



ROADS AGENCY LIMPOPO
Together for better roads

ISSUE 2 OF 2020

MMILENG

WELCOME TO OUR ROAD NETWORK

ROAD TO GROWTH 'MISS P' MULAUDZI

Univen FM to Phalaphala FM

RAL
+
ZZ2

Together for
better roads

STEENBOKPAN

Improved access to
LEPHALALE

**PUBLIC
INFRASTRUCTURE
TO DRIVE LIMPOPO
ECONOMIC RECOVERY**



BIG INTERVIEW

WITH BOARD'S HR & REMUNERATION
COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

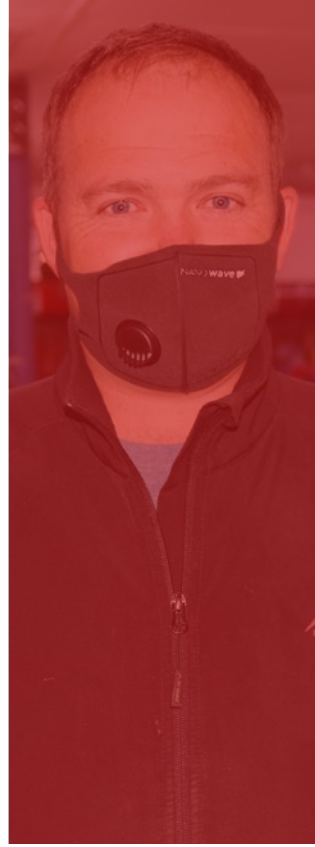


Contributing to socio economic development by connecting the people of LIMPOPO PROVINCE.



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 2 of 2020 Cover Star is Honourable Namane Dickson Masemola, the MEC for the Limpopo Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure. Story on Page 6.

POST-COVID-19 MINDSET AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY START WITH PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE



MR MAROPENG
MANYATHELA,
RAL's Head of Communications

The Covid-19 pandemic, a disease caused by the novel Coronavirus is still very much with us and is expected to define our 'new normal' for an unforeseeable future.

Amidst this gloom, we managed to put together another edition of your favourite corporate magazine to update you on the thankless road infrastructure work of Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL), which must continue amidst this socio-economic health crisis.

At *Mmileng*, as we already started from the previous edition, we continue to give platform to government's public awareness campaign to help manage the spread of the disease.

We believe trying to interpret the message sent out by the experts might be incautious and get lost in translation. We use the language of government. And the message is clear and straight forward.

It is now up to us to be less inconsiderate and selfish, and be more responsible in our attitude and behaviour.

RAL returned 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.

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. The lifting of those restrictions meant, slowly but surely, thousands of construction sector workers were given permission to return to work under safe working conditions.

Public infrastructure projects have potential of creating economy reigniting job opportunities on a massive scale even in the most battered of economies. Hence our focus on Limpopo Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure (LDPWRI) budget being critical to jumpstarting the economic recovery from the biggest global health crisis

in a century.

Many sectors, including mining - which contributes 25% to the Limpopo provincial economy, are shedding jobs and few will survive if on full capacity at all when this storm has passed. Mining has been a leading contributor to RAL's Strategic Partnership Approach with the private sector and now it is time for the agricultural and tourism sectors to step up as well, for the good of the country.

Every little contribution counts.

As far as the agricultural sector is concerned, ZZ2 - a leading producer of tomato in South Africa has been our reliable partner. And in this edition we profile their contribution to Limpopo's economic road infrastructure since our first Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) in 2016.

We also trekked to the farming town of Steenbokpan in the Waterberg District Municipality for our RAL at Work project profile. Steenbokpan has spawned a township of Lesedi on the back of activity at Eskom's Medupi Power Station, and the provincial road D1675 - colloquially referred to as the Steenbokpan Road, towards the town of Lephalale has never been this strategic in the area, and its rehabilitation is our focus.

We still have your favourite regular pages such as Personality profile feature and Mintirho Ya Vulavula community feedback page. Other sections, including the revamp of our content mix and design, are held in abeyance to give space for Covid-19 pandemic awareness campaigns from government.

Health remains our primary wealth investment.

For more information on Covid-19, visit South Africa's online resource and news portal established by the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) and the Department of Health on sacoronavirus.co.za or call Emergency Hotline 0800 029 999 or send 'Hi' to WhatsApp support line 0600 123 456.

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

NAVIGATING ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY IN THE ADVENT OF THE KILLER COVID-19



MR GABRIEL MALULEKE,
RAL Chief Executive Officer

The current Covid-19 situation in South Africa requires South Africans to put all hands on deck in working together to curb the surge. The seemingly unstoppable virus has already stolen an uncountable number of our loved ones.

As President Cyril Ramaphosa mentioned, it is now the responsibility of all citizens to entrench and adopt the “new normal” precautions in our daily routines.

As Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL), our work of delivering road infrastructure to the people of Limpopo has been severely affected. We have had to halt a number of our projects to save lives of our people on implementing projects. We firmly believe that there is nothing that can be equated to losing human lives.

Since the reopening of the road construction sector, we have had to adjust most of our operations to comply with the rules as set out by our government. We fully understand that our people do not require excuses but services. We are therefore doing everything within our power to address all the concerns within our available budget.

We continue to call upon our most valued stakeholder, the communities, to work with us in ensuring that the road infrastructure projects that are currently running continue without problems overlooking the current Covid-19 challenges. We further urge all parties involved in the projects to continue to take all precautions: wash your hands regularly, maintain social distance and wear a face mask at all times.

We further take a cue from our shareholder representative, Honourable MEC Namane Dickson Masemola. This is the time to show our communities how much we need to realise the Limpopo government's road infrastructure plans. RAL can never achieve those without rallying the support and participation of Limpopo communities. We will therefore keep on strengthening our stakeholder engagement efforts.

Our province is predominantly rural with

relatively good road infrastructure. We have, for the past two years, seen an increase in road infrastructure demands. Many of those demands have in some cases become service delivery protests. The increase in road infrastructure service delivery protests indicates to us how significant roads are in developing the economy of the province.

The high demand for roads in the province should be understood within the context of a study conducted by the World Bank in 2018, titled *Infrastructural Development in Sub-Saharan Africa*. According to the study, approximately 75 per cent of freight in South Africa is transported by road, making road the most utilised mode of transport in South Africa.

The most daunting and challenging task that faces RAL throughout our endeavours is to deliver a properly planned and well-maintained road system in an environment characterised by high-levels of demand, limited funding, high incidences of community protests and an increasingly deteriorating economic climate.

In order to achieve our objectives, the executive team, led by myself, decided on RAL's priorities to be:

- Proactively integrate legitimate community concerns into RAL's road demand planning mechanism,
- Consolidate gains made in strategic partnerships,
- Improve our audit outcomes,
- Seek harmonious stakeholder relationships for a shared road development vision.

Our primary role as the executive management remains to be diligent deployment of RAL's resources (physical, financial, skills, material) towards the construction and maintenance of provincial roads that create, capture and deliver optimal economic and public value.

Given the Limpopo Provincial Government's limited finances, private funding through strategic partnerships will remain an integral component of RAL's business strategy to achieve set objectives.

My mask
protects
YOU

Your mask
protects
ME



Even if you don't have symptoms, masks are important to reduce the spread of COVID-19.



Please wear fabric masks in public. Always wash masks between use.

Without a Mask

- Your cough or sneeze travels farther
- More germs are released in the air and onto surfaces
- More people can get sick from your germs

With a Fabric Mask

- Your cough or sneeze is more contained
- Fewer germs are released
- More people are protected from your germs



health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



The MEC for Limpopo Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure Namane Dickson Masemola tabled the department's 2020/21 budget during the virtual sitting of the Limpopo Provincial Legislature in the midst of the novel Covid-19 pandemic.

ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE KEY DRIVER TOWARDS POST-COVID-19 ECONOMIC RECOVERY

The new MEC for the Limpopo Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure (LDPWRI), Honourable Namane Dickson Masemola, tabled the Department's 2020/21 budget during the virtual sitting of the Limpopo Provincial Legislature in the midst of physical and social distancing measures imposed by government to curb the spread of the novel Covid-19 pandemic, a disease caused by the

Coronavirus that has devastated the world.

The LDPWRI has been allocated a budget of R3.9 billion out of the Limpopo Province's R73.0 billion budget for 2020/21, the first budget of the sixth Provincial Administration.

The allocation includes R1.3 billion for conditional grants and R1.5 billion to be transferred to Roads

Agency Limpopo (RAL) for operational costs, road maintenance and upgrades.

The departmental allocation increased by 6.7 per cent in 2020/21 financial year.

Included in the allocation of the Department (LDPWRI) is an amount of R10 million earmarked for programmes geared towards improvement of infrastructure delivery in the province.

Furthermore, included in RAL's allocation, is an amount of R400 million allocated from the provincial equitable share to address the over-commitment on road projects.

The budget will, amongst others, enable the LDPWRI to set up the Programme Management Support (PMS) as recently approved by the Provincial Treasury, which will assist in operationalising the Infrastructure Strategic Professional Hub as a shared service for the province.

Infrastructure remains a key socio-economic enabler as it connects households across rural and urban areas to higher quality opportunities for employment, healthcare and education. It is for such a reason that the budget is meant to aid the delivery of infrastructure to foster economic growth and create opportunities for the citizens of Limpopo.

According to the LDPWRI, the process to set up the PMS in the Limpopo Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure is at an advanced stage.

A Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) has already been signed between LDPWRI and Government Technical Advisory Centre (GTAC), a strategic and technical advisory agency of the National Treasury.

Hon Masemola outlined how the Department planned to allocate that (R3 859 787 000) across the Department's four main programmes, namely Administration (support function of the department); Infrastructure Operations (Planning and Design, Property and Facilities Management, and Construction Management); Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) and Road Infrastructure.

The greatest share of the Department's allocation to its programmes, at R2.505 billion, went to the Road Infrastructure programme, of which R1 478 676 000 has been transferred to RAL for operational costs, and upgrading and maintenance of roads during the 2020/21 financial year.

In the current 2020/21 financial year, RAL already has nineteen (19) road infrastructure upgrade projects under construction spanning about 85km in various parts of the province with two bridges at an estimated cost of R662 million.

And for the 2019/20 financial year, RAL had managed to complete a total of 87.62 kilometres of road at a total cost of R1.150 billion.

"The Department (LDPWRI) through Roads Agency Limpopo will continue to deliver road infrastructure in

the 2020/2021 financial year," pledged MEC Masemola.

"We remain committed in our endeavour to propel the upgrading and maintenance of the provincial road infrastructure, amidst the high demand by communities and working together with them we will succeed."

The MEC also announced that the Department will continue with the preventative maintenance which includes the program on pothole patching to ensure that our roads are in a good state."

Routine Road Maintenance or routine household maintenance is the ongoing day-to-day upkeep of the road network, and it includes activities such as regravelling of roads, patching of potholes, grass cutting along roads, clearing storm-water culverts, repairing damaged guardrails, fixing road signs, removing stray animals and clearing the road after accidents.


Over and above, said MEC Masemola, the Department implements the S'hamba Sonke labour intensive maintenance program.

The rest of the Department's programmes, namely Administration, Infrastructure Operations and EPWP got a share allocation of R410.5m, R875.4m and R68.6m, respectively, for the implementation of this year's projects.

"WE REMAIN COMMITTED IN OUR ENDEAVOUR TO PROPEL THE UPGRADING AND MAINTENANCE OF THE PROVINCIAL ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE..."

Part of this Infrastructure Operations as central to the mandate of the Department, the MEC highlighted the continuous condition assessments done on state-owned buildings, throughout the province in order to determine the extent of maintenance required. Having this as an ongoing initiative ensures that immovable assets owned by government remain in good condition. The MEC also took the opportunity to reflect on the plight of the people of Sekhukhune District, who remain the only district in the province whose government offices are in another district, being Capricorn in this case.

"Equally, we will continue to work with the affected stakeholders to ensure realisation of the long outstanding programme of relocating district offices of Sekhukhune from Lebowakgomo to Jane Furse," said MEC Masemola.

Note from the Editor: All information stated is accurate at the time of publication and subject to change due to special adjustment budget, as government gears towards Covid-19 economic recovery. For the full 2020/21 LDPWRI Budget Speech (Vote 9), go to www.dpw.limpopo.gov.za 

STAY

HOME

SAVE SOUTH AFRICA

TOGETHER WE CAN BEAT THE CORONAVIRUS

- Check your
- COVID-19**
- Symptoms

WhatsApp **“CHECK”** to **0600 123 456**
or Dial ***134*832#** USSD (free)



health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



#coronavirus

SHAREHOLDER REPRESENTATIVE APPOINTS NEW RAL BOARD MEMBERS

The MEC for LDPWRI and the Limpopo Provincial Government's shareholder representative responsible for Roads Agency Limpopo, Honourable Namane Dickson Masemola, has made changes to the Agency's Board.



Patrick Makape, the newly appointed RAL Board Member.



Motthanke Phukuntsi, the newly appointed RAL Board Member.

Board as a representative for Limpopo Provincial Treasury (LPT) in terms of section 12 (3) (c) of the Limpopo Province Roads Agency Proprietary Limited and Provincial Roads Act 7 of 1998. Mr Phukuntsi is currently employed as the Deputy Director-General responsible for Sustainable Resource Management at LPT.

The two new Board Members assumed their tenure on the Board of Directors with effect from Monday, 1 June 2020 and will serve for the remainder of the current term of the Board.

Messrs Makape and Phukuntsi replace Walter Sathekge (LDPWRI) and Russel Mulamula (LPT) both

Hon Masemola is the Limpopo Provincial Government's shareholder representative responsible for RAL.


The Limpopo Provincial Government, in turn, is the shareholder of RAL, and the incumbent Member Executive of the Council (MEC) for the LDPWRI is the shareholder representative.

Patrick Makape has been appointed to the RAL Board as a representative for the Limpopo Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure (LDPWRI) in terms of section 12 (3) (aB) of the Limpopo Province Roads Agency Proprietary Limited and Provincial Roads Act 7 of 1998. Mr Makape is currently employed as the Construction Project Manager at LDPWRI.

Motthanke Phukuntsi has been appointed to the RAL

"THE TWO NEW BOARD MEMBERS ASSUMED THEIR TENURE ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS WITH EFFECT FROM MONDAY, 1 JUNE 2020."

of whom resigned after serving the RAL Board with distinction since their first appointments in 2020 and 2016 respectively.

The two newly appointed non-executive Board Members will serve alongside Matome Ralebipi (Chairperson), Gabriel Maluleke (Chief Executive Officer), Gabaiphiwe Moleko, Kennedy Tshivhase, Mercy Ramabulana, and Tebogo Kekana (Company Secretary). 



The Chairperson of the Roads Agency Limpopo's Human Resources and Remuneration Committee of the Board, Mercy Ramabulana.

Lessons

FROM SOLOMON

Wisdom · Mercy · Legacy

How leadership skills honed through a range of coalface HR and Marketing roles within construction, infrastructure and technology sector will assist Roads Agency Limpopo.

Born in Sibasa, Vhembe District of Limpopo Province, Mercy Ramabulana grew up in Makwarela Township together with her three siblings. She has fond memories of growing up in a family of four girls, being the second born child.

“I had the time of my life there together with my three siblings and parents.”

Mercy started school at Mbaleni Primary School and later moved on to Gindikindi Senior Primary where she completed her primary schooling. From there, she moved on to Raluswielo Secondary School, where she matriculated in 1990. She has very vivid memories of her schooling years – “My fondest memories of my schooling years were my great teachers, particularly Mrs Mary Mahosi and Mrs Elelwani Silimela.”

Tertiary studies commenced thereafter at the University of Venda, where she studied towards a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Sciences. Having chosen a path that was to weave through Marketing and Human Resource Management disciplines, she later augmented her undergraduate qualifications with a Postgraduate Diploma in Labour Law from the University of Pretoria, as well as a Management Development Programme (MDP) from the Graduate Institute of Management and Technology (GIMT).

Ms Ramabulana’s working career kicked off with an HR role at Siltek, an IT company. This was followed by a position at The East Rand Water Care Company (ERWAT) and then a move to Goba Consulting Engineers (now Hatch). She had a final spell at Stefanutti Stocks before she answered her entrepreneurial calling and started her own business.

Appointed onto the Board of RAL in March 2018, she has been a board member for a little over 2 years, a period that “has been a great

experience”. She is looking forward to using her experience and skills to help RAL in fulfilling projects for the good of the communities of Limpopo.

Ms Ramabulana chairs the Human Resources and Remuneration Committee (HR and REMCO) of the Board.

In executing her roles on the RAL Board, which also includes membership of the Contracts Committee, her HR expertise in construction and consulting engineering stands her in good stead.

“My experience is critical and essential, looking at the work scope of RAL,” she affirms.

She has found her tenure at RAL thus far to be very fulfilling and the most heartening aspects are RAL’s impact in the lives of people in the province. To her, it is very satisfying, “when I see a project coming to completion and being handed over to the community”.

Her leadership ethos was influenced by a number of people including her teachers.

Mrs Mahosi always said, “a stitch in time saves nine, which means that whenever there is a problem, solve it on the spot before it gets worse”.

Her other key influential force, Mrs Silimela, on the other hand, “instilled a sense of discipline, neatness and paying attention to detail in my life. She encouraged and motivated us that everything you dream of, is within your reach.”

Her self-described management style is one that is fluid, not rigid in approach. This is complemented by an open, but critical mind.

“My experience is critical and essential looking at the work scope at RAL.”



Ramabulana says she wants to help RAL in fulfilling its core mandate of delivering road infrastructure to the people of Limpopo Province.

“I analyse matters before I take a decision. I’ve always been told that I am firm but fair,” she says.

In interactions with Ms Ramabulana while preparing for this article, one got a sense of someone who has a gentle but firm manner, and a keen eye for detail.

Patently, she has carried some of Mrs Silimela and Mrs Mahosi’s teachings through the years.

She mainly reads Christian books and biographies. When pressed to give the title of one of the most influential books she has read, she mentioned *Secrets of the Richest Man Who Ever Lived* by Mike Murdock.

“Aspects of the book that had the most impact were King Solomon’s wisdom regarding his negotiation skills, the type of people he hired, the way he rewarded those that assisted him achieve his goals,” say Ms Ramabulana of the book.

“It is very satisfying when I see a project ... being handed over to the community.”

“The strategies he used assisted me to think out of the box as a leader and entrepreneur.”

Mindful of leaving the right legacy, she wants in future to look back at her tenure as “having successfully promoted excellence in the implementation of ethics and proper governance as far as good policies and procedures are concerned in the ever changing HR environment.”

In her other role as an entrepreneur, she is “implementing systems and processes that can live beyond me so that they thrive even after my departure.”

Probed further on issues that are important to her as a female business leader and entrepreneur, she highlighted the importance of resilience and always striving to achieve one’s best no matter where one started from.

“Even a small fish is a fish – put yourself to the test, set goals and be consistent in striving to achieve them.”

Asked about which entrepreneurs she most admired, she cited her mother, Mainganye Emmah Masakona, who ran an informal business and through it managed the mammoth task of putting her and her sisters through school.

Oprah Winfrey was the other person she mentioned, primarily because of her philanthropic work, which resonated with Ms Ramabulana’s passion for community development.

Significantly, she is a strong believer in passing the leadership baton to younger people in business.

“Professionally, I like mentoring the young ones and seeing them grow and become successful in their chosen career paths,” she says.


Outside of her professional life, the mother of three - who is married to Hulisani Ramabulana - loves to indulge her creative side through interior design and fashion.

Her other leisure time activities include supporting national sport teams and travel.

Pressed about her travelling bug, she indicated that her favourite destination locally is Ballito in the coastal province of KwaZulu-Natal.

“I like the weather (in Ballito), the idea of experiencing summer throughout the seasons.”

Her last international trip was to Singapore.

“I enjoyed their good food and I liked their beautiful country. My highlight was spending time at Gardens by the Bay,” said Ms Ramabulana in conclusion. 

#CovidConversations



Sharing our lived COVID-19 experiences can help us support one another, educate others about the disease, share our recovery tips and fight the stigma around the virus.

If you would like to share your COVID-19 journey with the rest of the country, send us a video (between 1-2 minutes) or pen a short essay to covid19conversations@gmail.com

Together, we can beat this.



health

Department:
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When life gives you tomatoes, make tomato juice. Tommie van Zyl, Chief Executive Officer and Niël Scholtz, Technical Manager from the ZZ2 Group pictured in front of their new packhouse. The leading tomato farmer has spend just over R21 million since 2016 on the upkeep of Limpopo provincial roads.

TWO BECOME ONE

RAL AND ZZ2

PARTNERSHIP BEAR FRUIT

Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL) and ZZ2 Group, a Limpopo-based leading South African fresh produce company synonymous with tomato production, have entered the fifth year of their year-on-year strategic partnership agreement for the maintenance of roads in the Limpopo Province.

RAL and ZZ2 first entered into this Memorandum of

Agreement (MoA) in May 2016, just a year after the Agency adopted a Strategic Partnership Approach, a key tenet of the RAL Board of Directors' successful five-year turnaround strategy. The MoA is amended each year.

Since adopting its Strategic Partnership Approach in 2015, RAL has raised more than 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, ZZ2 has been a reliable and trusted pathfinder in the agricultural sector.

The ZZ2 Group's first foray, in May 2016, was the maintenance works on R521 between Pontdrift (border post) and Alldays in an area where they also have a farm. They have since assisted RAL in maintaining several sections of other strategic and mostly gravel roads in the province, including P135/1 (Musina to Pafuri), D1942 (Malaladrift), road D617 passing Houtbosdorp from Mooketsi farm and more recently road D2531 near Cloudlands farm, which they fixed after it had collapsed due to flooding.

In October 2018, Johannes Gobbler, the then Technical Manager at ZZ2 told the local community newspaper, *Letaba Herald*, that based on their experience of working with RAL, "ZZ2 is looking forward to build on this relationship and extend it to other roads in the province and to include other willing partners and contributors".

Limpopo Citrus, with farms in the Vivo (Blouberg Local Municipality) and Pontdrift areas, contributed with ZZ2 and RAL on the roads in these areas.

Based on the private sector confidence in the Agency's business practices, ZZ2 has indeed returned for another year of repairs and maintenance, this time on the gravel road D617 (Houtbosdorp Road) and rehabilitation of damaged stormwater culverts on road D854. The D617 contract entails works on 28 kilometres of RAL road and D854 entailed culvert repairs and roadworks.

Extensive maintenance work is also undertaken on the 22km stretch Malaladrift road along the Limpopo River, especially during the tomato harvesting season.

"THE RAL AND ZZ2 PARTNERSHIP IS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW WE CAN BUILD A FUTURE IN SOUTH AFRICA BY WORKING TOGETHER..."

The economic value of these roads and RAL budgetary constraints let to ZZ2 taking an initiative of maintaining these roads and other roads in the province in order to transport harvested products to the packhouses and then to the national and subsequently international markets. [See box on page 16: **Why it is Important to Maintain Gravel Roads**]

D617 (HOUTBOSDORP ROAD)

Road D617, or the Houtbosdorp Road as it is known locally, is a 35km long road connecting Mooketsi and Houtbosdorp to Masealama and further to Mankweng, of which only 3km of it is tarred surface.

Road D617 is still maintained by ZZ2 and a major upgrade was done and funded in 2010 by ZZ2.

The Houtbosdorp Road is an essential connection between ZZ2's packhouse near Mooketsi and Olyfberg farm near Houtbosdorp. The road also serves as the shortest route between Mooketsi and Haenertsburg and Mankweng.

According to ZZ2, this road's material eroded over time and not only caused additional wear on the vehicles



The ZZ2 Group recently contributed to the rehabilitation of a culvert structure on road D854 in the Vhembe District, as designed by Mosomo Consulting Engineers.

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN GRAVEL ROADS

Dirt and gravel roads also need to be maintained and regavelled as not all roads can be upgraded to tar due to the expensive cost of upgrading roads, or to ensure that when the time comes for an upgrade to tarred surface that this is done in a cost effective manner.

The economic impact in terms of mining, industrial, agricultural and tourism also needs to be greater in order to justify the cost of upgrading from gravel to tar.

According to Kishan Tulsi, RAL's General Manager for Planning and Design, gravel roads provide a means of transporting agricultural products in and out of farms.

And many of the gravel roads in Limpopo also serve residential needs as well.

This, says Mr Tulsi, is done by creating smart infrastructure in rural areas to drive social and economic development.

"Some of these roads will remain gravel due to the low traffic and lack of funds to convert these roads to tar (paved). Over the years, with the increase in size and weight of vehicles travelling on gravel roads, it requires of us to think differently on how to maintain them to withstand the increase in traffic volumes as well as climate change effects," says Mr Tulsi.

"ONCE TRAFFIC VOLUMES INCREASE ... THEN IT IS SUITABLE FOR UPGRADING."

A new smarter approach, says Mr Tulsi, is needed through research and development to reduce the cost of construction of gravel layers to withstand heavier traffic,

but extended the time the avocados are transported to the packhouse and causes damage to the products.

"These critical areas were identified and it was decided to use gravel to build up the roadbed to ensure avocados are transported within time and without excessive damage to the packhouse," says Niël Scholtz, Technical Manager at ZZ2.

Eight kilometres of road was regavelled and 20km was graded.

"Parts of the road that were still in a fairly good condition were not regavelled but only maintained by grading to ensure proper drainage and to remove the corrugations," says Mr Scholtz.

"Part of this project was to open up the culverts, storm water channels and waterways, bush clearing and grass cutting, and installation of new safety signs along the stretch of the road."

In terms of the MoA between the two organisations, ZZ2 bears all the costs (100%) if the road usage of a specific road is more than 95%. The mining and farming sectors use heavy-duty vehicles that shorten the lifespan of any road surface as part of their logistics road map.

Although their usage of the Houtbosdorp Road is less than 95%, ZZ2 is still absorbing all the costs for this road of more than half a million rands. The Houtbosdorp Road is maintained throughout the year by ZZ2 to provide a good riding surface for all road users.

"The ZZ2 Road Construction Team received on-the-job training to specifically reach targets like doing the maintenance within time and cost constraints. Local labourers are empowered with entry level Routine Road Maintenance (RRM) functions such as grass cutting, clearing storm-water culverts, and flagman to direct traffic."

"ZZ2 IS LOOKING FORWARD TO BUILD ON THIS RELATIONSHIP AND EXTEND IT TO OTHER ROADS IN THE PROVINCE.."

RRM jobs are the best way for local communities and cooperatives to get involved in road maintenance, a gateway to participating in the economy through RAL.

Expounding on the benefits of regavelled roads to ZZ2 farming operations, Mr Scholtz said, "Proper and on time maintenance of the roads ensure that agricultural produce, such as avocados and tomatoes,

drainage to adapt to climate change, and innovation in rehabilitation of gravel roads.

“Provincial and municipal gravel roads have deteriorated to a point where the road is far below the natural ground vegetation level. This results in a channel formation along the path of vehicles.”

“When it rains water has no other means of getting away from the road causing cut-off between communities. The solution is to rehabilitate the gravel roads by bringing back the lost material to be again above the natural ground vegetation level and redesigning the drainage along the road so as not to affect nearby properties.”

“Once the traffic volumes increase greater than the annual average



Kishan Tulsi, RAL's General Manager for Planning and Design.

daily traffic of 500 vehicles then it is suitable for upgrading at a lower cost,” says Mr Tulsi.

The latest audited length of Limpopo's provincial road network is 98 493 kilometres, of which 74 757km is under the ownership of municipalities (local government), 20 091km is controlled by RAL (provincial government) and 3 645km by SANRAL (national government).

Of the network under RAL's control, only 6 406km or 32% is paved (tarred) while 13 685km (68%) is dirt or gravel as of end of March 2020. Currently, only 3 793km of unpaved road network is prioritised across the five district municipalities, subject to budget being made available. R38 billion, says Mr Tulsi, is what is currently required for this task from RAL's annual budget of just R1.5 billion split across operational costs, and road maintenance and upgrades.

can be transported in such a way that it reaches the market without being damaged.”

“If the road is not maintained, the produce gets damaged to such an extent that it does not make economical sense to transport the avocados and tomatoes on the road,” says Mr Scholtz.

It is hoped the all year round maintenance of road D617 will galvanise job creation and retention on the farms. ZZ2 operations in the province currently employs just over 9 500 people, majority of which work out of the Mooketsi area.

D854 (CULVERTS REPAIR)

Also recently, ZZ2 was involved in the rehabilitation of damaged stormwater culverts on road D854 between Waterpoort and Alldays in the Vhembe District. In terms of the strategic partnership agreement, RAL contributed 90% to the road D854 project budget of just over R1.6 million with ZZ2 carrying the balance of 10% as they are not the primary road user.

Road D854, an alternative route between Alldays and Waterpoort, opposed to the national route via roads R521 and R523, is a rural access road serving the agricultural community who farm game, cattle and tomatoes. There is no human settlement along the entire length of the road and daily traffic counts are less than 500, with heavy vehicle counts estimated to be less than 10. That heavy vehicle traffic is limited to farming activities in the direct vicinity of road D2931; hence traffic growth rate is thus insignificant.


Tommie van Zyl, CEO of the ZZ2 Group, says logistics and functional road networks are key determinants for economic development and growth.

This, he says, necessitates the maintenance of rural road infrastructure in spite of budget constraints from RAL.

“The RAL and ZZ2 partnership is an example of how we can build a future in South Africa by working together in a cooperative, authentic, positive and principled way,” says Mr van Zyl.

Every little contribution to RAL's Strategic Partnership Approach counts, and goes a long way to develop local areas, municipalities, province and ultimately the country.

Other benefits of these roads to the public and the community include lower vehicle operating cost, safer and improved road traction, and reduced travel time for road users.

ZZ2 has other progressive corporate social responsibility initiatives and programmes for its employees and immediate community. Recently they have been donating food produce to local communities as part of their own relief efforts to ease distress brought upon by the COVID-19 pandemic, a disease caused by the novel Coronavirus. 

#RALatWork

Complaints and Compliments



RoadsAgency



roadsagencylimpopo



Brian Makuya @MakuyaTBDJ7 · May 8

Replying to @RoadsAgency

What needs to be done for all these roads to be prioritized?



1



Roads Agency Limpopo @RoadsAgency · May 29

Replying to @MakuyaTBDJ7

Thank you for reaching out to Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL).

Roads prioritisation occurs at the local and district municipality Integrated Development Plan (IDP) level.

District municipalities submit prioritisation list to RAL for consolidation.

#RALatWork #StayAtHomeSaveLives



1



Roads Agency Limpopo @RoadsAgency · May 29

The prioritisation list is an agreed upon prioritisation document by local and district municipalities, and local communities.

The plan (IDP) aims to facilitate the engagement of communities on road infrastructure issues in a consistent and transparent manner. #RALatWork



1



Roads Agency Limpopo @RoadsAgency · May 12

Dear Community Members/Road Users,

Kindly use relevant Roads Agency Limpopo Twitter hashtag + road number to search for status of your road query before posting. For example: '#RALatWork D3727' or '@RoadsAgency D3727'

We strive to respond to all queries within reasonable time.



1



1



1



Roads Agency Limpopo @RoadsAgency · May 8

N.B the number of Roads Agency Limpopo current projects has been revised. The Agency is currently involved in nineteen (19) road infrastructure projects across five district municipalities of Limpopo Province. Constructions will resume as soon as it is safe to proceed. #RALatWork



2



1



Gilbert Moela @GilbertMoela · May 8

Let me take this opportunity and thank RAL for sharing this information. Looking forward for more fruitful discussion about development of our roads in Limpopo.



2



2



Roads Agency Limpopo @RoadsAgency · May 8

The MEC for Limpopo Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure and Roads Agency Limpopo this week committed to step-up engagements with Mayors in order to deliver quality roads for the people of Limpopo. Below is feedback on recent road enquiries. #RALatWork #StayAtHome



Gilbert Moela and 6 others



5



2



12



Tshepho @Tshepho1 · May 8

Thanks for the update I know of all the roads in Mogalakwena and the no funds situation hence I wanted to know which roads are being attended to now



3



3



MINTIRHO YA VULAVULA

Mmileng recently visited Steenbokpan in the Waterberg District Municipality of Limpopo Province, a year after Roads Agency Limpopo completed a road project in the area to get feedback from community members and road users on its use. Road D1675 connects the farming area-turned-township of Steenbokpan and Lesedi to Medupi Power Station and Lephalale. Story on page 24.

I am very much satisfied with the new road. It's a beautiful busy road and our vehicles are safe and no longer need frequent service. We use the road on a daily basis when we go to town (Lephalale). Now, this is a quality road. I have never seen such a quality road in my years of staying in Steenbokpan.

- Martinus Marais, Community Member, from Steenbokpan.



The road is better now because it was ruined by the trucks from the mines. We are happy now that taxis are no longer breaking down when we are on our way to town (Lephalale). But I still wish that RAL could also upgrade the rest of the road to Ga-Seleka and neighbouring villages.

Christina Maropeng, Community Member, from Lesedi in Steenbokpan.



This road was very bad. It had gravel and potholes that forced us to drive slowly as it damaged our cars. Now that RAL has fixed it things are better. So, I really appreciate the work done by RAL. This road has made a huge difference in our lives. May they please continue with community development projects in other parts of Lephalale.

Tshepho Kekae, Community Member, from Ga-Seleka.



We are pleased by the work done by RAL. It was difficult to travel on this road. But now that they've upgraded it the lifespan of our taxis will be longer and trips to town are quicker. I sometimes drive the employees of Medupi Power Station to work, and they would get to work late because of taxi breakdowns on this road. But now the problem has been solved.

Judas Sekoboana, Taxi Driver, from Steenbokpan.



As a businessman in the community I am very happy now that when I go to town to buy stock for my shop I no longer take long. The previous stretch of road had gravel and potholes and we were forced to drive slow navigating the bad patches on the road. Now that we have quality tar road it has reduced my travel time. We really appreciate the work done by RAL in our community, bringing us this high quality tar road.

Pollar DeVos, Businessman, from Steenbokpan.



Pandelani Mulaudzi currently hosts *Denzhe* and *Teen Zone* on Phalaphala FM while also appearing in SABC 2 soapie *Muvhango*.

The Sweet Sound of Growth

The First Act: Pandelani

You have heard her dulcet and palpable growth on the wireless from a precocious 9-year-old radio presenter to a budding actor in television. Today Pandelani Mulaudzi is one of the rising stars to watch from an exciting pool of current millennial entertainers coming out of Limpopo Province.

The presenter, who turned 25 years old in February, is synonymous with the SABC Education's Saturday mid-morning programme *Teen Zone* on Phalaphala FM.

SABC Education is the business unit of the SABC that is almost the same age as Miss Mulaudzi herself, 'responsible for delivering the educational mandate of the public broadcaster'. It has a sub-unit called 'Tweens and Youth Development' that produces non-curriculum content, including *Teen Zone* and *State Your Mind*, the weekly tweenagers programme she presented for three years from 2008 when she joined Phalaphala FM.

The unit, according to SABC Education's website, promotes, in an informal way, involvement in personal empowerment, community development and society's wellbeing, true to its motto of 'enriching minds, enriching lives'.

The fast-paced *Teen Zone* is a programme for teenagers that focus on social issues that teens come across regarding their daily lives such as substance abuse, teenage pregnancy and social skills.

She has been presenting the show for about ten years now. She also presents other shows on the station including *Denzhe*, a kiddies show

that airs on Friday afternoons. And it is the premise of this balance, says Miss Mulaudzi, which makes her tick.

Despite getting a head start in the entertainment industry, Miss Mulaudzi did not let fame distract her focus on education. Affectionately known as 'Miss P' to listeners, Miss Mulaudzi is juggling between her studies and her various entertainment hustles, which she credits to self-discipline and hard work.

"In this industry, it's 90% hard work and 10% talent. I value my work so much that I work hard to attract my next project," says Miss Mulaudzi.

"As a person, one should have their priorities right and everything will follow. I give my work and studies equal amount of attention."

"As a person, one should have their priorities right and everything will follow."

She has spread her tentacles to other roles including providing voice over services. Since 2016 she has been part of the supporting cast on Duma Ndlovu's popular SABC 2 soap opera *Muhango*.

Miss Mulaudzi was born in Thohoyandou, the seat of



Miss Mulaudzi is a true broadcaster patiently growing her brand in the industry. She has just recently added a DJing career to her portfolio under the DJ name Miss P The DJ.

both the Thulamela Local Municipality and the Vhembe District Municipality of Limpopo Province. She started her primary school education at Haggai Private Combined School in the village of Maniini outside Thohoyandou until Grade 5 before moving on to Makwarela Primary School in Sibasa to complete her primary schooling.

And it was at Univen FM 99.8 - the community radio station of the University of Venda - where the journey began for her in 2004.

She opened up to *Mmileng* about how a nine-year-old from a village school landed on the radio, and a campus radio station run by students at that.

“My two sisters loved Univen FM so much, and naturally this influenced me to join them in listening to the radio station daily when preparing for school,” recalls Miss Mulaudzi.

And from the tender age of eight, and still at Haggai Private Combined, she explains, her sisters would ask her to call into the morning breakfast show presented by Tico Liphadzi, now also her colleague at Phalaphala FM, to convey on-air shoutouts on their behalf.

“I became a regular caller on the show and Mr Liphadzi began to recognise my beautiful voice. One day he called me in for auditions and that was the beginning of my radio career.”

She went on to showcase her precocious talents as a co-presenter on *Mzansi Fresh*, a children’s programme that aired on Saturdays at the feeder radio station, for five years ending 2008.

Incredulously, Ms Mulaudzi recalls commuting to the station for her show and walking the precincts of the university without a chaperone, something that will be irresponsible in today’s South Africa in the context of the current scourge of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) - a violence disproportionately targeted at defenceless women and girls.

“It was safer then as I used to take two taxis to work, alone without any fear, but gone are those days,” she says as she recalls that stand out memory.

The former child radio presenter, albeit low-key, says she highly values the help and support of her family in shaping her personal and career development from an ingenuous girl navigating into young adulthood, always sticking with her in whatever she wants, to borrow from the motto of Phalaphala FM.

“My parents and three siblings - the two sisters and a brother have been my



The early years of Miss P at Univen FM with album posters of Tumi Lane's *No Guarantee* (released circa April 2007) and Kabelo Mabalane's *The Bouga Luv Album* taking up space on the studio wall behind her. The 12-year-old's grainy camera phone photo was taken by one of her then co-presenters Lutendo Monyamane.

pillar of strength since I joined this industry.”

“I do not get any special treatment within the family. When we are all at home there is no telling that I am the TV or radio personality, they treat me like a normal human being I am and I love that,” she says.

Miss Mulaudzi started her teenage years at the famed Mbilwi Secondary School in Sibasa, albeit for just Grade 8. 2008 is also the same year she joined Phalaphala FM after former SABC presenter and producer-turned-businesswoman Rotenda Maiwashe, another former presenter at Univen FM, alerted her to auditions for *State Your Mind*.

She aced the auditions, presenting the show for her

“Let’s do our part by taking care of our vehicles to make sure that they are roadworthy, and let RAL do its job.”

first three years at Phalaphala FM before she moved to the *Teen Zone* youth programme in 2011. She returned to Thohoyandou in 2009 to continue her schooling at Liivha Combined School where she would complete her Grade 12 in 2012.

At one stage, the former Representative Council of Learners (RCL) president listed a pilot and lawyer among her preferred future jobs she wanted to pursue when she grew up. But she would eventually settle for jobs in the entertainment industry, which grew deep in her to disregard.

“In the arts industry I find radio fascinating because

radio is instant. As a radio presenter, each time you walk into the studio and start presenting, this affords you an opportunity to change someone’s life, who may find solace and hope as you speak through the microphone. This gives me so much joy,” she says of her passion.

However, Miss Mulaudzi says she is heedful of the challenges women face in the entertainment industry, and that her early crack count for nothing until a gender-equal society is realised.

“One of the challenges I come across as a woman in this industry is when people think I cannot handle certain tasks just because I am a woman, and prefer men to do those tasks,” she decries.

“These words are tiring; I have heard them so often.”

“But when you are passionate and keep working hard and perfecting your skills, you will meet other people who won’t care that you are a woman or young, they will give you the opportunity based on your capability.”

And this, says Miss Mulaudzi, is what she would have told her younger self anyways - to keep going.

“When the time is right, the LORD will make things happen. Nobody owes you anything, so stop with the sense of entitlement. It’s not about perfection. It’s okay to make mistakes,” she says she would have said.

Miss Mulaudzi holds qualifications in media studies from Jeppe College and marketing management from the Capricorn College for TVET, both in Polokwane, completed in 2015 and 2018, respectively. She is currently studying towards a short course in marketing management with the University of South Africa.

She recently parlayed her talents into venue DJing, under the moniker of ‘Miss P The DJ’, with focus on the House, Kwaito and R&B genres.

Due to her increasingly demanding schedule, she is always on the road for her various entertainment assignments, and provincial roads are vital in connecting her to those gigs.

“Let’s do our part by taking care of our vehicles to make sure that they are roadworthy and let RAL do its job, which is to build and maintain our roads,” she says in her advice to fellow road users.

On the road ahead, the Univen FM alumna, now working out of Johannesburg in Gauteng Province and still enjoying the passion and wave of the youth beat on Phalaphala FM, says she is still developing her brand and career.

“I’m working on something that is going to better the lives of children, but unfortunately I can’t reveal the details as yet.”

She says her desire to help others was instilled in her as early as high school when she chaired a recycling campaign which involved learners from across the entire Vhembe district. **m**



The rehabilitation and resurfacing of provincial road D1675 towards Steenbokpan in the Lephalale Local Municipality of the Limpopo Province empowered fourteen local businesses and over 21 labourers from neighbouring communities.

MAINTAINING ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE GAINS, EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL) recently completed a rehabilitation project on a provincial road D1675 near Steenbokpan in the Waterberg District Municipality of Limpopo Province.

The project was a preventative road maintenance project (rehabilitation and resurfacing) on a 5 kilometre section within road D1675 from Medupi Power Station south-westward towards Steenbokpan, the farming area-turned-township.

Medupi, an Eskom-owned dry-cooled coal-fired power station is located between Lephhalale (21km) and Steenbokspan (30km). Part of road D1675, known locally as the Steenbokspan Road, was upgraded in the year 2011 when it became a RAL property, to give access to Medupi.

The (scope of) work of the latest road maintenance project consisted of the design and reconstruction of a 5km road towards the Steenbokspan end, installation of road signs, repair of guardrails, cleaning of hydraulic structures, edge beams construction, clearing of shoulders and road marking.

“THE CONTRACTUAL REQUIRED AMOUNT FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF SMMES WAS R2.6 MILLION.”

According to Musa Ndlovu, RAL Project Manager responsible for managing the project, the contract required of the appointed main contractor Gombameni Risk and Events Management to make use of the available services of Small Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) as sub-contractors and suppliers on the project.

“The contractual required amount for the employment of SMMEs was R2.6 million, 10% of the contract value.”

The contract also made provision for the employment of local



Musa Ndlovu is the Roads Agency Limpopo Project Manager responsible for preventative road maintenance project (T861) on the 5 kilometre stretch of road D1675 between Medupi Power Station and Steenbokpan in the Waterberg District Municipality of Limpopo Province.

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.

The D1675 contract value was just under R20m, hence the 5% and 10% on labour and SMME empowerment respectively. In the end, only R18.0m of the R19.7m contract amount was expended, which translates to a saving of R42 639.93 (excluding engineering fees).

Notwithstanding, the project left behind an impactful socioeconomic footprint.

Twenty local community members and one labourer from the main contractor were given CETA-accredited on-the-job training and issued with certificates during the nine-month long construction period that ended in January 2019.

Martha Magwai from Steenbokpan, employed on the contract as a cleaner at Gombameni site office for the duration of the project, is one of the local community members who benefitted from the artisan training that was aimed at labourers.

"I got training and was issued with a certificate in unit standards such as applied basic concrete skills,

"THE CONTRACTUAL AMOUNT FOR LABOUR UTILISATION IN THIS CONTRACT AMOUNTED TO JUST OVER R690 000."

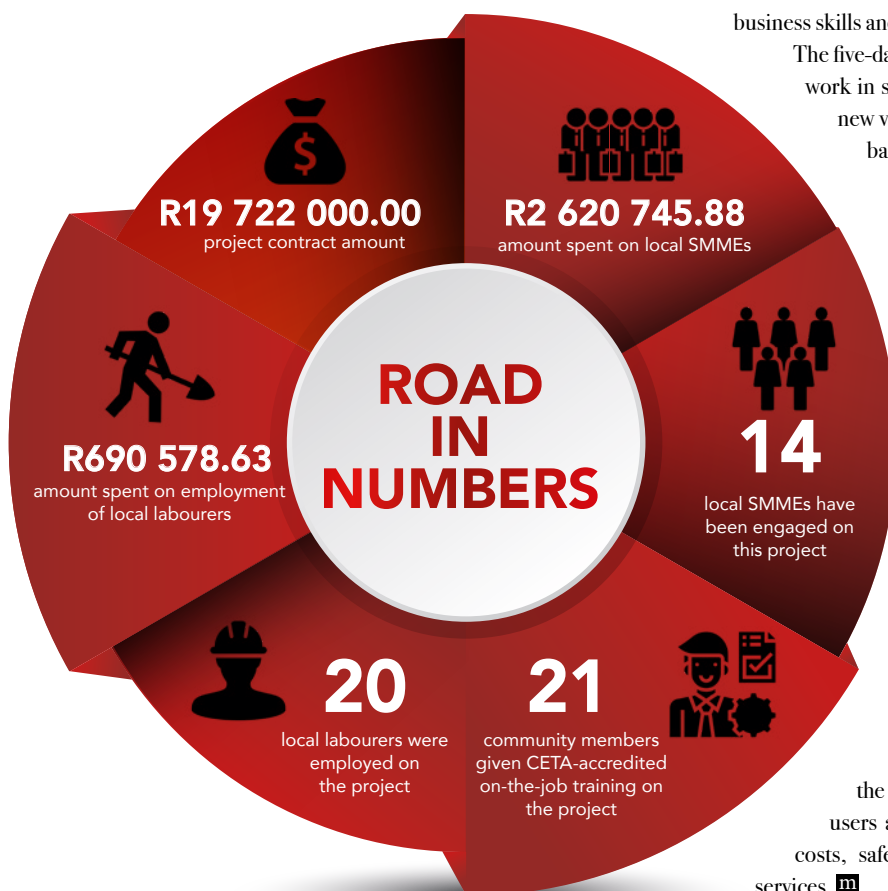
labourers by the contractor during the nine-month long contract period.

"The contractual amount for labour utilisation in this contract amounted to just over R690 000 or 5% of the contract value," said Mr Ndlovu.

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



Part of the team that was involved in the resurfacing of Steenbokpan Road is, from left to right, Marvellous Mashamba (Mgiba Consulting Engineers), Phestina Makgaba from RAL Social and Institutional Development (SID) unit, Vhengani Kwinda (Gombameni Risk and Events Management), Fidelis Baloyi (Mgiba Consulting Engineers), Musa Ndlovu (RAL Project Manager) and Rhulani Nxumalo from Mgiba Consulting Engineers.



business skills and first-aid combined level 1,” says Mrs Magwai.

The five-day course will also allow her to tender for business and work in selected new ventures, produce a business plan for a new venture, manage finances for a new venture and apply basic health and safety standards in a working area.

Elizabeth Manaka, co-owner of a 100% black women-owned Bukuru Njenje (Pty) Ltd, who were subcontracted to install edge beams – concrete slabs by the edge of the road - values SMME empowerment element on RAL projects.

“Going forward I’d like if RAL can enhance their policy to require of main contractors to work with some of the subcontractors they worked with before should they secure another project in the area,” says Ms Manaka.

Bukuru Njenje, operating out of the village of Letlora in Ga-Seleka, came in with a complement of 15 labourers for the last two months of the project, and Ms Manaka says her proposition will enable small businesses to grow beyond once-off projects and create more job opportunities for locals.

Further to the job creation aspect, some of the other benefits of this rehabilitated road to road users and the community include lower vehicle operating costs, safer road and improved access for communities to services. ^m



Road D1675, locally known as the Steenbokpan Road, between Steenbokpan and Medupi Power Station westward of Lephalale in the Waterberg District Municipality of Limpopo Province as seen from above.

LIGHT FROM ABOVE

LABOUR AND SMME EMPOWERMENT IN STEENBOKPAN & LESEDI

The Limpopo Provincial Government regards Small Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) as one of the key areas to create employment and reduce poverty levels in the province and further support the empowerment of women, youth and people living with disabilities.

One of the measures to ensure that its road infrastructure projects are in line with the province's job creation strategy, Roads Limpopo

Agency (RAL) has made it compulsory that bidders on contracts 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 the villages adjacent to the project sites. In addition, they require that 10% of contract value be used towards the



“BESIDES THE PROJECT PUTTING FOOD ON THE TABLE, IT WAS HELPFUL AS WE HAVE LEARNT A LOT OF THINGS ...”

employment of local labourers in the area where road upgrades and preventative maintenance projects are undertaken.

One such example is the recently completed project of the rehabilitation and resurfacing of provincial road D1675 towards Steenbokpan in Lephalale (Story on page 24), which involved Gombameni Risk and Events Management as the main contractor. This saw scores of

small local businesses, youth, women and people living with disabilities being empowered for a period of nine months.

The project was preventative road maintenance on a 5 kilometre section within the road linking Medupi Power Station and Steenbokpan in the Lephalale Local Municipality. It set aside R2.6 million to empower 14 small local businesses as they were sub-contracted to perform various tasks such as installation of road signs, repair of guardrails, cleaning of hydraulic structures, edge beams construction, clearing of shoulders and road marking.

One of the 14 SMMEs empowered in the project is the Bukuru Njenje (Pty) Ltd spearheaded by two women, Seemole Lizzy Manaka and Salome Mogagola based at Ga-Seleka in Lephalale.

The duo say they felt privileged to be chosen based on their skills to work on the project. Their company was responsible for edge beams construction from which they also hired an extra 14 local labourers to help them accomplish their task.

“Besides the project putting food on the table, it was helpful as we have learnt a lot of things such as recovering from loss of profit and strategies on how to successfully run small companies on a daily basis,” says Miss Manaka in appreciation.

“We would like to thank RAL for ensuring that women, youth and people living with disabilities are empowered.”

Mosweu Keetse, Managing Director at youth-owned Sekanedi Trading and Projects, which were responsible for training SMMEs on business skills, says being part of the project was a life changing moment as it helped him to uplift his facilitation skills.

He says he also benefitted from his engagements with Musa Ndlovu, the RAL Project Manager responsible for road D1675 project. He says Mr Ndlovu was handy in providing him with guidance and insights into handling big projects.

“The experience was priceless. I’m now confident as a facilitator because I have upgraded my profile in terms of skills development training,” says Mr Keetse.

Additionally, as part of its contractual agreement with RAL, Gombameni Risk and Events Management set aside R690 578.63 of the contract amount for the employment of 21 labourers from the neighbouring communities.

One of the general workers who benefitted from this project, Alfred Sekoboana from Steenbokpan, says he gained invaluable road maintenance experience through the project.

The father of two stated that prior to the project he was unemployed and the salary which he earned helped him make ends meet, especially when it came to his family and assisting his two daughters with schooling.

“I’m currently struggling since I’m no longer employed. I would like to thank RAL for bringing projects of this nature to our village, we hope that other organisations can do the same so that we can constantly be uplifted economically,” says the grateful Mr Sekoboana. **m**



Joel Seabi and Tendani Munyai from the Limpopo Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure attended the Roads Agency Limpopo's Communication and Stakeholder Management Strategy Review Workshop held recently.

STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION REVIEW WORKSHOP

As Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL) prioritises the needs of stakeholders in the quest to accelerate road infrastructure services, the Agency recently held a Stakeholder Communication Review Workshop to undergo a diagnostic and strategic alignment exercise that reflects on various factors and issues with which to improve Stakeholder Management within the entity.

The two-day workshop attended by RAL Communication and Stakeholder Units as well as representatives from the parent department, Limpopo Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure (LDPWRI), further increased awareness of the importance of stakeholder management in providing quality services to the people.

Roads Agency Limpopo held a two-day workshop for its Communication and Stakeholder Units to align its stakeholder management strategy.

In his strategic overview report, RAL Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Gabriel Maluleke, highlighted that RAL should be seen as a service delivery agent that continues to serve the communities of Limpopo in a distinct manner.

“Stakeholder management is therefore very significant to our success of delivering quality road infrastructure to our people,” he said.

Danny Legodi, a seasoned communicator who facilitated the workshop, highlighted that it was critical for all service delivery-based organisations in this democratic era to place stakeholders at the centre of shaping products and services to society.

“Communities’ interests and inputs should be incorporated into organisational strategies, and the best way to do it is through stakeholder engagement,” urged Mr Legodi.

Along the workshop, participants were able to debate the current situation analysis at RAL in terms of stakeholder management and avenues for improvements.



“COMMUNITIES’ INTERESTS AND INPUTS SHOULD BE INCORPORATED INTO ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGIES.”

One of the immediate challenges in terms of Stakeholder Management facing both RAL and LDPWRI has been the inability to constantly communicate with the external stakeholders throughout the projects’ implementation as the engagement is only done during planning.

Amongst the remedies, the participants discussed about strengthening stakeholder management and communication performance, achieving the best-fit solution for stakeholder management, communications and the business strategy; and further mapped out critical focus area response strategies to address the anticipated 2021 local government (municipal) elections road infrastructure protests.

The workshop achieved its intended goal as all the

participants agreed in unison that amongst others, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to serve as a guide on how to conduct engagements; and Stakeholder Management Strategy that is complete with the action plan to be established.

Speaking on behalf of LDPWRI, Joel Seabi, who is the spokesperson for the MEC, Honourable Namane Dickson Masemola, said the workshop was necessary as it has created unison between the Department (LDPWRI) and the Entity (RAL) in addressing stakeholder issues.

“The session was necessary especially for us internal stakeholders.

We needed to find a synergy between the Department and the Entity in order to successfully approach our outside stakeholders. There is no more ‘us’ and RAL, we are now one thing,” he said.

Tendani Munyai, Senior Communications Manager at LDPWRI, echoed Mr Seabi’s sentiments that the Department and the Entity do not have protocols in

place on how to share information in order to communicate better and with one voice.

She said that the workshop assisted everyone involved to understand where RAL was in terms of Stakeholder Management and how it can do better.

“I’m happy that the workshop concluded that a stakeholder strategy should be developed in order to guide how we do our work and address the challenges raised,” said Ms Munyai in appreciation.

Some of RAL’s external stakeholders include local communities, municipalities, the private sector, traditional leaders and sector departments.

The workshop follows the Public Relations (PR) strategic planning session held in March 2020, where the then new CEO, Mr Maluleke, had the opportunity to share his vision with the Communications Unit. **m**

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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



ROADS AGENCY LIMPOPO
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