

Mouton Foundation celebrates 10 years of community upliftment in Citrusdal

 By [Sindy Peters](#)

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Rooibos manufacturer and exporter Carmién Tea, through its social upliftment arm The Mouton Foundation, has contributed R17m towards community upliftment over the past decade. Supported by a portion of all the sales of Carmién Tea, some of the foundation's initiatives include; establishing multi-purpose community centres and early childhood development centres, providing tertiary study bursaries for employees' children, running a mobile health service which visits employees on the farms, and providing sports facilities, among many others.



Mouton Foundation Early Childhood Development Centre

Madele Mouton, manager of the Mouton Foundation, and Lize Mouton, marketing director of Carmién Tea, provide insight into some of the foundation's achievements over the years, its impact on the wider Citrusdal community, and how it ensures its initiatives are sustainable.

■ ***What would you say is the greatest achievement for The Mouton Foundation during its 10-year history?***

Madele and Lize Mouton: Ten years is still a short time in terms of community upliftment and we know the real impact will only be seen over generations to come. We feel proud that with the opening of our last community centre, all the workers of Mouton Citrus over all the different production sites have access to medical care in their workplace and all their children have access to education facilities for both pre-school and afterschool clubs. The quality of the educational programme we provide in our centres through the Pebbles Project is also one of the major strengths of the foundation.

■ ***How does The Mouton Foundation assess its broader impact in the communities with which it works?***

Madele and Lize: The foundation is one aspect of a company strategy to make a difference in society. Within the Citrusdal community, Mouton has representation in just about every school, police forum, non-profit and sports club in the local community. We also give regular donations and other forms of support to these organisations. The Mouton Foundation facilities (halls and sports grounds) are also used for local community initiatives and schools at a nominal fee or free of charge.

Within the citrus community, we measure academic results of school children, do formal assessments for pre-school children in centres twice a year by teachers, and have a database for medical statistics measuring and monitoring chronic illnesses, HIV/TB rates, number of family planning interventions done, birth rates etc.



Mouton Foundation nurse

■ ***How do you drive customer awareness in terms of the difference their purchases make?***

Madele and Lize: We communicate our commitment to goodness on our retail cartons with our Goodness Seals: Eco-, Social-, Flavour- and Health- Goodness. Clients can also read more about this on our website. We continuously share real-life stories from the farm on our social media to ensure customers are aware that by purchasing a box of Carmién Tea, they are making a bigger difference. Carmién Tea has several certifications such as UTZ, Rainforest Alliance and Fairtrade. All of these certifications also ensure clients that we comply with international standards.

■ ***Do you think South African businesses are doing enough in terms of social upliftment - from your experience, how would you motivate for greater corporate social investment?***

Madele and Lize: At Carmién Tea, we will continue the good work and our commitment to social upliftment, training and development and productive job creation. Hopefully, others will follow as they see the fruit of the investment in our workers and the community. We will continue to share the success stories and lead by example.

■ ***How does The Mouton Foundation ensure its initiatives are sustainable?***

Madele and Lize: We believe that investing (however small) in people is always sustainable, since it is carried in a living being throughout eternity. That being said, we are not going anywhere and will keep on investing in our people. The foundation is intertwined in the business and the one cannot be seen as separate from the other. As a business, we believe in economic upliftment, ownership enhancement, leadership training and creating wealth for all. This is one side of the coin. The foundation is the other side where we are focusing on other needs of the communities like health, education, culture etc. The income for the foundation is also linked to the commercial viability of the companies involved. This double-sided coin is what creates a sustainable environment for everyone involved. From management to the smallest child - we are one family.



Mouton Foundation feeding scheme

▣ *What lies in the future for The Mouton Foundation?*

Madele and Lize: We have established excellent infrastructure and educational programmes over the last 10 years that we felt were the basis for these communities. We are thus excited to upscale some of our more softer programmes including those for teenagers and the elderly. We are thus excited about more specifically designed life skills and mentorship programmes to instil a sense of value for all involved.

▣ *What is The Mouton Foundation and Carmién Tea doing for Mandela Day this year, and what do you think is the significance of Mandela Day in 2017?*

Madele and Lize: The Mouton Foundation will support the ATKV Young Starts physically and financially to decorate Citrusdal's entrance on 18 July. The foundation will also be involved in the handing out of 160 sleeping bags to Pebbles at Ford, Citrusdal.

The Carmién Tea marketing team, with our characters Babalo the Elephant and Max the Sugarbird (as seen on our Carmién Kiddies Tea packs), will also visit children on the farm in Bergendal as well as in Philadelphia near Cape Town together with Kinetics IV. It will be a day of fun and sharing time and having tea with kids from all ages. We'll be playing with the kids and handing our warm rooibos tea with snacks.

ABOUT SINDY PETERS

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