

A journey to Swaziland

“Now, when I sit at my desk writing these stories and developing the material about the project, I really know how much of a difference our commitment is making. I have seen it with my own eyes.” Vicky Engsted, Group Marketing Manager at SANOVO TECHNOLOGY GROUP, takes us behind the scenes of her visit to Swaziland and the Heart for Africa Project.



On June 24th, Heart for Africa officially opened the Project Canaan egg farm with a wonderful opening ceremony filled with great speeches, traditional dancing and guided tours around the facilities. Showing SANOVO TECHNOLOGY GROUP’s great commitment to the project, Group Marketing Manager Vicky Engsted, took the trip to Swaziland to take part of the festivities and celebrate the successful implementation of the donated boiling and cooling machine. Here, she gives a unique insight into the project and her journey to Swaziland.

As the Group Marketing Manager of SANOVO TECHNOLOGY GROUP (STG) and more than 14 years in the company, Vicky Engsted is used to making marketing material telling everything about the company, its products and its services. When STG decided to support Heart for Africa and their Project Canaan egg farm with a customized boiling and cooling machine, Vicky got a brand new story to tell – one about eggs and good karma!

“First of all, we wanted to find a project that was related to our industry and our core values and competencies. We wanted a project that our employees could relate to and feel connected to. It was important to us that this project could show that we do good WHILE doing business. In the Heart for Africa Egg Farm project, we can use our industry specific knowledge and network to help people in need.” Vicky elaborates.

Together with the lead partners, International Egg Foundation and Egg Farmers of Canada, STG and LACTOSAN-SANOVO INGREDIENTS GROUP began to work on building an egg farm from the ground at the Project Canaan Farm. And there was never really any doubt that STG could support the project through one of its machines.

“From the beginning of the project, it was very clear that in order to make the chicken farm at Project Canaan successful, they needed a boiling and cooling machine for all the eggs that were produced” Vicky explains and continues, *“This we felt very confident that we could help with, however, the machine had to be smaller and less complex than we are used to make, and additionally, we had to think about issues like power sources and water usage. This immediately got us working hard on engineering a machine that was*

100% designed for the needs and conditions at Project Canaan, and the machine they have now, is therefore totally unique and does not exist anywhere else in the whole world."

And the unique project has not only spread good karma in Swaziland. Internally in STG, the project has been on top of everyone's mind, as Vicky says; *"We can feel that it has had a great impact on our employees, as they feel involved and part of the project. In fact, all of our employees have been so supportive that they have donated 3 hours of their work directly to the project. And our top management have donated a whole day. Everyone took ownership of the project and everyone is really proud of being part of this. This creates an amazing sense of team spirit. This is why we have also prioritized to really inform and update everyone about the development of the project. Everyone wants to know how things are going and how the machine has helped the project."*

An eye-opening experience

And on June 24th, Vicky took the trip to Swaziland and Project Canaan – to see the impact the machine has with her own eyes and to participate in the official opening of the egg farm. Together with ministers, other leaders from Swaziland and industry partners of the project, Vicky was part of an extraordinary opening ceremony.





"The opening ceremony was quite an experience! We really got to see and feel the Swaziland Culture. I was amazed by the great support from ministries, local officials and the press. And now I can even say that I have been on Swaziland TV! It was really fascinating to see the different dancing performances and see the rich Swaziland culture unfold. It was also really nice to be participating alongside the other partners in the project. It was also the first time for me to see the project and our machine "live" instead of on pictures, and I must say that it felt really good to see SANOVO TECHNOLOGY GROUP represented in such a good place." Vicky recalls.

But the opening ceremony was just a small part of Vicky's journey. She also got to experience just how the eggs produced and processed at the farm was helping in the local community. And experience that Vicky will never forget.

"I was really moved to see the conditions of how people were living in the surrounding communities." Vicky explains; *"We visited one of the 31 churches, which is part of the community support that Project Canaan also offers. And when I say church, you probably think of a big and beautiful building, with an altar, decorations, etc. This was nothing like that. It was a small house, with one small room for everyone to gather. And this day, the church was full of children, who had been walking 1 or even 2 hours to get there. We set up a fire outside the church and prepared food for all of the children. And then we also handed out the eggs. It was really lovely to see, how perfect the egg functions in this situation. It is easy to distribute and the children get the much needed protein and nutrition an egg contains."*



Besides the community feeding program through churches, Heart for Africa also goes on homestead visits, providing food to families who are in vital need of help and food. On her trip, Vicky also got to visit one of these homesteads: *"Our visit to the homestead made a huge impact on me. Of course I knew that the conditions would be poor compared to the things we are used to in Denmark, but to see one grandmother living under the same roof, sleeping on the floor and providing for 11 children was really heartbreaking. When we arrived at the homestead, all of the children were so quiet and tired, and we quickly found out*

that this was because they had not had anything to eat for 24 hours. So we quickly handed out the eggs that we brought with us and started a fire to cook a good meal for them. It just puts things into perspective!

Vicky continues: "And this is really where I see the power of Project Canaan and the potential of the egg farm. And I believe our machine is helping in doing a big difference. Without this machine, they would not be able to boil and cool this many eggs in one batch. And because eggs are such an easy source to protein, it really is a great way to help in the community."



Consequently, when Vicky embarks on telling the story of the Company Karma project in Swaziland, the story she tells has become much more than a simple story about eggs and good karma to her. She explains, *"For me it has been an eye-opening experience to visit Project Canaan and Swaziland. To see it with my own eyes. In my daily work, I make all these colorful brochures and material about the project. But to actually be there and also take some of the pictures I use for the material, adds a whole new dimension to me. Now, when I sit at my desk writing these stories and developing this material about our project to our employees and to our customers, I really know how much of a difference our commitment is making. Because I have seen it with my own eyes. And it really makes me want to share the story with many more."*