Lady Frere in the Eastern Cape is starkly beautiful, remote and almost untouched by the 21st century. The communities are widely scattered across vast open spaces without electricity and running water. The schools based in Lady Frere are small and under-resourced. For the learners getting to school is a daunting task as many walk more than 5kms to get to school - often, under extreme weather conditions. It is difficult to ignore the contrast of the beautiful scenery against the severe poverty and high unemployment in the region.

The Tiger Brands Foundation implemented their in-school breakfast feeding programme into 27 schools in the Lady Frere District. The programme supplements the government’s National School Nutrition Programme ensuring these vulnerable learners have two nutritious meals per day. Working in this area creates additional challenges as logistics and costs are significantly higher as access to the schools is via dirt roads; delivery trucks have difficulty manoeuvring in and out of the area.

Tiger Brands Corporate Social Investment has formed a 3-year partnership with the Department of Basic Education and the Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory focussed on addressing food security challenges in disadvantaged communities. Against this backdrop, the food parcel distribution project was developed. The project aims to support learners through the July and December school holidays to prevent their return to school malnourished. Poor nutrition diminishes the brainpower of children and 16% of South African children live with child hunger.

As a good corporate citizen, Tiger Brands has committed to ‘leaving an imprint of value’ in the communities where we work and the impact of our projects may not always be apparent. During the December food parcel distribution, the team was humbled by the quiet dignity and pride of the learners and their families. In particular, learners believed their schools to be places of learning, joy and their step towards a better future. They proudly shared their academic improvement and performance.

At Gqebenya Primary School, two learners shared their hopes and the belief they now have in making their dreams real. The girls are confident, focussed on their studies and happy to know their community is being supported. Through this assistance, the girls feel they are stronger, able to work better at school and their families are also now being taken care of.

For the Tiger team, the challenge of working in the Eastern Cape was well rewarded.

**Leaving an imprint of value...**