

# Zeerust Solar commences commercial operations

Zeerust Solar, situated in the North West Province, has commenced its commercial operations, having achieved full compliance on 1 January 2021.



Image supplied

The 75MW facility comprises 250,080 solar panels, and is expected to generate 180GWh each year, which is enough to satisfy the needs of around 84 000 average South African households.

The project, which commenced construction in January 2019, is constructed on a 179-hectare project site and is connected to Eskom's Kameeldoorn switching station, which feeds the generated power into the country's national grid.

As with all other independent power producer projects, Zeerust Solar has a strong social development component. "Extensive economic development projects kicked off during our project's construction period to provide Covid-19 relief, in addition to enterprise development training and accelerator programmes, skills development training and other welfare initiatives," said Isaac Mmushi, CEO of Zeerust Solar.

Around 1,000 people from the local beneficiary communities were directly employed on the project during construction. This is in addition to the employment created through the contracting out of various services.

## Development projects

Zeerust Solar's socio-economic development projects are focused on education, youth development, health, food security and welfare. The programmes have been chosen following research and engagement to ensure that they are well informed and will strengthen the beneficiary communities.

Additionally, a percentage of the revenue generated each year will be committed to implementing enterprise development initiatives, to build resilience and accelerate the growth and success of entrepreneurial businesses, ultimately stimulating the local economic growth and creating opportunities for the economic participation of previously disadvantaged groups.

The focus is on small and micro enterprises, designed to enhance growth. To deliver on this objective, the establishment of a local resource centre, for use by local SMMEs and communities at large, will support this drive to support development, whilst the provision of accredited skills training will be provided to start-up businesses.

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