



# The LAND project at the UW-Madison Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems

University of Wisconsin-Madison  
College of Agricultural and Life Sciences



The Eastern Cape Province of South Africa is a beautiful region, with a series of lush, fertile plateaus rolling up from the sea to the Drakensberg Mountains. Yet the area has high levels of poverty, hunger, and HIV infection, a paradox of scarcity in what could be a land of plenty. The Livelihood, Agroecology, Nutrition, and Development Project (LAND) seeks to end this paradox.

## goals

Our four goals are 1) to provide sustainable livelihoods for smallholder farmers and their communities in the Eastern Cape Province; 2) to integrate health and nutrition with improved agricultural practices; 3) to enhance ecosystem services, including crane habitat, erosion control, and carbon sequestration; and 4) to build social capacity through participatory methods.



## partners

The LAND Project is a partnership of the Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems at the University of Wisconsin-Madison; Indwe Trust, a South African sustainable development NGO; Kidlinks World, a youth and health charity that focuses on Southern Africa; and the Ncedisizwe Co-op, a local cooperative of 800 smallholder farmers in 26 villages in the Engcobo region of the Eastern Cape.



## production approach

Our approach centers on two systems of sustainable agricultural intensification: managed grazing on common pasture lands and perennial home gardens. Managed grazing will double the level of animal production, while also building soil quality, reducing erosion, sequestering carbon, and promoting wildlife habitat. Perennial home gardens will increase the quality and variety of local diets and thus improve health, including HIV/AIDS survival, while reducing labor needs.





## business approach

The LAND project is enhancing incomes both through adding value and retaining value. Cooperative marketing agreements that add value are in development with local, national, and international distributors for the free-range meat produced by local farmers, with the Co-op acting as the broker. Local sales of meat and vegetables from village to village, and farmer to farmer, will retain value. Both approaches will develop entrepreneurial skills and provide employment opportunities for both young and old.



## health approach

The LAND project integrates sustainable food production with cooperative development and combines health education with agriculture education, merging food security with economic security. The project has a special focus on children, as children are the future of the region and also central contributors to family farming.



## implementation approach

We work at the village level, synergizing local knowledge and expert knowledge in planning, monitoring, and evaluation. Through the Ncedisizwe Co-op, we are working with local schools and village committees to develop and demonstrate sustainable and perennial systems that fit local circumstances and grow social capacity. We closely involve women, men, the young, and the old.

## sustainable growth

We aim to propagate new endeavors and new partnerships, both in Engcobo and elsewhere in the Eastern Cape, with benefits that will extend well beyond the life and location of the project. Additional support will allow the LAND project to continue its work with the Ncedisizwe Co-op, and expand to other regions of the Eastern Cape.



For more information or to support the LAND project, contact:

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