

SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Duxton Asset Management

Strengthening links between urban and rural planning through agricultural planning and investments

To achieve the goal of making cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable requires looking beyond urban centers. Cities often maintain strong linkages with rural areas and share a symbiotic relationship. One cannot thrive without the other. In the case of Duxton Asset Management, our investments are focused on primary agriculture production, most of which are in the rural areas. We believe that agricultural investments and sound planning have an important role in strengthening the social and economic linkages between urban and rural areas.

An example would be our investments in the tea sector in Darjeeling, which produces 30% of Darjeeling tea. Significant investments were made to rehabilitate and convert tea estates in Darjeeling, over 14 tea estates employing 10,000 direct employees and 60,000 dependents. A comprehensive economic and social program was introduced to improve living and economic conditions for the employees and their dependents. These include upgrading of housing facilities, and income augmentation programs which allowed employees to grow crops such as turmeric, ginger, and honey for sale into the local markets. We found that by improving social and economic conditions for the employees, it greatly improved the staff turnover rate and reduced migration into the city of Kolkata. We believe that by creating good conditions for work in the rural agricultural space, pressure from rural migration into cities can be relieved. On the other hand, agricultural activities in the rural sector also contributes to the creation of jobs in urban areas where processing and value addition are typically made, making these cities more inclusive and sustainable.