



ROADS AGENCY LIMPOPO
Together for better roads

ISSUE 3 OF 2020

MMILENG

WELCOME TO OUR ROAD NETWORK

**FAMOUS AT
BIRTHDATE
DJ BRIAN
RIKHOTSO**

**RAL AT
WORK**
Musekwa Village
Rehabilitation/Upgrade

**SMART
ROADS**

CSIR & University of Pretoria
Towards Cost-Effective Roads

**BOTTOM UP
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT
MEC MASEMOLA LEND EAR
IN COMMUNITY ROADSHOWS**

BIG INTERVIEW

WITH ROADS AGENCY LIMPOPO
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGER

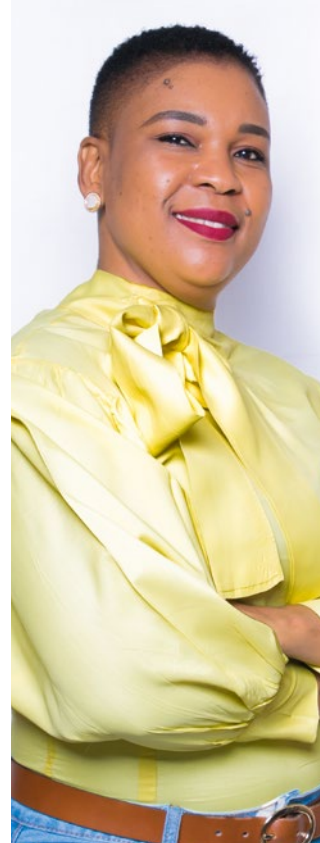
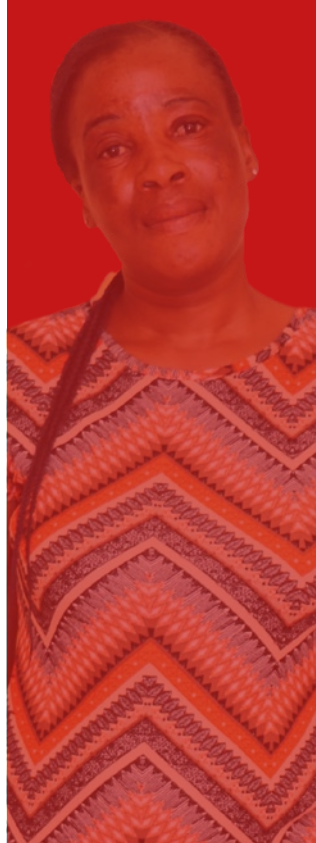


Contributing to socio-economic development by connecting the people of LIMPOPO PROVINCE.



ROADS AGENCY LIMPOPO
Together for better roads

Providing quality and sustainable provincial road infrastructure network for the economic development of LIMPOPO PROVINCE.



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COVER STORY

Mmileng Issue 3 of 2020 Cover Star is Giyani Brian Rikhotso, Radio Announcer at Munghana Lonene FM's Morning Drive Time Show Phaphama. Story on Page 22.

THE POST-COVID-19 REALITY IS IN FULL SWING AND IT'S ABOUT TAKING OWNERSHIP



MR MAROPENG
MANYATHELA,
RAL's Head of Communications

We are pleased to be linking up with you, our valued reader, for yet another issue of *Mmileng*. If this is the first time you lay your hands on *Mmileng*, the official quarterly publication of the Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL), please don't let go.

Here you will find informative and insightful up-to-date news on the road infrastructure work of the Agency. Here is what's on the menu in this edition, *Mmileng* Issue 3 of 2020.

We lead with stakeholder engagement by the Limpopo Provincial Government shareholder representative for RAL. In August 2020, *Mmileng* joined the MEC for the Limpopo Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure, Honourable Namane Dickson Masemola, as he criss-crossed the province to engage mayors on road infrastructure challenges in their respective municipalities.

MEC Maseloma's intervention, as covered on page 6, is on provincial roads that have been prioritised by the province's municipalities and are on those respective municipalities' consolidated priority list and RAL future priority plans, but are like many other roads, awaiting availability or allocation of funds before they could be attended to.

RAL's perennial budgetary constraints are well documented amidst increased demands for road infrastructure service delivery. This challenge has forced the Agency to be innovative in finding means to deliver projects in a cost-effective manner.

One such intervention is RAL's Strategic Partnership Approach that was adopted by the Board of Directors' five years ago, and is undoubtedly the most effective intervention yet (in this regard) in the history of the Agency.

The Agency has so far raised R789.5 million, in financial and non-financial deals, to supplement its budget in the construction and rehabilitation of Limpopo provincial roads.

On page 16, we focus on two such non-financial collaborations, the recently signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research

(CSIR) and the University of Pretoria.

For our regular RAL at Work project profile (page 26), we zoom in on the recently completed rehabilitation and upgrade of road D3671 or, colloquially, the eponymous Musekwa Road, in the village of Musekwa in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province.

As always, RAL road infrastructure projects have the SMME and labour empowerment elements to them and, on page 30, we let local small business owners and labourers share their experiences on how they got empowered on the project.

Plans are already afoot for the upgrading, from gravel to tar, of the unpaved stretch of road D3671 towards Maranikhwe village. However, this extension project will only be realised as soon as budget is made available. Story on page 32.

In Inside RAL feature, we celebrate the women of RAL, with a select group of women whose profiles are headlined by 'women-empowering' titles from the music of India Arie, Destiny's Child and Donna Summer, and from the poetry of Maya Angelou and Lebo Mashile.

Inside RAL is another regular section in *Mmileng* content mix, which seeks to bring, to our external stakeholders, elements of the behind-the-scene value chain that links up to deliver on road infrastructure projects.

As the saying, behind the adaptation of our feature, goes, 'behind every successful man there stands a woman'. Construction industry workers are not only those with calloused palms. And we salute these unsung public servants on page 33.

Last but not least. Covid-19, a disease caused by the novel Coronavirus, is still at pandemic level and, at *Mmileng*, we continue to give platform to government's public awareness campaign to help manage the spread of the disease.

And as the country now focuses on preventing the Covid-19 resurgence, and preparing for the 'new normal' post-Covid-19 world, we share all the latest advocacy messages to assist you, our valued reader, in playing your part.

Stay Safe. Protect South Africa.

We Connect LIMPOPO...



Today, Limpopo boasts a good road infrastructure because we are creating and designing modern bridges and roads, making transportation of people and goods reliable and opening access to the rest of Africa. Making it all happen...



ROADS AGENCY LIMPOPO
Together for better roads

EXPLORING ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO REDUCE AND MANAGE THE COST OF BUILDING ROADS



MR GABRIEL
MALULEKE,
RAL Chief Executive Officer

Provincial road network remains the primary source of transportation to millions of our communities, thereby becoming a cornerstone of Limpopo's economy and its social life. This explains why Roads Agency Limpopo's (RAL) business domain of building provincial roads matters to the greater part the Limpopo province.

RAL's mission of facilitating the movement of the people of Limpopo was mainly crafted with the people of Limpopo's welfare in mind. This mission resonates well with the Agency's vision. RAL's vision is to "contribute to the socio-economic development of Limpopo Province by connecting its people". This vision obligates RAL to focus on road construction activities that generate better returns on investment to the people of Limpopo in terms of economic growth and job creation.

RAL seeks to achieve this vision by constructing provincial roads using low-cost road construction technologies. We continue to explore alternative ways to reduce and manage the cost of building roads per kilometre.

In line with priority 2 of the Medium-Term Strategic Framework, RAL seeks to achieve transformation by prioritising (1) Skill Development Programmes that target local labourers, (2) Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) Empowerment Programmes that targets companies owned by historically disadvantaged women, youth and people with disabilities and (3) the Local Labourer Programme which obligates contractors to source labourers locally.

To this end, the Agency upgraded 45 kilometres of road from gravel to tar at a cost of R450 million during the course of the 2019/2020 financial year.

In addition, a total of 337 593 sq. metres of surface roads were rehabilitated and, in the process, creating 523 jobs at a cost of R38 million.

Furthermore, RAL spent a total R120 million on local SMMEs making it one of the key contributors of Limpopo's economic transformation. During the same period, a total of 716 local labourers benefited from RAL's various skill development programmes.

Although RAL's desire to obtain a Clean Audit Opinion during the 2019/2020 financial year did not materialise, management remains hopeful given the fact that it obtained yet another Unqualified Audit Opinion from the Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA).

We are fully aware of the uphill task of delivering an accessible, safe and reliable provincial road network in a Covid-19 landscape. Management is encouraged by the continued support it received from the 6th administration of the Limpopo Provincial Government led by Honourable Premier Chupu Stanley Mathabatha.

RAL remains upbeat that given the support from the Province's highest decision-making structure, the future of road infrastructure in Limpopo is bright. We are also grateful of the leadership we continue to receive from the shareholder representative, Hon Namane Dickson Masemola, who is also the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) responsible for the Limpopo Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure.

As anticipated, Covid-19 had a contagion-effect on RAL's operations. Management had to contend with the fact that for the first time in history, it suspended its operations for several weeks. RAL's top priority remains to save lives by rolling out a workplace-driven Covid-19 Occupational Risk Mitigation Campaign. The goal of this campaign is to enhance Government's efforts to curb the spread of the virus.

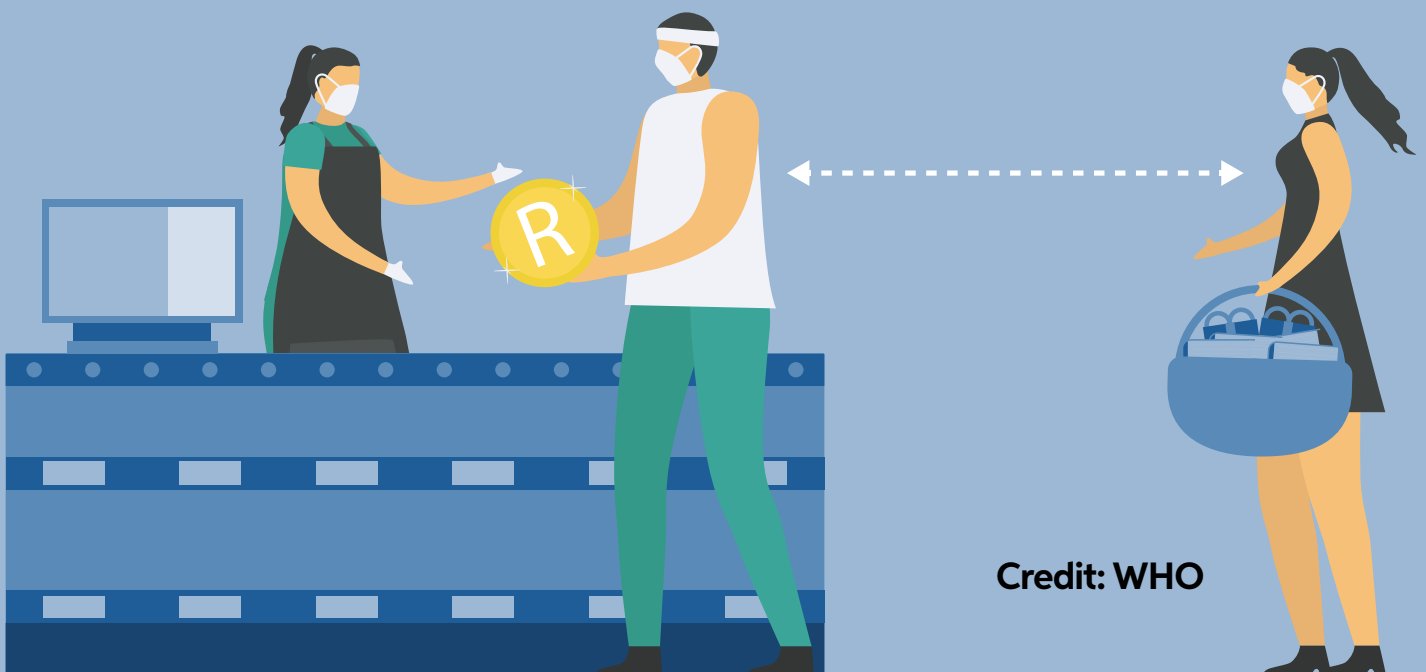
Lastly, Management takes this opportunity to thank the Board, led by the servanthood leadership of Matome Ralebipi, and all employees for working tirelessly to make the 2019/2020 financial year, a resounding success.

THE NEW NORMAL

Before #COVID19, we may not have considered how close we stood, walked or sat near other people.

Now it's important to keep a distance of at least 1 metre from each other to limit the spread of #coronavirus.

#StaySafe



Credit: WHO




health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



The MEC for the Limpopo Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure, Honourable Namane Dickson Masemola, hit the ground running with a stakeholder engagement to road site of road D887. From left to right is Blouberg Local Municipality Mayor Cllr Maseka Pheedi, Cobus Coetzee from Agri Bosveld, MEC Masemola and RAL CEO Gabriel Maluleke.

MEC MASEMOLA STEPS-UP HIGH-LEVEL INTERVENTION WITH VISITS TO ROAD HOTSPOTS

 On the occasion of his first meeting with the Board of Directors for Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL) SOC Ltd after his appointment as the MEC for the Limpopo Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure (LDPWRI) and effectively the Limpopo Provincial Government shareholder representative for RAL, Honourable Namane Dickson Masemola had committed to stepping-up engagement with mayors

in order to deliver quality road infrastructure for the people of Limpopo Province.

And the stakeholder engagement started in earnest, with Hon Masemola embarking on province-wide eight-road blitz in August 2020 to address road infrastructure challenges in the province, particularly at roads that have been prioritised and are in a

MMC for Public Transport and Roads in the Mopani District Municipality Japisa Mathonsi, RAL CEO Gabriel Maluleke and MEC for LDPWRI Namane Dickson Masemola during a site visit to road D3200 in the village of Mohlabaneng in the Greater Letaba Municipality.



deplorable state.

Hon Masemola kicked off his first three-leg roadshow programme with a site visit to road D887 to Swartwater, connecting to R521 (Alldays to Vivo), in the Capricorn District of Limpopo Province.

MEC Masemola also met with senior traditional leader Kgoši (Chief) Kgolongwana Bernard Makgato of Ga-Makgato and key road users, from the Kromhoek Taxi Association as represented by members Petrus Pheedi and Solomon Lephassa, at the site of road D1589. The potholed road from De Vrede to the village of Ga-Makgato/Kromhoek to Senwabarwana was added to his itinerary when he was already in the area and will also be attended to.

For his second and third visits, Hon Masemola visited the site of incomplete road D3727 (Mashamba to Tshitale to Morebeng) whose construction had stopped and Giyani on the site of road D3840 (Giyani to Phalaborwa road) in the Vhembe and Mopani districts respectively.

For these in loco visits, MEC Masemola was joined by RAL CEO Gabriel Maluleke, and Blouberg Local Municipality Mayor Councillor Maseka Pheedi (D887) and Member of the Mayoral Committee (MMC) in the Capricorn District responsible for Infrastructure Cllr Maria Mokobodi (representing Executive Mayor Cllr John Mpe), and by the Executive Mayor of Vhembe District Municipality Cllr Nenguda Dowelani, Mayor of Makhado Local Municipality Cllr Samuel Munyai and senior traditional leader Thovhele (Chief) Fhatuwani Mulima of Ha-Mulima for the road D3727 visit.

In Giyani, he was joined by the Mopani District Municipality Executive Mayor Cllr Pule Josiah Shayi who highlighted the urgent need to rehabilitate the pothole-laden Giyani-Phalaborwa road as it is now experiencing increasing traffic volumes due to activities around Musina-Makhado SEZ (Special Economic Zone).

For his second round of roadshows, MEC Masemola visited the sites of road D11 in the Mamaila area and road D3200 in Lebaka to Mohlabaneng in Greater Letaba Municipality of the Mopani District. These roads have

5km and 5.5km stretches of damaged road, including potholes, respectively. Road D11 will be rehabilitated and road D3200 will be reconstructed, according to MEC Masemola, pending thorough assessment from RAL.

Accompanying MEC Masemola were the MMC in the Mopani District responsible for Public Transport and Roads Cllr Japisa Mathonsi (representing Executive Mayor Cllr Shayi), Greater Letaba Municipality Mayor Cllr Peter Matlou and traditional leader Kgoši Khuduwane Solomon Mamaila.

“WE ARE HERE TODAY TO ASSURE YOU THAT WE HAVE HEARD OF YOUR ROAD PROBLEMS AND WE ARE BRINGING SOLUTIONS.”

In the Sekhukhune District, MEC Masemola road site visits were to road D4150 that connects Praktiseer to national road R37 (from Polokwane to Burgersfort to Limpopo/Mpumalanga border) and D2537 from Penge (Mabulane) and Praktiseer to Burgersfort in the Fetakgomo Tubatse Local Municipality.

He also engaged with traditional leaders in the area, Makgoši Kgalema Ramaube, Koos Manoke and Phatudi Sekhukhune, from Bapedi ba Ramaube, Ga-Manoke and Marota a Bogwasha traditional councils respectively.

For the penultimate leg of his first stakeholder engagement with mayors, MEC Masemola did an on-site inspection of road D4150 in Burgersfort within the Fetakgomo Tubatse Local Municipality of Sekhukhune District. Flanking on him is a representative from the local municipality and Martin Ramaboea, General Manager for Operations at RAL.



“IF YOU NEED ANYTHING FROM US TO HELP WITH THIS ROAD PLEASE ASK, WE ARE WILLING TO HELP.”

After each in loco visit with the leadership of municipalities, MEC Masemola engaged other stakeholders from affected communities such as traditional authorities, business forums, community representatives and road users.

One such community representative, Cobus Coetzee, Chairperson of the Agri Bosveld - an agricultural cooperative that farms in the vicinity of road D887 in the Blouberg Local Municipality thanked MEC Masemola for “coming to us to see what we go through on a daily basis and how our business is affected as farmers”.

“If you need anything from us to help with this road please ask, we are willing to help,” commented Mr Coetzee.

Since adopting its Strategic Partnership Approach in 2015, a key tenet of the RAL Board of Directors’ successful five-year turnaround strategy, the Agency has raised R789.5 million and continues to secure more partnerships, including non-financial deals, to help construct and rehabilitate Limpopo provincial roads.

The Strategic Partnership Approach targets prospective partners and economic roads in the agricultural, mining and tourism sectors in the province to raise funds to help augment the Agency’s constrained financial resources in its mandate to deliver on the much-needed upgrading and maintenance of road infrastructure in the province.

Notwithstanding that mining, which contributes 25% to the provincial economy, has been a leading contributor to the Strategic Partnership Approach, the agricultural sector is willing to assist. *Mmileng* Issue 2 of 2020 profiled ZZ2 Group’s contribution to the upkeep of Limpopo provincial roads.

According to MEC Masemola, the plan with road D887 is to rebuild it. But to achieve that the province and RAL will have to contact national government (Department of Transport)

and the South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL) to assist with resources as RAL’s budget alone won’t be enough to attend to more than 100km stretch of road between Tomburke and Vivo that is affected.

For a list of regional roads transferred from RAL (province) to SANRAL (national) since 2014 and how roads are transferred, revisit *Mmileng* Second Quarter Edition, 2018.

“This situation is bad. From Vivo and all the way coming here (Alldays) and 30km towards the South it is the same situation. The little budget we thought we will bring here to fix this road won’t bring any major difference because the state of this road is totally bad,” said MEC Masemola.

It has been audited that RAL will need R38 billion from its annual budget of just R1.5 billion (split across operational costs, and road maintenance and upgrades) to upgrade the currently prioritised 3 793 kilometres of road out of the total of 13 685km of unpaved road network across the province.

Road prioritisation occurs at the local municipalities’ Integrated Development Plan (IDP) level. Local communities are encouraged to get involved in the IDP public participation process from ward level at local government, which aims to facilitate community consultation and engagement, including on municipal and provincial road infrastructure needs and priorities, in a consistent and transparent manner.

Thereafter, the five district municipalities of Limpopo Province submit their provincial roads prioritisation list, from across twenty-two (22) local municipalities, to RAL for consolidation. Once prioritised or on RAL future priority plans, roads are then attended to, subject to budget allocation and funding availability.

Municipal roads commonly referred to as Street, Drive, Avenue, Crescent etc., with a network of just fewer than 75 000km are managed at local government level across all the twenty-two local municipalities.


IDPs are generally five-year cycle plans (reviewed annually) on all planning and development objectives at local government level. Most municipalities’ integrated development planning is on a 2016-2021 term.

After each of MEC Masemola’s visits, RAL CEO (Mr Maluleke) released a team of engineers to do a road assessment that will determine costs and the kind of works needed to fix each road.

“We are here today to assure you that we have heard of your road problems and we are bringing solutions,” MEC Masemola told the community of Mhlabaneng, a commitment he made on all of his visits.

He estimates that by November 2020 there will be construction activities such as rehabilitation (resurfacing), upgrades and resumption of construction (on halted projects) on most of the road sites visited.

Routine Road Maintenance (RRM) or routine household maintenance, which includes preventative maintenance activities such as pothole patching and regravelling of roads, is a programme that resides in the LDPWRI, and not RAL.

MEC Masemola will continue on similar stakeholder engagement in other local municipalities as this programme to address service delivery concerns across Limpopo Province gains momentum. 

COMPLETED ROADSHOW ITINERARY

Road: D887
Description: Connects to R521 (Alldays to Vivo)
Local Municipality: Blouberg
District: Capricorn

Road: D1589
Description: Ga-Makgato/Kromhoek to Kgobokanang to Vivo
Local Municipality: Blouberg
District: Capricorn

Road: D3727
Description: Mashamba to Tshitale to Morebeng
Local Municipality: Makhado
District: Vhembe

Road: D3840
Description: Giyani to Phalaborwa road
Local Municipality: Greater Giyani
District: Mopani

Road: D11
Description: Mamaila area
Local Municipality: Greater Letaba
District: Mopani

Road: D3200
Description: Lebaka to Mhlabaneng
Local Municipality: Greater Letaba
District: Mopani

Road: D4150
Description: Connects Praktiseer to R37
Local Municipality: Fetakgomo Tubatse
District: Sekhukhune

Road: D2537
Description: Penge and Praktiseer to Burgersfort
Local Municipality: Fetakgomo Tubatse
District: Sekhukhune

Road: To Be Announced (TBA)
Description: TBA
Local Municipality: TBA
District: Waterberg

Road: TBA
Description: TBA
Local Municipality: TBA
District: Waterberg

RAL AT THE FOREFRONT OF LIMPOPO'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AGENDA



**MR MATOME
RALEBIPI,**
RAL Board Chairperson

Since its establishment in 1999, Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL) has been on the driving seat of Limpopo's road construction and maintenance journey. Over the years, RAL's documented achievements in expanding and modernising Limpopo's road network are commendable. With a total road asset base of over 19 000km RAL has been doing its best within the available resources. Of the total provincial kilometres, 69 per cent or (13 916 km) comprises of gravel roads whilst 31% or (6 175 km) consists of tarred roads.

The Board has noted the threats posed by Covid-19 to RAL's operations and is fully supportive of precautionary steps taken by the executive management to mitigate all the risks. The Board further acknowledges the importance of a quality road network in Limpopo Provincial Government's determined efforts to save lives as well as to contain the spread of Covid-19.

Our view is that a well-maintained provincial road system remains one of the integral components of Limpopo's integrated disaster management programme. Provincial roads continue to play an instrumental role in facilitating the transportation of health medication, medical equipment, personal protective equipment (PPE), critical food supplies, patients and essential services workers to and from various healthcare facilities.

Due to the significant role played by the provincial road network in the fight against Covid-19, RAL was unquestionably put at the centre of ongoing efforts by the Provincial Government to manage and contain the Covid-19 pandemic. This explains why in its 2020-2025 strategic plan, the Board made a firm commitment to repurpose organisational resources towards building an accessible, safe and reliable provincial road network by 2025.

The Board will continue to bank on continued support from the shareholder representative and our strategic partners in the private sector to achieve this desired impact.

The Board also reaffirms its resolve to put RAL on the forefront of Limpopo's socio-economic transformation agenda. As the Board, our strongest desire is to continue to contribute significantly towards tackling the triple crisis of

unemployment, poverty and inequality facing historically disadvantaged communities by prioritising road construction and maintenance projects with a high job absorption capacity.

Programmes aimed at equipping local labourers with relevant skills will continue to receive RAL's highest priority. This also entails focusing on programmes aimed at empowering small construction companies owned by historically-disadvantaged women, youth and people with disabilities.

We continue to play our governance role in assisting management to improve critical aspects of RAL's operations such the Supply Chain Management (SCM) as we view this as critical for to achievement the clean audit.

The Board has directed the Executive to work tirelessly towards addressing recurring SCM challenges identified in the 2019/2020 audit report. The Board further directed the Executive to urgently prioritise the capacitation of the SCM Unit.

Despite all these setbacks, the Board takes comfort on the fact that during the 2019/2020 financial year, the Agency obtained yet another unqualified audit opinion from the Auditor-General of South Africa.

RAL has maintained this position for the past few financial years now. Whilst the Board welcomes this outcome, it is important to note that the outcome itself fell short of the Board's expectations given the fact that from the onset, the Board had targeted a clean audit.

RAL is also refreshed by the on-going support from the 6th administration of the Limpopo Provincial Government led by the Honourable Premier Chupu Stanley Mathabatha.

The RAL family remains grateful to the wise counsel it continues to receive from the shareholder representative and Member of the Executive Council (MEC) responsible for Limpopo Department of Public Works Roads and Infrastructure (LDPWRI) Honourable Namane Dickson Masemola.

Lastly, the Board extends its gratitude to the able leadership of our Chief Executive Officer Gabriel Maluleke for steering RAL on the path greater accountability and prudent resource management during the Agency's most difficult times.

COVID-19 & STIGMA

DO



Talk about COVID-19 & those who have been infected



Speak accurately about the risk from COVID-19, based on scientific data and latest official health advice



Talk positively & emphasise the effectiveness of prevention & treatment measures



Emphasise the effectiveness of hand washing, wearing a cloth mask & social distancing

DON'TS



Attach locations or ethnicity to the disease



Refer to people with the disease as “COVID-19 suspects” or “suspected cases”



Talk about people “transmitting COVID-19”, “infecting others” or “spreading the virus”



Repeat or share unverified information



Dwell on the negative

Source: WHO



health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Shonisani Patience Tshivhase is the Environmental Manager at Roads Agency Limpopo.

Environmental Compliance

at the heart of

ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY

Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL) responds to the challenges of climate change globally by ensuring environmental protection is in place for all its road infrastructure projects.

RAL holds firm the principles of sustainable development in implementing projects, pioneered by the Environmental Management division, which is headed by Shonisani Patience Tshivhase.

Shoni, as Ms Tshivhase is commonly known, was born and raised in a village of Khalavha within the now Thulamela Local Municipality of the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province.

Ms Tshivhase is no stranger to environmental sustainable development as she was raised on the conscience of community subsistence farming wherein her upbringing exposed her to acquire basic knowledge of farming.

She grew up in a household with both parents. She is the third born (middle child) in a family of five kids – two elder sisters and a younger brother and sister.

Herself now a mother, to Wisani (eldest daughter) and son Ndzalo, she imposes similar principles from her upbringing upon them.

Ms Tshivhase enjoyed much of her junior and senior years of schooling in the Vhembe District at Fondwe Primary School, in a village of Fondwe, and at Dimani Agricultural High School - a boarding school in the township of Shayandima outside Thohoyandou.

She progressed to pursue her tertiary education in Natural Sciences at the University of the North, the now University of Limpopo, where she acquired her Bachelor of Science (BSc) degree in 1995 and BSc (Honours) in 1996.

Ms Tshivhase proceeded to further her studies and acquire a

Masters Degree in Environmental Sciences at University of Venda in 2008 and a Management Advancement Programme (MAP) with the University of the Witwatersrand in 2010.

Apart from these formal qualifications, she has acquired a total of 22 certificates in short courses; 14 in environmental management, seven in health and safety management and one in project management.

Ms Tshivhase is a registered Professional Natural Scientist – Environmental Science with the South African Council of Natural Scientist (SACNASP), in terms of section 20 (3) Natural Scientific Professions Act 27 of 2003.

Her first professional appointment was through the Limpopo Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism whilst perusing her Honours Degree in January of 1997 in the Scientific Services division. The division was comprised of Environmental Impact Assessment Biodiversity, Integrated Pollution & Waste Management and Ecological sections.

She became pivotal in the newly adopted National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998 and other subsequent environmental legislations on Air quality, Biodiversity, Integrated waste management and pollution control,

Environmental Impact Assessment regulations, Water Act etc.

She occupied the position of a Nature Conservation

“As a team we both strived to succeed in creating environmental awareness to all the project teams.”



Tshivhase is responsible for environmental compliance in RAL's road infrastructure projects. She has ensured environmental compliance in over 300 projects since she joined RAL in 2003.

Scientist and was later promoted to Senior Nature Conservation Scientist from 1997 to 2003.

In 2003, she joined RAL on a long serving journey that has still currently occupied her professional career as an Environmental Manager for road infrastructure sector.

She is currently a member of International Association Impact Association (IAIA SA), and Regional Mining Development Committee (R.E.M.D.E.C) of Dept of Minerals & Energy Limpopo. Throughout her professional journey she had served in different professional portfolios such as:

- Council of Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority (L.I.H.R.A)
- Provincial Adjudicating Committee for Cleanest Town Competition - Limpopo
- Phalaborwa and Ellisras Environmental Management committees
- Water Quality Liaison Committee - Dept of Water Affairs & Forestry

The inception of the Environmental Management Division at RAL was one of Ms Tshivhase's immediate challenges upon joining the institution. She has had her fair share of professional growth in establishing an understanding of the environmental management field amongst seasoned civil engineers, contractors and RAL engineering staff.

It has been a very interesting and challenging long journey to raise the level of environmental compliance in RAL projects to where it is. This has been a team work with my different subordinates over the years, namely Matodzi Silidi, Percy Mahinga and Khakhathi Mulaudzi (all of whom have since moved on) and now with Thabelo Mulaudzi.

As a team we both strived to succeed in creating environmental awareness to all the project teams to a level where environmental management got recognition from the planning until project

completion phase.

The current staff complement is comprised of Ms Tshivhase and (Thabelo) Mulaudzi, as profiled on page 39. Amongst the challenges of staff shortages, Ms Tshivhase takes pride in her achievements of ensuring environmental compliance in more than 300 projects since she joined RAL.

While overwhelmed with this challenge, she seized an opportunity to inspire others and motivate herself with taking on more to her title than anticipated. She offers tremendous experience, knowledge and skills in her area of expertise.

Ms Tshivhase firmly believes in leading from the front and that may be seen from her engagements with subordinates in her department. Her independent approach to work filters through to those in her department to single headedly manage themselves with any tasks or challenges within the department. She is fond of sharing and transferring her acquired skills to the next generation of youth minds in this field through mentorship and advice.

Throughout the years, her sense of ambition has gained her self-confidence, which she shares with her younger subordinates and peers. She learnt at a very young age of her career to manage expectations on all co-governance structures, be it at local, provincial or national.

Furthermore, she reiterates that her late father always told her that "perseverance is the mother of success". Her sense of inspiration can be credited to her upbringing around her family and fellow community.

While passionate about her career obligations, Ms Tshivhase prefers to have her own space when not occupied with work. She also enjoys watching environmental documentaries, local soapies, news, listening to music, and travelling and going on holiday with her family.

Ms Tshivhase's aspiration is that the construction industry role players instil the culture of environmental sustainability in their day to day operations. **m**

“Ms Tshivhase takes pride in her achievements of ensuring environmental compliance in more than 300 projects since she joined RAL.”

THE POWER IS IN YOUR HANDS

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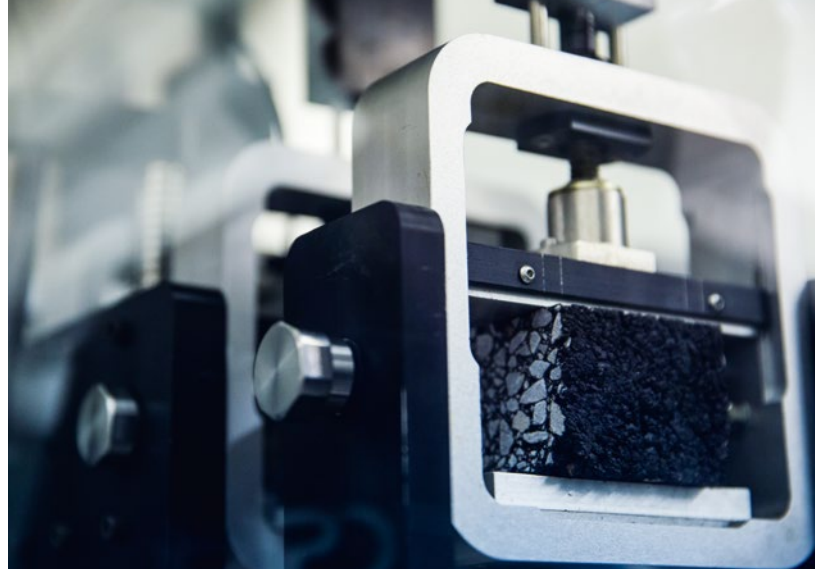
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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**STAY
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The CSIR boasts a world-class laboratory and personnel who will collaborate with engineers from the Roads Agency Limpopo to find road building materials and solutions that will reduce unit costs and increase the life-span of roads in Limpopo Province.

RAL AND CSIR TO EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMART ROADS

RAL signs separate MoUs with two of South Africa's most esteemed research institutions in an endeavour to unlock innovative and lasting solutions for Limpopo road infrastructure challenges.

Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL) and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), a research, innovation and industrial entity of the Department of Science and Innovation, recently entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that will seek to find solutions to road infrastructure challenges plaguing Limpopo Province.

Key to those challenges is finding innovative and alternative road building materials and methods, cost-effective designs for reducing cost of construction and

maintenance, and developing a long-term maintenance profile and plan for Limpopo road infrastructure assets.

"RAL is constantly looking for efforts to design, maintain, construct and rehabilitate road infrastructure in a cost-effective and innovative manner," explains Gabriel Maluleke, the Chief Executive Officer for RAL.

"Partnering with institutions such as the CSIR and the University of Pretoria will go a long way in creating innovative ways to solve many of our road infrastructure delivery challenges. We have already begun to explore a number of possible future solutions."

The MoU has identified nine possible areas of collaboration between the two organisations, including road design and materials,

RAL AND UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA INK R&D MOU

Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL) and the University of Pretoria (UP), a Pretoria-based public higher educational institution, have recently entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which will improve how the Limpopo provincial road infrastructure is managed.

The MoU, in the field of research and development (R&D), will explore up to nine identified or possible areas of collaboration that include road design and materials, construction, maintenance, road networking planning and management, road infrastructure management, and institutional support.

This R&D programme, with UP, will seek to develop new standards for road design, road construction and maintenance and alternative road

building materials and methods, and long-term maintenance profile and plan.

The collaboration, which will initially run for five years, will also aim to improve on existing bridge management system, forensic investigations in causes and mechanisms of premature failures under road infrastructure management, and environmental impact studies and

climate adaptation (risk management and resilience optimisation of road network) under road design and construction.

• In July 2020, UP and CSIR signed their own Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) where the Smart Mobility Cluster of CSIR and the Engineering Faculty of UP will collaborate in the area of smart transport, cities and environments.



construction and maintenance of road infrastructure.

According to CSIR, its mandate encourages it to cooperate with entities in the public and private sector.

“We recognise that a collaborative approach to research will lead to better outcomes and innovations.”

“Complex problems require a multidisciplinary approach to resolve. Partnerships can play a key role in broadening the capabilities required to resolve these challenges.”

Kenny Kistan, CSIR Executive Cluster Manager for Smart Mobility, says the Smart Mobility cluster of the CSIR had previously been involved with RAL.

“WE RECOGNISE THAT A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO RESEARCH WILL LEAD TO BETTER OUTCOMES AND INNOVATIONS.”

“We see the collaboration with Roads Agency Limpopo as an integral component of its strategic initiative to address road infrastructure in the province (Limpopo), which will undoubtedly contribute to improving and advancing economic activity.”

“This partnership will enable us to share our expertise, introduce new and innovative solutions, to accelerate the deployments of new and advanced technology solutions in one of the key provinces of our country,” says Mr Kistan.

“The CSIR is contributing to the development of context appropriate road building materials and sensor technology to reduce the life-cycle costs of roads.”

“In this regard, CSIR has invested in world-class laboratory infrastructure and personnel. Much work is also been carried out to improve climate resilience of road infrastructure.”

RAL currently construct roads at the unit rate of R8 million per kilometre, while maintaining road infrastructure at R2 million per kilometre. RAL uses double seal surfacing to seal its roads with projected traffic volumes of more than 500 AADT (Annual average

daily traffic) per day. Double seal surfacing is lower priced than a more durable asphalt road surface used on high traffic volume metro and national roads.

RAL is continuously engaging technology solution-oriented companies that can help the Agency with building roads at a lower cost without compromising quality, i.e. applying value engineering techniques to the expensive activities of constructing roads.


If this five-year MoU, on a project-to-project basis, meets its objective, the natural corollary will make RAL’s budget go the extra mile.

RAL’s perennial budgetary constraints are well documented amidst increased demands for road infrastructure service delivery.

The MoU will also seek to find labour-enhanced construction and job creation solutions. This, as public infrastructure is predicted to be key driver of post-COVID-19 (pandemic) economic recovery.

RAL requires of its appointed contractors to subcontract a minimum of 30% (upgrading projects) and 15% (maintenance or rehabilitation projects) of contract value to Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs), and 10% of contract value should be used for employment of local labourers in areas where road projects are undertaken.

Since RAL adopted its Strategic Partnership Approach - a key tenet of the Board of Directors’ successful five-year turnaround strategy - in 2015, the Agency has raised more than R789.5 million, in financial and non-financial deals, to help construct and rehabilitate Limpopo provincial roads.

Other collaborations support SMME and labour empowerment, training, and research and development initiatives to improve efficiency in the delivery of RAL’s mandate. 

#RALatWork

Complaints and Compliments



RoadsAgency



roadsagencylimpopo



Roads Agency Limpopo
26 Raba St, Polokwane Central, Polokwane
← All questions

andre steenkamp
Where do I apply for a map of the RAL & SANRAL roads in the greater tzaaneen letaba area

Kahlan Tshepo
Local Guide · 40 reviews · 22 photos
Edited · 2 years ago
Please contact the Land use department at RAL for a map of the road network.

Kwena Masix @kwena619 · Jun 1
@RoadsAgency Re kgopela le tlo kgora ditsela. That service is ESSENTIAL. One man, One road grader. You should have no excuse for not delivering that service. All Matlala roads needs serious attention
@LDPWRI @OtpLimpopo @TransportLimCom

Roads Agency Limpopo
3,760 Tweets

Roads Agency Limpopo
@RoadsAgency

Roads Agency Limpopo @RoadsAgency · Jul 24
Roads Agency Limpopo SOC Ltd this week completed a preventative maintenance on road D1468 from Indermark to Vivo in the Capricorn District of Limpopo Province. The project entailed the rehabilitation of 6.6 lane kilometres, pothole patching and road marking for 19kms.
#RALatWork

CDM and 9 others
5 2 15

Roads Agency Limpopo
Phathola Piet
Good program. Hope the outreach can extend to our villages in Moutse West. There are serious road upgrades backlogs. There are serious road upgrades backlogs.
Like Reply Message 2h

Mmutla Selomo
Congratulations on completing that road it's a job well done.
Like Reply Message 3h

Noko Winston
But this road was completed last year moes. U never advertised even a single since 2019 may.
Like Reply Message 6h

KoenaClery Clarence Mathabagana
Noko Winston no my man this road was completed this week. Its not that of Machaba Indermark.
Like Reply Message 6h

Noko Winston
Okay
Like Reply Message 6h

Malapa ga lekane @tttliomatsane · Jul 24
What's the latest with road D4036 ward 5, lepelle nkumpi municipality

Roads Agency Limpopo @RoadsAgency · Aug 4
The Limpopo Provincial Government's shareholder representative at Roads Agency Limpopo, the MEC for the Department of Public Works, Roads & Infrastructure Honourable Namane Dickson Masemola is embarking on roadshows to address road infrastructure challenges.
#RALatWork #StaySafe

BLOBERG MUNICIPALITY and 9 others
9 1 11

Gilbert Moela @GilbertMoela · Aug 4
Can you kindly also visit Fetakgomo-Tubatse Local Municipality's rural villages

Regal @RegalGlobal · Jul 24
Was a pleasure to have been part of this 🙌🙌🙌

4

Vongani Khosa @Vongani219 · Jul 24
Can you help with current projects around limpopo.. I'm looking for Civil Engineering in-service training

Bra B @Mogala_kwena · Jun 8
Congrats to the new board I just hope that they speed up the process of allocating funds for many roads in our Province including D3505, I also want to drive on a tared road when I'm at home.

MINTIRHO YA VULAVULA

Mmileng visited Musekwa, and its neighbouring villages such as Khomela, Makhushu and Pfumembe, to hear first-hand from community members and road users the benefits of the recent rehabilitation and upgrade on road D3671 in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province. Provincial road D3671, within the Makhado Local Municipality, connects to road P278/1 (R523). Story on page 26.

Truly speaking the government has rescued us from the bad conditions of this road because it was a nightmare. As Thusong Service Centre we work with different stakeholders, social workers, health professionals and teachers that need to travel this side now and then, and it was really hard for them that they took long not coming. Though our service centre is still on a gravel road, we wish that they could extend this road to our service centre going forward.



Sarina Tshatsinde, Cashier (Musekwa Thusong Service Centre), from Musekwa.

This road was totally bad. It was last tarred in 1989. But this year it was never patched when it had potholes, so it ended up being gravel. The potholes here were really bad that they affected many road users during the rainy season. But now it's a good road that changed our lives for the better. We no longer struggle when we go to Makhado town.



Robert Makhavhani, Community Member, from Pfumembe.

RAL did a good job. We are happy because it has been many years of disaster. Now we're happy about this development. I transport school kids and we really struggled with punctures on this road and that made us to be late to schools. Now this section is good and we applaud them for that and we would like them to extend this road to Khomela and Straighthardt as we are struggling on that side.



Alfa Maluleke, Bus Driver (PJ Thwala's Lux Tours), from Khomela.

We are pleased with the work done by RAL in our village. Our people struggled with dust and were late to work because of transport issues. Now things are much better. But we will be very happy if they could extend it to Khomela as people there use bakkies to go to town as it's difficult for taxis to go there using bad gravel road.



Tshikwatamba Mashudu, Community Member, from Musekwa.

As taxi drivers, we really lost business and taxis because of this road before. We are travelling on it daily and it had potholes that damaged our taxi tyres. We had breakdowns now and then, and we took long on our trips to town and back to the villages. Now things are much better because we have a proper road and our business is running better.



Justice Nengovhela, Taxi Driver (Dzanani 1 Taxi Association), from Ngudu (Musekwa).



A traditional rain dance ceremony performed in a forest in Limpopo, South Africa.

DESTINATION LIMPOPO

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

ALL ROADS LEAD UP NORTH

When the nation first went into lockdown mode in late March 2020, as the new cases of Covid-19 infections rapidly rose across the country, tourism was among the first industries to be shutdown. This is because tourism establishments, may, at any given time, play host to travellers from different parts of the province, country and even countries further afield.

Given the need for social distancing and restricting transmission to a minimum, the tourism industry was identified as being high risk. The tourism industry in the province, as elsewhere, has been decimated.

It was therefore a great relief to the tourism industry when, in mid-

August 2020, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced that the lockdown status would be dropped to alert Level 2 at midnight, 17th August 2020.

The lowering of the alert status to Level 2 has significant implications in terms of travel regulations. This meant that for the first time in over five months, interprovincial leisure travel would be allowed, although tourism establishments were expected to stick to broad social distancing principles, such as ensuring that the breakfast and reception area keep to a maximum



50% of occupancy space.

Other guidelines under this alert level pertaining specifically to the tourism industry were summarised in a press release issued by the Limpopo Tourism Authority (LTA) recently.

These relate generally to other places of attractions, which have now also been opened up. These include theme parks, amusement parks, water parks, family entertainment centres, nature and game reserves, national parks and other entertainment and cultural attractions.

For those facilities catering for weddings and functions, a maximum of 50 people was allowed, even then, ensuring compliance to social distancing, sanitising and wearing of masks.

With Covid-19 related lockdowns having kept people indoors and away from their favourite getaway places of leisure and recreation, it comes as no surprise that many people are looking forward to curing their “cabin fever” and travelling freely in the beautiful province of Limpopo.

As people prepare to travel to various tourism destinations around the province, tourism businesses are doing their best to prepare to receive visitors. This

is all happening at a time while they are still grappling with trying to keep their businesses afloat, having lost approximately five months in revenues.

Reopening for visitors is a herculean task given that establishment owners must take measures to ensure compliance with stringent Covid-19 regulations.

Taking cognisance of this and other factors, LTA, working together with Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET), has started the implementation of its recovery plan.

Broadly, this plan is “based on brand maintenance, refocusing of provincial tourism and rebuilding of the industry as whole”.

When asked about the importance of road infrastructure in enabling travellers to access tourist facilities, LTA responded that “... tourism can never operate in isolation from other sectors. Roads are critical to tourism as they connect attractions but also make it easy for tourists to access destinations. Once tourists visit an attraction and find it difficult to access it, they are likely not to return because of the bad roads”.

“RAL IS AN IMPORTANT STAKEHOLDER ... TO LTA IN ACHIEVING ITS OBJECTIVE OF EASY ACCESS OF TOURISTS TO ALL DESTINATIONS IN THE PROVINCE.”

According to the LTA press release, interaction with stakeholders has been significantly intensified, especially the tourism industry to find ways to help the industry back on its feet.

The LTA has indicated that with the eye on the Tourism Month in September they will also be promoting more on rural development and tourism in those areas. The impact of local tourism on rural development is an oft-overlooked factor.


Asked specifically about how Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL), given its mandate, could help LTA achieve its objectives in terms of aiding rural development and tourism, LTA responded: “RAL is an important stakeholder to help the LTA in achieving its objective of easy access of tourists to all destinations in the province. LTA in collaboration with the tourism industry met several times with RAL and Department of Public Works to raise issues of state of roads to most attractions in the province.”

“We’ll continue to engage RAL and its mother department, Public Works, to address these challenges for the province to get more tourists, which will boost the economy.”

Tourism, after all, is important not only for the joy and freedom that travellers often associate with travel, but it is a major driver of economic development as well as a major source of employment, at a time when unemployment is a grave challenge in the province and nationally.

As one of the critical drivers of the economy in the province of Limpopo, and possibly having the greatest potential to create jobs and other multiplier effects, the tourism industry has long been one of the key sectors that RAL takes into consideration in planning the road networks that traverse the province.

The tourism industry, together with mining and agriculture, is pivotal to economic development in the province. Over the years RAL has sought to align, as much as possible, its plans with LTA needs.

RAL supports LTA’s drive to revive the industry, as well as save and create new employment opportunities in the tourism establishments within the province. 



Giyani Brian Rikhotso is one half of the on-air talent on *Phaphama*, a morning drive time show on Munghana Lonene FM that broadcasts in Limpopo and as far as Gauteng and Mpumalanga provinces in South Africa, and the neighbouring Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

Half Man, Half Radio

DJ Brian Rikhotso Life, Pt II

The Soweto-born Giyani Brian Rikhotso, popularly known by the moniker DJ Brian, wears many hats. The 40-year-old is a radio personality and broadcaster, an entrepreneur, a club DJ, voice artist and producer. A dive into his background tells a story of him growing up in a village of Ga-Matshwi in Bolobedu, a rural area near Tzaneen in the Mopani District of Limpopo Province.

It is during this childhood, he says, that the spark for radio was ignited. Growing up, he used to observe his brother Ben Rikhotso mimicking broadcasters on radio, which subsequently sparked his love for radio.

“I don’t think he is aware that he is the one who actually influenced me to love radio.”

In 1998, after he had completed high school at Mokope Senior Secondary (Ga-Matshwi), he enrolled into a Journalism programme at Technikon Pretoria, the now Tshwane University of Technology. Two years later, at the turn of the century, he started his radio career when he grabbed an opportunity to join SABC’s Xitsonga language Public Broadcast Station (PBS) Munghana Lonene FM as a stand-in presenter.

He currently co-hosts the radio station’s Phaphama Breakfast Show with Mikateko Conny ‘Connizer’ Masimbye.

What is remarkable about this is how he shared his wish of one day working at Munghana Lonene, with his father at a young age. True to form, the manifestation of this strong desire has unfolded

in leaps and bounds.

1 November 2020 will mark the 20th anniversary of DJ Brian’s career in radio broadcasting. After almost two decades in the industry, where others have buckled under the pressure of a highly demanding career, Mr Rikhotso has not only prevailed, but has thrived and achieved numerous accolades and awards.

But how has he been able to keep the momentum going without losing steam?

“It is discipline,” Mr Rikhotso tells *Mmileng*, the official quarterly magazine of Roads Agency Limpopo.

“I don’t think he is aware that he is the one who actually influenced me to love radio.”

“When I talk to up-and-coming radio DJs, I always emphasize the issue of discipline.”

He emphasizes the importance of being true to oneself, being grounded in one’s beliefs and being guided by one’s principles.

When asked how he maintains this discipline himself, he draws on a salutary experience of how people should surround themselves with the right people.

He also speaks about the importance of honesty and being able to give and take constructive criticism.

He says this of his friends, "I want them to be able to tell me when I'm out of line, without fear or favour."

This, he puts it, makes for honest relationships that cultivate stronger bonds.

After observing his career trajectory, one quickly concludes that Mr Rikhotso is not one to rest on his laurels. He has been instrumental in the success of the Xitsonga Music Awards, now in their 16th year. The awards were started by Munghana Lonene to honour Xitsonga musicians.

Not only is he successful as a radio presenter, but his success filters in other spaces too. He is an influencer of brands, and this comes as no surprise. When you look at his social media presence you can easily

gauge his enormous influence.

As mentioned in the beginning, he is a man who wears many hats. One of these hats is entrepreneurship. He is the owner of Bharule Communications – a communications media and integrated IT solutions agency.

With DJ Brian being constantly on the road for his various gigs, entrepreneurial endeavours and productions, travel is an important aspect of the job.

It's not rocket science that when road conditions are good, the travel experience is more seamless.

Weighing in on this, Mr Rikhotso - who 'doesn't like planes (aviophobia)' anyways - says, "Good roads

“Good roads are very critical in my day-to-day business because I get connected to my clients and listeners...”

are very critical in my day-to-day business because I get connected to my clients and listeners with ease around Limpopo Province. Improving my time management allows me to enhance my performance and achieve my desired goals with less effort and more effective strategies. I manage to do all this because of the good road conditions in the province.”

Smooth roads really make all the difference.

There's more to this ambitious creative. Social conscience also runs in his blood.


In 2005 when he won Munghana Lonene's *Best DJ of the Year award*, his second award at the station since 2003, it came with a cash prize of R25 000. Instead of squandering this money like any other youngster would, he chose to buy computers for Mokohe Secondary School and give back to the community that raised him.

He remembered how the lack of computers at the time meant he had a tougher time assimilating and thus wanted to help others after him get the much-needed resources to kick-start their computer literacy journey.

Since then, he has been involved in numerous community upliftment projects.

DJ Brian started his radio career, as a fresh-voiced 20-year-old, two years into his media studies at the now Tshwane University of Technology.





20/20 life begins at forty? DJ Brian whose New Year's resolutions are calibrated at birthday has parlayed his talents across the media and entertainment space.

Adding a dose of inspiration about how others can get into radio, Mr Rikhotso is steadfast in driving the point across that would-be aspiring radio DJs should cultivate their own unique voice and make it better.

To this end, he speaks to how you may admire influencers you look up to, but without adopting their style and rather creating and enhancing your own.

Probing into what keeps him going and what keeps him grounded and humble even after he has accomplished what others can only dream of, he says that his family keeps him grounded.

Speaking of family, this father of three often tells his kids, "You must do something that you love, you must not be me."

He is adamant that others should chart their own path and follow their passion. **m**



Despite the Covid-19 induced lockdown delay beyond the contractor's fault, Roads Agency Limpopo was able to complete on time the rehabilitation and upgrade of provincial road D3671 towards the village of Musekwa in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province.

RAL BACK AT WORK

MUSEKWA ROAD

POST-LOCKDOWN MAKEOVER

Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL) has just recently completed a project for the design and construction of 3.36 kilometres of road D3671 towards the village of Musekwa in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province.

The project entailed the rehabilitation of 2.76 kilometres of road and an upgrade, from gravel to tar (bituminous surface), of 600 metres of road. The unpaved stretch of road D3671 towards Maranikhwe village is in future plans and will be upgraded as soon as funding is made available. Story on page 32.

“FIFTY-ONE (51) PEOPLE WERE EMPLOYED ON THE PROJECT, INCLUDING TWENTY-FIVE (25) WOMEN AND TWENTY-SIX (26) YOUNG PEOPLE.”

According to Shadrack Mukhuba, RAL Project Manager responsible for managing the project, the rehabilitation activities included the improvement of the structural capacity to the pavement layers.

“The project was initially for the upgrading of 3km length of road D3671 and later revised to rehabilitation at the start of project, for the first 2.76km, which had deteriorated to an extent that motorists were driving on gravel shoulders,” explains Mr Mukhuba.

The project started at approximately 11km from the intersection with road P278/1 (R523) at Tshituni ending just before Musekwa Thusong Service Centre – a community centre in Musekwa.

Musekwa is a rural area about 60 km north-east of Louis Trichardt within the Makhado Local Municipality of Vhembe District.

The project whose designs started in February 2019 and



In boosting village economy, the Musekwa Road project empowered fifteen (15) local businesses, as sub-contractors and suppliers of materials to the main contractor, and employed just over fifty labourers from villages adjacent to the road project site.

construction in August 2019 was initially scheduled for 16 months but was given an approved extension of time (EOT) period of three months to end of August 2020 due to restrictions on the construction sector brought about by the 26 March 2020 national lockdown imposed by government to curb the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, a disease caused by the novel Coronavirus.

“TWENTY-TWO (22) WORKERS WERE ALSO TRAINED ON VARIOUS AREAS ON THE PROJECT...”

At the time, RAL had nineteen (19) of its under-construction road infrastructure projects across the five district municipalities of Limpopo Province put on hold.

RAL was allowed to return to its operations on 1 May 2020 when the country eased its restrictions on the national lockdown from hard Level 5 to Level 4, giving permission to the construction sector to resume construction, maintenance and repairs of public works projects such as roads and bridges.

The Musekwa Road project was finally completed on 19 August 2020. And RAL has completed other projects since the May return.

Mr Mukhuba says as with all RAL projects, the contract required of the appointed main contractor to make use of the available services of Small Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) from adjacent communities as sub-contractors and suppliers on the project.

To this end, Tzaneen-based contractor Midiro Civils & Construction spent R2 540 460.87. That’s 15% of the construction value of R16 936 405.81 (exclusive of VAT, CPA, contingencies and special material).

“A total of 15 SMMEs were appointed and 14.94% of the target was achieved,” says Mr Mukhuba.

The contract also made provision for the employment of local labourers by the contractor during the contract period.

“The contractual amount for labour utilisation on this contract amounted to just over R 945 000 or 5% of the contract value, exclusive

The benefits of road D3671 to the community of Musekwa and road users in general are lower vehicle operating costs, reduced journey time, safer road and improved access for communities to services and opportunities such as healthcare, education and job opportunities.

of VAT, CPA, contingencies and special material.”

In total, says Mr Mukhuba, fifty-one (51) people were employed on the project, including twenty-five (25) women and twenty-six (26) young people.

“Twenty-two (22) workers were also trained on various areas on the project,” says Mr Mukhuba.

Turn to page 30 to read more on the labour and SMME empowerment on this project.

In terms of RAL policy, in line with (Department of) National Treasury Preferential Procurement Regulations, 2017, successful contract bidders on contracts are expected to sub-contract a minimum of 30% (on upgrading projects) and 15% (on the preventative maintenance or rehabilitation/resurfacing projects) of contract value to small businesses in villages adjacent to the project sites, and 10% of



contract value should be used for employment of local labourers in areas where road upgrades and preventative maintenance projects are undertaken.

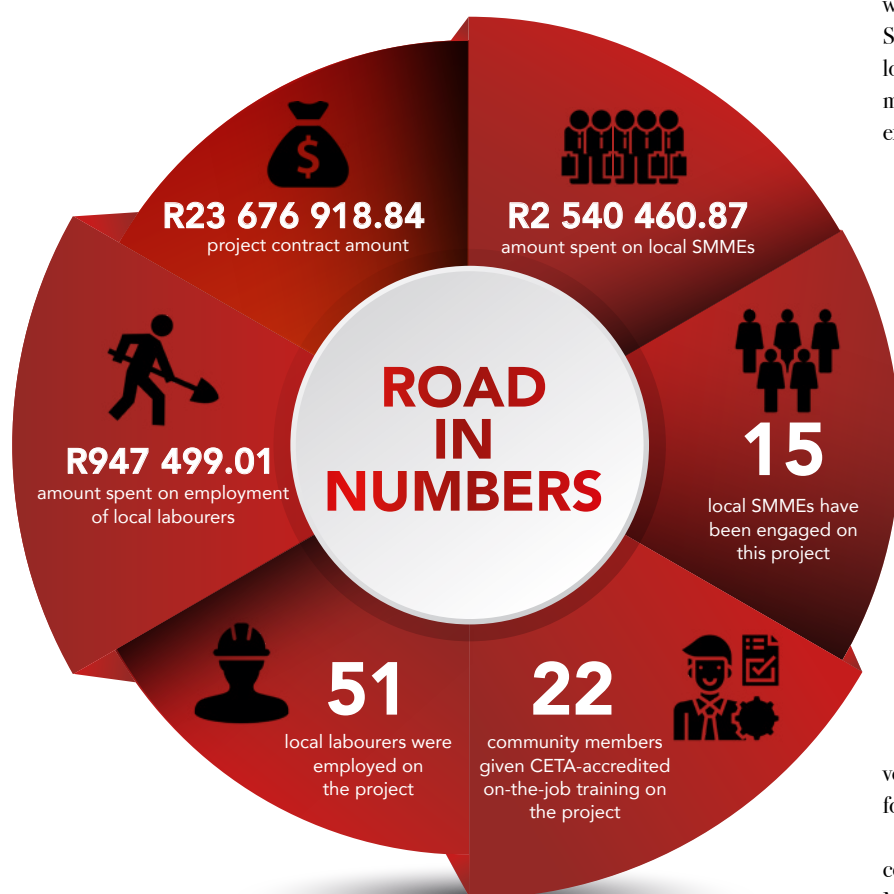
Further as a caveat, the policy states that procurement to SMMEs and employment of labourers should be limited to the locality of Limpopo Province with preference given in the priority order of, first to the SMMEs from affected villages, then to those within the local municipality before exploring the district municipality labour catchment area for skills, experience and training opportunities.

However, in cases where absent skills are not specialised, the locally based workers are still absorbed into projects and provided with on-the-job and, at best, a Construction Education and Training Authority (CETA)-accredited training, while local small businesses are assisted with enterprise support by the Agency, main contractors and strategic partners.

This is to ensure that local SMMEs understand business principles to better run their businesses and local labourers acquire accredited skills to be well equipped to participate in future projects as main contractors, including within the private sector, once the project is completed and has left their respective villages.

Further to the job creation aspect, some of the other benefits of this completed road project to road users and the community at large include lower vehicle operating costs, safer road and improved access for communities.

For feedback (vox pop) on the road from the community of Musekwa, and road users at large, turn to Mintirho Ya Vulavula on page 19. [m](#)





The recent rehabilitation and upgrade of provincial road D3671 towards the village of Musekwa in the Makhado Local Municipality of Vhembe District was built on the blood, sweat and tears of community members from various villages in the area.

PREFERENTIAL PROCUREMENT

INSTILLING SENSE OF OWNERSHIP

Wandy Makhari, though she prefers to pronounce it as Wendy, is a person living with disability in one ear from birth. She is a widowed mother of three from Pfumembe village, on one end of the recently completed 3.36 kilometre Musekwa Road (D3671) project. Story on page 26.

Mrs Makhari, 39, worked as a domestic worker for various households in Johannesburg and Pretoria in Gauteng before she quit her job at the end of 2019 due to her employers' failure to comply with the national minimum wage.

Her eldest child, a daughter, now 20, matriculated two years ago in 2018 but couldn't afford to further her studies due to circumstances.

"She passed well and would love to study further, but I don't have the financial means to support her dream. She has been home since," says Mrs Makhari, who also has a 15-year-old boy in Grade 8.

Her last born, a nine-year-old boy is in Grade 4.

She says she was hired as a 'part-time' cleaner at contractor Midiro Civils & Constructions site office in late March 2020, joining two other women, one of whom is also a person living with disability. But she could only work for just one day after being issued with uniform, as the country went into a hard Level 5 national lockdown on 26 March 2020.

"I was called back towards end of June 2020, working seven days, and then a full last month in July."

This is the human-interest story of Mrs Makhari, one of the more than fifty local community members who were given job opportunities by Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL), through main contractor, on the rehabilitation



“THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME WORKING ON A RAL PROJECT AND THE EXPERIENCE WILL CERTAINLY BOOST THE PROFILE OF MY COMPANY.”

and construction project for part of road D3671 from Pfumembe towards the village of Musekwa in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province.

Amongst those employed by the main contractor were twenty-five (25) women and twenty-six (26) young people, from the socioeconomically disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in society, to contribute to building a road in their community.

Additionally, twenty-two (22) community members, amongst them Annikie Mafela, were given a two-week Construction Education and Training Authority (CETA)-accredited on-the-job training on the project.

The 31-year-old, from the neighbouring village of Makhushu, was employed on the project for a period of six months, between January and July 2020. She too,

like Mrs Makhari, had her income severely affected by the national lockdown imposed by government to curb the spread of the dreaded Covid-19 pandemic.

The single mother of two says the job opportunity was a welcome relief as her previous job of patching potholes on the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in Louis Trichardt had ended mid-2018.

“During my time of employment I was able to help my siblings and sickly mother,” says Miss Mafela, who hopes the certificate issued will put her in a more advantageous space to secure more job opportunities.

RAL contracts make provision for the employment of local labourers, from areas where road upgrades and preventative maintenance projects are undertaken, during the contract period.

The contractual amount that was spent on local labour utilisation on this project amounted to R947 499.01 or 5% of the contract value, as it was mainly a rehabilitation project. Upgrading projects have a minimum target of 10% of contract value for the employment of local labourers.

Further to this job creation element by the main contractor, and in terms of RAL policy in line with the (Department of) National Treasury Preferential Procurement Regulations of 2017, successful contract bidders on contracts are also expected to subcontract or source materials to the tune of 30% (on upgrading projects) and 15% (on the preventative or rehabilitation/resurfacing projects) from small businesses in villages adjacent to the project sites.

In this regard, the contractor spent over R2.5 million on local Small Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) as subcontractors and suppliers on the project.

One of those local small businesses was Makhushini Holdings, owned by 30-year-old Rabelani Makhushini, which was hired to supply tipper trucks on the projects for a period of 14 months.

“This was the first time working on a RAL project and the experience will certainly boost the profile of my company.”

“All in all I employed four drivers for the project, after starting with three,” says Mr Makhushini, who hails from a village of Khomela, just two villages away from Musekwa.

Khathutshelo Nesane, 43, from Khathu & Takie General Services, which provided TLB (Tractor loader backhoe) machinery hire, says

he is grateful for the 6 months they were able to work on the project.

He co-owns the 50% woman-owned company, which is based in Sane village about 15km from project site, with 38-year-old Takalani Raedani.

“Half a bread is better than nothing at all,” says Mr Nesane, as he also extolled the virtues of patience and benefits of the road to local communities.

These sentiments were also shared by a family-owned Vutsikini (Pty) Ltd from Makhushu village, which came in for the last two months of the project to do stone pitching.

Owned by Grace and Lawrence Majuta, the company through Mrs Majuta, 37, says it is grateful to the Community Liaison Officer (CLO), Samuel Ramadwa, Ward Councillor, Frank Chililo, and the Project Steering Committee (PSC) for helping her company recruit ten labourers equitably across the vast ward.

In total, the contractor engaged 15 local SMMEs on this project. ■

PLANS AFOOT TO EXTEND MUSEKWA ROAD PAST DIVHANI TO MARANIKHWE

Sarina Tshatsinde, a cashier at a government-run Thusong Service Centre in Musekwa, is one of the local community members recently interviewed in *Mmileng* popular community feedback page Mintirho Ya Vulavula (story on page 19) on the benefits and feedback on the first phase works on Musekwa Road who had wished that the tar road could be extended past her place of work.

And indeed plans are in place for road D3671 (Musekwa Road), which was recently rehabilitated and upgraded, from gravel to tarred surface, by Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL) to be extended. The plan for the 3 kilometres upgrade extension will be realised as soon as the budget is made available.

The announcement of the proposed upgrade was made by the Minister of Transport, Honourable Fikile Mbalula, during a recent October 2020 (Transport Month) visit to Musekwa village in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province.

The extension project is made possible by the budget from the Rural Roads Upgrade Programme, a Strategic Integrated Project (SIP) no 26 of the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission's Strategic Integrated Projects (SIPs). The implementation will be managed by RAL, a provincial road infrastructure implementing agency of government in Limpopo.

The first phase of the rehabilitation (mainly) and upgrade (from

gravel to tarred surface) of Musekwa Road is covered in this edition, *Mmileng* Issue 3 of 2020. See story on page 26.

The scope of work on the proposed next phase (extension) will involve the design and construction of the D3671 from where it ended (in the first phase), just before Musekwa Thusong Service Centre – a community centre in Musekwa (Ngudu), past the village of Divhani to Maranikhwe village within the Makhado Local Municipality of Vhembe District.


“THE EXTENSION PROJECT IS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE BUDGET FROM THE RURAL ROADS UPGRADE PROGRAMME...”

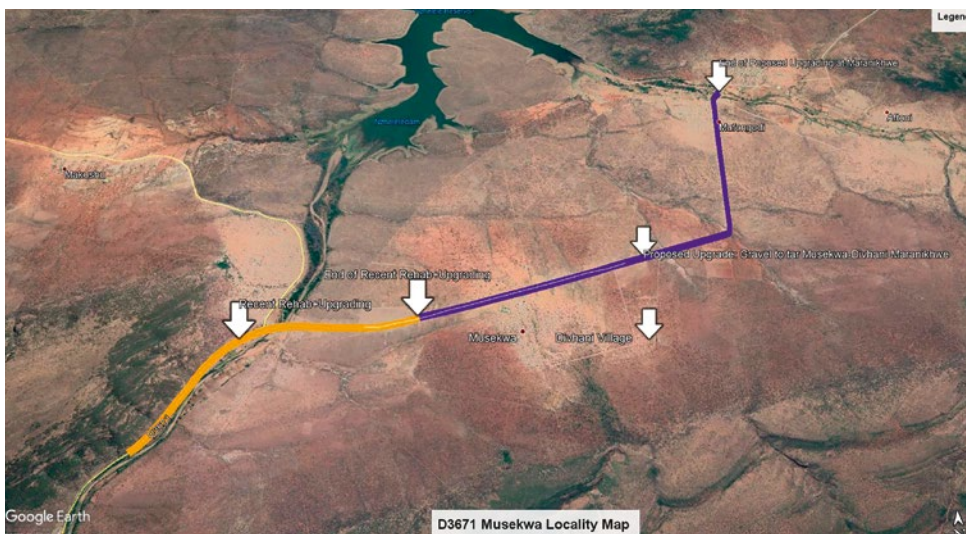
This construction, whose commencement date will be announced in due course, will take the total works on road D3671 to over 6 kilometres.

Initial estimates suggest the project will create 150 job opportunities for local communities, with 30% of contract value or just over R17 million (as estimated)

earmarked for the employment of Small Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs).

Phase one empowered 51 local labourers and 15 small businesses from adjacent communities as sub-contractors and suppliers on the project. See story on page 30.

It is expected that when the road upgrade is completed it will benefit public, and road users, with lower vehicle operating costs, reduced journey time, safer, all-weather and dust free road and improved access for communities to government services such as at healthcare facilities, educational institutions, job opportunities and economic hubs. 



The locality map of road D3671, or the Musekwa Road, as viewed on Google Earth. The yellow denotes the first phase, which was completed in August 2020, while the purple denotes the proposed upgrade from just before Musekwa Thusong Service Centre towards Maranikhwe village.



BEST

Behind every success...

That's me

Mmileng goes inside Roads Agency Limpopo to profile a select group of six women at the Agency's Rabe Street, Polokwane offices. As the adage goes, even the successes of traditionally male-dominated sectors and organisations, such as in construction and civil engineering, are made possible by the support of women. We celebrate these 'behind the scenes' women with an empowering headline from a poem or song title.



I Am Not My Hair

Thokozile Mdluli says her position as an Office Administrator at the Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL) has a vital role as it entails helping the Agency to meet its strategic initiatives and contribute to the attainment of its goals.

As the Office Administrator to the Executive Manager for Corporate Services, Ms Mdluli coordinates office activities, schedules meetings, makes travel arrangements, manages the Executive Manager's diary, assists colleagues whenever necessary and attends to stakeholder enquiries.

Ms Mdluli, who was born in Namakgale, Phalaborwa in the Mopani District, says her profession needs someone who is friendly and open-minded as she gets to meet and work with diverse people, both internally and externally.

Her work is often challenging as it deals with different personalities who visit her office, "particularly members of the community, some of whom will be pleasant, while others will be unpleasant because of the state of their roads."

As a passionate entrepreneur, the energetic 36-year-old says despite being an administrator, her job gives her an opportunity to learn about the dynamics of the corporate world.

"When you work in a support role, this entails working closely with the leadership, which comes with a chance to pick up business acumen as one witnesses first-hand decision making daily," she notes.

Ms Mdluli began her basic education at Phalaborwa Primary School in 1995 and Sebalamakgolo Secondary School in 2000. In 2004 she proceeded to Damelin to study for a Diploma in Office Administration, which she passed with distinction. She also has a degree in Business Administration obtained from the Southern Business School, Gauteng in 2014, with a couple of distinctions.

Although Ms Mdluli joined RAL in 2009 as a receptionist, through hard work, diligence, loyalty and good personality, she was promoted to the current position in 2012.

"When you work in a support role, this entails working closely with the leadership, which comes with a chance to pick up business acumen..."



Prior to joining RAL, she began her career at the Limpopo Heritage Resources Authority (LIHRA) in 2004 as an Office Administrator, later moving to ExecuPrime Training as a Sales Consultant in 2007.

When she is not busy, the mother of two girls, Thobile and Wanga aged 15 and 5 years respectively, takes care of her private business.

"While growing up I was a business-minded young woman because at home we could not afford everything we wanted. I used to sell popcorn and sweets during break time at school, and never struggled to get pocket money. I am a hustler naturally; I believe in selling items during weekends such as cosmetics to generate extra cash for my children."

As someone who cherishes the importance of family and family gatherings, Ms Mdluli, the last born child from a family of five (four girls and one boy) says her parents and siblings played a pivotal role in her upbringing.

"I was raised by both parents who firmly believed in maintaining the family culture of togetherness alive; hence I continue to ensure that my kids remain a priority in my life. My father is now late but he left a legacy of togetherness and the Christian faith in all of us."

Ms Mdluli says spending time with her two lovely daughters inspires her about life.

"They keep me convinced as a mother that despite the scarcity of resources, I always include them in my daily plans," she concludes.

Thokozile Mdluli is the Office Administrator to the Executive Manager for Corporate Services at Roads Agency Limpopo.

Independent Women

Phestina Makgaba, Assistant Project Manager for Social and Institutional Development at the Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL), says being a middle-aged woman often poses a challenge in her line of work, especially when men are always preferred for certain tasks.

Nonetheless, through her industrious passion, dedication and persistence, some stakeholders are starting to realise that gender and age do not necessarily determine how well a person executes their duties.

Despite all the social challenges she encounters at the project implementation level, she is always willing to ensure that the projects run smoothly until their completion.

“When projects are completed on time, without interruptions and all targets are met, I become very motivated and look forward to other projects,” she says.

In spite of her broad scope of responsibilities, her main duty entails liaising and convening various stakeholders such as municipalities, traditional leaders and contractors to ensure mutual communication liaison regarding RAL projects.

Ms Makgaba was born in Uitkyk No 2, Senwabarwana in the Blouberg Local Municipality. She grew up with ample access to everything a child could want but that did not deter her from taking education seriously.

In her quest to prepare for a better future, she completed her primary school education at Welgelegen Primary School (Ga-Mankodi, Senwabarwana) and Malaka Primary School (Uitkyk) between 1986 and 1992.

Her high school journey began in 1993 at Marobotha High School in Boyne near Ga-Molepo, where she enrolled for her Form 1 (the now Grade 8), and thence in 1994 she proceeded to Madikweng Senior Secondary School (Uitkyk No 1) until she matriculated in 1997.

In a bid to discover her career path, she studied towards a BA degree at the Rand Afrikaans University (now University of Johannesburg) but moved to the University of Pretoria (UP) the following year where she completed a BA degree specialising in Community Development.

She also has Honours and Masters degrees in Development Studies from the University of the North (the now University of Limpopo) obtained in 2003 and 2012 respectively.

As child, Ms Makgaba did not have any meaningful outlook on what career she wanted to follow when she completed her schooling.

“When projects are completed on time, without interruptions and all targets are met, I become very motivated and look forward to other projects.”

“Growing up, I did not have exposure to different career paths and access to technology like the kids of nowadays. At first, I wanted to be a nurse just because I liked their white uniform. I later realised that I was good at history and I changed from envisioning being a nurse to a lawyer. After matric, I did not qualify to register for Law; I was accepted for the BA.”

The 40-year-old says while at UP, away from her parents, one of the classmates whom she formed a close bond with, Esther Matibidi, helped her discover her career by motivating her in many ways.

Prior to joining RAL in October 2008, Ms Makgaba was employed by the Independent Development Trust in the Mpumalanga Province from 2003 to 2004, where she was exposed to community projects for the first time.

From 2004 to 2008, she worked at the Department of Land Affairs in Limpopo where she continued working with communities.

“I am grateful for the support from colleagues since joining RAL, particularly when the going gets tough. The guidance from my line manager, Ms Mabjalwa Modjadji (page 38), makes me look forward to yet another day with courage and confidence. The support from my son, Boitumelo, has also been amazing.”



Phestina Makgaba is the Assistant Project Manager for Social and Institutional Development at Roads Agency Limpopo.

She Works Hard For Her Money

Bestina Mphahlele, a Cleaner at Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL), says despite some regarding the job of a cleaner as not being so fancy, this is the most important thing that has ever happened to her life as she is able put food on the table.

Mrs Mphahlele, who began her duty as the cleaner at the Agency on the 15th of August 2015, says having an opportunity to be part of the Agency's family has indeed brought a huge delight in her life.

"It was always my wish to be part of RAL. Receiving a call and being told I was hired by RAL is one of the moments I will never forget in my entire life," she says.

Born in a village of Seleteng, Ga-Mphahlele, the 54-year-old mother of two opened about her upbringing.

She says her unemployed and often ill mother couldn't afford to provide essentials for her to the extent that she was compelled to move out of her parents' home and stay with relatives.

"It was a difficult situation, but this has motivated me to work hard and produce good results on everything I do," she reckons.

Mrs Mphahlele began her education at Mmutle Primary School in Seleteng. She then went to Matsobane Primary School where she attended Standard 3 and 4 (the now Grade 5 and 6) and later went on to complete her primary education in Atteridgeville, west of Pretoria (Gauteng), where she stayed with relatives.

She then proceeded to Saulridge High School, also in Atteridgeville, where she completed her matric.

Mrs Mphahlele grew up with wishes to go to school just like any other child, however; her family background presented a challenge.

Notwithstanding, "Being unable to further my studies after completing my matric a few decades ago has never been an obstacle to me at all, rather it has motivated me to work even harder in life," she says.

Upon completion of her matric, she did odd jobs until she landed the cleaning job at the South African

National Defence Force in Polokwane from 2002 to 2006 on contract basis.

"The fact that we are not undermined as cleaners by the Agency's top management brings more confidence in me."

She spent nine years taking care of her baking business before joining RAL in 2015.

After joining RAL in 2015, she was presented with opportunities, including an offer to enrol for an Office Management Certificate at the University of South Africa (Unisa) in 2018 with all-expenses paid for by her employer.

"Enrolling with Unisa was indeed a dream come true because growing up I wanted to see myself furthering my studies with one of the universities in South Africa."

Despite her age, Mrs Mphahlele believes in education and hopes that her persistence will serve as a huge example that age should never discourage anyone from fulfilling their aspirations.

She says she always wake up with a great smile on her face when thinking of her work and the profound relationship she has with colleagues at her workplace.

"The fact that we are not undermined as cleaners by the Agency's top management brings more confidence in me," she says.

Mrs Mphahlele says she always ensures that she balances her work, studies and being a mother and wife at all possible times.

"This is important because my success couldn't be possible without the support of my family (husband and children), as they play a crucial role by always being there for me," she says.



Bestina Mphahlele is the Cleaner at Roads Agency Limpopo.

Woman Work

Refilwe Adams' exceptional work as an Office Administrator for Land Use Management (Engineering) at the Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL) debunks the widely held belief that administrative assistants are just mere cogs for photocopying and typing.

Like many young girls back in her days growing up in Lulekani, outside Phalaborwa, in the now Mopani District, Ms Adams cherished popular careers such as being in the police force to weed out offenders in society, but this was not to be, due to ill health relating to asthma.

As someone who easily adjusts to any environment, office administration became a perfect alternative to her childhood dream of being a uniformed staff member.

Having joined RAL in April 2013, today the organisation enjoys Ms Adams' demonstrated work ethic resting on her three core skills - technical, human, and conceptual.

She directs the activities of all staff in her unit, helping them to undertake their duties responsibly to achieve the strategic intents of the organisation.

Her acute planning, organisational acumen, conflict resolution and team playing skills saw her emerge as the Best Employee of the Year in the Sekhukhune District while working for Khuvutlu Water Consulting Roads and Service (KWCRS) in 2010.

She went on to receive more honour at the 2018 RAL Excellence Awards for the Engineering Division, where she was recognised as 'the most dedicated and committed employee'.

The 43-year-old's administration career spans 15 years of providing an oversight role in key performance areas such as planning, organising, record-keeping and managing various organisational activities to enhance overall performance.

As a single mother of two boys aged 14 and 19 who are in Grade 8 and 12 respectively, she says striking the balance between work and family can be daunting and therefore needs someone who is highly organised.

This is compounded by multiple office demands that include fielding calls from citizens

who frequently call her to enquire about matters relating to road infrastructure projects (and service delivery angst) in their respective communities.

“It breaks my heart to see high levels of unemployment, and the high rate of gender-based violence and child abuse in our communities.”

“It breaks my heart to see high levels of unemployment, and the high rate of gender-based violence (GBV) and child abuse in our communities,” she explains empathetically in recognition of the frustrations of some of RAL's clientele.

Ms Adams remarks that to keep a cool head under the circumstances, she starts her day with meditation to gather positive energy and create a conducive working environment.

Also, she goes to gym, jogs and dances to unwind from the pressures that come with her multi-faceted responsibilities.

Her message to young prospective office administrators, especially women is that “the Office Administration career is very good and interesting as you can learn a lot about the organisation you work for. Furthermore, I would say to young women ‘Vukuzenzele’ (get up and do it for yourself). No matter the challenges you face in your life, your past is not your destination.”

Ms Adams holds a Diploma in Office Administration from Damelin Business College obtained in 1998, as well as a Certificate in Revenue and Debt Management with Arista College in Pretoria gained in 2004.

Her employment record includes working for the Mopani District Municipality as a Credit Control Officer from 2002 to 2004 before joining KWCRS from 2005 to 2012 as a Credit Controller and Customer Service Officer and later joined her current employer RAL in 2013.



Refilwe Adams is the Office Administrator in the Land Use Management Unit at Roads Agency Limpopo.

There Is A Me That I Could Be

Mabjalwa Modjadji, a teacher-turned-social developer, who serves as a Manager for Social and Institutional Development at the Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL) says, growing up, she always envisioned a career where she would make a difference to the lives of others.

Her position as a Social and Institutional Development practitioner at RAL is exactly what she envisioned as it entails management of community development initiatives, social facilitation and institutional development relating to implementation of road infrastructure projects.

This is something Ms Modjadji believes contributes to not only building the future for the next generation in the province, but society as a whole. She says her social development position takes her down memory lane to her humble upbringing when her parents, a housewife and a general worker at a local shop, struggled to make ends meet.

The 58-year-old, born in a rustic village of Ga-Mabulana in the Bolobedu area, taught the Economics and Accounting subjects at three high schools during her 10-year stint as a teacher.

“I have always enjoyed teaching and other careers where you help people, so there are a lot of synergies between teaching and social development,” explains Ms Modjadji, drawing similarities between the two noble professions.

Her teaching career began in 1986 at Mokomene High School in Mokomene village, Ga-Ramokgopa in the Botlokwa area before moving on to Lepato M High School in Phalaborwa in 1988. From 1991 to 1996 she taught at Masalanabo High School in Khetlhakoni village, Ga-Modjadji in the Bolobedu area before taking up Development Studies to improve her employment prospects.

She obtained her Bachelor of Education degree in 1985 majoring in Economics and Accounting from the then University of the North (now University of Limpopo).

Although she always wanted to be a teacher, after serving for 10 years, she couldn't see herself doing it for the rest of her life, hence she opted to study in a different field of practice.

Ms Modjadji went back to the

classroom in 1995 to enrol for Honours qualification in Development Studies at UL, which she obtained in 1996.

“At RAL I have accrued a lot of skills both from communities and colleagues. My job requires **social skills such as listening, negotiating, patience and perseverance...**”

She then resigned as a teacher in 1996, and began a new career as a development worker in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry in Polokwane. She later joined RAL at the end of 2003 to serve as Project Manager for Social and Institutional Development, a position she still holds to date.

Although Ms Modjadji realised that her career comes with some challenges such as gender inequality, she says none of these challenges have made her to regret her decision.

“Previously, women were not allowed to give an opinion in the *Kgorong* meetings, and were also restricted on how they should dress during the meetings as compared to their male counterparts. It is often difficult to thrive in this profession especially when dealing with the Traditional Council as they often ask your male colleague to confirm the same information you have provided to them.”

Since joining RAL, she has learnt a lot of aspects, which have positively contributed to her profile as a social developer.

“At RAL I have accrued a lot of skills both from communities and colleagues. My job requires social skills such as listening, negotiating, patience and perseverance, all of which are necessary when one deals with people and these were developed along the way since joining RAL.”

As a wife and mother of three girls, Ms Modjadji enjoys watching documentaries on TV, attending church and spending quality time with her family when she is off duty.



Mabjalwa Modjadji is the Project Manager for Social and Institutional Development at Roads Agency Limpopo.

Still I Rise

Thabelo Mulaudzi, Assistant Environmental Manager at Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL) says, “Growing up, I had a passion for the medical fraternity, and had hoped to one day become a nurse, a physiotherapist or a doctor. However, the calling apparently grew much broader into taking care of the environment in general.”

Having served RAL for at least 13 years, Ms Mulaudzi traces her interest in the environmental industry back to her secondary school days when her teachers used to organise Arbor Day activities for their school.

“We would receive trees from Ramasaga Nursery in Shayandima to plant in our school, some of which we planted at home. It was such celebratory field moments that prompted my interest into environmental protection.”

Born and bred in a small village of Ha-Tshikonelo outside Thohoyandou in the now Vhembe District of Limpopo Province, Ms Mulaudzi describes her arduous experiences in the historically white male-dominated industry as astronomically challenging.

She believes that “most men undermine women’s abilities in carrying out particular tasks and overcoming the challenges associated with the sector. Little do these men know that women are more than capable of working twice as hard and can achieve targets beyond ordinary expectations.”

She says the requisites into the environmental sector have, and still continue to be dominated by people from financially privileged backgrounds.

Despite this, she implores that dedication, passion and persistence are some of the attributes a black child from an underprivileged community, like herself, should possess to get recognition and break into the ranks of the profession.

Amongst other responsibilities, Ms Mulaudzi’s job description entails ensuring that RAL complies with all environmental legislations that affect or influence RAL’s core business.

Ms Mulaudzi says her job comes with daily challenges, more especially now that communities are aware of their environmental rights as stipulated in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996).

As such, she pays attention to

detail to ensure that all processes are executed according to the book.

“...women are more than capable of working twice as hard and can achieve targets beyond ordinary expectations.”

She further says her passion for the industry and zeal to learn new things keeps her going during these difficult times.

Prior to joining RAL, Ms Mulaudzi worked for an environmental consulting company in Polokwane as an Environmental Assessment Practitioner for five years. This worked to her advantage when she vied for her current position at RAL, which she assumed in January 2007.

Ms Mulaudzi went to Tshikonelo Primary School, Ha-Tshikonelo before proceeding to Tshivhidzo Masiagwala Secondary School in Maungani village, also outside Thohoyandou, where she matriculated.

However, growing up in a poverty-stricken family where her grandmother used her pension benefits to support her and three siblings, Ms Mulaudzi family’s financial position was extremely dire that she was forced to take a gap year after completing her matric.

In a bid to enhance her employment opportunities, Ms Mulaudzi obtained her first degree in Environmental Science at the University of Venda in 2001, before moving on to the University of South Africa (Unisa) where she completed her Honours degree in Environmental Management in 2013.

She went on to complete a Postgraduate Diploma in Project Management at MANCOSA in 2018.

She also obtained a Masters degree in Environmental Management from the University of the Free State in 2017.

Currently, Ms Mulaudzi is registered for a programme in Safety Management at Unisa.



Thabelo Mulaudzi is the Assistant Environmental Manager at Roads Agency Limpopo.

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RAL'S VALUES

The way we conduct ourselves and our business in pursuit of our vision and mission is underpinned and guided by the following corporate values:

COMMITMENT

We are committed to delivering quality road infrastructure in the province with pride

RELIABILITY

We offer reliable, safe and economic road infrastructure

EFFICIENCY

We will go the extra mile in serving our communities

ACCOUNTABILITY

We remain accountable to all our stakeholders and the environment

TRANSPARENCY

We are transparent in both our internal and external business processes

EXCELLENCE

We strive to exceed expectations

DIVERSITY

We value and embrace diversity within the work context

TEAMWORK

We work together for better roads



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