



**REVIEW OF THE MIDVAAL AGRICULTURAL GROWTH
STRATEGY 2024**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Midvaal Local Municipality (MLM) is dedicated to driving sustainable growth by pursuing the objective of becoming a thriving agricultural hub that serves as Gauteng's primary food source, Midvaal Agricultural Growth Strategy 2016. Through innovative and coordinated efforts, MLM is focused on fostering economic opportunities in agriculture, creating resilient food systems, and enhancing the well-being of its communities., as such the municipality has aligned its economic growth strategy position to realise this objective and this is evident as pronounced in the Midvaal Integrated Development Plan and Spatial Development Plan 2023/2024 by emphasizing on the need to facilitate and enhance agricultural production, and support farmers to graduate from subsistence Small Holder Farmers to commercial farmers and ultimately become entrepreneurs in agriculture.

The document introduces a renewed strategic vision and mission for the Midvaal Local Municipality (MLM), providing a clear direction and goals that reflect the municipality's aspirations for growth, sustainable development, and community enhancement. This strategy is designed to align with relevant policies at both national and provincial levels, ensuring Midvaal's initiatives are consistent with broader government objectives and standards.

In addition to the strategic vision, the document includes an in-depth analysis of Midvaal's socio-economic profile. This profile outlines current demographic, economic, and social data, offering stakeholders a deeper understanding of the municipality's status. This section helps contextualize the priorities of Midvaal's development strategy by highlighting areas needing intervention and potential growth. The strategy's implementation plan provides a roadmap for project prioritization and resource allocation. It details the phased approach for executing initiatives, along with specific actions. By identifying key stakeholders and assigning roles and responsibilities, the plan ensures that all parties involved are aligned and engaged in the successful rollout of these projects. This structured approach aims to enhance accountability and transparency, with measurable goals for each stage of the municipality's development initiatives.

Through this comprehensive strategy, Midvaal Local Municipality aims to foster a thriving local economy, improve service delivery, and ensure a high quality of life for its residents, laying the foundation for sustainable, long-term progress. It is for the above reason that the Agricultural Growth Strategy (AGS) of 2016, is being revised to look at the current status quo within the

agricultural sector, align with new policies and incorporate recent methods and techniques withing the agricultural sector.

2.OBJECTIVES OF ARICULTURAL GROWTH STRATEGY

The strategy outlined in this document is designed to foster a robust and sustainable agricultural sector, with a focus on collaboration, growth, and inclusivity. Key objectives of the strategy include creating a shared vision for agriculture among stakeholders, developing and implementing a strategic framework, and identifying impactful programs and projects to support agricultural growth. The objective of the strategy is to:

- Create a common vision for agriculture with key stakeholders
- Design and implement a strategic framework
- Identify programmes and projects that will help agricultural growth
- Address issues undermining investor confidence and interest in agriculture
- Ensure increased access and participation in the sector
- Combine, share and optimise the resources and benefits among the partners
- Foster global competitiveness, growth and profitability in the sector to attract new investment
- Ensure sustainable agricultural development
- Build lasting partnerships among key role-players
- Encourage youth participation in agriculture for employment growth and inclusivity.
- Support climate-resilient farming practices to mitigate environmental impacts
- Enhance agricultural innovation through research and technology adoption
- Strengthen infrastructure to improve market access and supply chain efficiency
- Promote gender equity by empowering women in agriculture
- Establish monitoring and evaluation systems to track progress and adapt strategies as needed
- Increase awareness of agricultural opportunities through community outreach and education programs

3.LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The Agricultural Growth Strategy will align to the following National, Provincial and the District policies that are important to the agricultural environment in shaping the agricultural sector.

3.1 National Development Plan 2030

Aligned with the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030, which identifies agriculture as the primary economic driver in rural areas, the agricultural sector has the potential to generate up to one million new jobs by 2030, making a substantial impact on national employment targets.

The National Development Plan 2030 (NDP) outlines several key passages that align closely with the goals of the Midvaal Agricultural Growth Strategy, especially those focusing on rural economic growth, job creation, and sustainable agricultural practices.

3.2 The National Department of Agriculture Land Reform and Rural Development Strategic Plan (2020-2025)

The National Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development Strategic Plan (2020-2025) contains key passages that align with the Midvaal Agricultural Growth Strategy, particularly in promoting agricultural development, land reform, and rural economic empowerment. Relevant sections include:

Focus Area 1: Increased Equitable Access to Land, Water, and Biological Resources.

Focus Area 2: Improved Governance and Coordination of Rural Development.

By focusing on food security, this goal aligns with the MAGS vision of a resilient and productive agricultural sector that contributes to national food security and reduces reliance on food imports.

3.3 Sedibeng District Municipality Rural Development Sector Draft Plan 2023

Aligned with the Midvaal Agricultural Growth Strategy's goal to enhance agricultural productivity, community empowerment, and economic diversification, the **Sedibeng District Municipality Rural Development Sector Draft Plan 2023** designates several high-potential agricultural zones, such as **Bantu Bonke**. These areas are key to driving local agricultural growth and supporting sustainable food systems. Together, these interconnected Regional Agri-Processing Hubs and the **Sedibeng Agri Park**, supporting the objectives of sustainable growth, improved market access, and resilient local food systems.

3.4 Midvaal Local Economic Development Strategy (2023-2028)

The **Local Economic Development (LED)** strategy of the **Midvaal Local Municipality (MLM)** emphasizes agricultural development as a vital component of the local economy, with a focus on

key productions like maize, red meat, and agro processing. Recognizing agriculture's role in job creation and food security, MLM aims to support both active and inactive farmers, from small-scale to commercial, with targeted assistance to increase their productivity and self-reliance.

Aligned with the **Midvaal Agricultural Growth Strategy**, MLM's agricultural projects are structured around key goals:

- Sustainable and Diversified Agricultural Development
- Support for Emerging Farmers and Skill Development
- Agro-Processing and Niche Product Development
- Market Development and Enabling Environment

4.SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

According to the Midvaal Economic Development analysis report of 2014, to support an inclusive rural economy in line with the Midvaal agricultural growth strategy, the focus could be on creating job opportunities in agriculture and related sectors, as well as ensuring a positive trade balance for agricultural products. Based on the Integrated Development Plan 2022-2027, The socio-economic profile of Midvaal Local Municipality reflects both opportunities and challenges for growth and development.

4.1 Economic Development and Investment:

Midvaal is positioned as a promising investment destination within Gauteng, with infrastructure investments aimed at fostering economic growth. The Midvaal local municipality has allocated substantial resources to public safety, roads, and essential services. Significant spending on infrastructure, including roads and bulk water, sewer, and electricity services, aims to make the area more attractive to investors, supporting economic activity and job creation. The promoting of the investment opportunities is promulgated through the Midvaal Brochure and the Municipal website.

4.2 Unemployment and Poverty:

Midvaal faces unemployment rates in line with national trends, with poverty affecting approximately 18% of the population. The municipality's economic strategies focus on creating employment opportunities through the facilitation of the EPWP programme with a grant allocated

by the Department of Public Work and Infrastructure and supporting local businesses, especially through infrastructure development and strategic investments.

4.3 Small Business Support:

Local economic development initiatives include support for SMMEs and township enterprises. . by partnering with Small Enterprise Development Agency, Department of Agriculture Rural Development and Land Reform and other relevant State-owned entities. Programs like the CASP were Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) a South African government initiative designed to support emerging and small-scale farmers, help equip entrepreneurs with skills in business planning, financial management, and compliance, addressing gaps that hinder the growth of small businesses. These initiatives support SMMEs and cooperatives in aligning with market demands and accessing new opportunities.

To strengthen the agricultural sector, particularly in agro-processing and related industries, it's essential to enhance intra-regional and cross-border trade with neighbouring countries. For the Midvaal local economy, this can be achieved by developing strong regional connections, particularly through improved infrastructure. Enhancing east-west trade routes, such as those linking Heidelberg and Potchefstroom, and strengthening the north-south corridor via the N1 freeway (connecting Polokwane and Cape Town), would greatly improve trade accessibility and flow within the region and beyond.

These improvements will boost Midvaal's connectivity, facilitating faster and more efficient movement of agricultural goods across key trade areas, which supports regional trade growth and expands market reach for local producers. Aligning Midvaal's strategy with these national objectives will foster inclusive rural development, create jobs, and ensure economic resilience in agriculture.

Aligned with the **Agricultural Growth Strategy** of the **Midvaal Local Municipality**, this socio-economic profile reinforces the need for targeted agricultural development and value-adding within MLM. Midvaal's strategy focuses on supporting emerging farmers, enhancing skills, and fostering agro-processing initiatives that reflect national trends in agriculture. Through mentorship, training, and resources, the strategy aims to boost agricultural productivity, create jobs, and empower small-scale farmers to contribute to the regional economy and food security, reflecting broader national agricultural goals.

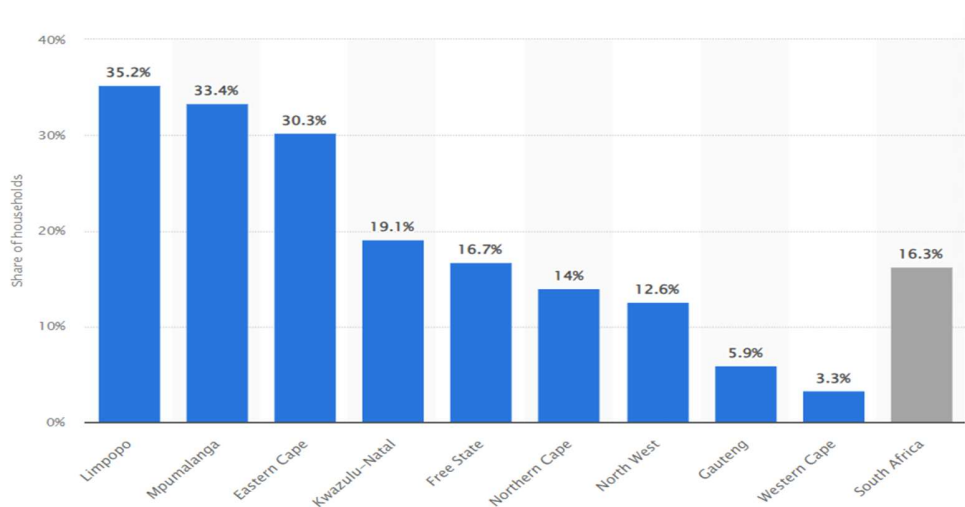


Figure 1 illustrates share of households involved in agricultural activities in South Africa in 2022, by province (Statista).

As of 2022, **16.3%** of households in South Africa engaged in agricultural activities, with higher participation rates in rural provinces such as **Limpopo** (35.2%) and **Mpumalanga** (33.4%). In contrast, more urbanized provinces like **Gauteng** (5.9%) and the **Western Cape** (3.3%) showed lower involvement in agriculture. Overall, the percentage of households involved in agricultural activities decreased across most provinces compared to 2021, except in the **Northern Cape**, **North West**, and **Western Cape**.

The **Midvaal Agricultural Strategy** aligns with the **Gauteng Rural Development Plan (GRDP)**, emphasizing rural areas as key sites for farming and economic potential due to the availability of vast unused land. This strategic approach aims to harness agricultural opportunities for job creation, improved quality of life, and economic activity in the region. The GRDP highlights that the district is largely designated for large-scale agriculture, with small-scale agricultural activities concentrated near rural economic nodes throughout the district.

4.4. Population in Gauteng

The population in Gauteng as shown in **Figure 2** is 16 million, with regards to the Sedibeng District Municipality population number is 1,2 million.

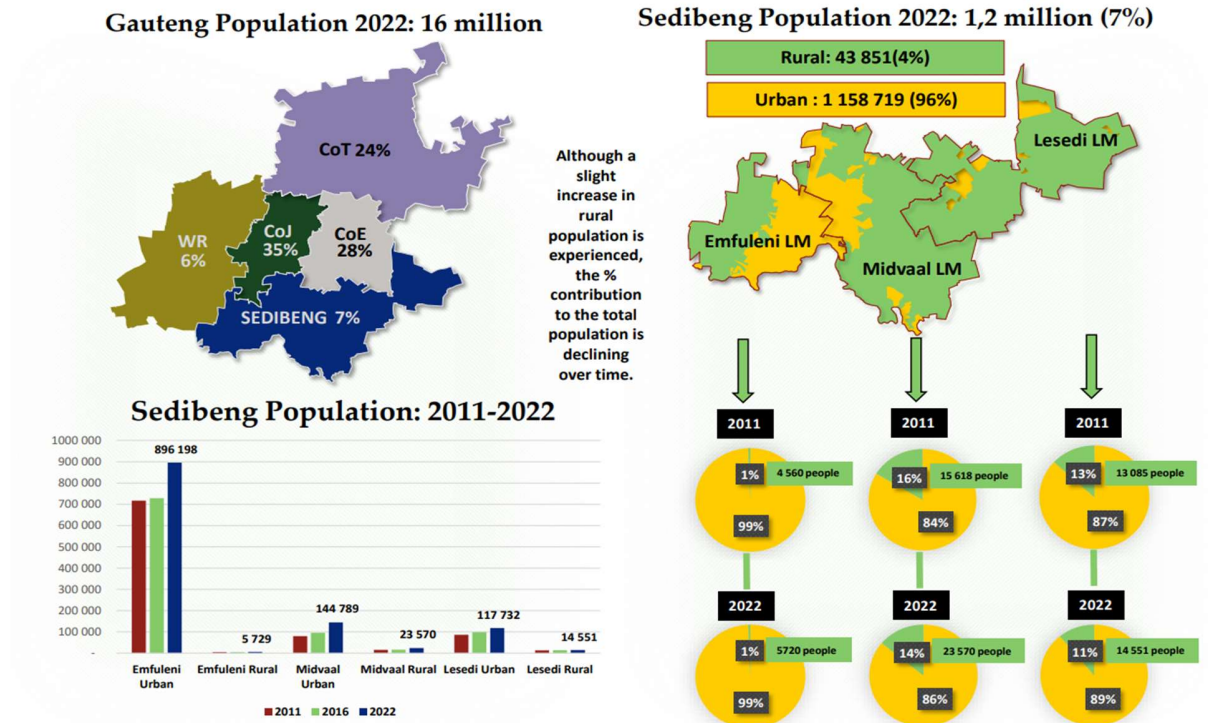


Figure 2 depicts population from broader Gauteng Province simultaneously filtering to the Sedibeng District Municipality level (Sedibeng Rural Development Plan, 2023).

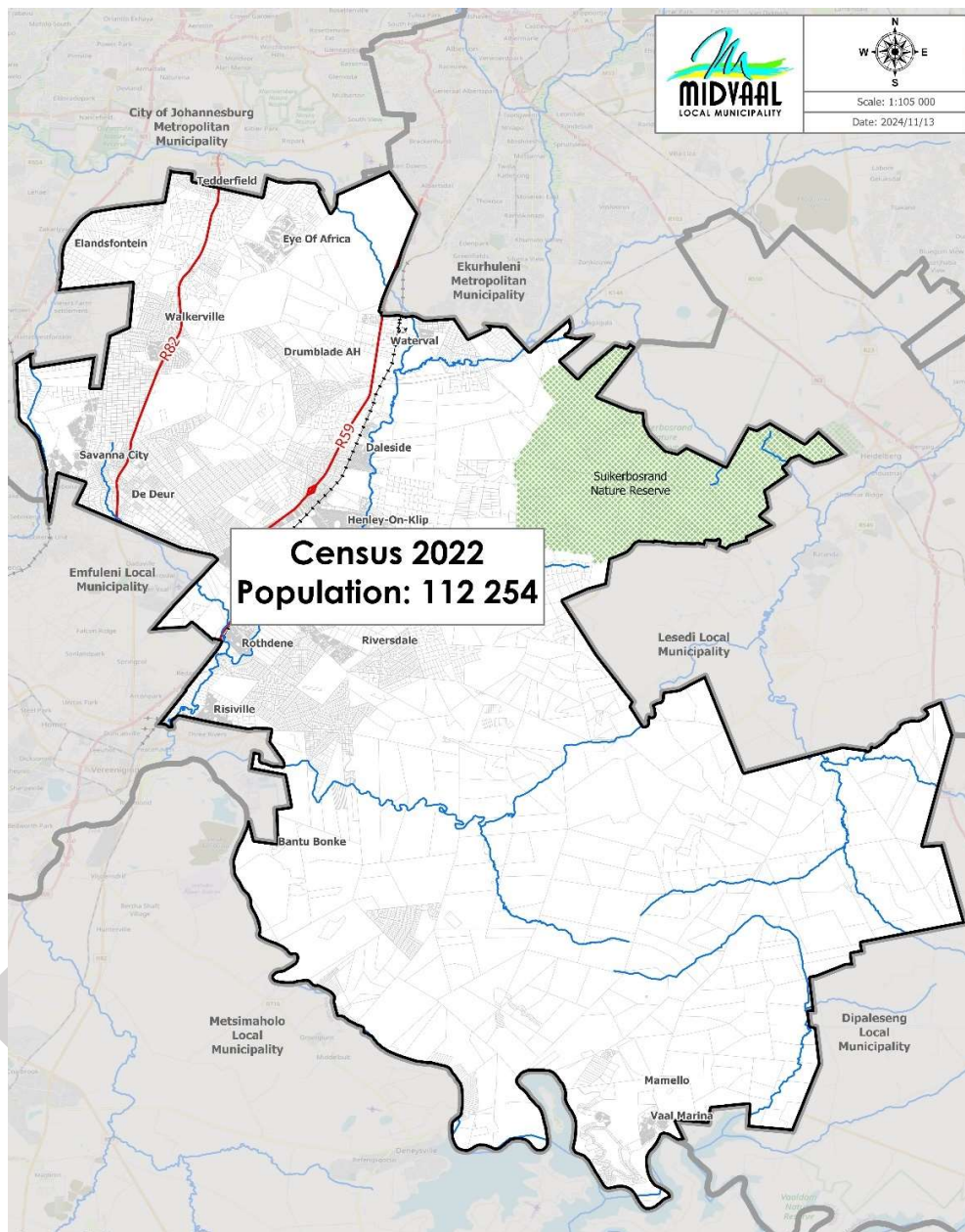


Figure 2.3 illustrates the number of Midvaal Local Municipality population from the Census, 2022 (Midvaal GIS).

The population of the Midvaal Local Municipality is estimated to be around 112 254 people, based on Midvaal infographic statistics recent data. This municipality is in the southern part of Gauteng Province and is part of the Sedibeng District. The area is characterized by a predominantly rural setting with extensive farming, which makes up about half of the municipality's jurisdiction.

4.5. Spatial locality

Midvaal Local Municipality is a Category B municipality as defined in the Municipal Structures Act (No. 117 of 1998). It includes 15 wards as illustrated in **Figure 3**, and it is one of three local municipalities which make up the Sedibeng District Municipality. The other two are the Emfuleni Local Municipality and the Lesedi Local Municipality.

Midvaal Local Municipality covers an area of approximately 1 722 km² compared to approximately 966 km² and 1484 km² respectively for the neighbouring Emfuleni and Lesedi municipalities.

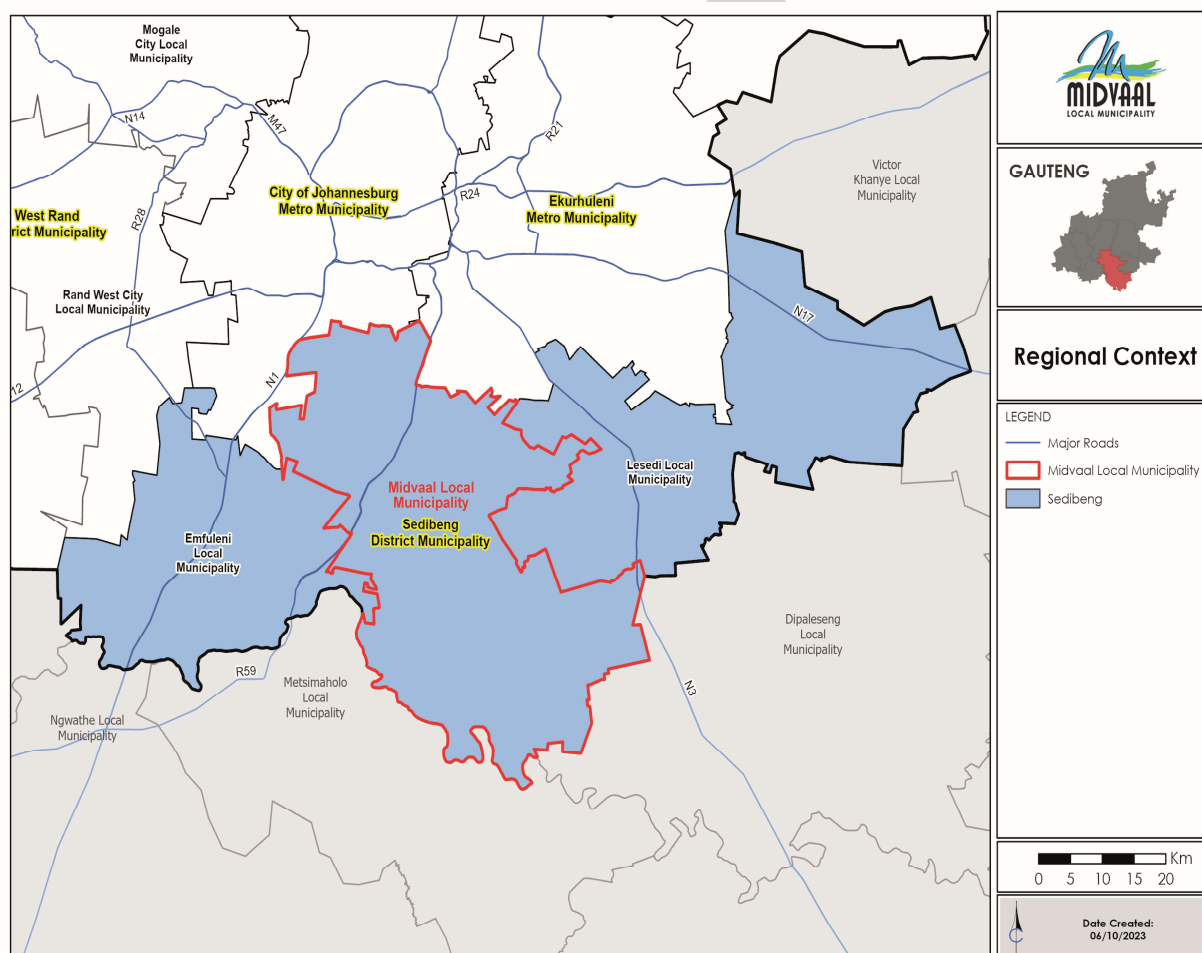


Figure 3 illustrates the institutional arrangement of the Gauteng Province, the Midvaal LM covering the southwestern parts. In terms of extent, the Midvaal LM is the largest and covers 41% of the land in the Sedibeng District Municipality. Geographical Size is 1722km² (Midvaal GIS,2023).

4.5.1 Midvaal Municipality Wards

A ward is an area in a metro or local municipality, which has clearly defined boundaries. **Figure 4** clearly illustrates how the 15 wards within the Midvaal Municipal jurisdiction area have been demarcated.

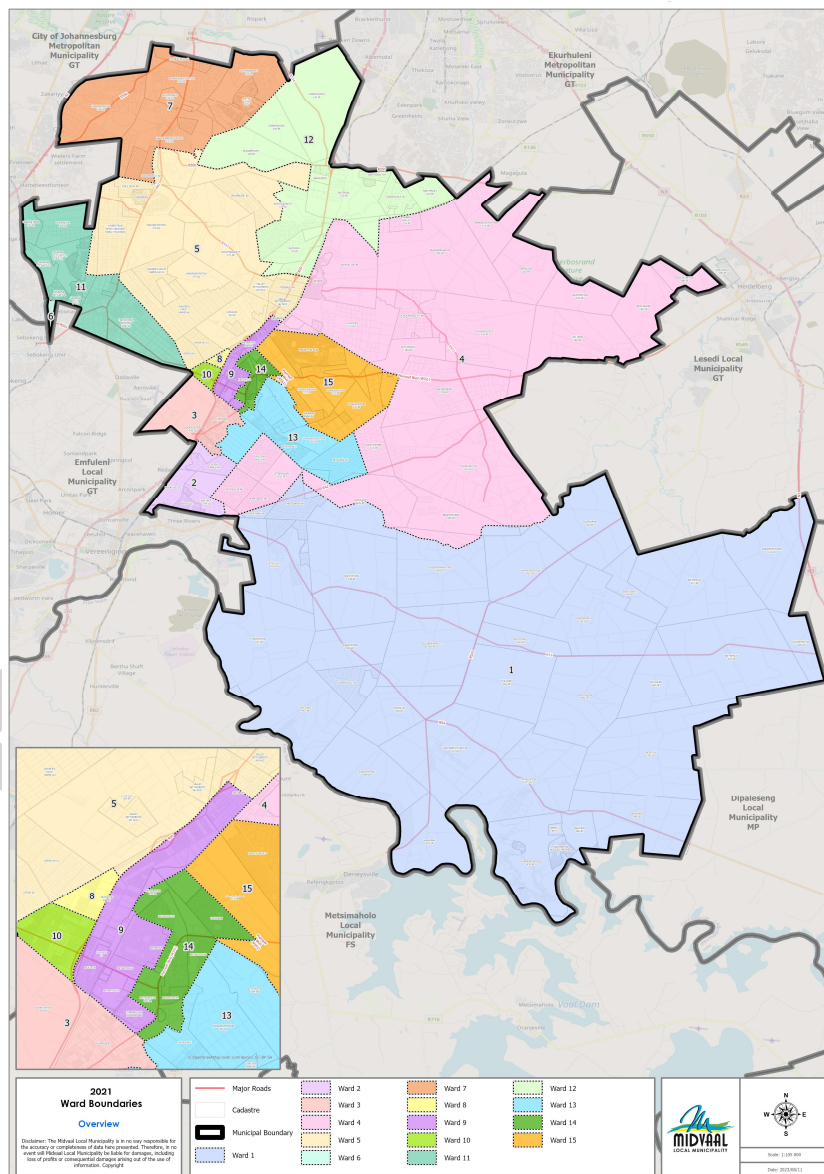


Figure 4 depicts the 15 ward boundaries of the Midvaal Local Municipality (Midvaal GIS).

4.6. Employment status in Midvaal Local Municipality

According to Stats SA a total of 45 956 people are economically active (employed or unemployed but looking for work), and of these, 18,8% are unemployed. Of the 21 439 economically active youth (15–34 years) in the area, 25,4% are unemployed.

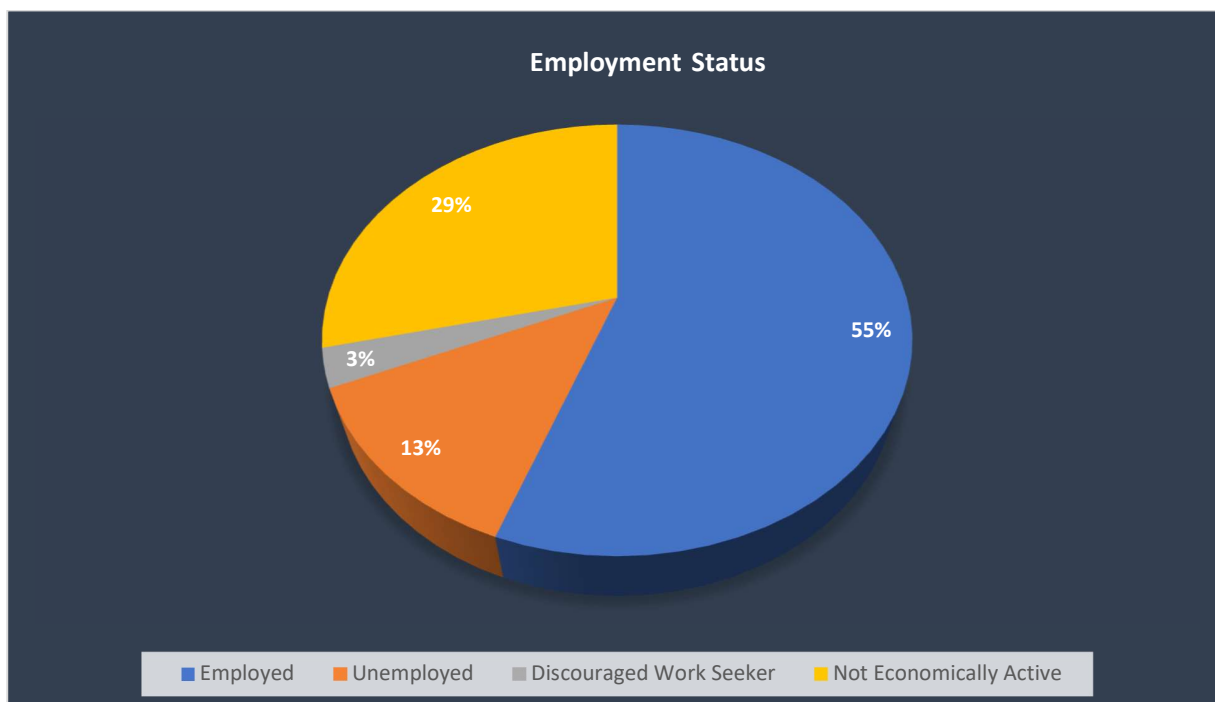


Figure 5 depicts employment status of the MLM (Stats SA, 2011).

4.7. Income category of Agricultural Households

Agricultural statistics are key to the measurement of the performance of the agricultural sector. It is used to inform policies and strategies on poverty, food security, environmental sustainability, and rural development.

Income category of agricultural households	
Annual income category of agricultural households	Number

No income	908
R1-R4800	170
R4801-R38400	1645
R38401-R307200	1465
R307201+	370
Unspecified	202

Table 1 details on the income category of agricultural household (Stats SA).

4.7.1. Income category of agricultural household chart

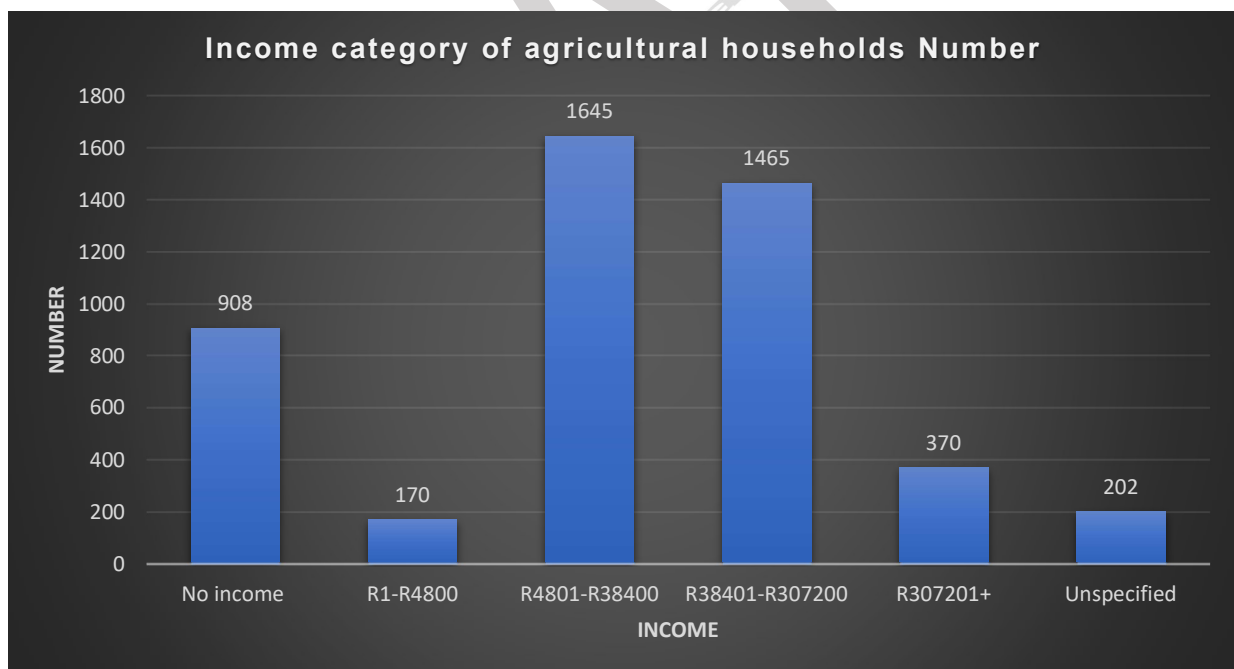


Figure 6 illustrates a chart on the income category of agricultural households of the data in MLM.

4.8. Agricultural Activities

Agricultural Activities are prominent throughout the Midvaal Local Municipality. The area west of the N1 is predominantly cultivated land with some cattle farming towards Vanderbijlpark. There is no cultivated land in the pocket of land between the N1 and R59 while tunnel farming seems prominent in this area, with dispersed cattle farming. The area between the R59 and the N3 is characterised by cultivated land in the southern areas with dispersed cattle farming. The eastern extents of the Sedibeng District Municipality, between Heidelberg and Devon, are characterised by cultivated land with cattle and chicken farming.

There are several types of agricultural activities and several MLM Households as shown in **Table 2** and **Figure 7**.

Agricultural Households Data	
Type of Specific activity	Number
Livestock production	1,205
Poultry production	1,818
Vegetable production	2,118
Production of other crops	820
Other	984

Table 2 An agriculture household may engage in more than one agricultural activity (Stats SA, 2011).

4.5.1 Agricultural Household Number

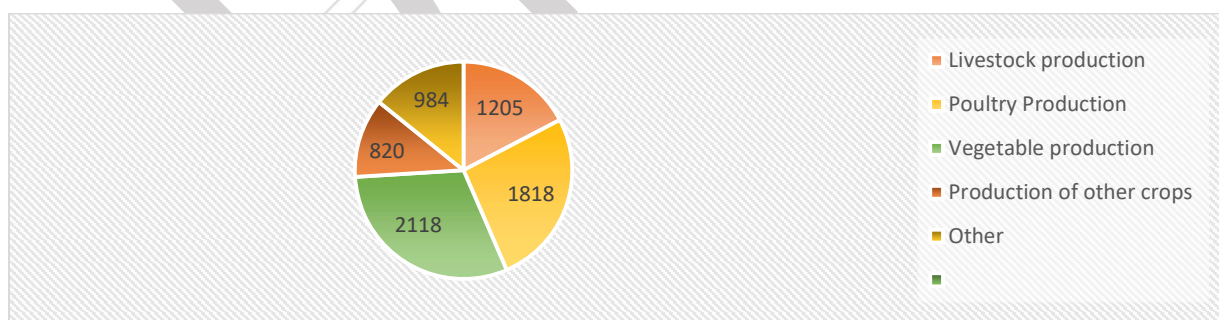


Figure 7 translates the data in **Table 2** to Agricultural Household Chart.

4.9. Midvaal Local Municipality Agricultural Potential

Figure 9 highlights the distribution of high-potential agricultural land within the Midvaal Local Municipality, with a notable concentration of such land in the Bantu Bonke Agri-hub, located in the municipality's southwestern region. This area stands out as the largest cluster of high-quality agricultural land, emphasizing Midvaal's overall agricultural potential. The municipality is considered a high-potential agricultural zone, supported by these concentrated areas, which offer significant opportunities for agricultural development.

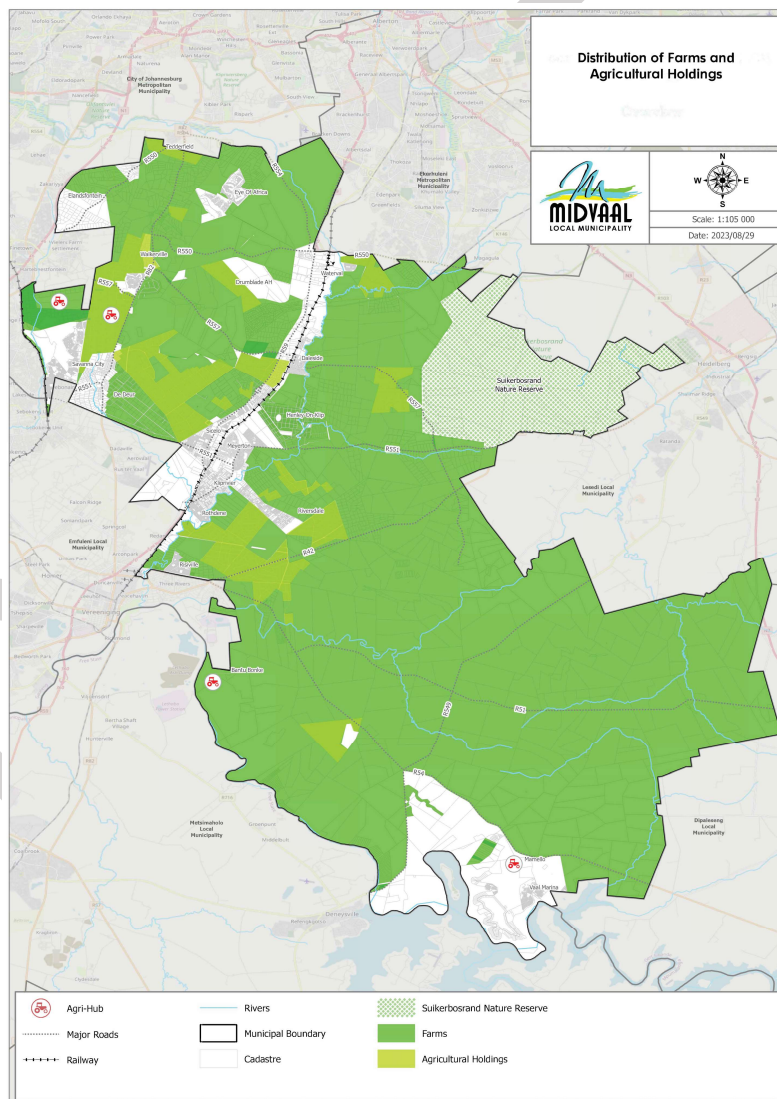


Figure 9 Map shows the Agri cultural holdings including farms and Agri hubs (Midvaal GIS).

5. MIDVAAL AGRICULTURAL VISION AND MISSION

5.1. Strategic Vision and Mission,

5.1.1. The **vision** of Midvaal agricultural growth strategy is:

"To become a catalyst for holistic Socio-economic transformation aims to build resilient agricultural communities where sustainable farming, agribusiness growth, and equitable access to resources drive shared prosperity, increased employment, and local food security."

5.1.2. The **mission** of Midvaal Agricultural growth Strategy is:

"Our mission is to drive inclusive agricultural development and business growth while revitalizing townships and informal economies. Through sustainable practices, skills development, agro-processing innovation, market expansion, and the creation of an enabling environment, the aim to uplift emerging farmers, empower local businesses, and attract investment for the long-term success of our communities."

"The **guiding principles** and **values** of the Midvaal Agricultural growth Strategy are as follows:

- Service excellence.
- Unlocking economic opportunities in agriculture.
- Sector transformation.
- Collaboration and cooperation between all key stakeholders

6. STRATEGIC FOCUS

The Agricultural Growth Strategy of Midvaal Local Municipality focuses on five strategic pillars to achieve its vision for agricultural growth, the table below indicates the pillars along with the required actions:

Five Strategic Pillars	Required Activities
• Capacity Building	1) Pair experienced farmers with emerging ones to provide practical guidance and monitor progress. 2) Offer specialized training for young farmers in essential agricultural and business skills, including technical and financial aspects.

	3) Encourage partnerships between commercial and small-scale farmers to share resources and market access, promoting equitable growth. 4) Establish a hub for knowledge-sharing, workshops, and resources on sustainable practices and new technologies. 5) Schedule annual site visits by agricultural officers to offer tailored guidance, track progress, and provide best practice updates.
• Access to Agricultural Land	1) Assist small-scale and emerging farmers in terms of Land applications available for lease from the various Government bodies. 2) Assist small scale farmers by providing information related to compliance matters for eligibility to access funding and land parcels. 3) The Midvaal land alienation policy needs to be finalised to support the small-scale farmers in search of the land to perform agricultural activities.
• Access to Markets	1) Promote demarcated informal trading stalls to gain access to markets: Establish a central hub for farming activities to streamline access to resources and market pathways. 2) Conduct a study to identify niche agricultural markets that are suitable for small-scale farmers, helping them focus on profitable, high-demand products. 3) Assist in packaging, quality management, and marketing, enabling farmers to sell produce more effectively at local markets. 4) Local Seller Support: Address the needs of local sellers, offering guidance in areas such as packaging and marketing.

• Mechanization	1) Encourage the growth of small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs) that specialize in renting out agricultural equipment. This will provide local farmers with affordable access to essential farming tools and machinery, reducing the financial burden of equipment ownership. These SMMEs would support increased productivity in the agricultural sector, especially for emerging farmers who may lack the capital to purchase equipment. 2) Proposal to National Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development: Submit a formal proposal to the National Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development, advocating for the transfer of agricultural machinery ownership to the Midvaal Local Municipality. This transfer would establish the municipality as the official custodian of the equipment, thereby enabling Midvaal to allocate budget resources for maintenance and upkeep under the provisions of the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA). This arrangement would ensure that the equipment remains in good working condition and is accessible to local farmers, promoting sustainable agricultural development in alignment with local government financial regulations.
• Sustainable partnerships	1) Organize networking events and establish advisory boards to connect commercial and emerging farmers. 2) Enable access to resources like facilitation of knowledge exchange in farming techniques.

	3)Promote joint projects and secure financial support to make partnerships sustainable. 4)Coordinate skill-building programs, led by experienced farmers, on quality management and compliance. 5)Track progress to ensure mutual benefit and adjust strategies as needed through business surveys and interviews.
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6.1. Midvaal Local Municipality Swot Analysis

For the Midvaal Local Municipality to successfully achieve the aims of the strategy, a SWOT analysis needs to be conducted. **Table 3** therefore shows the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats as identified. The analysis is imperative to enable a strategic position before committing to endeavours that will improve and promote the agricultural activities.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Land availability	Lack of Financial support to farming activities
Existing farmers	Funding and finance constraints
Comparative advantage	Lack of adequate agricultural infrastructure
Ownership of land	Lack of organised farmers consortium
Lowest unemployment rate in Gauteng	Farmers working in silos
	Inequality in socioeconomic conditions within the municipality
Opportunities	Threats
Food home gardens	Climate change and water scarcity
National and Provincial investments	High inflation rates
Training in farming and provision of venue	Increasing crime levels

Growth in a diversification of sectors, incl. manufacturing, agriculture, and tourism	Land invasion threats
Large portion of undeveloped land	

Table 3 illustrates the MLM SWOT analysis.

7. AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES

The following programs are highlighted within the agricultural Development, support and value adding thrust of the LED strategy.

- Agro-processing and niche product development
- Market development & creating an enabling environment
- Sustainable and Diversified Agricultural Development
- Emerging farmer support and skills development

8. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This section provides guidelines for the preparation and implementation of the identified projects. It will service as an agricultural growth implementation manual for the Midvaal Local Municipality's LED unit after the completion and adoption of the Agricultural Growth Strategy.

Table 4 below indicates the relevant agricultural programmes for implementation:

Intervention	Activities	Outcome	Role Players	Budget
Obtain ongoing funding	Approach funding institutions Promote the strategy to invite Investors	• PPP • Availability of funds	MIDVAAL GDARDE DPWI DTI DFFE	Subject to an agreement
Agro-processing and niche product development	Investigate the feasibility of an Essential Oils Pilot project.	• Market Demand and Potential Revenue	DFFE DALRRD GDARDE	Subject to an agreement
	Investigate the feasibility of a cattle feed production plan.	• Regulatory and Environmental Compliance • reducing water usage	DALRRD GDARDE DTI	Subject to an agreement
	Investigate niche agricultural products and agro-processing opportunities.	• Identification of High-Value Niche Crops	DALRRD GDARDE	Subject to an agreement
	Investigate the expansion of the Bantu-Bonke Hydroponic project.	• Sustainable agriculture practices	DALRRD DTI GDARDE	Subject to an agreement MIG

			DPWI MIDVAAL	
Market development & creating an enabling environment	Develop a multi-purpose agricultural centre and distribution depot.	• Opportunities for Export and Regional Trade • Economic Growth • Job Creation	DPWI DALRRD GDARDE MIDVAAL SEDA	Subject to an agreement
	Initiate a study to identify niche markets in agriculture suitable for small farmers.	• Guidelines for Product Diversification • Increased Income Opportunities	DALRRD GDARDE MIDVAAL ARC SEDA	Subject to an agreement
	Assist small-scale and emerging farmers in terms of packaging, quality management and marketing of produce to be able to market and sell their produce at the existing markets in Midvaal LM.	• Improved Product Quality and Consistency • Competitive Edge in Local and Regional Markets • Reduction of Post-Harvest Losses • Stronger Brand Identity and Recognition	DALRRD GDARDE SEDA	Subject to an agreement
	Assist local sellers with their current needs (e.g. packaging, quality management and marketing)	• Better Packaging and Shelf-Life	DALRRD GDARDE SEDA	Subject to an agreement
	Promote a SMME for hiring of farming implements, tools, machinery & other equipment	• Cost-Effective Farming Operations	DALRRD GDARDE SEDA	Subject to an agreement
Sustainable and Diversified Agricultural Development	Promote and assist the establishment of vegetable production small-scale farmers	• Enhance access to markets and marketing opportunity	DALRRD GDARDE SEDA	Subject to an agreement
	Encourage the development of agro-processing plants in the area	• Market Expansion for Farmers	DALRRD GDARDE SEDA DFFE	Subject to an agreement
	Develop small-scale livestock farming cooperatives	• Community Empowerment and Development • Social and Economic Inclusivity	DALRRD GDARDE SEDA DFFE	Subject to an agreement

	Establish vegetable production cooperatives focusing of produce suitable to the area	• Risk Mitigation • Better Bargaining Power	DALRRD GDARDE SEDA DFFE	Subject to an agreement
	Develop a poultry cluster, focusing on support & development of the existing and struggling poultry farming cooperatives/small-scale farmers in the area.	• Job Creation and Rural Development • Improved Animal Health and Welfare	DALRRD GDARDE SEDA DFFE	Subject to an agreement
	Investigate opportunities for the cultivation, processing and distribution of cannabis in alignment with Gauteng Province's Cannabis Industrialisation Programme	• Investment in Infrastructure • Boost to Agricultural Innovation	DALRRD GDARDE SEDA DFFE	Subject to an agreement
Emerging farmer support and skills development	Develop a central mentorship programme for emerging farmers	• Enhanced Business Management Capabilities	DALRRD GDARDE SEDA DFFE	Subject to an agreement
	Develop a skills development programme aimed specifically at young/emerging farmers	• Enhanced Farming Knowledge and Technical Skills	DALRRD GDARDE SEDA DFFE	Subject to an agreement
	Bring commercial farmers and emerging/upcoming and small-scale farmers together through Agri-BEE partnerships	• Enhanced Sustainability and Productivity	DALRRD GDARDE SEDA DFFE	Subject to an agreement
	Create a farming education and information sharing centre	• Building Strong Networks	DALRRD GDARDE SEDA DFFE	Subject to an agreement
	Monitor and ensure that an agricultural expert (an Department of Agriculture official/extension officer) visit each emerging farmer/cooperative once or twice a year	• Identification of Challenges and Tailored Solutions • Fostering Long-Term Sustainability	DALRRD GDARDE SEDA DFFE	Subject to an agreement

Table 4 illustrates the programmes targeted from the LED Strategy.

9.CONCLUSION

The prominence of an agricultural strategy cannot be overstated. It is important for guiding decision-making, improving efficiency and effectiveness, promoting sustainability, managing risks, engaging stakeholders, and enabling long-term planning. A well-developed agricultural strategy not only addresses current challenges but also positions the sector for future success and resilience.

DRAFT

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