



# WATER-WISE FOOD GARDENS

Doringbaai

## Project Objectives

- Design training programme
- Identify 25 households for food gardens
- Train participants
- Facilitate water awareness
- Deploy trainees to household food gardens
- Produce vegetables and supply school feeding scheme, old aged homes and soup kitchen
- Facilitate access to land and water for the emerging farmer group
- Mentorship and training to 15 emerging farmers

## Project Timeframe

12 Months

## Long term goal

- To create sustainable employment opportunities by developing small businesses and creating a welcoming and safe environment for tourism, while promoting the MPRC and Doringbaai.

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“The West Coast fishing community of Doringbaai and its 2500 inhabitants can no longer depend on the sea for a living. Despite a lot of investment and growth in the mining, farming and tourism sectors recently, communities such as Doringbaai are still isolated and impoverished,” says Peter Owies, manager of the Doringbaai Multi-Purpose Resource Centre (MPRC).

The MPRC, which was founded in 2002 as a Section 21 Company (Not for Profit, Non Governmental Organisation), aims to support socio-economic development, while facilitating entrepreneurship, youth development, upliftment and the development of sustainable structures within the community of Doringbaai. The MPRC focus areas are agricultural, marine resources, tourism and mining. The centre has already successfully sustained a pre-primary school, a home-based care organisation, an old age home and a soup kitchen, and is currently involved in developing the West Coast Crayfish Hiking

Trail between Elandsbaai and Ebenhaeser.

“We all know that food is something we must have in order to survive and grow. If we are hungry we have little energy to live, learn, vote, speak, think or move around freely. People who don’t have enough to eat struggle to work, interact with people, perform physical tasks, educate themselves and participate in their community,” says Owies. “The lack of proper nutrition has serious effects on the mental and physical development of children. A hungry child can’t concentrate in school and is likely to perform worse than other children. Such a child might drop out of school and might not be able to find a decent job in the future.”

The idea to start food gardens in the area began in 2001, when the Doringbaai Emerging Farmers Project was launched. Its aim was to assist unemployed people to grow their own fresh vegetables. The Doringbaai MPRC plans to expand the project by establishing 25 food gardens across the town.





## Water for Health and Food Security



### Emerging Farmers

Today, 15 emerging farmers representing five households are involved in the project.

The Matzikama Municipality has allocated land to the emerging farmers, and made some water available. This water is being supplied free of charge, at least until the project is self-sufficient. To ensure the sustainability of this project, the MPRC will provide ongoing mentorship and training to the beneficiaries as well as the broader community through a water conservation and awareness programme.

The farmers will focus on growing vegetables and raising poultry and other small livestock. In addition, they intend to establish a nursery to grow and supply seedlings to the food gardens and neighbouring towns. The project aims to farm organically, thus ensuring access to a better market, while at the same time protecting the environment.

In the short term, the project aims to put food on the tables of its members, and then supply produce to the local primary schools. In the medium term, the project aims to generate income through selling selected vegetables and herbs. In the long term, the initiative aims to create sustainable employment opportunities by developing small businesses and creating a welcoming and safe environment for tourism, while promoting the MPRC and Doringbaai.

“We focus on sustainable development,” Owies says. “The project has a lot of potential to succeed and be sustainable, and it just has to be purposefully driven.”

