



INNOVATION PLATFORM–YOUTH AGRIBUSINESSES
eMsinga: Malongwane dip, Mthaleri area at Pomeroy
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Goat Value Chain Innovation Platforms facilitated by Goat Agribusiness Project

In 2016, the Goat Agribusiness Project (GAP) set up Innovation Platforms for the Indigenous Goat Value Chain in South Africa.

In recent years, innovation platforms (IPs) have become increasingly prevalent in the agricultural development arena to bring together value chain actors for the purpose of creating linkages, surfacing and discussing issues, defining possible solutions and creating research agendas, coordination of activities, disseminating research, streamlining and improving the value chain process, amongst other things.

With the goat value chain in South Africa being underdeveloped and few formal horizontal or vertical linkages existing, GAP has been facilitating IPs for almost 8 years now with the goal of building relationships and providing a useful forum among the value chain actors in favour of rural, smallholder farmers. While innovation platforms are not new, there is no record of any IPs related to goat value chains in South Africa to date.

Goat farmers have been able to interface directly with relevant stakeholders to help solve their problems. Goat farmers have been able to voice their concerns, constraints and issues related to commercialisation of their herds. This has been

discussed in the innovation platform forum with government, NGOs and researchers. Over the years, research has been conducted and brought back to the forum for discussion and dissemination. In addition to knowledge transfer through the innovation platforms, scientists are involved in publications, short course lectures and other talks. Numerous innovations have come from these platforms and been tested across KwaZulu Natal and incorporated into the Indigenous Goat Production Handbook.

The meeting was held at Bongani Mbatha's home.

The purpose of the meeting:

Goat Agribusiness Project thought of ways to bring youth to be active in livestock while making an income, they'll do this means of Mobile vet shops, selling of protein blocks, Ram speculators, and auction Champions.

The youth will share their experiences in their businesses and talk about the challenges they are facing and how are they overcoming them.

1. Business Successes and obstacles

1.1 Ram Speculator - Sinethemba Dlamini from OThukela

Sinethemba is a young farmer who was loaned by Mdukatshani Rural Development Project to buy rams. He bought 10 rams.

The agreement was that after a couple of months the loan is to be paid back. The project also assisted with medicine, shelter for the kraal, poles, and feed.

Some challenges that Sinethemba experienced were goats becoming sick as well as having to ask farmers for young goats since some of his goats had been sold and he needed to restock.

The young farmer stated that making it a loan encouraged him to put in effort and take good care of the goats he was selling.

When goats were bought, they ranged from R900 to R1100.

The first goat sold was sold it at R1300, the second one was bought at R1000 and was sold at R1700, and the other one was bought at R1000 and sold at R1600.

He buys goats from the age of 6 months.

He buys rams because it is easy for them to be sold while with the female goats aren't as easy because they tend to delay the business when they become pregnant.

He plans to start an indigenous chicken project.

1.2 Blocks makers - Nompumelelo Zondi and Zamile Gcumisa

They started their Business in February 2023 with a capital amount of R1600 that they used to buy material in Greytown. They then asked MRDP management for support and had their work posted on Facebook for advertisement.

They decided to sell in town because there would be more customers to buy their blocks. In their first mix, they made 108 blocks and made R700 profit.

At first, they were making small blocks that they were selling at R20 each, then when cow farmers approached them and said the blocks were too small for their cows, they started to use 20 litre buckets to make bigger blocks that they sold at R100. Other farmers also complained and wanted bigger blocks, and they ended up using a basin and their profit increased to R1000.

The blocks they are making have all the nutritional value needed by livestock. At first they used to buy mix in Greytown but now MRDP is helping them to get the mix from them.

Challenges that the ladies experienced were that in the beginning, they would go back home with stock they had not sold because farmers weren't used to the protein blocks, some farmers believed the protein blocks killed their goats- they overcame this challenge by explaining to farmers that feeding the block to livestock in correct quantities is beneficial to livestock, in winter the block do not dry easily at times they would put them on a fire so that they would dry.



Nompumelelo Zondi, a block maker from Mathonjane Dip, talking about the different sizes of protein blocks



Farmers and community members engaging with block makers

1.3 Mobile Agrivet - Nompilo

Mbatha (Mthungwini Dip) and Landithey Xulu (Nodada Dip)

They started the business In May 2023, they started while they were doing censuses and they were told that they needed to keep R1950 from their stipends to order their first batch of medicine.

Landiwe Xulu was able to make R2 700 from her first stock, she then took R1600 and bought 5 litre dip medicine because she saw farmers struggling with the dip medicine and sold 500ml of dip at R200 and from the profit she made, she was able to buy a cell phone worth R1300 to connect with customers.

The stock that is in demand is Sprays, tick grease and dip medicine.

1.4 Mobile agrivet - Mxoveni Sikhakhane from Vumbu

Mxoveni started in 2019 as a CAHW, and then in 2020 the project came to an end. He told his community about the closure and explained to farmers that he wanted to continue to treat their livestock but only if they were willing to support him. They agreed then he started treating their goats at R5 per ml.

He then went to other dip tanks, introduced himself and marketed his work to farmers. The farmers loved his work and asked him to stay. When he gets into a new area, he looks at their livestock and sees which medicine would be suitable for them then he provides them according to their needs. To increase his profits, he also sells his MI's.

What helped him the most is that he did an interview at the town hall and Mdukatshani Rural Development Project Management posted his interview on the GAP Facebook page which led him to work in different provinces.

1.5 Auctions Champion - Lindani Ngidi from Ellesmere Dip

Lindani communicates with farmers about when and where the goat sale will be. He has bought a horse so he can travel faster when mobilizing goats.

When talking to farmers he emphasizes the importance of selling colours that are in demand. Black goats are not easily sold. Some farmers will sell a goat because they are getting rid of it without looking at whether the colour is in demand or not, this will lead to them not getting enough money.

The challenge they face is that farmers need to have their own transport and it becomes a problem because others want to sell but don't have transport to take their livestock to the sale.



1.6 Selling of protein blocks - Sfundo Mbatha from Malongwana

Sfundo started his business in April 2023. While he was working under the Jobs fund project. He saw that people in his village didn't have anywhere to buy protein blocks so he started making small blocks so that anyone could afford them. They were too small for cows so he made them using a 5 litre bucket.

When livestock eat a protein block, they need 3 to 5 litres of water because the salt in the block makes them thirsty, this leads to better health of the animal and decreases the chances of abortion.

To promote his business, he advertised on Facebook groups, he also got videos from farmers and posted them on Facebook. He makes his deliveries using Pep Store.

He had challenges with transport for orders to Nquthu and Durban. He met Musa Tiba from Ngome, who does deliveries to Durban. Musa offered to help Sfundo by doing his Durban deliveries for free.

He started to order from Dundee but MRDP helps him with mix orders, and he can now realize bigger profits.

He makes deliveries across KZN and Eastern Cape, Gauteng, and Mpumalanga.



Malibongwe Mbatha, from Malongwane dip, explains how he uses innovation to further his business



Community members listening to the youth speak about their business.

2. Way Forward

Mr Langa, Agrivet shop owner at Pomeroy

When starting a business it is hard, and you need to have a vision.

Their vision is to make sure that the farmer's livestock is healthy and that farmers are happy with their livestock.

You need to do research first and know the market, the goat market is very high.

Business is about meeting demands. There are things that they can do to assist the youth in businesses.

Medicine

- Make one order(Bulk sale)
- If they can tell how much stock they will need, at what time they will need it and they can negotiate the price Mark up
- Buy wraps

Blocks mix

- The pre-packs can be arranged and prices will be negotiated.

Other structures that help small businesses with Funding and Business plans

- LED in local municipality
- District LED
- DED Economic development
- Agricultural Development they have a budget to help small businesses
- ITHALA Bank in business section they do business plans.

People who are chosen by the project do not perform better than those who chose themselves, the project wants to support youth from what they have started and also on what hinders their businesses.



Community member attentively listening to how the youth overcome challenges in their businesses.