



Growing resilient and Environmentally friendly Education and Networking
in Biodynamic Farming and Horticulture in Southern Africa

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Innovative Training Approaches for
Biodynamic Agriculture based on a
Regional Skills and Needs
Assessment
(Deliverable WP2 D.2.1)

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Table of Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION – PURPOSE OF THE WORK PACKAGE 2 REPORT	5
1.1	CONTEXT	5
1.2	METHODOLOGY	5
1.2.1	<i>The process</i>	5
1.2.2	<i>Interviews and Guideline</i>	6
1.2.3	<i>Grounded Theory</i>	7
2	CORE SKILLS SECTION.....	9
2.1	SKILLS FOR ECONOMIC & LIVELIHOOD REALITIES.....	9
2.2	SKILLS FOR COMMUNITY BUILDING - AGRICULTURE AS PART OF COMMUNITY BUILDING PROCESS.....	12
2.2.1	<i>Interdependence of Agricultural and Community Development</i>	12
2.2.2	<i>Youth Involvement - Meeting Young People Where They Are</i>	15
2.3	AGRICULTURAL SKILLS IN CONTEXT.....	17
2.4	LANDSCAPE LEVEL AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SKILLS	22
2.4.1	<i>Indigenous Land Stewardship and Learning from Elders</i>	22
2.5	SKILLS FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING PROCESSES	24
2.5.1	<i>Learning by doing</i>	24
2.5.2	<i>Learning While Connected</i>	26
2.5.3	<i>Taking People as Knowers and Co-creators</i>	28
2.5.4	<i>Shift Toward Experiential Learning</i>	29
3	CONCLUSIONS BASED ON INSIGHTS FROM INTERVIEWS.....	32
3.1	INTRODUCTION	32
3.1.1	<i>Skills for Economic & Livelihood Realities</i>	33
3.1.2	<i>Agriculture as Part of Community Building</i>	33
3.1.3	<i>Agricultural Skills in Context</i>	34
3.1.4	<i>Landscape Level and Indigenous Knowledge</i>	34
3.1.5	<i>Teaching and Learning Processes</i>	35
3.2	IMPLICATIONS FOR VET PROVIDERS (BDAASA, KUFUNDA, MOZAMBIKAN PARTNERS)	35
3.2.1	<i>Strengthening Training Centres (WP2 T2.1)</i>	35
3.2.2	<i>Addressing Skills Mismatch and Emerging Labor Market Trends (WP2 T2.2)</i>	36
3.2.3	<i>Building Capacity for Problem-Based, Non-Formal Learning Models (WP2 T2.3)</i>	36
3.3	STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS EMERGING FROM THE FINDINGS	37
3.3.1	<i>Anchor Training in Real Contexts and Real Economies</i>	37
3.3.2	<i>Integrate Community Building into all VET Approaches</i>	37
3.3.3	<i>Develop Learning Pathways Focused on Regenerative Practice</i>	38
3.3.4	<i>Build a Strong Pedagogical Culture of Mentorship, Accompaniment and Experiential Learning</i>	38
3.3.5	<i>Prepare the Ground for three Innovative VET Approaches</i>	38
4	VET APPROACHES	39
4.1	INTRODUCTION TO VET APPROACHES.....	39
4.2	APPROACH 1: ON-FARM LEARNING AND APPRENTICESHIP PATHWAYS.....	41
4.2.1	<i>Rationale</i>	41
4.2.2	<i>Core Elements of the Approach</i>	41
4.2.3	<i>Skills and Competencies Addressed</i>	42
4.2.4	<i>Role of VET Providers</i>	43
4.2.5	<i>Expected Outcomes</i>	43
4.3	APPROACH 2: LIGHTHOUSE FARMS AND THE REGIONAL LEARNING LIBRARY	44
4.3.1	<i>Rationale</i>	44
4.3.2	<i>Core Elements of the Approach</i>	44
4.3.3	<i>Skills and Competencies Addressed</i>	45
4.3.4	<i>Role of VET Providers</i>	45
4.3.5	<i>Expected Outcomes</i>	46
4.4	APPROACH 3: MODULAR, PROBLEM-BASED, COMMUNITY-ROOTED TRAINING	46
4.4.1	<i>Rationale</i>	46

4.4.2	<i>Core Elements of the Approach</i>	47
4.4.3	<i>Skills and Competencies Addressed</i>	47
4.4.4	<i>Role of VET Providers</i>	48
4.4.5	<i>Expected Outcomes</i>	48
4.5	INTEGRATION OF THE THREE APPROACHES.....	49
4.6	PREPARING FOR WORK PACKAGE 3.....	49
5	ANNEX	51
5.1	ANNEX I INTERVIEW GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUALS.....	51
5.2	ANNEX II INTERVIEW GUIDELINES FOR INSTITUTIONS	54
5.3	ANNEX III LIST OF INTERVIEWS AND WORKSHOPS CONDUCTED	56
5.4	ANNEX IV PUBLICATIONS	60
5.5	CLOUD STORAGE WITH DETAILED ANNEXES.....	60

1 Introduction – Purpose of the Work Package 2 Report

1.1 Context

This report has been developed as part of the *GreenSouth* project¹, a collaborative initiative strengthening vocational education and training (VET) in biodynamic, organic, and agroecological farming across South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique. GreenSouth brings together vocational training providers, agricultural practitioners, and business experts to co-create innovative learning pathways that respond to real needs in rural communities. By aligning training with local market realities, supporting trainers, and integrating sustainable land-based practices, the project aims to build resilient agricultural livelihoods and contribute to the wider goals of climate-smart, regenerative development. By the end of the first project year, three innovative Vocational Education and Training (VET) approaches addressing current skills needs and skills gaps have been identified through comprehensive public-private dialogue. These approaches will serve as the foundation for developing job-related, non-formal, country-specific training models, curricula, and training content, specifically in Work Packages 3.

Through comprehensive interviews and engagement with farmers, trainers, and agricultural practitioners across the three countries, the authors have identified skills that cluster around three core areas [see the chapters]: **1. Economy and Livelihood, 2. Community Building, 3. Agricultural Skills 4. Landscapes and Indigenous knowledge and 5. Learning and Teaching Processes**. These skills are deeply interconnected—economic vitality cannot be separated from community health, and both require new approaches to how we learn and teach.

As part of the wider objectives of the Erasmus+ CB-VET framework, this Work Package report contributes directly to strengthening the institutional capacity of VET providers in the region. For BDAASA in South Africa, Kufunda Learning Village in Zimbabwe, and the Mozambican partners, the findings presented here provide an evidence-based foundation for developing training systems that are responsive, context-specific, and organizationally sustainable. By grounding the VET models in the lived realities of farmers and trainers, WP2 supports each organization in refining its role as a trusted provider of high-quality, practice-oriented learning. This alignment between field insights and organizational development is central to building resilient VET ecosystems capable of delivering long-term impact in biodynamic, organic, and agroecological agriculture."

1.2 Methodology

1.2.1 The process

The process began with a kick-off meeting in January 2025 in Cape Town, South Africa, where an interview guideline was developed. In the following months, up to November, interviews

¹ For more info visit the project website www.greensouth.bio

and related gatherings were conducted. Findings were regularly exchanged, allowing for reflection and continuous improvement of the process.

In early September, a meeting was held at Kufunda. Participants read the interviews individually and took further steps toward allowing key concepts to emerge from the material. Contributors from outside the core group also joined and collaborated in this process.



In early November, a second meeting took place in Cape Town. This meeting deepened the work of distilling concepts from the interviews and integrated insights from the Kufunda meeting.

From the end of November until the end of December 2025, weekly Zoom meetings were held to review progress. During this period, participants worked collaboratively on a shared document alongside these discussions.

1.2.2 Interviews and Guideline

The interviews were conducted using a guideline (see Annex I and II). The emphasis was placed on questions such as, “*Can you describe a positive learning experience you had in the past year?*” or “*What practices have you adopted during this period?*” Focusing on positive

experiences made it possible to identify potential future successes by building on past achievements.

The conversations were held in the field, side by side with the farmer. This setting encouraged discussion about the concrete practices that had been developed, what was visible in the landscape, and how these practices related to the farmer's personal development. Such an environment tends to direct attention to shared observations and actions—what is being done or could be done—making engagement easier. In contrast, conversations held around a kitchen table often shift more readily toward topics such as politics or financial concerns.

1.2.3 Grounded Theory

The interview material was analysed using the Grounded Theory methodology. Grounded Theory is a qualitative research approach designed to develop theory directly from data, rather than testing pre-existing hypotheses. It was introduced by sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in the 1960s as a systematic method for building theory “from the ground up.”

Rather than starting from assumptions, Grounded Theory allows patterns and concepts to emerge inductively from the data. Data collection and analysis take place simultaneously, with new data continuously compared against existing codes and categories. This iterative process—often referred to as constant comparison—supports the refinement of categories and relationships over time. Decisions about further data collection are guided by emerging insights rather than a fixed research plan, a process known as theoretical sampling.

The main steps in Grounded Theory analysis include:

- **Data collection**, through interviews, observations or open-ended questionnaires
- **Open coding**, in which data is broken down into discrete units and assigned initial codes
- **Axial coding**, where relationships between codes are identified and categories are developed
- **Selective coding**, which integrates categories around a central theme to form a coherent theoretical framework

Grounded Theory is particularly useful when existing theories are limited or absent, when the aim is to understand processes, behaviours or social phenomena in depth, and when the goal is to generate practical, evidence-based insights rather than to confirm assumptions. It is widely applied in fields such as healthcare, education, sociology and business.

Building on this approach, Albert de Vries (2004) in his dissertation proposed a simplification of the Grounded Theory process by focusing on narratives and the actions within those narratives. In this study, analysis was guided by the question “*What moves me?*” This question supports the identification of moments where change or significance becomes visible. Such a selection process highlights aspects of will and motivation, which are considered central to vocational education and training. The analysis therefore focused less on opinions or preferences and avoided summarization that might lead to abstract conclusions. Instead, the

2 CORE SKILLS SECTION

2.1 Skills for Economic & Livelihood Realities

It became evident on that sustainable agriculture cannot be separated from economy. Dominik from Organic Africa, a leading producer of organic and fair-trade produce in Southern Africa stated: “Sustainability can’t happen if not all three aspects are involved — environmental, social, and economic. If the economic aspect is missing, the whole thing breaks down.” (Zim 1).

From the first gathering with farming organisations in Zimbabwe in April, a clear sentiment was that “Many farmers lack basic training in farm financials, with unfamiliarity around profit-and-loss dynamics, costing, and planning—pointing to an urgent need for business skills within agroecological models.” (Zim 8)

And it was stated time and again as a real challenge: *“What I feel is missing in rural areas are strong local economies. Everything is so dead in these places. There are so few opportunities to make an income. It's strange: all the food is grown out in rural areas, but people still need to come to Harare to shop. That fascinates me---the absence of local economies, no value addition, no jobs, no businesses employing others. (Zim 6)*

To give an idea of the complexity and the challenges from an individual perspective, here is an inside look at the work of the economic aspect on one farm:

From a farmer in the Cape of South Africa: “My new Malawian farm worker, and I were both learning to farm at the same time. After our initial start, three years ago, certain realizations became apparent to me, they were subtle, but evident i.e. the huge discrepancy in the haves and have not and me needing to understand this divide as it was affecting output.

At first, he had no interest in what was going on, except to please me to maintain his job to get paid at the end of the month. I wondered, why were we doing all this? What was the story? This was quite hard to share as he lives a very hard life compared to me. We had different motivations and lived in different worlds, etc. The question I was working through was how do our dreams coincide? Mine for me and his for him... That he also had a dream!

His reality was that he had left his family in Malawi to find work to send money home to support the family. This means that he was working from hand to mouth and just getting by every month as best he could.

This led to taking time out and dedicating attention to an introspective discussion with my worker around his future. What was his intention in coming to SA, what was his dream? These were simple things, like sending money home each month, then returning for holiday in 2 years' time with enough money to fix his house, pay school fees, etc. etc. His wife wanted a TV.... they needed fences. I made a list. Added all the prices, including bus fare to Malawi, and return date

with details. Then worked out together how much he would have to put aside monthly to be able to meet that target from present wages.

Now he had a goal that motivated him to make his dream come true. Knew why he was working, besides enjoying the learning knowing and knowledge that all of this he could replicate back in Malawi and teach others. He could envisage how his dream could come true and more... In addition, I also set up a special saving incentive with him, putting R50 per month, which I would match with my contribution of R50 per month. This is over and above wages. However, should he spend this before the holiday, then my portion would fall away, he would lose that. In this way he was beginning to learn to work with money without going into debt. I do not lend money. Do not believe in debt. There is no such thing as debt in nature. So, I have taught him to budget, work within his means. Obviously, a raise in pay occurs as he can take on more responsibility. He knows that this payment is in relation to his quality of work, rather than being paid for time.

So now we both know that we are each working to create the other's dream, and I feel that he belongs to the dynamic of the farm." (SA 26) ²

The effect is that the effective income rises. For both, the farmer took the initiative to take responsibility for the future of her employee, and the employee took more responsibility for the farm as a whole. So, the farm flourishes more.

She showed in this example, the skills **to take responsibility, to connect, to envision the future, to concretize goals, to plan steps towards the goal, to learn together, to solidify and document the effects of financial planning.**

Other examples show more entrances to strengthen economic life. Caroline Jacquet has been with the NGO, Bio-Innovation in Zimbabwe for the past 12 years and has been active in the sector since 2001. She gives some positive experiences:

"Some groups have ventured into local processing ideas for local markets. For example, there's a group doing pre-cooked porridge, and another that makes little flavoured sachets that kids can add to their water bottles at school to create a strawberry or fruit drink. So, there are some food processing and value addition ideas---not very many yet. ... I always think of Chef Tuft, who went to Mudzi last year and taught our farmers how to make wraps with rosella. They were so excited! And I thought: yes, they want to learn new things. They don't want to keep hearing what they already know. They also don't want to eat Sadza every day. They are looking for different ways to feed their families. Let's stop seeing them as poor people in need of charity and instead recognize them as sponges who want to learn, to try, to expand." Caroline Jacquet (Zim 6)

² All quotations in this report come from interviews conducted by the project team with various stakeholders in the three project countries. After each quotation, a number and a country abbreviation indicate where the interview took place.

Skills are needed to become innovative, creative and be more open to seeing the opportunities in order to take the initiative.

Laurie from Softfoot Alliance, a community orientated, regenerative initiative in Hwange, Zimbabwe. This is located on the edge of the National Park that works in and through local communities seeking to bring harmony in the human nature relationship.

"If you just go into carpentry in a landscape where every tree is being chopped, it won't work. But if it's part of a regenerating landscape---sustainably harvesting certain trees and creating something from them---then it makes sense. With Soft Foot it was the nuts and seeds: collect them, press oils, and from those trees make products like soaps and creams for the tourism industry. Multiple possibilities. It's just about imagination. But if you don't have that base understanding of regeneration, whatever you create will be extractive again. That's the key--- how to connect all the dots. For Soft Foot Alliance the foundation is regeneration using holistic management and permaculture design. Everyone who comes in starts there."

We demonstrate what life-based business looks like: thriving, diverse, multiple enterprises grounded in regenerating land, not in degrading it. We need to show clearly that, because the land is thriving, we can now create multiple businesses rooted in that regeneration. Too often, people involved in Holistic Management only think about products based directly on animals. That's far too limiting. The potential is much broader" (Zim: 5)

Laurie builds on the idea of building multiple innovative products but states that they have to be linked to a holistic regenerative understanding. She invites us to the skill of connecting the dots, embedded in our natural landscape. Business is not separate from sustainability. Otherwise, the need for income can become a destructive impulse.

"Teaching ecological farming works well. The people get more profit. But then they don't use the money to invest, when they have enough for basic needs. They just spend it. So, it is difficult to come a step further." (Zim:5)

'We teach them to work with permaculture principles. As an example: goats are no longer everywhere, but in special spots, where there is enough food for them and they can't destroy other things. That works well, but then the people buy more goats. And then the goats start destroying the landscape again...' (Zim:5)

Stewardship is a skill that involves taking responsibility and envisioning in the long term, for future generations. It could take shape as re-evaluation of the relationship between landscape approaches and economic outcomes, and thus our role in bringing about these economic outcomes.

The GreenSouth goal is to provide learning spaces and demonstrations that connect economy with sociability and ecology, showing that restoring soil health is not in conflict with economic stability. Aligning the economy with ecology allows farmers to sustain both their livelihoods and the living systems that sustain us all. Realizing that if we just do what we can, a movement can grow, that ultimately is an answer to poverty all around us

2.2 Skills for Community Building - Agriculture as part of community building process

2.2.1 Interdependence of Agricultural and Community Development

The Project Team met group of women who are now closely connected with sustainable agriculture. This development started on another point:

Sekwanele meaning 'Enough is Enough' was launched in 2020 by a group of struggling women from Acornhoek in Mpumalanga, South Africa. Led by Quantan, a training program specifically for South African women to defend themselves called Fox Fitness was designed. The changes in the women participants are profound, they have increased self-esteem, a newfound physical and emotional dignity, connection to other women seeking independence, and a reclamation of their lives. This is the story from Quantan:

"I saw how my mother was being abused. I was very scared; I was worried she would die. At that young age the only way I knew how to protect her was to stay awake and help her when the abuse started. As I got older, I started thinking about how I could protect my mother and myself should I land up in the same situation. I saw some information about self-defence and made contact with a coach. I then started talking to the other women in the community and asked if anyone else was interested in attending self-defence training. 26 women of all ages attend the first lesson/demonstration.

Fortunately, my mother realized my fear and decided it was time for her to take action. She saw some people growing some vegetables and decided "I need to do this as well." This started small, but soon we could all eat and had more and could start sharing. We started to share seeds and ideas and save little bits of money (stokvel) we started to become a bit more independent. (SA30)

This group of women are part of establishing the Permaculture Explorers, Sekwanele and the 10-tree project and going from strength to strength" (SA 30)



This example reveals that strengthening women—through building confidence, dignity, and connection—creates a solid basis for agricultural development. An approach that addresses violence, builds self-esteem, and creates solidarity among women simultaneously builds the foundation for collaborative farming.

Women have always played a pivotal role in agriculture. As environments and systems transition, we must look at how to support this role more fully. Women often hold and conserve traditional knowledge and practices even as much around them evolves. There is a real call to create enabling systems that support women's participation in agricultural processes—not just acknowledging their work but actively accompanying and strengthening it.

The importance of strengthening capacity within the community became evident. This impulse was also taken up by another organization, which realized it in their way. Blessing from Participatory Organic Research & Extension Training Trust (PORET) talks about their developments:

"We now bring the training into the community. And that has changed everything. Learning in-place helps people carry the knowledge forward more easily---because they're working with their own land and with people they live and work with daily. It's much better when the people who learn together also live together. They support each other and keep each other going".
"When you're in the community, there will be other villagers, when they pass through to the place where you are doing the practical work, some will come and join. Some just pass and

they can look and see what is happening. And later, you see that if you go into that village, you have some symbols of people who will be practicing it on their own without joining the other group of people. Yeah.” (Blessing, Zim 3)

Other voices affirm the need for community level participation

“For me, it really has to be a whole community---or as much of the community as you can gather---working together. That's what we were working on with Soft Foot: creating at least one community that could then host others in a peer-to-peer way.” (Laurie, Zim 5)

“Those two things --- the ecological catchment mapping and the community visioning --- were profound. For me, that's the starting point.” (Anna Brazier, Zim 4)

A consistent pattern across these interviews was the realization that the most successful learning happens when training is rooted in place. Rather than drawing farmers away from their lives to centralized workshops, facilitators are moving into communities, learning with people on their own land. This shift transforms training from a one-off event into a shared, living practice.

The Skill illuminated here is translating training into lived community practice (“learning in place”).

When agriculture is brought into community, community starts to embrace and integrate these activities as part of their community life

“Currently we have a vegetable growing competition where participants get seeds, support and there is a prize. The Zimbabweans always win because they love vegetables. Locally there are many people that are very good with seeds and nurseries.” (SA 10)

Another example:

“Introduce festivals and they run through the agricultural processes and that brings a hell of a lot more meaning to me, who is a pruner or a worker, because suddenly my life has got meaning. I'm not just working for my money, because the boss is telling me what to do. That's my current way of working. Now suddenly, I'm attached to my work. Now my life is invested in what I do. And that is being acknowledged through these festivals. So, I get to participate and everybody in the community knows that I have. So, this is the cultural realm, this is where the poverty is, this is where the gap is.” (SA 10)

Perhaps this skill does not need to be learned, because it is already culturally available? And yet it is a pathway that is often forgotten when focusing on survival.

Linked to the reflections on fun, Caroline Jacquet asks:

"It's something that I find so fascinating, because you know that we do all these good seed and food festivals, also in the districts that we work with, and then our field officers come back and they say, 'farmers had so much fun'. „. (Zim 6)

The theme of joy and public celebration also points directly to engagement for other people: fun is often the entry point that draws the whole community into farming and creates pathways for leadership.

The founder and manager of a shelter shows another dimension of community empowerment:

An appeal was made to locals for trees and suitable plants and then this area was planted up by these persons from the shelter. It was a total face lift, visible for the whole community. She guided the residents to grow plants. When she asked people from the community to come and donate blankets and things, they got plants to take home with them as a thank you for the donation. They could take as much as they wanted. The reciprocity which is lived and demonstrated has taken over. It is the participatory way and, in every instance, engaging the aspiration of each person. (SA 7)

The Skills illuminated here are demonstrating what's possible, creating reciprocity, engaging aspirations by connecting with what people care about and long for, storytelling and inclusion of the wider community.

Across many of the interviews, a powerful pattern emerged: sustainable farming cannot be separated from community vitality.

The most successful agricultural initiatives were embedded in a strong social fabric—where trust, collaboration, and collective vision created the foundation for regenerative practice. This interdependence shows up as two linked processes: (1) communities creating conditions for farming to flourish, and (2) farming acting as a mechanism for rebuilding trust, identity and local economy. Understanding this mutuality is essential when designing vocational training that aims for durable, place-based transformation.

Social learning opportunities in communities create an environment for free expression and sharing different knowledge areas. Festivals that some communities still practice echo the level of joy we can jointly bring into our sacred work with the land. Just as we plant a seed and reap what we sow, if we plant in joy we will also reap in joy.

2.2.2 Youth Involvement - Meeting Young People Where They Are

There is a growing awareness among youth that they can stay and leverage their resources and skills to create meaningful opportunities in their rural communities.

Anna Brazier quotes and shares *"A blog (Zimbabwe) indicates that a shift is happening among young people. They are not still living as they have been and are realizing that they need to work with what they have where they are.*

"So, now there's more of a mindset shift --- young people looking at how they can stay in or return to their rural communities and build opportunities from there." (Zim 4)

But how to support this shift? The examples that follow show what works:

PORET is a Zimbabwean organization which is working successfully with youth. Most of their members are young people, who have been brought in through soccer and festivals. To be a member of PORET you have to practice permaculture and to learn business skills. And the youth love it because they come together in fun social ways

"In 2015 they launched a football tournament. So that's where I got the opportunity to come here." (Zim 21)

"We had gone for a festival, a district festival in Chimanimani at CELUCT. We were put in different groups at CELUCT during the event, and we were given some questions to discuss, and they said we were going to present the information. We are going to choose a person who is going to present the information after, so I was tricked.

During the discussion, they nominated me to write the notes for them down on the chart, and I thought it was just going to end there, and I wrote it down. And when the time came now for the presentation, they also say, no, we cannot present things that we did not write, because we might not be able to read the handwriting. And there was fear in myself, and I could say that I'll be able to do this. And Mr. Dube, that officer, he urged me that you can do it, trust in yourself. That's when I stood up and I presented it, and when people clapped claimed him for me, when I finished, finished the presentation of our work, that's when I started to believe in myself that, no, I can do these things because I've done it well in front of a big crowd." (Zim 21)

"Now I'm now confident, far, much confident that I can even present information in front of the President! I now have that confidence, and also, I managed to implement some works that helped a lot in our field, which is water harvesting. We usually had a part of our field which was being actually eroded a lot with runoff. That's when I used this knowledge to implement some water harvesting structures, and now it seems to be working." (Zim 21)

"I'm proud of my work for it gave me the opportunity to start project like the broiler chicken project now I am having more than 100 broilers at my home, and I have implemented impaction in my field. ... Because I'm doing my own project I buy things with my money, not from my mother, not from my parents, I use my own money because I'm doing my project. "(Zim 21)

Out of the fun comes the learning and the impact. Young people were met where their energy already is (soccer, festivals). Skills for expressing individuality and supporting this Self Actualization: Through public recognition and affirmation confidence was built. Supporting youth to move from learning to implementation and to economic independence

In the example described above, the shift in mindset is supported by an organization. During a visit to the far northern part of South Africa, in Mpumalanga, a different situation was observed, where an individual, Christopher, initiated the process independently.

“He felt bad seeing the kids not succeeding and becoming dropouts. He asked a couple of adults to assist him in setting up an after care for the struggling school kids. This really helped the kids to achieve much better results and also grew their confidence and self-esteem. Spending time with these learners he discovered they were keen to play soccer. This became his next project; a soccer team, the soccer team now has been recognized in some of the leagues in the area and he has hopes that some of these players will get chosen for the bigger leagues.”

“...Then he came with the food allotment gardens (For the kids). Others became interested in vegetable gardening. The municipality assigned a portion of land to them, and he has a large team of learners running their own gardens.” (SA 33)

Despite the social and economic misfortunes of his community, Christopher had been fortunate enough to do well at school, find sponsorship, and succeed. He came back and helped his village. Christopher's journey reveals several interconnected skills. He demonstrated the ability to see community needs holistically - recognizing that struggling students needed more than just academic support. He showed the skill of mobilizing others - asking adults to join him rather than working alone. He possessed the capacity to follow the energy and interests of young people - when he noticed their passion for soccer, he built on it rather than imposing a predetermined plan.

After-school care led to confidence, which opened space for soccer, which created trust and relationship, which then made food gardens possible. This progression shows an intuitive understanding that agricultural education cannot be separated from social and emotional development.

Skills illuminated: Christopher followed the energy and interests of the young people - when he noticed their passion for soccer, he built on it rather than imposing a predetermined plan. His approach also showed the power of sequencing interventions - after-school care led to confidence, which opened space for soccer, which created trust and relationship, which then made food gardens possible.

2.3 Agricultural Skills in Context

Several biodynamic and regenerative farming training curricula already exist that outline what to do in practice. However, through the interviews it became clear that for trainees to truly become successful, they require more than technical instruction. Real competence emerges from a wider set of transdisciplinary capabilities: perceiving the farm as an organism and individuality, recognizing cycles, experimenting responsibly, integrating social and ecological processes, and aligning farm economics with the long-term resilience of the whole.

To give also an idea of the complexity of this aspect and the challenges, here is an inside look at the agricultural work on one farm and how things are interlocked:

Another farmer in the Cape relays a story: "We cleared 8 hectares of citrus camps, turned it into pasture, brought in a small Nguni herd of cattle and later added egg mobiles behind the cattle on a rotational basis. The hens also roam in the orchard adding needed nitrogen, eat insects and trimming thick ground cover between the trees, giving lovely dark yellow egg yolks. Today eggs have become our secondary income stream, to the extent that my son has given up a city job and established a business raising day old chicks to sell at point of lay and producing an excellent GMO-free chicken feed, with no poisons, called 'Eddies Feed' supplying local SSK outlets. The chicken manure bedding is converted to composts for the tree nursery. That is my wife's business. So, we create a nice circular economy." (SA 8)

This farmers' example shows multiple skills at work simultaneously: courage to initiate change, the capacity to imagine a future farm individuality, and the relational skill of engaging children, spouse, workers into a shared process. These abilities sit beneath the technical integration of cattle, chickens, orchards, compost, and markets.

You need courage to initiate such changes and a vision for how the individuality of the farm can evolve. Once the 'experiment' begins to take shape, it becomes important to involve and engage others. In this way, the farm gradually starts to function as a living organism.

At the heart of this example lies the recognition that each farm is a living, self-sustaining individuality, integrating soil, plants, animals, and people. Practices must nurture this wholeness, with a strong emphasis on environmental and social responsibility. How can you connect with this wholeness, this farm-individuality? Let's listen to Emmanuel:

A farm employee speaks: "It starts on Sunday, I walk on the farm just to go and see and let my thoughts just wander as I look at what is around me, let my feet take me where they need to go. Let ideas go round in my head. I find this a very important part of the week, even though it is my day off and I don't get paid for it. It is important and it makes me feel happy and I get a feel of what's happening around me"(SA 27)

These skills - this kind of walking, sensing, and attuning is rarely named in formal curricula, yet it proves essential. It builds the skills to connect, to perceive empathetically, to envision the future, to take responsibility, and to make decisions that are grounded rather than reactive.

To see the parts not separated but connected in a whole is a basic skill for biodynamic farming. But what can that mean and what are starting points to make this skill your own?

Another farm employee's story: "I learn the way the farm is structured, with everything in its place, the way the terraces worked and that whatever we needed was in front of us. We did not have to go to the shop. We got everything from scratch; it was there in its place. Then we could perform better."(SA 19)

This is a practical and accessible way to cultivate a holistic skill of seeing and thinking. Through it, you begin to develop an inner sense of belonging to a greater whole. The whole can be the job of that day, your family, the farm individuality, the earth and even the cosmos.

Their harvesting criteria differs from the other chemical farmers, who pay on quantity harvested per day, whereas their staff have to handle the fruit carefully not to bruise them, which can lead to disease later on. (SA 8)

In this example the connection between agricultural technique and social approach, on a very basic level, is made clear. Skills arise which have to do with **motivation to handle with care, to take responsibility, to empathize with what you are doing.**

Let's look at another level of wholeness:

"When I arrived at Integral Kumusha, the first thing that touched me was how everything was interwoven---the farming, the livestock, and the garden, with each part supporting and sustaining the other. The place felt alive. It was a homestead where the land and its beings collaborated to provide life. I noticed the variety of vegetables she grows and how the goats, chickens, and cattle are cared for as part of a cycle that nourishes the soil, which in turn feeds the garden.

What moved me was the sense of balance: the land feeding the people and animals, and the animals giving back to the land. This impression revealed a way of life grounded in relationship with the land." (Sikhethiwe Mlotsha Zim 3)

One specific skill that arises from this example is **the way of thinking in cycles in agriculture.**



A farmer's words: It is worth a try to prove the effect of the practices of BD on Black spot and Thrips, and I would be happy to experiment on one of my citrus camps for a trial that we can all learn from. But would also need some help to do that in an effective way. (SA 8)

Agriculture and certainly not agriculture where you want to cope with the situation you are in, is not a cookery book with protocols. Skills are asked **to adjust to a situation, to find new ways, to become creative.**

Thomas Linders tells about his experience with such processes:

"In 2015 we moved onto our farmland in the Eastern Free State and started to implement the mainframe Permaculture design as a foundation or blueprint to the Biodynamic core reality of the farm organism. I made a very interesting experience there:

The Nguni herd often chooses the most degraded areas to lie down / overnight and ruminate. This follows the depositing of their valuable fertility as they get up and move on and subsequent increase in vegetation cover and biodiversity. The active and passive impact of the cattle in the degraded grassland and erosion hotspots has taken on a life of its own! We were witnessing the interaction between the rainwater harvesting swales and dams and the self-healing progress of the erosion on the land we encountered in combination with the semi-holistic grazing program with our Nguni herd.

This erosion and land repair can now even be seen from historical and current satellite pictures (<https://maps.app.goo.gl/Fmy8CjhPFXn3MD5d6>)." (SA 11)

What surprised Thomas was that after he took an initial step in land restoration, the herd responded in a way that advanced the soil's healing process even further. This calls for the **skill** to act decisively while also **holding back at times**—observing, listening, and allowing the landscape to reveal its next step.

"The focus has changed from not what will make the most profit, but what can I grow that supports the whole system in order that the whole farm can be resilient."(SA 13)

It requires courage not to go for the most profit from one crop, but to rely on the profit of the whole. It means that you can take 'losses', because the benefit will come in another place or in another time. **The skill to see something as a part of an organism, a whole is required here.**

Future Farmers is a unique venture. It widens their view and focuses on young people opening doors for those with a passion for farming. The focus being on passion rather than qualifications.

"When the founder of Future Farmers Foundation asked the youth two years ago, what they will do after the show, they replied that they did not know as they had not had any training. She aligned with her network and found three farmers who were able to take these youth on as apprentices. She functioned as the mentor bridging the gap between the farmer and the apprentice. After a two-year period, the now matured youth had acquired experience and know-how and were taken on by the farmers as permanent members of staff." (SA 16)

To align people to each other is one of the skills that is used here. But, moreover, **the skill to have a vision of a meaningful future.** And have a pity when people don't feel a future. Some people take the initiative themselves:

"And then, when I got the opportunity to work with a part of the research farm and have cows there, I would let their horns grow. They belong to cattle and they live stronger. I am used to cattle with horns." (SA 19)

When you are motivated to do something new, you first must realize that the new situation is asking for a skill that fits that situation.

Taken together, these stories reveal that biodynamic agriculture is not a fixed set of techniques but a cultivated way of seeing and acting. It requires perceptual sensitivity, holistic thinking, cultural and ecological intuition, social alignment, and the courage to experiment and adapt. These are the *skills for not only knowing what to do but also how to do* — skills that allow farmers to meet each situation creatively, work with the individuality of their farm, and participate in the unfolding life of the land. Any vocational training that hopes to support biodynamic practice must therefore foster both technical knowledge *and* these deeper human and ecological capacities.

2.4 Landscape Level and Indigenous Knowledge Skills

Throughout our research, a theme emerged: transformative agricultural work happens not only at the level of individual plots, but also at the **landscape level**—where farmers, communities, and the land itself are understood as interconnected and interdependent. Just as each farm has its individuality, each landscape also has a character that can only be understood through regular, patient contact. This section explores the skills needed to perceive, relate to, and work with landscapes as living wholes, and the essential role of indigenous knowledge and elder wisdom in this work.

Anna Brazier identifies a significant challenge facing rural communities:

"One of the biggest challenges is a growing individualism—among NGOs with their own territory not collaborating, and between farmers not wanting to work together, as well as many divisions (intergenerational, Church/traditional)." (Zim 4)

"That simple act—coming together to map the land—starts to repair damaged relationships. From there, you can begin to develop what I'd call a hybrid governance system. One that is participatory and integrates national, indigenous, and conventional local governance mechanisms."

"It's about community building, movement building, and thinking at the landscape level. Not just individual fields or individual farmers, but the entire living landscape." (Zim 4)

Her experience shows that landscape-level thinking offers a strong entry point for reconnection. Her core insight is that Landscape-level work addresses fragmentation not by demanding collaboration, but by giving communities a shared object of attention that holds them together. Demonstration and mentoring can support this relearning and provide an approach for working with landscapes. Collaborative effort becomes possible when there is a shared willingness to understand the potentials and needs of a given landscape. **There is a way of being with landscapes that needs to be discovered.**

Skills needed: facilitating landscape-level mapping processes, creating participatory governance structures, seeing the whole system (not just individual farms) and building collaboration through shared resource stewardship

2.4.1 Indigenous Land Stewardship and Learning from Elders

It is not necessary to develop all knowledge independently, as relevant knowledge already exists:

"Our grandmothers don't need to be trained—they need to be listened to. They carry the curriculum in their bones." — Community leader, Mozambique

"When the elders came, the soil shifted. It was like the land was remembering who we are." — Participant, Zimbabwe

Much of the wisdom of the past has been left behind or actively suppressed through colonialism and modernization. We are being invited to return to these roots to enrich our capacity for working with the land. Method Gundidza from Bikita, southeastern Zimbabwe, shares a story of what happens when communities remember ancestral wisdom:

“I am an earth jurisprudence practitioner from Bikita in southeastern Zimbabwe. We have an important story to tell about how we have revived our community and our lands by remembering how our ancestors lived, farmed and governed themselves. It is a story that can be told through the changing fortunes of our sacred crop, millet. For countless generations, millet was at the centre of life in Bikita. We grew many varieties that knew our soils and the weather, we could rely on them in recent decades, however, maize has been replacing millet in our fields. We have observed that maize does not know our soils and does not support our ways of life. People use pesticides with the maize that harm wildlife and the soil, they have to buy new maize seed and pesticides every year, making us dependent on others for our food. Worst of all, maize is not resilient to climate change. In recent years, we have been holding community dialogs with elders to discuss what to do about this. We have remembered something our ancestors knew well.

The more diversity we have in our fields, the more resilient we will be. We are now on a mission to revive the traditional crop varieties suited to our lands and climate. Our success is exemplified by millet, which has helped weave our community together. Again. Millet is drought and flood tolerant. It thrives in poor soils and does not require pesticides. Having saved a high and low for the old varieties of millet, they are now growing in our fields once again, the elders and women who know these seeds have regained confidence and respect. We have brought back our collective harvest and millet ceremonies strengthening our community. The granaries we use to store our seeds have been rebuilt, preserving enough of each seed each year to see us through.

We have also begun to renew the relationship between the millet our sacred natural sites, mountains, wetlands and forests. These are the places where we have a specifics and reeds that we use to thresh winnow and store millet; they are also the home of the birds and insects which pollinate our plants. There is too much to do, but bringing back millet has reminded us of our place on this planet and our responsibility to protect and restore Mother Earth.”
(Method Gundidza, Zim 22)

What this story reveals is that the vocational skills needed in agriculture extend far beyond technical agronomic knowledge. Essential in this part of the world is also to connect with cultural memory, ritual practice, and ecological diversity.

These embedded skills and knowing include indigenous seed saving, water harvesting techniques, inter cropping and ecological design, as well as ritual practice and deeper connection to the land, and eldership engagement

2.5 Skills for Learning and Teaching Processes

The previous chapters (2.1–2.4) have highlighted a wide range of skills that are relevant in the context of agriculture and learning. A closer examination shows that these are not primarily technical or production-focused agricultural skills. Instead, they relate strongly to ways of learning, interacting, and working with complexity.

These skills include relational capacities, the ability to observe and respond to natural systems, and the social and communicative abilities required to work with others. They shape how knowledge is shared, how experience is transformed into understanding, and how learning processes are supported over time.

This section therefore focuses on the skills that enable learning and teaching processes to take place, particularly in experiential, practice-based, and relational contexts.

2.5.1 Learning by doing

In farming it is quite usual to just do and try:

"When I started with propagation, I didn't know much. But I began to really love it. How to take a cutting, how to grow it, how to care for it. I saw the plants respond to what I was doing. It gave me passion." (Blessing, Zim 3)

Just doing it is the teacher. Very often explanations are overwhelming, just getting into action is sometimes all that is needed for the knowledge to appear. But it is not always that easy:

"It's very easy for one to learn about compost making, but it's very difficult for one to go and continue to make compost." Nelson Zimsoft (Zim 11)

"Farmers actually know a lot already. When you ask them what they need, they always say, 'Oh, we need more training, more education.' That's the Zimbabwean obsession---education. It's seen as the answer to everything. But training is not the solution to all problems. Farmers value it highly, but the truth is they already know a great deal. They have the knowledge, the skills, and often even the tools. The challenge is that they don't always implement what they know.

It's almost like there's a little switch in their heads that hasn't been flipped. They know it makes more sense to grow traditional grains than maize, but they keep planting maize anyway, season after season. I sometimes wonder, how many failed harvests does it take before they change? That's where I think Kufunda could be very helpful and strong. Less training, more mentorship---that's what we need. Because farmers know how to make compost, they know how to dig pits, they know about minimum tillage. They know. But they aren't doing it. So, it's not about more training---it's about mentorship, support, and accompaniment." (Caroline Zim 6)

Anna Brazier has a similar view:

“It's not really training that's needed. It's empowerment. It's the ability to take action. It's not just about acquiring information or skills --- it's about knowing what to do with them.” (Zim 4)

Anne Brazier is right, it is not only, we would say, the technical skills, it is also the ‘softer’ skills that support making things reality.

“People need to learn how to plan. That's so often missing. How to look ahead and say, 'What do I need to do? What are the steps to get where I want to go?' And then also: 'What might go wrong? What risks could come up? How do I prepare now so I'm not knocked off track later? That kind of planning is crucial --- and it's what's so often missing. That's why the word 'empowerment' feels so key. Empowerment, confidence, planning, visioning --- those are crucial.” (Zim 4)

So, it needs sometimes more as just doing:

Blessing from PORET shared how passion can be shared -- not through theory -- but through demonstration and hands-on experience. The skills we aim to develop are, at their core, practical skills. They are acquired through hands-on engagement, through learning by doing, and through experiences that participants can carry back home and put into practice in their own landscapes and communities. It can then be transformed into a consistent, long-term practice.

The visit to PORET revealed an organization working within a harsh environment—a rocky landscape with very low annual rainfall—yet demonstrating exceptionally strong collaboration with its member farmers. Learning and practice were closely intertwined, with little separation between what was taught and what was actively implemented. Numerous member sites displayed a wide range of activities, including nurseries, animal husbandry, water harvesting and more. The overall picture was that of a living network of practice. There are more examples, showing in the same direction:

“In 2020 I attended a Permaculture Design Course, I learned how to make Bokashi. I go back to my home and ask my grandfather how can I do it? He joined me and we made a small one which we put in our garden. I see that it was so different from the time when we did not put bokashi and we started making more and more... The community admired it, and we made some big bokashi. Last week there was a group of people coming from the university of Bindura. They come to see how our community is making Bokashi. I'm proud of it, because I'm the one who started to teach them. That's my passion, and my garden, I rely on selling vegetables. And if you see, my vegetables are very good, I did not put fertilizer, I put organic manure. And the people in my garden, others were mocking me, they said I was too young. But as of now, they start to admire me, and they say, 'next year, the PDC course we will attend, and we will learn how to do it'. And that's my passion, and I'm proud of it.” (Zim 21)

What enables this consistent follow-through? It raises the issue of which capacities need to be cultivated in order to implement what has been learned. As one of the interviewees said:

John Wilson speaks of a place in Andhra Pradesh where they teach farmers practically with a very specific approach (25% cash crops 75% diversity crops and they work intensively with them for a 5-year transition period (from conventional to organic):

"What they're saying to people is, follow these very specific instructions in the early years - very specifically -- with our support, and then as you become skilled in natural farming, innovate, try new things yourself. That combination of structure followed by creative freedom has worked really well." (Zim 2)

Cultivating a structure of relationship is an important skill. And not dropping people once the training ends.

"Mentorship, support, and careful planning appear to be common denominators for empowering both seasoned and emerging farmers. These elements could help farmers navigate the complex challenges of the agricultural sector, adapt to changing conditions, adopt sustainable practices, and continuously strengthen their resilience in a demanding industry." (SA 05)

2.5.2 Learning While Connected

To Learn to deal/cope with a farm's individuality, it is important to be 'in' it. You can't learn that out of books. One experience is that of Ishaan who has 2 apprentices in training:

Ishaan Lilje: "In year 2 of the training, the trainee takes on his or her own trainee based on year 1. So, with this model you learn by teaching, you learn mentorship and so it cascades. It is not just the systems that do the training, it is the people on the ground. If you fit into the farm and you love the farm, Reyneke gives you a hectare and you run that hectare as a business. Or you take over the vegetables or composting etc., if you want to stay. You then become employed by Reyneke and contribute to the biodynamic organism."(SA 5)

You are learning in this way while you are connected, while you are in it. As a farmer/trainer you need the skills to care for this connectedness. On daily base it can look like this:

An employee on a farm in the Western Cape: "We let everyone talk and say what they need to say and when all feel happy again, then I talk about the tasks of the week and day, and we begin. We do this every day. My men cannot work if their heart is heavy, if they are afraid to speak up, if no one takes any notice of their work, then they sit around and talk on their phones, and we all feel this and it spoils the happiness of the day. It is very important that everyone feels happy, then, as you know, we like to sing. Need first to talk out the anger or fear." (SA 27)

Or:

A farm manager, teacher and anthroposophist: "Best for workers to know the story, the why, when and how of a task, then give them creative license to work it out. Gathering in the

morning so everyone knows what the other is doing for the day. Very important is putting tools away, care for and respect equipment. End the day." (SA 20)

The skills that are used in these examples are: **to mentor, to connect, to take responsibility and to perceive empathetically**. It starts direct from beginning of the contact:

New employees are selected from the casual worker pool. If they show good working potential, are honest, etc., then they begin at the bottom and work themselves up and into areas where their interests lie. Some succeed and become managers in their field, some stay at their level. The system we have seems to work well and we have our HR person who handles personal problems. (SA 8)

There is, first of all, the **skill of recognizing the potential within people**—seeing not only who they are now, but who they may become. From this arises a companion skill: **the ability to support and guide others so that their capacities can unfold**, grow, and ultimately carry them forward in their development.

"We saw the actual efforts and challenges farmers face; at the moment we did farm visits and we were not just looking at theoretical challenges. In these moments empathy prevailed; we were able to put ourselves in the shoes of the farmers, producing our food."(SA 17)

In these moments—when they meet the reality of practice—students naturally begin to perceive with empathy, and this capacity allows them to act with greater competence and understanding.

"We worked at Jakkalskloof from a teaching perspective. Everyone knew what the other was doing. We worked as a team. We were all residential. Most of our food we ate came from the farm. Managers were the coaches and were specialists in their fields and our focus was teaching and getting the work done. And most important, students had to work creatively within a budget and so realized the real running costs of a farm. We shouldered responsibilities together. (SA 20)

Through the wide variety of activities, students soon discovered where their passion lay and how to manage social relationships, group decision making, discussions and reporting, all came into it.

"It was the first time I was working with students instead of with employed workers. What a difference this made working and learning side by side. In the process they told of the many ways they worked with the native plants, cattle and goats in their cultural ways, and also of course many uses of cow manure." (SA 20)

This farm manager discovered in a new situation how learning and working can go side by side. This can be a challenge for every learning situation, also with employed workers, to realize working and learning at the same time.

As a teacher it is a skill **to see where the passion of the students lies and give space to it.**

“Many staff members have never left the area, so attending BDAASA training that included a round trip – this was like a geography lesson – This was incredibly significant.” (SA 21)

By stepping outside your familiar surroundings and travelling elsewhere, you gain a clearer view of your own situation—the one you are usually immersed in. This ability **to look from the outside**, which is itself a skill, can deepen and even intensify your connection to your own context. There are more ways to intensify the connectedness:

“Make expectations of what your land can deliver more realistic.”(SA 21)

The skill begins with forming expectations about what the land can realistically offer and then learning from how things actually unfold in real-life practice.

A farmer from South Africa, grew up in a rural, farming community entrenched in traditions, but his dream was to become a fashion designer. He found that when facing struggles and challenges he was able to use this talent to find clarity:

“He sits and draws, puts colours on paper and then the picture will show him what's going on. To look at what he had made and then be able to understand the situation and make a choice.” (SA 22)

“And those kinds of tools --- visual arts, performing arts, storytelling, drama, poetry, music --- they're so underused. People often dismiss them as fluffy or hippie, but they are incredibly powerful.” Anna Brazier (Zim 4)

As a teacher you also use other ways of expressing yourself, not only verbal or with written words. You need **a skill to use these other ways of expressing simple and nearby.**

What makes our approach different from standard farming education is the focus on building relationships. It's not just about the practical skills; it's about how we relate to the land and each other. We aim to create a network, not just train people in isolation. Yolanda (Zim 12)

2.5.3 Taking People as Knowers and Co-creators

You can start on working to connect people with what and how they are learning, but you can already start that people are connected:

“We never see people as empty. We don't go into a community thinking people know nothing. We always start our training by asking local farmers or youth what they already know. We listen and then we add. Then we share what we know, building on what the people bring. That makes our work especially powerful. It means we identify local resource persons and have people who can step into the community training in a stronger way. It means it is a fuller participatory experience. Over the years, you can see how this way of working (asking and

listening first, inviting the community's experience in) has shaped not only the impact of the training but also the growth of PORET itself. From 32 farmers to now working with 4600 households. It opens to learning not just for the community but also for the trainers themselves.” (Zim 3)

“We are now actually venturing into farmer led research, because we've actually learned that the farmers or the community would have a lot of knowledge, some of it is undocumented, some of it has not been tapped and shared with other farmers. So, we're actually moving into a stage whereby we promote participatory action research, where farmers will do the research and try to take the knowledge within the farmers and actually help the farmers to actually find solutions for the problems.” (Zim 21)

To take the connectedness as a starting point, one needs a skill to trust that it is there and say 'yes' to what there already is.

2.5.4 Shift Toward Experiential Learning

Some experiences related to this theme of learning emerged during the GreenSouth meeting at Kufunda in September 2025. Sometimes the knowledge is not there. How can you bring in new knowledge with respect to the people?

There are interviews being held with farmers about their needs and challenges for training. We were working to get the results out of these interviews. In the meeting in Kufunda we were a group of about 20 people.

We had all read one or more interviews with farmers. We had a conversation within this group. I, Albert, proposed not to summarize, but to select the highlights in these interviews. To find those highlights I suggested using your own awareness with questions as: "What touches you? What moves you?" You are using your own will to find out where the will of the interviewed is. Thoughts and feelings come with these questions parts to the will.

Sizo makes clear he doesn't understand what we are going to do now.

I explain it in other words. Among others: We are looking for points that inspire us for the next step in the project, where we must build curricula. Only describing the knowledge that must be transferred is not inspiring and is mostly already known.

We start the conversation. After a short time, Andrew tells he has four points that move him. He starts telling.

From my point of view, you can have only one or two points that really move you. When you summarize there are many points. The challenge is to select. In my ears it sounds very intellectual, also Andrew is telling with great enthusiasm. I stop Andrew after his second point.

Someone else takes over and brings what moved her. Andrew wants to go on with his next points. I stop again. Admire is upset about the way I stop Andrew.

They are right. It is not fruitful to do it this way. I say: Yes, it is not only my task to see, or we are on the desired path. Let's all together look at it and adjust the conversation.

In the ongoing conversation the inputs are different, and no one is adjusting.

I am very much touched. That is not the way I wanted to do it. In my reflection I imagine that next time I can do it differently: I can start the same. Then I can invite you for an experiment: Let's try to work in the way I proposed. After, let's say, 15 minutes we can look back. How do you recognize the different levels / points of view while listening, while telling? Have you recognized them already while reading? What are the effects of speaking out of the different levels? After this learning conversation from 5-10 minutes we can go on, let's say, 30 minutes, and look back again.

What I said in the end: "Let's all look together ... "(can I also say much more concrete,) instead... and let me explain myself more clearly so that everyone can take part in it. (Albert)

At a deeper level of reflection, this pattern can be observed frequently: when someone is recognised as an expert in a particular area, they are asked to explain how things should be done, and then to judge whether the work was carried out correctly. When it is not, they are expected to correct it—and such correction is easily experienced as a form of punishment. Although one might assume that punitive dynamics no longer play a role in learning environments, they still appear in subtle ways.

One way to avoid this dynamic is to adopt the principle: 'We learn together.' Yet, taken literally, this would leave no room for expertise, requiring everyone to reinvent the wheel each time. The more sustainable alternative is to bring expertise into the process as a *possibility*—as an invitation rather than an instruction—and then to **begin an experiment together**. In such an approach, the expert also becomes a learner, because the outcomes and experiences of the shared experiment offer new insights for everyone involved.

This is precisely the direction in which the GreenSouth project is working. Sustainability is understood not only as the development of future-oriented processes in nature but also as the cultivation of resilient human capacities that enable communities to grow, learn, and act together. A day later we met the same question about learning and knowledge from outside very practical in the vegetable garden:

We have a walk in the garden and look, together with the gardeners, at the Swiss chard. One expert says: "The gardener must take off the lower leaves. It is hot and dry weather, and these older leaves do not support the building of mass, while they at the same time evaporate water." Another expert says: "These lower leaves are now standing horizontal. So, they bring shadow on the soil, and the water is kept more in the soil." It sounds like the opposite. A discussion between the experts will easily become principal and abstract and won't help the gardeners to find their way. The gardeners take it as an invitation to start an experiment. (Albert)

Through experimentation, knowledge becomes integrated into the real situation—into that specific place and that particular moment in the year. For example, removing the lower leaves

of a plant may take considerable time. If, instead, you use that time to make compost and spread it between the plants, an entirely different situation is created. Moreover, many other factors may come into play. In an experiment, it is therefore essential not only to observe single, isolated actions but to consider the full range of possible actions available in that context.

This is the skill: **to continually create experiments out of real situations**—anywhere and at any time. It is the ability to design an experiment that fits the question, the circumstances, and the people involved. The goal is not to turn it into a scientific experiment in the strict sense, where the danger is that the process becomes something imposed from the outside. (See: Albert de Vries, Human-Inclusive Agriculture. A Methodology for Practice-Oriented Research, www.greensouth.bio.)”

There is a need that the farmer sees the reward of his efforts in training students on his farm. (SA 2)

This highlights that farm-based training cannot be sustainable if the farmer is only ‘giving away.’ Instead, it requires that the farmer invites students to take part in the ongoing experiments and developmental processes of the farm itself. In this way, the farmer receives immediate value through their contribution, and the students, in turn, learn in a far more engaged and meaningful way.”

3 Conclusions based on Insights from Interviews

3.1 Introduction

Work Package 2 set out to understand the skills that farmers, agricultural practitioners, communities, and VET providers in South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique need in order to strengthen biodynamic, organic, and agroecological farming systems. Through public-private dialogues, interviews, focus groups, case studies, and participatory workshops, the consortium engaged directly with those who work the land and those who support them.

The purpose of this chapter is twofold. First, it synthesizes the key insights that have arisen from WP2's fieldwork and public-private dialogue processes. Second, it identifies strategic directions that prepare the ground for the three innovative VET approaches to be developed in Chapter 4 and further elaborated in Work Package 3.

The interviews, focus groups, and dialogues conducted across South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique revealed a set of interconnected skill areas that shape the lived realities of farmers and the effectiveness of VET provision. While the contexts differ, recurring themes emerged with striking consistency:

Through the fieldwork, five interconnected domains of skill and capability consistently appeared:

1. **Economic and Livelihood Realities:** the financial, market, and resource conditions shaping farmers' decisions.
2. **Agriculture as Part of Community Building:** the community, cultural, and relational dynamics that are core to successful agriculture
3. **Agricultural Skills in Context:** the technical, perceptual, indigenous, and systems-based capacities that allow farmers to work effectively within living landscapes.
4. **Landscape Level and Indigenous Knowledge:** The understanding of land, ecosystems, and stewardship practices rooted in long-term observation, place-based knowledge, and Indigenous worldviews.
5. **Teaching and Learning Processes** the experiential, relational, and developmental pathways through which knowledge becomes embodied, including mentorship, on-farm practice, facilitation skills, reflective learning, and the cultivation of confidence and self-agency.

The identified themes show that skills gaps are not simply technical deficits but reflect wider economic, social, cultural, and ecological conditions. Together, they form the analytical foundation for identifying appropriate VET approaches.

3.1.1 Skills for Economic & Livelihood Realities

Across all three countries, farmers face persistent constraints that limit both productivity and long-term livelihood security. Key challenges include limited access to financial literacy, irregular income streams, market saturation for key crops, weak distribution systems, post-harvest losses, and a lack of tools for planning and budgeting.

Interviewees frequently emphasized that economic decisions are deeply entangled with ecological and cultural realities. Many farmers aspire to adopt regenerative practices but struggle to translate knowledge into sustained practice because basic financial management skills, affordable inputs, and stable markets are lacking.

A second recurring theme was the absence of local economic ecosystems. In many rural areas, value chains are thin or fragmented, forcing farmers to rely on distant markets while local communities depend on urban centres for essential goods. Participants called for skills that would enable farmers to participate confidently in value chains, including understanding pricing, cooperative marketing, and simple accounting tools adapted to low-resource settings.

These insights reveal the need for VET systems that connect economic training with ecological stewardship, practical decision-making, and community-based enterprise development.

3.1.2 Agriculture as Part of Community Building

A strong message across interviews was that agricultural development cannot be separated from community life. Skills for community building emerged as essential for enabling cooperation, knowledge sharing, and mutual support. Farmers, women's groups, youth, and trainers described how cooperation, trust, and social infrastructure determine whether new practices are adopted and sustained.

Farmers and trainers highlighted the importance of:

Participatory forms of leadership were repeatedly emphasized, especially practices that foster listening, dialogue and appreciative inquiry, including approaches drawn from the Art of Hosting.

They also stressed the **value of demonstration and of bringing training directly** into the community. When learning takes place in visible, shared spaces, neighbours are more likely to observe, join in, imitate successful practices and support one another. As one trainer noted, learning in place helps people to carry knowledge forward more easily.

Women's empowerment was identified as a key precondition for broader agricultural empowerment. Confidence, dignity and solidarity were seen as essential foundations for building the capacity to farm together and to sustain collective action.

Finally, participants pointed to the importance of creating meaningful **pathways for young people**. Approaches grounded in fun and creativity—such as football, festivals, and forms of recognition and affirmation—were described as effective entry points for engagement and the development of leadership.

Examples from Mpumalanga, Bloemfontein, and rural Zimbabwe showed how initiatives such as after-school programs, women's groups, sports teams, festivals, seed shows, and shared gardens create the social cohesion necessary for learning to flourish.

This points to the need for VET approaches that include **social, artistic, and cultural dimensions** alongside agricultural content.

3.1.3 Agricultural Skills in Context

While numerous curricula for organic, agroecological, and biodynamic farming already exist, the interviews showed that technical knowledge alone is not sufficient. Effective practice depends on context-specific, perceptual, and systems-based capacities that allow farmers to work with the individuality of their farms and landscapes.

Farmers emphasized the importance of **developing skills in observation and perceptual presence**—the ability to read what land, animals and crops are communicating—as well as in **experimentation and adaptive learning** through trying, adjusting, evaluating and learning from experience.

They also highlighted the value of **holistic and cyclical thinking**, working with the individuality of the farm as an interconnected living system in which livestock, crops, soils, water, people, roles and rhythms influence one another. **Mentorship and intergenerational practice** were seen as equally essential, engaging family members, workers, young people and peers in shared pathways of learning.

Interviewees also noted that many farmers *know* what to do but struggle to implement practices consistently or adapt them when conditions shift. This highlights a need for VET systems that include long-term accompaniment, apprenticeship pathways, on-farm mentoring, and demonstration sites that anchor knowledge in real conditions.

In short, vocational training must cultivate the **inner and outer skills** required to work with the farm as a living organism—skills that integrate perception, adaptation, ecological understanding, and social responsibility.

3.1.4 Landscape Level and Indigenous Knowledge

Our research showed that elders often serve as custodians of embodied knowledge that cannot be learned through technical instruction alone - and that is in the process of being lost.

Participants consistently emphasized the need to **revive indigenous seed varieties and farming systems**, as well as the **importance of collective landscape mapping as a powerful means of overcoming fragmentation**. They also highlighted the **role of elders as custodians of embodied knowledge and stressed the value of rituals**, celebrations and cultural practices in sustaining land-based livelihoods.

3.1.5 Teaching and Learning Processes

The strongest cross-cutting insight from WP2 relates to pedagogy. Across all interviews, trainees, trainers and farmers consistently emphasized that transformation does not result from information delivery alone. Lasting learning was described as emerging through **doing, observing, empathizing and practising**; through **long-term mentorship and accompaniment**; and through **working within real farm systems** rather than simulated environments.

Learning alongside peers and community members, being encouraged to experiment, question and adapt, and developing confidence, voice and a sense of purpose were seen as equally important.

In this context, **the skill of “creating self” was highlighted as essential**, particularly for trainers, who need to be on their own journeys of self-discovery, confidence-building, self-esteem and personal growth.

Interviewees repeatedly expressed that farmers already hold substantial knowledge, yet implementation stalls when training is not supported by follow-up, mentorship, or community engagement.

3.2 Implications for VET Providers (BDAASA, Kufunda, Mozambican partners)

The findings from WP2 show that the skills farmers need cannot be developed through conventional training methods alone. Because agricultural competence is relational, landscape-based, and culturally grounded, VET providers must strengthen their own capacities to design learning ecosystems rather than isolated training events. For BDAASA, Kufunda, and the Mozambican partners, this means building institutional and pedagogical approaches that integrate ecology, economy, community life, and cultural practice.

WP2 therefore highlights three key areas where VET providers must deepen their capabilities, aligned with Tasks T2.1–T2.3 of this Work Package.

3.2.1 Strengthening Training Centres (WP2 T2.1)

The public-private dialogues held in all three countries revealed the importance of VET providers acting as *bridging institutions* that connect farmers, communities, market actors, local authorities, and knowledge holders. These dialogues underscored the need for VET organisations to develop skills in:

- facilitating participatory processes with diverse stakeholders
- synthesizing field insights into actionable training concepts
- conducting SWOT analyses of their own training provision
- aligning training priorities with local labour market needs
- supporting farmers’ associations, cooperatives, and community-led initiatives

The dialogues showed that effective VET provision emerges when institutions listen deeply, engage collaboratively, and contribute to shared strategic thinking within their regions.

3.2.2 Addressing Skills Mismatch and Emerging Labor Market Trends (WP2 T2.2)

WP2 findings show a clear mismatch between existing agricultural training and the skills needed in emerging agroecological and regenerative value chains. Farmers frequently expressed that they hold substantial knowledge but lack the confidence, planning skills, and market access mechanisms required to translate this knowledge into viable livelihoods.

For VET providers, this means developing stronger capacities in:

- analysing local, regional, and future job trends in organic and biodynamic farming
- identifying gaps between graduates' skills and labour market requirements
- integrating financial literacy, cooperative marketing, and value-chain understanding into training
- recognizing indigenous practices and cultural knowledge as important components of employability
- supporting youth and women to participate in new economic roles

This skills-gap analysis positions VET providers to align their programs with the evolving labour market, ensuring that training leads to real livelihood opportunities.

3.2.3 Building Capacity for Problem-Based, Non-Formal Learning Models (WP2 T2.3)

Perhaps the most significant implication is the need to strengthen VET providers' ability to design and deliver **problem-based, experiential, and relational** learning models. Interviewees across the region emphasized that transformation occurs when learners:

- practise skills directly on farms
- receive follow-up support and mentorship
- participate in community learning circles
- work with elders, local innovators, and experienced farmers
- address real-world challenges through experimentation and adaptation

For VET providers, this means developing capacity in:

- designing on-farm learning pathways and apprenticeships
- training trainers in accompaniment, facilitation, and mentoring
- using participatory tools such as landscape mapping, community visioning, and learning-by-doing
- creating modular, flexible training formats that respond to learners' diverse needs and contexts
- supporting learning environments that integrate cultural practices, storytelling, and youth engagement

These capacities form the foundation for new VET models that are not only technically relevant but socially embedded, ecologically grounded, and aligned with the realities of smallholder farming systems.

Training should be decentralized and embedded within communities rather than limited to centralized facilities. It should begin with or at least include community visioning and mapping

processes to build shared purpose before introducing technical skills. Learning approaches benefit from integrating festivals, arts, celebration and local cultural rhythms, while peer demonstration sites and community hosts need to be actively supported and resourced. Women's empowerment should form a foundational element of agricultural training, and youth-focused modules should be designed around fun, challenge and confidence-building.

3.3 Strategic Directions Emerging from the Findings

The insights gathered through WP2 indicate that VET provision must support learning ecosystems rather than isolated training events, and must weave together economy, ecology, community life, and cultural practice. Against this backdrop, several strategic directions emerge that guide the development of innovative VET approaches in Chapter 4.

3.3.1 Anchor Training in Real Contexts and Real Economies

VET approaches must engage directly with the conditions under which farmers make decision-making market access, financial planning, resource constraints, and ecological realities.

This calls for VET approaches that support:

- learning through concrete examples drawn from farmers' own economic and ecological contexts
- alignment of training with livelihood strategies, market access, and value-chain participation
- practical tools for financial planning, record-keeping, and decision-making under resource constraints

By situating learning directly within farmers' daily economic challenges and opportunities, VET training addresses the economic and livelihood realities.

3.3.2 Integrate Community Building into all VET Approaches

Because learning is relational, VET approaches must incorporate community processes, cultural practice, and social cohesion into their methodology. This includes:

- fostering participatory learning environments including community-based training sites
- encouraging collective visioning and mapping, shared responsibility, and peer-to-peer learning
- integrating cultural expressions, festivals, storytelling, and youth engagement into training pathways

Embedding community processes into VET models strengthens not only the uptake of new skills but also the social conditions that allow them to take root - addressing the Social Foundations of Learning

3.3.3 Develop Learning Pathways Focused on Regenerative Practice

Regenerative agriculture demands capacities that go beyond technical instructions. Farmers require perceptive skills that enable them to read the landscape, observe change, and adapt practices through experience. VET approaches should therefore emphasize:

- observation-based learning and systems thinking
- experimentation and reflective practice
- integration of indigenous ecological knowledge with biodynamic and organic principles

Such pathways support learners in developing the competencies needed to work with complexity and uncertainty in living systems enabling us to work with agricultural skills in context, as part of our design

3.3.4 Build a Strong Pedagogical Culture of Mentorship, Accompaniment and Experiential Learning

A recurring theme in the interviews was that farmers often know what to do but lack the support required to implement practices consistently and confidently. VET institutions can respond by fostering:

- long-term mentorship relationships
- on-farm accompaniment and coaching
- On-farm learning environment
- Peer learning spaces where learners reflect on progress, challenges, and emerging questions.
- trainer development and reflective practice

This relational approach transforms training from a one-off event into a sustained developmental process that aligns with farmers' real-world needs.

3.3.5 Prepare the Ground for three Innovative VET Approaches

The findings of WP2 underline that vocational education and training in organic and biodynamic agriculture must be flexible, context-responsive and deeply rooted in lived practice. Rather than being designed at a distance, effective training emerges from attentive listening to farmers and communities, from recognizing existing knowledge, and from engaging with real economic, ecological and social conditions. Skills development is shown to be not only technical, but also relational, cultural and embedded in landscape and community life.

These insights point towards a shift in perspective: from training as information transfer to training as a process of accompaniment, empowerment and co-creation. Based on farmers lived experiences, labour market analysis and the need for non-formal, problem-based learning environments, WP2 prepares the ground for three innovative VET approaches. Presented in Chapter 4, these approaches translate the insights of WP2 into concrete models for implementation and curriculum development in Work Package 3, with the aim of strengthening VET providers as long-term, community-rooted institutions capable of supporting regenerative agricultural livelihoods.

4 VET Approaches

4.1 Introduction to VET Approaches

WP2 revealed that agricultural learning does not unfold primarily through lectures or technical instruction. It arises in practice, through observation, experimentation, relationship, community participation, landscape awareness, and the revival of indigenous knowledge. Farmers, youth, and community groups across South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique consistently expressed that they learn best when training is rooted in their own realities, supported by mentors, and connected to the land itself.

At the same time, VET providers emphasized that they need ways to organize and support these relational forms of learning. Training centres cannot rely on one method alone: some learners need immersive apprenticeship, others need places of orientation and inspiration, and many require short, practical modules that respond to the challenges of daily life.

These insights align closely with the principles of **Human-Inclusive Agriculture**³ developed by Albert de Vries (2025), which emphasizes:

- *learning that emerges from lived situations rather than imposed theory,*
- *empathetic perception and intuitive alignment,*
- *development arising from within practice,*
- *and strengthening the initiative of those directly involved.* (see pp. 19–34).

These principles provide an essential reference for how the GreenSouth consortium can shape training models that genuinely honour the lived realities of learners, farmers, trainers, and VET institutions.

Across the three countries, farmers, trainers, and community members expressed a desire for learning pathways that are practical, locally relevant, and rooted in their own agency. This resonates strongly with de Vries' central insight: learning and research already take place within every practice, but they must be recognized, made visible, and strengthened instead of replaced by external models (pp. 12–16, pp. 19–21).

Following this orientation, the three approaches described below are not conceived as abstract models or blueprints. Instead, each approach:

- Begins from lived experience, not from predetermined theory.
- Builds upwards from practice, using stories, examples, intuitive actions, and shared reflection — a principle de Vries frames as “perceiving while empathizing and aligning while empathizing” (pp. 25–27).
- Strengthens the initiative of professionals, especially VET trainers, farmer-educators and local leaders, who act as the key agents of development.
- Supports diversity and local specificity, avoiding standardization and allowing each region, farm, or training centre to individualise its learning pathway (pp. 10–11).

³ See Annex IV

At the same time, the approaches respond directly to the overarching aim of the Erasmus+ CB-VET program: to enhance the organizational, pedagogical, and collaboration capacities of VET providers. In the GreenSouth context, this includes strengthening BDAASA (South Africa), Kufunda Village (Zimbabwe), and the Mozambican partner institutions as facilitators of bottom-up, practice-based learning.

Each of the three approaches therefore combines:

- A skills and content dimension – grounded in the needs concluded in Chapter 3 (economic resilience, community practice, pedagogy).
- A methodological dimension – inspired by human-inclusive, practice-oriented research.
- A capacity-building dimension – equipping VET providers to anchor these methods sustainably within their organisations.

Together, these elements aim to create VET pathways that are locally grounded, human-inclusive, and capable of strengthening both learners and institutions. Far from being fixed recipes, the approaches should be understood as living frameworks that will continue to evolve through iterative practice, reflection, and the co-development processes of WP3.

Following this orientation, the three approaches presented are **living frameworks** that allow for diversity across contexts, and support VET providers in becoming facilitators of practice-based learning ecosystems. Each approach brings something distinct and necessary:

1. **On-Farm Learning and Apprenticeship Pathways:**
enabling deep, embodied skill formation through immersion, mentorship, and responsibility.
2. **Lighthouse Farms and a Regional Learning Library:**
providing places of inspiration, coherence, demonstration, and story-based knowledge-sharing.
3. **Modular, Problem-Based, Community-Rooted Training:**
offering flexible, accessible learning modules that address immediate challenges and strengthen community resilience.

Together, these three pathways form a **multi-level vocational learning ecosystem** that supports different learners, different contexts, and different stages of development. They translate the grounded insights of WP2 into practical approaches that enhance the pedagogical and organizational capacities of VET providers, while empowering farmers and communities to develop regenerative, culturally rooted livelihoods.

4.2 Approach 1: On-Farm Learning and Apprenticeship Pathways

4.2.1 Rationale

WP2 revealed a consistent pattern across the three countries: people learn most effectively when development is rooted in real situations, supported by relationships, practice and continuity. Farmers, youth, and community members repeatedly emphasized that meaningful learning happens by doing, by observing, by taking responsibility, and by receiving guidance over time. Short training sessions may raise awareness, but they rarely lead to sustained change.

On-farm learning creates conditions in which deeper capacities can grow such as attentiveness, courage, practical judgment, confidence, and the ability to act coherently within a living system. These capacities arise naturally when learners are immersed in the daily rhythm of a farm, accompanied by someone who helps them interpret what they see and do.

This approach also resonates strongly with the strengths of the GreenSouth partners:

- **BDAASA:** includes a network of biodynamic farms well-suited for apprenticeships,
- **Kufunda:** an established community-learning environment where agriculture, culture, and youth engagement are integrated,
- **Mozambican partners:** community-based farms working closely with women, youth, and agricultural groups.

These diverse contexts provide fertile ground for an apprenticeship model that evolves from real practice and responds to what emerges in each learning situation.

4.2.2 Core Elements of the Approach

The On-Farm Apprenticeship Pathway is a flexible framework that adapts to local contexts while maintaining several shared characteristics:

Learning in Real Situations

Learners build skills through active participation in farm life: soil preparation, composting, planting, livestock care, water management, harvesting, record-keeping, and market-related tasks. Understanding develops through **experience, repetition, and observation**, not through abstraction.

Farmer-as-Trainer

Farmers play an essential role in guiding apprentices. Their experience, intuition, and practical judgement shape the daily learning process. VET partners strengthen this role through short pedagogical training that equip farmer-trainers with mentoring and facilitation skills.

Progressive Learning Journeys

Learning unfolds in interconnected stages. Rather than progressing strictly from basic to advanced tasks, learning is strongly shaped by observing and engaging with already demonstrated autonomy:

- **Orientation and Foundation:** Newcomers engage with basic tasks and daily structures while observing experienced practitioners working autonomously.
- **Learning through Demonstration:** Autonomous work is demonstrated in practice. By observing this level of independence, newcomers learn how experiments are designed, carried out, and reflected upon.
- **Practice and Own Experiments:** Building on what they have observed, learners begin to take responsibility for specific tasks and their own small experiments. This marks the start of the journey toward owning one's learning process and experimental work.
- **Autonomy and Contribution:** With growing confidence, learners plan and manage small projects independently. Eventually, they support newcomers and actively contribute to the learning culture on the farm.

Soft Skills as Integral Outcomes

Apprenticeships naturally foster discipline, teamwork, communication, problem-solving, leadership, and resilience. These skills are not add-ons but grow organically from participation in real work processes.

Reflective and Relational Pedagogy

Regular reflection sessions - individually, in small groups, or together with the farmer-trainer - allow learners to articulate their observations, make sense of challenges, and decide on next steps. Reflection strengthens the ability to learn from experience and supports personal development.

4.2.3 Skills and Competencies Addressed

Economic and Livelihood Skills

- budgeting, planning, and simplified accounting
- understanding local value chains
- cooperative marketing and price-setting
- post-harvest handling

Agricultural and Technical Skills

- soil health, composting, fertility management
- livestock integration and care
- water harvesting and irrigation management
- crop planning, observation, and record-keeping
- Biodynamic specific skills such as preparations and the biodynamic calendar

Landscape and Systems Understanding

- recognising ecological patterns
- working with seasonal rhythms and natural cycles
- adapting practices to local contexts

Social and Personal Capacities

- teamwork, communication, responsibility
- initiative and problem-solving
- confidence and a sense of agency

These capacities emerge most strongly when learning is embedded in daily practice and supported by trusted relationships.

4.2.4 Role of VET Providers

For this approach to take root, VET providers need to shift from functioning primarily as instructors to becoming facilitators of situated, practice-based learning. Their contribution begins with identifying and preparing suitable farms, gardens, or community plots where apprenticeships can unfold. This preparation includes working with host farmers to establish shared expectations about the learning journey, clarifying responsibilities, and ensuring a supportive environment for both learners and trainers.

A central task for VET institutions is to strengthen the pedagogical capacity of farmer-trainers. Short, practical workshops can help farmers develop confidence in guiding learners, offering feedback, and creating learning moments from everyday farm situations. Rather than introducing external teaching models, the aim is to help farmers recognize and articulate the knowledge already embedded in their practice, turning their farm into a coherent learning space.

VET providers also play an important coordinating role by outlining the broad learning pathway, defining core competencies, and offering simple tools for observation, reflection, and assessment. These tools are not meant to standardize the learning process but to provide structure and orientation, ensuring apprenticeships remain purposeful and connected to real skill development.

Throughout the apprenticeship period, VET facilitators maintain light but meaningful oversight. Regular visits, coaching conversations, and opportunities for joint reflection help sustain quality and provide support when challenges arise. In this way, VET centres act as the backbone of a decentralized learning ecosystem, enabling farmer-trainers and apprentices to work confidently and creatively within their own contexts.

4.2.5 Expected Outcomes

When implemented with care, the on-farm apprenticeship approach strengthens both individual learners and the broader agricultural community. Apprentices develop practical skills that are deeply rooted in experience, allowing knowledge to become embodied rather than theoretical. Over time, this leads to greater confidence, increased employability, and a clearer sense of vocational direction particularly for young people seeking meaningful livelihoods.

Because learning is integrated into real farm work, regenerative practices are understood not as abstract principles but as lived habits shaped through repeated engagement with soil, water, plants, and animals. Farmers and apprentices become more attentive to ecological patterns and more capable of adapting their practices to changing conditions.

An equally important outcome is the strengthening of relationships. Apprenticeships foster a culture of mentorship and mutual support, reducing the isolation that many small-scale farmers describe. As apprentices gain competence, they often begin to guide newcomers themselves, creating a ripple effect that reinforces local learning networks.

For VET providers, this approach deepens institutional capacity. It enables centres to become facilitators of long-term learning journeys rather than one-off trainings, and it anchors vocational education in the lived realities of rural communities. In the longer term, such a system contributes to more resilient local food economies and more vibrant, community-rooted farming landscapes.

4.3 Approach 2: Lighthouse Farms and the Regional Learning Library

4.3.1 Rationale

During WP2, farmers and practitioners repeatedly expressed a desire for places where they could see possibilities, be inspired by concrete examples, and learn from farms that demonstrate coherent, well-integrated systems. Many participants described how transformative it can be to visit a farm that is “further along the journey” where soil health, water cycles, community participation, economic organization, and cultural practices come together in visible, practical ways.

Such places serve not only as demonstration sites, but as **living reference points**, offering orientation, imagination, and practical insight. Lighthouse farms provide an anchor for learning that is grounded in lived reality rather than conceptual abstraction. They allow learners to observe whole systems functioning in context and to understand how regenerative practices unfold over time.

This approach responds directly to the desire for inspiration, peer learning, and inter-farm exchange expressed across all three countries. It also builds on existing strengths: biodynamic and organic farms in South Africa, community-led farms in Zimbabwe, and emerging regenerative networks in Mozambique. These farms can become hubs where learning, storytelling, and community engagement converge.

4.3.2 Core Elements of the Approach

The Lighthouse Farms and Learning Library model brings together several complementary components:

Identifying and Curating Lighthouse Farms

A small number of farms in each country are selected as reference sites. These are places where regenerative practice is already developed, or where there are strong leadership and commitment to learning. The selection reflects diversity across landscapes, farm sizes, cultural settings, and production systems.

Structured Learning Experiences

Each lighthouse farm hosts field days, immersion visits, practical workshops, and exchange programs. Learning moments are created through guided walks, observation exercises,

conversations with farmers, and demonstrations of critical practices such as composting, water harvesting, value chain organization, or community mobilization.

The Regional Learning Library

Knowledge from these farms is documented and shared through a multimedia “library”: short videos, photo stories, farmer interviews, mapping exercises, practical guides, and local narratives. The library evolves continuously and remains grounded in real, lived examples rather than abstract theory.

These components form a dynamic network that links farms, VET providers, communities, and youth in a shared learning ecosystem.

4.3.3 Skills and Competencies Addressed

This approach strengthens a broad and interconnected set of competencies:

- **Systems understanding:** Seeing the farm as a whole and understanding relationships between soil, water, plants, animals, people, and markets.
- **Landscape literacy:** Reading ecological patterns, understanding topography, recognizing water flows, and appreciating the individuality of each place.
- **Contextual problem-solving:** Learning from how established farms respond to challenges, adapt to constraints, and innovate within real conditions.
- **Community and organizational capacities:** Observing how successful farms build teams, engage community members, and establish rhythms of shared work.
- **Cultural and indigenous knowledge:** Reconnecting agricultural practice with local traditions, rituals, intergenerational learning, and place-based narratives.

These competencies are not taught abstractly; they come alive through direct experience and shared reflection

4.3.4 Role of VET Providers

For this approach to flourish, VET providers become coordinators of a regional learning network, supporting the identification of lighthouse farms and cultivating relationships among farmers, practitioners, and learners. Their role is not to define what a lighthouse farm should be, but to recognize and strengthen existing excellence, enabling these places to become accessible learning environments.

This involves working closely with selected farms to design meaningful learning experiences that respond to local needs. VET institutions help structure field days and immersion visits, support farmers in articulating their knowledge, and create opportunities for dialogue and reflection. They also take responsibility for documenting learning moments through interviews, photos, audio recordings, or short videos and curating these materials into a coherent learning library.

As custodians of this network, VET providers ensure that the learning ecosystem remains vibrant and inclusive. They facilitate exchange between farms, bring youth and community groups into the process, and help translate lived experience into resources that other learners

can use. In doing so, they strengthen their own institutional capacity for programme design, facilitation, and community engagement.

4.3.5 Expected Outcomes

The development of lighthouse farms strengthens the wider landscape of vocational learning by providing visible, practical examples of what regenerative, biodynamic and organic agriculture can look like in different cultural and ecological settings. Learners gain insight not only into techniques but also into the attitudes, habits, and forms of collaboration that sustain successful farms. They see regenerative practices embedded in daily life, which enhances motivation and provides an aspirational horizon.

Communities benefit from increased visibility and recognition of local knowledge holders. Young people, in particular, gain access to inspiring spaces where they can imagine their own futures in agriculture. Farmers who host learning visits often deepen their own understanding as they articulate their methods and innovations, creating a cycle in which teaching and learning reinforce one another.

For VET providers, this approach strengthens organisational capacity by expanding their role as connectors, facilitators, and stewards of learning networks. Over time, the lighthouse farms and the regional learning library become shared assets that enrich training programmes, inform curriculum development, and encourage cross-country collaboration. The approach helps to build a culture of peer learning and practical exchange that supports long-term resilience and innovation in the sector.

4.4 Approach 3: Modular, Problem-Based, Community-Rooted Training

4.4.1 Rationale

Interviews across South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique showed that many farmers and community groups cannot commit to long-term apprenticeships, yet they face immediate challenges that require accessible, practical, and locally relevant training. Community organisations also expressed a need for short learning interventions that address urgent issues like drought, soil fertility decline, market access, food processing, youth unemployment, and organisational difficulties.

This approach responds to those needs by offering **short, modular training units** that are shaped by real problems arising in specific communities. Each module is designed to start from a local situation, allowing learners, facilitators, and community members to co-create solutions rather than receive pre-packaged content. This orientation mirrors the principle that development begins with a lived question or difficulty, and learning unfolds through shared exploration grounded in context.

The approach is particularly suitable for VET providers who work closely with communities, women's groups, youth networks, cooperatives, and individual farmers who require practical tools rather than long-term placements.

4.4.2 Core Elements of the Approach

Flexible and Modular Design

Training units can be offered as stand-alone modules or combined into broader learning pathways. Modules respond to identified needs such as:

- financial literacy and farm budgeting
- Perceiving farm individuality
- Perceiving while empathising, aligning while empathising
- soil rehabilitation and composting
- water management and drought resilience
- value chain participation and cooperative marketing
- youth entrepreneurship
- community leadership and group facilitation
- small-scale processing and post-harvest techniques

Problem-Based Learning

Each module begins with a concrete issue raised by the community. Facilitators and participants jointly explore the situation, identify underlying causes, and work towards practical responses.

Community-Rooted Delivery

Training takes place where people are on community farms, in gardens, at schools, at cooperatives, or in village gathering spaces. Local knowledge holders, elders, and experienced farmers contribute actively, strengthening cultural and intergenerational continuity.

This structure allows each training moment to be responsive, relevant, and grounded in lived realities.

4.4.3 Skills and Competencies Addressed

The modular format strengthens a wide range of skills identified as priorities in WP2:

- **Economic and livelihood competencies**, including budgeting, pricing, cooperative strategies, and simple accounting
- **Agricultural techniques** such as composting, seed saving, agroecological pest management, and water harvesting
- **Community capacities** such as facilitation, conflict navigation, group decision-making, and collective planning
- **Personal and entrepreneurial qualities**, especially for youth: initiative, creativity, communication, responsibility
- **Reflective and adaptive thinking**, as learners analyse real situations and adjust practices based on results

By linking skills development directly to real problems, learners gain confidence and experience the immediate relevance of the training.

4.4.4 Role of VET Providers

In this approach, VET providers act as facilitators of community-based learning processes rather than as conventional trainers delivering fixed content. Their role begins with listening: engaging with communities to understand the challenges they face and identifying where learning could support practical change. From these conversations, VET institutions help shape modules that respond directly to the expressed needs, ensuring that training is timely, relevant, and situated.

Facilitators from BDAASA, Kufunda, and the Mozambican partner organisations work alongside local groups to co-create learning experiences. They introduce concepts only when needed and encourage participants to draw on their own knowledge, observations, and cultural practices. Over time, VET providers develop a repertoire of modules that can be adapted, expanded, or combined as circumstances require.

Equally important is the support VET institutions offer to the facilitators themselves. Training in participatory methods, group facilitation, and reflective practice enables staff to feel confident in guiding problem-based learning. VET providers also help document community experiences, gather insights for future modules, and maintain continuity across learning cycles.

Through this role, VET organisations deepen their capacity to be responsive, community-embedded institutions that can accompany groups through cycles of experimentation, learning, and development.

4.4.5 Expected Outcomes

This approach strengthens community resilience by providing practical tools that address real and immediate challenges. Because modules begin with local situations, learners experience training as relevant and empowering, often seeing tangible results in a short period of time. The approach builds confidence, especially among youth and women, who gain opportunities to develop entrepreneurial ideas, contribute to household income, and take on leadership roles within their communities.

Communities benefit from renewed collaboration and shared problem-solving, which reinforces social cohesion and collective purpose. As groups learn to navigate challenges together, they strengthen their ability to manage resources, organise production, and improve their livelihoods.

For VET providers, this approach enhances institutional flexibility and responsiveness. It enables them to reach a wider range of learners, especially those who cannot engage in long-term training, and it supports the creation of a diverse training portfolio tailored to different contexts. Over time, the modular system becomes a living resource that evolves with the needs of the communities and reinforces the role of VET institutions as catalysts of locally rooted development.

4.5 Integration of the Three Approaches

Although each of the three approaches has its own emphasis and structure, they are best understood as complementary elements within a wider vocational learning ecosystem. Together, they offer different entry points for learners, different rhythms of engagement, and different ways of responding to the diverse situations found across South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique.

The apprenticeship model provides a deep, immersive pathway for those able to learn through long-term engagement with real farm systems. Lighthouse farms offer orientation and inspiration, creating spaces where people can experience regenerative agriculture in its fullness and connect with more advanced practitioners. The modular, problem-based approach reaches those who need flexible, accessible, and immediate support in navigating local challenges. Each approach strengthens different capacities, and together they form a coherent set of learning pathways that reflect the complexity of rural livelihoods and the relational nature of skills development.

Importantly, these approaches also reinforce one another. Lessons gained during community modules can lead to deeper interest in apprenticeships; experiences on lighthouse farms can inspire youth to explore entrepreneurship; apprentices may contribute to the learning library by documenting their work. By holding these approaches together, VET providers can offer an adaptable and multi-layered system that meets people where they are while enabling progression over time.

This integrated framework also gives coherence to the capacity-building efforts of the VET providers. It supports them in developing pedagogical skills, strengthening community relationships, and becoming facilitators of learning journeys rather than deliverers of isolated training. Across the three countries, the approaches create a shared orientation toward practice-based, context-sensitive, human-inclusive vocational education.

4.6 Preparing for Work Package 3

Work Package 3 marks the moment when the three VET approaches outlined in this chapter begin to take shape as concrete training programs, curriculum frameworks, and professional development pathways for trainers. While WP2 focused on listening, analysing, and identifying needs, WP3 turns these insights into structured learning offers that strengthen the capacity of VET providers and enhance employability for learners.

The first major step will be the development of Training-of-Trainers (ToT) curricula, drawing directly on the apprenticeship model, the lighthouse farms network, and the modular training system. These curricula will not be theoretical packages. Instead, they will prepare trainers to work confidently in real situations, accompany learners over time, guide reflection, and adapt teaching to local contexts. The ToT programs will include elements of pedagogy, facilitation, observation skills, community engagement, and applied agricultural knowledge—all themes that emerged as central in WP2.

The international workshops planned at Kufunda and BDAASA will serve as catalytic spaces where trainers, staff, community leaders, and specialists come together to refine these curricula. Through shared practice, dialogue, and comparison of experiences, the consortium

will begin shaping learning pathways that reflect diverse African contexts while maintaining a clear methodological coherence. These workshops will also strengthen professional mobility and exchange between partners, laying the foundation for an ongoing culture of shared learning within the VET centres.

In parallel, each country team will engage public and private actors to ensure that the ToT programmes and curricula align with labour market requirements and sector-specific needs. The inclusion of these stakeholders in the design and delivery of training models helps ensure that the learning pathways developed under WP3 remain relevant and contribute to emerging job opportunities in regenerative, organic, and biodynamic agriculture. Their involvement also strengthens partnerships that will support internships, apprenticeships, and future job placements.

Digital learning will form a third pillar of WP3. Building on the modular approach, the consortium will design three e-learning tools or platforms that support trainer development and peer-to-peer learning across countries and languages. These tools will enable VET trainers to access resources, share experiences, and collaborate even when physical travel is limited. They will also allow for innovative forms of group learning, documentation, and reflective practice that complement the hands-on approaches described in this chapter.

By the middle of the second project year, these efforts will result in six distinct curricula and three e-learning approaches, all grounded in the lived realities documented in WP2 and in the pedagogical orientation described in Chapter 4. Together, they will form the core toolkit that VET providers use to strengthen staff capacity, enhance the quality of vocational training, and create meaningful pathways into employment for young people and farmers across the region.

WP3 therefore represents a transition from conceptual clarity to practical implementation. It provides the structures, tools, and collaborative processes needed to embed the three approaches within VET institutions, ensuring that the insights of WP2 are transformed into tangible, sustainable, and context-appropriate outcomes.

With this foundation in place, the work now turns toward programme development and implementation.

5 Annex

5.1 Annex I Interview Guidelines for Individuals

Questionnaire to ground the building of trainings for nature-inclusive and human-inclusive agriculture in South-Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique

Introduction and context

In the GreenSouth project we focus on enhancing the capacity of training centres to support not only nature-inclusive but also human-inclusive agriculture. As we begin to develop and refine curricula, we aim to identify learning needs through various forms of dialogue. These include this questionnaire, but also in-depth interviews, networking conversations, and more.

We are with this questionnaire interested not only in **what** has been learned, or is wished to be learned, but also **how** it was and will be learned. This approach draws inspiration from both anthroposophy and biodynamic farming.

Common Questions

1. “Can you describe a positive learning experience you had last year?”
2. “What practices have you adopted in the past year?”
3. “Imagine you participated in our training. What specific outcomes would you be satisfied with at the end of it?”
4. “Imagine you participated in our training. What could you do afterwards that you are not able to do now?”

Specific questions

1. Say, you have been adopting or expanding biodynamic/organic practices on your farm, what was for you the essential change you made in practice, in your behaviour? Where, how, from whom you learned that?
2. What would help you to come a step further in your development, in developing your farm? What, would you think, is an appropriate way to learn it?
3. What did you learn related to water access and management? What did you change in relation to water conservation? Where, how, from whom you learned that? What would help you to come a step further in this topic?
4. What approach did you learn related to pest and disease pressures you face? Where, how, from whom you learned that? What would help you to come a step further in this topic?

5. What did you learn related to traditional or indigenous farming practices? Where, how, from whom you learned that? What would help you to come a step further in this topic?
6. What did you learn related to your soil health (e.g., structure, organic matter, biological activity)? What specific soil management techniques have you found effective in your situation? Where, how, from whom you learned that? What would help you to come a step further in this topic?
7. What did you learn related to compost, cover crops, biochar? Where, how, from whom you learned that? What would help you to come a step further in this topic?
8. What did you learn related to upgrading products after harvest? Where, how, from whom you learned that? What would help you to come a step further in this topic?
9. What did you learn related to marketing? Where, how, from whom you learned that? What would help you to come a step further in this topic?
10. What did you learn related to networking? Where, how, from whom you learned that? What would help you to come a step further in this topic?
11. What did you learn related to leadership, guiding students? Where, how, from whom you learned that? What would help you to come a step further in this topic?

Administrative data

We would like to ask more about your responses and send you the results of this questionnaire. However, you are not required to answer the following two questions:

What is your name?

What is your email?

Questions about your situation

In which country you live? South-Africa / Zimbabwe / Mozambique / Other

Are you member of an agricultural organisation? BDAASA / SAOSO / Other ...

What is your current occupation or field of study?

What is your highest level of education completed

What is your most recent educational experience?

What are your past connections with agriculture?

What is your current connection with agriculture?

Year of birth:

Gender: m / f / ..

The last question

We designed this questionnaire in the same way as we train. Therefore, we conclude, as we often do in our training sessions, with an evaluative question:

“What touched you while completing this questionnaire?”

5.2 Annex II Interview Guidelines for Institutions

Questionnaire to ground the building of trainings for nature-inclusive and human-inclusive agriculture in South-Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique

Introduction and Context

In the GreenSouth project, we aim to co-create training approaches that strengthen both nature-inclusive and human-inclusive agriculture. We believe that valuable insights arise from the lived experiences and initiatives of organisations and people themselves. This questionnaire invites you to share examples from your practice, impulses for development, and ideas for collaboration. Your contributions will shape the foundations for future training programmes.

1. Your Practice and Experiences

- **Please describe your organisation and highlight a specific example where its unique qualities or approach made a meaningful difference for people and the environment.**

What strengths became visible in this situation, and how do they shape the way your organisation works today?

- Which moments or experiences have inspired new approaches or learning within your team in recent years?

2. Development and Future Needs

Looking ahead: what emerging opportunities or trends could inspire your future work?

Which skills or qualities do you wish to strengthen in your team to face upcoming challenges?

In your daily work, where do you notice a need for change or further development?

3. Learning and Training

Please describe a training or learning experience (formal or informal) that was particularly effective for your team.

Is within your organisation a learning process structured, facilitated? Can you give an example?

What conditions help people in your organisation to learn and develop best?

What kind of support or collaboration from training centres would enable you to build on your existing strengths?

4. Connecting and Collaborating

Who are your most important partners in learning and development, and what makes these partnerships successful?

How could GreenSouth contribute to building connections and sharing inspiration among organisations in your region?

5. Policy and Support

Which forms of institutional, or policy support have you experienced as helpful for your work?

What would encourage greater initiative and innovation within your sector?

6. Reflection

What personal or organisational impulse would you like to see reflected in future training programmes?

If you imagine an ideal training for biodynamic/organic agriculture in five years' time – what does it look like, and what makes it meaningful?

7. Organisational Details

- Name of Organisation
- Type of Organisation (Company, Cooperative, NGO, Training Institute, Government Agency)
- Country & Region
- Contact Person (optional)
- Position of Contact Person in the organisation (optional)
- Contact Details (email and/or phone number) (optional)

5.3 Annex III List of Interviews and Workshops Conducted

Project country	Number	Category	Date	Interviewer	Interviewee	Position and Organisation of Interviewee
MOZ	1	Interview	03.09.2025	Andrew Mbetsa	Joseph Kalemba	C.E.O. Pro Agro Mozambique
MOZ	2	Interview	02.09.2025	Andrew Mbetsa	Nicole Vaz	Private Sector D. Advisor-GIZ
MOZ	3	Interview	27.08.2025	Andrew Mbetsa	Abdul de Almeida	Forest Engineer
MOZ	4	Interview	28.08.2025	Andrew Mbetsa	Niurka da Joaquina	Instituto de Marera
MOZ	5	Interview	26.08.2025	Andrew Mbetsa	Catia Joao	Consultant
MOZ	6	Interview	27.08.2025	Andrew Mbetsa	Adolfo Graciano Marcelino	Director (Agro Nice Lda)
MOZ	7	Interview	22.08.2025	Andrew Mbetsa	Kota Bernade	Director of Koben Farming
MOZ	8	Interview	28.08.2025	Andrew Mbetsa	Lionel S. Zisengwe	Director of Lethan
MOZ	9	Interview	29.08.2025	Andrew Mbetsa	Salvador A. Paulo	
MOZ	10	Interview	27.08.2025	Andrew Mbetsa	Ricardina Janueque	Docente Uni Zambeze
MOZ	11	Interview	22.08.2025	Andrew Mbetsa	Arlindo Fernando Macie	Project Manager - Enabel
MOZ	12	Interview	30.09.2025	Andrew Mbetsa	Nobre J. Mazive	Senior Extension Officer. SDAE Sussundenga
MOZ	13	Interview	30.09.2025	Andrew Mbetsa	Mandela Manuel Francisco	Director Ecoresbio Ida.
MOZ	14	Interview	02.10.2025	Andrew Mbetsa	Simao Januario Belop	Samora Moises Machel Cooperative
MOZ	15	Interview	13.09.2025	Andrew Mbetsa	Mario Matavela	Director Eco Agro Lda
SA	1	Interview	19.05.2025	Alan Rosenberg	Busi Mgangxela	Farmer
SA	2	Interview	30.06.2025	Avice Hindmarch	Helenvan Zyl	Farmer / Trainer
SA	3	Interview	02.06.2025	Liezl Hassbroek	Angus McIntoch	Farmer / Trainer
SA	4	Interview	15.07.2025	Avice Hindmarch	Tom Borman	
SA	5	Interview	07.05.2025	Liezl Hassbroek	Ishaan Lilje	Farmer at Reyneke Wines
SA	6	Interview	07.05.2025	Liezl Hassbroek	Johan Reyneke	Farmer
SA	7	Interview	18.07.2025	Avice Hindmarch	Mary-Anne Cunningham	Social worker
SA	8	Interview	01.05.2025	Avice Hindmarch	Johnny Ferreira	
SA	10	Interview	22.06.2025	Avice Hindmarch	Helen & Riaan van Zyl	

Project country	Number	Category	Date	Interviewer	Interviewee	Position and Organisation of Interviewee
SA	11	Interview	02.06.2025	Alan Rosenberg	Thomas Linders	Farmer /Trainer
SA	12	Interview	02.06.2025	Sheila Bischoff		Farmer
SA	13	Interview	21.05.2025	Alan Rosenberg	Janet Gracie	Farmer/Trainer
SA	14	Survey	29.05.2025	Alan Rosenberg		PGS Pollinator Program
SA	16	Interview	11.04.2025	Alan, Avice, Alan	Judy Sutart	Founder Future Farmers
SA	17	Interview	11.06.2025	Alan Rosenberg	Busisiwe Mgangxela, Manvester Ackson	Training Participantes at ToToT
SA	18	Interview	20.07.2025	Alan Rosenberg	Christiaan Loots	
SA	19	Interview	25.03.2025	Avice Hindmarch	Abongle Pilisani	
SA	20	Interview	16.05.2025	Avice Hindmarch	Garth Sinclair	Landscape designer / Farm developer
SA	21	Interview	28.05.2025	Liezl Hassbroek	Rozy Dunn	Farmer and Trainer
SA	22	Interview	10.03.2025	Avice Hindmarch	Linda Mtshali	
SA	23	Interview	11.09.2025	Avice Hindmarch	Daniel Fourie	Farmer
SA	24	Interview	07.05.2025	Liezl Hassbroek	Bulelani	BD Training Graduate at Reyneke Wines
SA	25	Self Assessment	06.06.2025	Avice Hindmarch	Avice Hindmarch	Trainer
SA	26	Interview	25.09.2025	Avice Hindmarch	Fotini Babeletakis	Farmer
SA	27	Interview	02.09.2025	Avice Hindmarch	Emmanuel Nkhonjela	Farmer
SA	28	Interview	21.02.2025	Avice Hindmarch	Daniel Chimaliro	Farmer
SA	29	Interview	25.09.2025	Sheila Bischoff	Mpho Ramathe	Founder Sustainable Abundance Permaculture
SA	30	Interview	12.10.2025	Sheila Bischoff	Lillian Marule, Quantan Marule, Zingela Ulwazi	Members Community of Women's Independence
SA	32	Interview	12.10.2025	Sheila Bischoff	Morris Budezi	Smallholder Farmer
SA	33	Interview	11.10.2025	Sheila Bischoff	Christopher Nkosi-community leader	Community Leader
SA	34	Interview	11.10.2025	Sheila Bischoff	Edwin Mathebula	
SA	35	Interview	06.10.2025	Sizo Nsibande	Maphomolo Majoro	Farmer
SA	36	Interview	06.10.2025	Sizo Nsibande	Mottalepule	Womens cooperative member

Project country	Number	Category	Date	Interviewer	Interviewee	Position and Organisation of Interviewee
SA	37	Interview	06.10.2025	Sizo Nsibande	Tlaleng Pule	Womens cooperative member
SA	38	Interview	06.10.2025	Sizo Nsibande	Elisa Mofokeng	Farmer
SA	39	Interview	06.10.2025	Sizo Nsibande	Mathoso Fokase	Farmer
SA	40	Interview	06.10.2025	Sizo Nsibande	Jemina Mofokeng	Farmer
SA	41	Interview		Sheila Bischoff	Upenyu Marume	Professor at North West University
SA	42	Workshop	02.09.2025			
Zim	1	Interview	22.04.2025	Maaianne Knuth	Dominik Kollenberg	CEO Organic Africa
Zim	2	Interview	25.04.2025	Maaianne Knuth	John Wilson	Founder of Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre
Zim	3	Interview	16.08.2025	Maaianne Knuth	Blessing	Programme Director PORET
Zim	4	Interview	02.09.2025	Maaianne Knuth	Anna Brazier	Consultant and Facilitator Resilient Food Systems
Zim	5	Interview	02.09.2025	Maaianne Knuth	Laurie P.	
Zim	6	Interview	03.09.2025	Maaianne Knuth	Caroline Jacquet	Bio Innovation Zimbabwe
Zim	7	Visit	04.08.2025	Yolanda		Team Visit at PORET
Zim	8	Workshop	25.04.2025			Gatherin to Reimagine VET for Sustainable Farming
Zim	9	Workshop	19./20.07.2025	Irvine, Admire, Tichaenzana		Bulawayo Farmers Dialogue
Zim	10a	Workshop	23.05.2025			Farmer Dialogue at Kufunda
Zim	10b	Workshop	20.06.2025			Farmers Workshop at Kufunda
Zim	11	Interview	02.09.2025	Maaianne Knuth	Nelson	ZIMSOF
Zim	12	Interview	05.09.2025	Maaianne Knuth	Yolanda	
Zim	13	Visit	30.08.2025	Maaianne Knuth	Ticha, Munyori	Learning Visit to Krumhuk Namibia
Zim	14	Interview		Pamela Nyasha	Chef Zoro	My food is African Campaign
Zim	15	Interview		Pamela Nyasha	Shean Mukochia	Ziva Kwawakabva
Zim	16	Interview	07.11.2025	Pamela Nyasha	Joseph	
Zim	17	Visit	09.08.2025	Sikhethiwe Mlotsha		Integral Kumusha
Zim	19	Interview	04.09.2025	Maaianne Knuth	Theo	Country coordinator PELUM

Project country	Number	Category	Date	Interviewer	Interviewee	Position and Organisation of Interviewee
Zim	20	Meeting	31.07.2025	Klaus Merckens, Maaianne Knuth	Dominik Kollenberg	Meeting with Organic Africa
Zim	21	Group Interview	15.08.2025	Maaianne Knuth	PORET Youth Group	
Zim	22	Earth Jurisprudence Resource		Online resource		

5.4 Annex IV Publications

- A methodology for practice-oriented research. **Human Inclusive Agriculture.** Developed based on experiences in biodynamic agriculture. Albert de Vries, 2025
 - o [Publication on GreenSouth Website](#)
- **Connecting While Imagining** – How farmers think and work. An explorative study with biodynamic farmers. Albert de Vries, Geert-Jan van der Burgt, 2025
 - o [Publication on GreenSouth Website](#)

5.5 Cloud Storage with detailed Annexes

<https://next.octostor.de/s/JW5AktFCi8HAbTQ>

Password can be requested from: info@greensouth.bio