

Food & Trees for Africa launches online social investment platform

Issued by [Ninety9cents](#)

22 Oct 2021

[Food & Trees for Africa \(FTFA\)](#), a non-profit social enterprise that was originally founded to address environmental inequalities and food security, has taken another step within the development sector by launching '[Footprint](#)', a social investment platform to assist corporates in identifying suitable beneficiaries and tangibly measuring their impact.



What adds to Footprint's capabilities within social development is that it is developed as a beneficiary-first platform which prioritises their needs at its core. Importantly the platform is also designed to protect their privacy and rights. One of the primary reasons for this protection is to limit any potential exploitation of good performing projects.

[Chris Wild](#), FTFA Executive Director, says there is a need to match donors and beneficiaries in a way that protects both parties as well as outline a clear path to maximise the impact of any given funding. "Over the years, we have developed the largest beneficiary database in the country thanks to years of applications and our thorough assessment process. During this time, it became evident that beneficiary selection is essential to the good running of a project. In terms of strategic decision, we originally built the platform for ourselves but quickly realised that, combined with our 30 years of knowledge and experience in the sector, it would be a powerful tool in the hands of donors and funders."



Footprint is enabled with real-time reporting, ensuring CSI and Development teams receive regular information and are able to track progress in order to measure the process and sustainability of their projects.

“One of the applications for example is that before a relationship between a beneficiary and donor is formalised, donors can receive accurate information and reports on beneficiary’s needs. The information on hand combined with assessments makes it effortless to measure and track all elements of the relationship through a dashboard managed by FTFA that guides the development intervention process.”



How does Footprint work?

- Corporates/CSI/Sustainability departments present requirements in terms of their strategy. This could include demographics, location and type of project (as examples).

- The system looks through the database and pulls the highest scoring beneficiaries we have with the given parameters.
- There are a number of scorecard elements of each project that fall within situational and behavioural.
- If a beneficiary is not on our database, the footprint team is able to perform an assessment and give you a scorecard for potential projects of that beneficiary.

Founded in 1990, FTFA also recently celebrated its 30th birthday, a milestone that is testament to the good work and positive impact the organisation has had to date. Having launched with less than 20 partners, it now boasts partnering with the likes of Shoprite, Tiger Brands, Fortress, Bidvest and Investec.

Wild believes their success comes down to their partnerships and their long term view on sustainability coupled with a large knowledge economy internally. "We started with three employees in 1990 and are now 70. We have our own nurseries, the Climate Reality Project, a combined 200 hectares of vegetable production, and through our Eduplant programme, we have reached over 18 000 schools. This would not be possible without the force working behind the scenes at FTFA to bring these projects to life and grow them."

Currently FTFA runs six flagship programmes addressing integrated and sustainable community interventions focusing on food security, community forestry and climate change.

For more information on Food and Trees for Africa, visit the [website](#), head to Footprints, or contact them on 011 656-9802.

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