



FACT SHEET

Piloting the Green Hydrogen Community Development Toolkit

Using action-learning to equip green hydrogen developers to work with local communities, municipalities and partners.

CONTEXT

South Africa's green hydrogen sector is moving fast. Historically, large-scale energy and extractive investments have left behind a legacy of unmet promises and shallow consultation, eroding the trust that new projects desperately need.

When Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) launched its Community Development Toolkit in 2023¹, the guidance existed on paper.

What was missing was a real-world project to test whether the recommendations could actually work in practice. Could the toolkit help real developers navigate real uncertainty?

Through action-learning between seven pilot projects across South Africa, the Economic Development Partnership (EDP) helped developers move community development from paper to genuine practice.

1. Access the toolkit via: <https://ptx-hub.org/community-development-toolkit-for-green-hydrogen-project-developers-available/>

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- Test and refine a practical community development toolkit across seven green hydrogen projects
- Build developer capability to engage communities meaningfully
- Generate lessons that strengthen inclusive collaborative practice across South Africa's emerging green economy

INNOVATION

Rather than training developers in a classroom, the project team used an action learning approach. The EDP worked alongside project teams in real time to navigate actual community development challenges that turned the toolkit into a living instrument, tested under the developers' current uncertainty and refined through diverse, collective reflection.

STRATEGY & ACTIVITIES

Seven green hydrogen projects across three provinces took part in a structured two-year process. Each project received a tailored gap analysis and support plan. The EDP-facilitated workshops and one-on-one sessions applied the tools in the toolkit to stakeholder mapping, grievance mechanisms and local economic planning.

The insights gathered from these engagements fed directly into a revised toolkit, with three new case studies and a new business case tool created to help developers motivate for early-stage community development.



RESULTS

Five of seven developers actively integrated community development tools into their project systems by the end of the pilot. This meant applying stakeholder mapping, grievance mechanisms and local economic planning tools to build internal systems as part of ongoing project governance.

Some teams used the 'competencies tool' to define and recruit dedicated social-performance roles. Others aligned their community strategy with Municipal Integrated Development Plans, creating local institutional grounding that developers alone cannot replicate.

The updated toolkit, now in its second version, includes downloadable templates, chapter guides and three new case studies, freely available through GIZ channels for future developers to use.

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