

Pioneer Foods

ACCESS TO FOOD FOR ALL

PIONEER FOODS' BRANDS SUCH AS Weet-Bix, ProNutro, White Star, Spekko Rice, Moir's, Marmite, Bovril, Redro, Sasko, Nulaid and Tydstroom Chicken are well-known throughout the country and the company believes it is well-placed to address issues around nutrition, agricultural and environmental sustainability. In line with this stance, the overarching objective of Pioneer Foods' CSI programme is to work towards ensuring access to food for all and to contribute to sustainable development at community level.

The Pioneer Foods Fund

Pioneer Foods has recently taken the step of establishing an independent fund, which will be responsible for all its CSI programmes. Established at the beginning of 2008, The Pioneer Foods Fund is an independent sub-committee of the board's human resources committee, and is chaired by an independent chairperson.

In the past, the executive management approved a CSI budget and focus areas for investment but the company believed that an independent board would ensure greater governance and transparent decision-making around CSI. The Pioneer Foods Fund is allocated a minimum of 1% of net profit after tax per year. In its last financial year, the company spent R5.8 million on CSI and has allocated R6.5 million for CSI projects in 2008.

The Fund is committed to supporting projects where there is a triple-bottom-line outcome such as economic sustainability, environmental protection and social development. With this in mind, four strategic areas for development have been identified and the Fund is supporting four flagship projects within these strategic areas.

Focus areas for development

The Fund aims to invest in sustainable development initiatives that will address the needs of its stakeholders as well as expand their opportunities. To make this a reality, it has identified four focus areas, which it refers to as its development boundaries. These include: nutrition; agricultural initiatives along its value chain; environmental sustainability; and disaster relief.

There is no budget allocation for each area. Rather, the company invests in projects with the greatest need and also considers the

// The Pioneer Foods Fund vision is a South Africa free of poverty, where all people who live here have an opportunity to access food from a just and sustainable system. //

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EXECUTIVE, CORPORATE STRATEGY, PIONEER FOODS



Pioneer Foods helps Feedback Food Redistribution link those with an excess of food to those in need of nourishment.

potential of the project to be sustainable in the future. In so doing, it seeks to build relationships with project leaders so as to enhance the value of each initiative through capacity-building. In line with this objective, projects are run by NPO service providers which report to the Fund, so that the impact of the project is continually monitored and evaluated.

Feedback Food Redistribution Project

Pioneer Foods' commitment to community development is informed by its belief that development cannot happen when people are hungry. Its primary focus on nutrition is an attempt to improve access to food and is, arguably, the area where Pioneer Foods' products can have the biggest impact.

In line with this objective, Pioneer Foods supports the Feedback Food Redistribution Project, an organisation that is committed to community development in South Africa through food redistribution. Launched in 2000, as a result of redistributing excess food from Cape Town's film industry to those in need, Feedback has grown from delivering food that could provide around 200 meals a day, to an organisation that, in 2007, provided over 14 million meals to 215 beneficiary organisations in the Western Cape, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. Pioneer Foods has been able to lend valuable support by funding Feedback's increasing operational costs, which included the donation of two delivery trucks in 2006 and direct operational costs in 2008.

Food & Trees for Africa

Improving nutritional access at community level is a key aspect of the Fund's focus on environmental sustainability initiatives. Within this focus area, the Fund supports Food & Trees for Africa, South Africa's national greening organisation, which has set up more than 200 organic food gardens over the past 18 years, as well as distributed over three million trees.

The Fund is also directly supporting community food garden projects. One such initiative is the Pula-Madibogo project near Polokwane. At present, 48 educators, parents and community members participate in this permaculture project, an approach to food production that recycles all nutrients and waste. In addition, these community-based projects bring about poverty alleviation in a sustainable and practical manner.

Pioneer Foods Bursary Scheme

The Fund further supports two bursary schemes, which enable students from disadvantaged backgrounds to receive grants to develop their careers in the fields of engineering, food technology and artisanship. The initiative, known as the Pioneer Foods Bursary Scheme, is a priority for Pioneer Foods because it aims to decrease the dearth of skills in the food and beverage industry as well as the agricultural sector. What is more, the bursary scheme encourages enterprise development, which empowers farm workers. By participating in this initiative, farm workers can enjoy the benefits of owning shares in farm workers' trusts.

Winter Warmers Project

The fourth arm to Pioneer Foods' CSI strategy is to provide relief in times of critical need, such as during a natural disaster or extreme weather conditions. In 2008, the Fund set up a Winter Warmer Project, which aims to pre-empt the effect that the Cape winter has on learners from informal settlements in Paarl and Wellington in the Western Cape. To date, the Fund has provided 3,700 learners at schools in these towns with rain-resistant tracksuits with neon reflectors.

Partnering for the future

Pioneer Foods has long embraced the notion that public-private partnerships are crucial if South Africa is to achieve its development goals. Via its Fund, Pioneer Foods is set to make sure that it walks the talk and invests in the future of South Africa. In playing this vital role, it is envisaged that the Fund will serve as the bridge between Pioneer Foods, the corporate citizen, and South African communities.

CSI PROFILE

CSI budget

- R5.8 million in 2007

Focus areas

- Nutrition
- Agricultural initiatives
- Environmental initiatives
- Disaster relief

Geographic reach

- National

Flagship projects

- *Feedback Food Redistribution Project* – an organisation that redistributes quality excess food to the poorest areas of Gauteng, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.
- *Food & Trees for Africa* – South Africa's national greening organisation that distributes trees for planting and sets up organic food gardens, among other projects.
- *Pioneer Foods Bursary Scheme* – bursaries that aim to address a lack of skills in the food, beverage and agricultural sectors.
- *Winter Warmers Project* – a disaster relief project that aims to provide learners in the Wineland towns of Paarl and Wellington with rain-resistant tracksuits with neon reflectors.

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