock

The Southern Africa region is increasingly being characterised by dry and hotter climates. Faced with frequent droughts, livestock production will be significantly affected by the devastating impacts of climate change. This is a major concern for a region with a rich diversity of livestock that contributes considerably towards the agricultural gross domestic product of multiple national economies. Livestock production is simultaneously one of the main contributors of climate change. This makes smart adaptation initiatives that result in fewer and more efficient animals, a necessity for the region.

Opportunities exist to use indigenous animal genetic resources and green technologies that form part of carbon-neutral, climate smart production systems. While such opportunities offer exciting responses to the realities of climate change, current mitigation and adaptation efforts have often been uncoordinated and sporadic. In order to overcome these challenges, the creation and strengthening of regional networks is required where experiences and lessons learnt are shared to enhance and strengthen effective adaptation of the livestock sector in the region. Solidaridad Southern Africa is leading the charge for a better-

coordinated sector, recognising that the industry does not operate within a vacuum. In Zambia it works with partners such as the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, Livestock Development Trust, Dairy Association of Zambia, Zambia National Farmers Union and the Citizens Economic Empowerment Commission to support the implementation of sustainable landscape management practices for improved beef and dairy production, while at the same time reducing the exploitation of natural resources. This work also focuses on strengthening the capacity of smallholder producers and help them move into the commercial sector by increasing access to finance and value addition for dairy and beef products and by-products. This includes hides and skins and establishing modern slaughter and milk collection centres to create broader access to more viable markets, locally, regionally and internationally. Solidaridad Southern Africa works with government to strengthen and introduce supportive policies and incentives that promote agro-dealership by smallholder producers. It also supports business development strategies that provide paid-for basic extension and veterinary services by producers, including drug sale by trained community livestock volunteers within target communities.



Soy

Soybean has a multitude of benefits for soil fertility, human nutrition and household income that provide valuable opportunities to address significant regional challenges related to climate change, food insecurity and poverty. Despite the potential soy offers, production practices across the region are generally poor, with the exception of commercial farmers in South Africa and Zambia. Smallholder soy producers are characterised by low input use resulting from high prices, lack of finance, poor seed availability, limited irrigation and poor agronomic practices. Addressing these challenges is critical to maximise the benefits that soy production offers

smallholder producers and their families. Solidaridad Southern Africa works to improve technology uptake that will lead to improvements in productivity and contribute to farm output growth and converting product intensification into a sustainable source of farm income. Existing work that strengthens farmer associations has successfully helped smallholders reduce buyers' transaction costs and negotiate collectively for services and inputs. Solidaridad Southern Africa supports company representatives engaging in inclusive agri-business practices with practical tools and a comprehensive overview of potential solutions and collaborative approaches.

In Malawi the number of soy-producing hectares increased by over 50 % providing valuable nutrients and improved income to smallholder producers

Our work with Smallholder Producers



Good practices

A growing demand for agricultural production systems that produce more with less, requires innovative sustainability solutions that enable smallholder producers to increase productivity in a sustainable and resilient manner. At the centre of Solidaridad Southern Africa's approach lies the smallholder producer. For meaningful, effective sustainability in agricultural production to be realised, the organization believes smallholders need to be co-owners of efforts to promote the application of good and climate smart agricultural and industrial practices. Central to this is ensuring that producers are not only trained, but actually see the benefits of applying good practices. Working

with partners such as AgriIQ has enabled interventions to draw creative, hands-on training techniques. These include gamification approaches that better demonstrate the need for proper governance and financial management of producer organisations. As a result, a number of associations are legally registering as cooperatives and collectively reformulating their association constitutions to hold leaders accountable. Interventions to provide water infrastructure improvements have helped 1240 smallholder sugarcane producers to maintain their yields, outperforming some commercial growers, in the regions worst drought in 90 years..



Robust infrastructure

Solidaridad South Africa believes good practices can flourish and lead to real impact when they are embedded and supported by a robust infrastructure. Producers cannot improve productivity and sustainability without access to necessary resources, services and knowledge. The organization uses the cluster model to support producers to organise better, and works with key stakeholders in supply chains to provide inputs and services. The benefits of the cluster model have accrued to smallholder farmers in Mozambique where the support for the Better Cotton Initiative has seen an average yield increase of over 100% amongst smallholder cluster farmers compared to non-cluster farmers. Alongside this, Solidaridad Southern Africa also supports partners to provide crucial extension support to smallholder producers that ensures continuous support and services. The Southern Africa Partnership for Sustainable Cotton and Food

Security project has equipped 29 extension workers with motorcycles and training to support 16,979 smallholders. This has supported smallholders to grow more sustainable cotton and improve their food security by growing food and cash crops. Solidaridad Southern Africa's livestock programme focuses on increasing productivity and efficiency while simultaneously helping to reverse land degradation that has occurred across the region from unsustainable grazing practices. The aim of this is to shift the mind-set of traditional cattle producers who move their cattle from area to area and therefore see little value in investing in sustainable practices. In Namibia, cattle producers' improved access to livestock auctions has resulted in cattle sales amounting to 28,3 million Namibian dollars (1,8 million euros). This has contributed to significant improvements for the community who report now being able to pay for school fees and uniforms on time.

Our work with companies



Developing mutually beneficial partnerships that help reconcile social and ecological responsibility with market and supply chain realities is one of the most important aspects of our work.

As such, Solidaridad Southern Africa partners with hundreds of players from across national, regional and global supply chains. This includes local producers and associations, supply chain service and input providers, governments, civil society, policy and decision-makers, corporate social responsibility leaders, leading global brands and consumers Southern Africa's agro-food companies, such as Illovo Sugar, TSB Sugar, Heineken and retailers such as Spar, and trading companies have all benefitted from collaboration with Solidaridad Southern Africa to strengthen their supply chains, facilitate better smallholder access to their markets and support their sustainability agenda. Opportunities abound in all the commodities the or-

ganization works with, to become a partner of choice within sustainable and inclusive value chain development.

In South Africa, the organization's project with vegetable smallholder farmers sought to build entrepreneurial farming by equipping farmers with the knowledge and skills to improve their production and enable these farmers to participate in the supply chain of local retailers and surrounding fresh produce markets. In these interventions, focus lies on the intensification of best practices and ensuring sustainable production systems to increase productivity, quality and profitability. The programme targeted clusters of smallholder vegetable producers with the provision of fulltime extension support, increasing the market readiness of smallholders while linking them with local markets, including the Joburg Fresh Produce Market.

Landscape level

Solidaridad has been involved in facilitating the formation of a national association for smallholder sugarcane producers which has allowed producers to address the challenges they face together with other industry stakeholders.

Market level

Linking producers to international markets: Solidaridad facilitated the construction of a chemical shed for use by smallholder producers to store their chemicals safely and minimise risk and exposure to their families. This has helped those associations that were seeking Fairtrade certification.

Solidaridad Southern Africa has also been working with TsGro and Akwandze to support the production of sustainable sugarcane in South Africa. As subsidiaries of one of the leading sugar producers in South Africa, TSB Sugar, the partnership with TsGro and Akwandze has facilitated the provision of bulk water supply management services, repair operations management and security services to support the irrigation infrastructure provided to smallholder farmers. This has resulted in 2 day turnarounds to report and repair leaks, versus waits of up to 4 to 5 weeks from private contractors prior to the introduction of the bulk water management system. The result has been 44% increase in farmers' income and better quality sugarcane for TSB Sugar.

In its fruit and vegetables work, Solidaridad Southern Africa supported institutional capacity development by co-establishing a shared platform of stakeholders that intersects with the smallholder farmers sector, retailers

(including Food Lovers' Market, Woolworths) and fresh produce markets (including Cape Town Market, Joburg Fresh Produce Market), government, food standard holders and development organizations. The Smallholder Horticulture Platform was established with funding provided by Solidaridad to build improved coordination, partnership and alignment in the sector and is working towards integrated standards and has conducted a survey among major fresh produce markets and supermarkets in South Africa. These markets operate regionally and 6 out of 7 of these markets responded favourably for a single, harmonised standard that addresses social, environmental benchmarks and food safety and that can create a step-up towards GlobalGAP for smallholder farmers. Continentally the Platform is working towards a consolidated AfricaGAP that can support the transition of smallholder farmers into continental supply chains.



A partnership with United Purpose saw a **69 %** adoption rate of good practices

by smallholder producers after training on sustainable sugarcane production principles

3 multi-stakeholder platforms established with key retailers, private and public entities to drive innovative and inclusive solutions for the region's sustainability challenges



Innovation Areas

Gender Inclusivity

Solidaridad Southern Africa's understanding of inclusive development takes into account the needs, the participation and the contribution of women and men equally. At present, in most of the sectors the organization works in, women are not part of the formal economy and do not benefit from it equally, or in some cases are even affected negatively by it.

In all aspects of its work, Solidaridad Southern Africa seeks to prove a 3 tier business case of gender inclusivity:

1. Increased quantity of impact by tapping into the often unused economic potential of women.
2. Improved quality of impact by increasing diversity in formal economies and societies.
3. Increased sustainability of impact by empowering women in their social impact and redistribution of wealth in communities.

To achieve this Solidaridad Southern Africa designs projects from the perspective of gender equity. Sensitization and training of Solidaridad staff and partners is part of this approach, as is specific attention for capacity-building and social and economic empowerment of women. To create an enabling environment for gender inclusivity, Solidaridad Southern Africa's lobbying and advocacy activities include gender sensitive interests and agendas and partnerships with special interests partners.

Impact Investment

The organization's focus on impact investment centres on 2 key questions: how are projects continued after interventions and how can the impact of these interventions be leveraged? Clear business cases and bankable propositions mobilize soft commercial finance, while providing continuity as markets the organizations activities. By integrating business cases in its projects and attracting soft commercial finance for businesses that are part of it, Solidaridad Southern Africa positions itself towards blended finance donors and impact investors as a preferred partners. The result is investment opportunities for investors that are looking for more benefits than financial return only. On the producer level, Solidaridad Southern Africa supports farmers improve their business case and attract impact-driven private sector investments. To be successful, producers need to be able to rely on a robust rural infrastructure of agricultural companies and cooperatives delivering services and products they need. Solidaridad Southern Africa supports the development of such an infrastructure by mitigating the business risks for these companies and cooperatives using local, private sector investments. At landscape level, the organization supports producers and consortia of companies to develop bankable business cases for landscape level interventions like carbon reduction, water management and decreases deforestation. At country level, the organization advocates for responsible finance practices among leading public and private investors, providing that investments be guided by social and environmental checks, balances and safeguards.

Climate Innovation

Climate change is already an inevitable reality. Agriculture and associated land use changes, such as deforestation, are important sources of greenhouse gas emissions contributing to climate change. At the same time, farmers are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change, feeling the impacts of more intense and frequent droughts, floods and rising temperatures. Unfortunately, farmers do not have access to financial opportunities that support climate smart approaches to production, as most instruments focus on large-scale energy and forestry projects. It is for this reason that Solidaridad Southern Africa integrates climate smart concepts across its entire programming and links farmers with supportive financial sources.

Solidaridad Sustainability Solutions: Digital 3S

Solidaridad Southern Africa understands that the myriad of challenges facing the region, as well as on a global level, offer exciting opportunities to draw on digital technology solutions to address challenges, that were once almost impossible to overcome. Advances in digital technology now offer rural communities with an unprecedented opportunity to overcome isolation, improve communication, bridge knowledge gaps and adapt. The move towards increasing affordability and availability of smartphones means the digital infrastructure is already in place or accessible, but needs to be tapped into in ways that ensures these technologies are used to support sustainability.

Solidaridad Southern Africa wants to lead this process and include smallholder producers from the beginning, especially the poorest and remote who are currently not positioned to reap the benefits of technology and digital solutions. In order to protect the interests of these groups, the digital applications used for technology-driven sustainability programmes run on neutral platforms to which anyone can connect, rather than proprietary platforms for a selected few.

Over the last 5 years, the Solidaridad Network has developed the Rural Horizons tool, offering smallholder producers a rapid and critical analysis of their performance on relevant sustainability issues. Producers' production practices are compared with external norms and standards which stimulates legal compliance and informs the support provided, helping producers overcome barriers that prevent them from producing sustainably and accessing markets. For companies sourcing produce from these producers, this digital solution offers a reliable bank of information and ensures they are able to source locally while meeting growing demands for quality.

Landscape Innovation

The global population is growing at rates never seen before, a challenge that is of particular concern for the African continent where population rates are projected to double to 2.4 billion by 2050. As population increases, the region is faced with growing pressure on land, water and natural resources. Within the context of this growing pressure for these scarce resources, the interests of vulnerable groups, particularly in developing countries, are being ignored and side-lined. Solidaridad Southern Africa brings together smallholder producers and key, influential economic players to ensure that landscapes are used in a way that promotes biodiversity and takes into account the environment, and social and economic interests of the people working on the land. This requires investments in research, training, promotion, monitoring and active support from local and regional authorities.

Our Impact

The application of an innovative cotton cluster model helped smallholders increase their yield by over **100 %** compared to non-cluster smallholders



Solidaridad Southern Africa has increased the number of direct beneficiaries it supports by **200%** from 2012 to 2016



Bulk water supply management improvement assisted smallholder sugarcane producers maintain their yields during the region's worst drought in over **90 years**



Meet the Team

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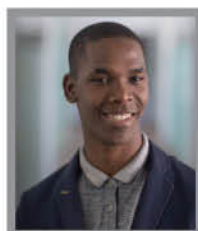
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Our Partners



Formerly known
as Concern Universal



Dairy association of Zambia



Kingdom of the Netherlands

KATOEN
SUID-
AFRIKA



COTTON
SOUTH
AFRICA



COOPERATION >

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