



NDA

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Tfutfukani brick making cooperative Case Study



BEYOND **10** yrs
OF UNLOCKING
POTENTIAL



Tfutfukani Brick Making Cooperative
National Development Agency funded project

Compiled by

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BACKGROUND

Tfutfukani is a brick making cooperative which is strategically placed at the heartland of developing areas and nearby Nelspruit which is the economic hub of the region. Tfutfukani Bricks Making is under the Mbombela Municipality which is situated within the Lowveld sub-region of the Mpumalanga Province. Tfutfukani was started in 2005 by six members that were brought together by Mrs. Mavuso after she was retrenched from a clothing factory. The cooperative was legally registered in 2005 but only started its first operations in 2008 due to lack of land and startup capital to kick off their activities.



Figure 1: the quality of Paving bricks produced by Tfutfukani

PROJECT METHODOLOGY

The cooperative starts with mixing the river sand, building sand and cement to produce the bricks. A conveyor belt adds the mixture to a machine, which pours a measured amount of mixture into a form. The form is vibrated to remove bubbles, after which it is raised to reveal the wet bricks, spaced out on a pallet then they are carried to the brickyard for drying. The cooperative makes four types of bricks, hollow bricks used to build homes and walls, maxi bricks which are used mainly for RDP houses and stock brick and paving bricks used for paving on the roads. Currently Tfutfukani Bricks Cooperative makes about 10 000 bricks daily which are SABS approved.



Figure 2: the quality of hollow bricks produced by Tfutfukani



Figure 3: the quality of stock bricks produced by Tfutukani



Figure 4: the quality of Maxi bricks produced by Tfutukani

CHALLENGES

- Insufficient number of palettes to enable the cooperative to produce more numbers of bricks daily.
- The parts for the brick making machines are very expensive and they are purchased in Gauteng which takes some time. The cooperative have experienced a breakdown of the machine and had to stop producing bricks for weeks while waiting for the parts to be replaced.
- The cooperative has a delivery truck that is not in good conditions as it always breaks down and it costs a cooperative lot of unbudgeted monies for repairs.
- The project beneficiaries struggle with transport from home to work.

PARTNERSHIPS

The cooperative has established partnerships with:

- Build it – to supply bricks to them on a monthly basis.
- The cooperative has an agreement to supply its bricks to the school that is being built for the community.

FINANCIAL AND NON FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- In 2008 Tfutukani approached the Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency (Mega) for assistance and they funded the cooperative R495 000 as a loan. The cooperative installed electricity and fencing, bought a container for storage of tools and materials, repaired the brick making machine, de-bushed the land and constructed a guard house.
- National Development Agency funded the cooperative a grant amount of R941 719 which was used to buy material and a truck. The NDA also ensures that members are capacitated in governance and financial management and controls. Ten members have benefited from these trainings already.
- DELTA donated the industrial brick making machine to the value of R550 000.
- Mbombela Municipality provided land and have appointed Sekela Xabiso, an Audit Firm to prepare the cooperative's books.
- Small Enterprise Development Agency assisted the Cooperative with the development of the business plan.

CONCLUSION

The cooperative is doing very well and has a great potential for growth seeing the hard work that the members are putting in the cooperative and the quality of bricks they are producing. Tfutukani is a good example of youth and women empowerment as majority of the beneficiaries is youth and women.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The cooperative needs a forklift to pack their bricks and load them in a truck as they are currently using a wheel barrow to move the bricks from one point to another when they have dried out, this is time consuming and requires lot of labour.



Figure 5: bricks being packed in the wheelbarrow and ready to be loaded in the truck for delivery to the local market



Figure 6: the sand and cement mixture is being prepared for producing first blocks of bricks.



Figure 7: the mixture is being loaded on the industrial brick making machine



Figure 8: Brick production Pallets used to carry out wet bricks to the brickyard for drying



Figure 9: Fourteen stock bricks produced and packed on the pallet



Figure 10: Wet, newly produced bricks packed on pallets for drying.



Figure 11: Industrial brick making machine owned by Tfutukani



Figure 12: Women Empowerment



Figure 13: Youth Empowerment