



The HPSA Jozini Agricultural Model Project is funded the European Union

Too many kids to count thanks to goat enclosure



Mam Thembu gathers one of her goat kids at her enclosure

MAM THEMBU moved out of Mkuze town to Tshaneni because of her goats. There were four of them to start off with, payment from clients for work done by her husband, a mechanic. That was the start of the dream, back in 2010.

By the time HPSA got involved, her flock had grown very nicely, to 45 goats and 18 kids. But she knew she could do better. Fortunately, there are no hyenas or leopard in the immediate area, but there were many losses to theft by what she calls the 'two-legged predators'. Most often it's the kids who were stolen when they were out with their mothers feeding in the veld, or newborns, that are so easy to tuck under an arm. Theft, and water, are her greatest worries.

Kid mortality among some goat farmers can be as high as 90% sometimes. This can be due to disease, a lack of nutrition, or mothers going hungry or thirsty. To help combat this, simple enclosures are built for the cost of a goat. Altogether 45 enclosures have been built in all the dip tanks. Each dip tank has 15 enclosures, and they demonstrate to other farmers how to reduce mortality rate of heifers especially in winter. The CAHWs monitor these enclosures

every month. In these enclosures, livestock is fed daily with grass, stover, mineral blocks, and maize, mash and food leftovers

Looking for solutions to her difficulties, Mam Thembu started attending community meetings run by CAHW Makhosi Sangweni in 2016. Like many other farmers in the Jozini Agricultural Model Project, she asked if HPSA would assist in building her an enclosure to enable her to manage her flock better. Most farmers build these, together with CAHWs, for their goat kids to ensure they get enough nutrition and are kept from predators. These enclosures, originally developed by Mdukatshani Rural Development Programme, are being piloted and rolled out across Jozini and other HPSA project sites. For Mam Thembu, the main benefit is that she can keep the kids in with sufficient water when she lets the rest of the flock out in the morning, sometimes as early as 8am when there isn't dew on the ground. The ewes then come back in the late morning for water themselves, and suckle their kids who have been safely out of reach from stock thieves. Later, in the afternoon, the entire flock goes back out, but doesn't exhaust itself on long treks for water, which makes the kids most vulnerable.



2 CAHW Makhosi Sangweni checks the condition of one of Mam Thembu's goat kids.

The results were immediate. Whereas Mam Thembu would have expected most of the 10 kids born since the enclosure was built to have been 'lost', all have survived. Now, says Mam Thembu, there

are too many to count, but she knows them all by sight and name so she knows if they're all safely home by the end of the day, and healthy.

Her goats have put her eldest through university, with a second child in final year. She sells about one goat a month, with females fetching up to R950. She sells by word of mouth, and the proceeds go towards education and food. Her growing flock means that the family will be able to buy cattle to set Mam Thembu's husband up in business, as the mechanic's trade has been lean of late and the future uncertain. With jobs so scarce, the goats have come into their own, with a sure hand from Mam Mthembu and a little help from HPSA.

HPSA's Jozini Agricultural Model Project covers four areas in the Umkhanyakhude District and the Zululand District - Jozini, Nongoma, Hlabisa and UMhlabuyalingana. The project, funded by the European Union, started in May 2015. The project aims to help 2400 farmers increase their livestock production. Part of the project activities are focused on helping goat farmers increase their productivity and assist with formalising the indigenous goat market by linking stakeholders throughout the value chain and organising goat sales at pension points and regular auctions. Project partners are Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, Mdukatshani Rural Development Project and the KZN Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.



Mam Thembu and her goats