

Creating local employment

Wayne Carbutt is Chiansi Farming Company's Project Manager, bringing his construction and commercial farming expertise to the ambitious irrigation project.

The Chiansi Irrigation project will expand the Chanyanya pilot, building sufficient bulk water capacity to irrigate up to 3,800ha of land in southern Zambia. "InfraCo Africa is partnering with us on the project. It has been a challenge to negotiate with the local communities as the canal passes through a lot of land. InfraCo Africa has been on the ground dealing with that challenge."

Wayne says: "We are upgrading and extending the canal infrastructure to serve the commercial farm and the new community market gardens. The next steps are to continue establishing a sugar nursery and, on the expansion of the Chanyanya pilot, we will carry on laying their pipeline and infrastructure as we move up the canal to the commercial side."

Of his team, he says, "The majority of our workforce is locally employed. We are training them for skilled jobs in construction, driving and operating heavy machinery, brush clearance, planting cane, managing pivots, managing the spraying and fertilising programme, and for management positions."

Chiansi Farming Company also intend to assist with the running of the scheme, ensuring that water is delivered and agricultural expertise made available to the communities through its water bailiffs and extension officers. Wayne expands, "This will be particularly useful as commercial cropping of wheat, soya and maize, and potentially sugarcane, expand into the community areas over the next decade."

The amount of people influenced by the Chiansi project sets it apart, the way it is planned, it's going to change people's lives."

