

# MORUO

MY BUSINESS | MY GAUTENG | MY ECONOMY

ISSUE 41 | FREE COPY



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**GAUTENG PROVINCE**  
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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**GGT2030**  
GROWING GAUTENG TOGETHER

The word "stokvel" originated from the term "stock fairs", in the Eastern Cape during the early 19th century by English settlers. Stock fairs were rotating cattle auctions then.

Even though the term evolved, the original intention of such seems to have lived throughout the centuries, giving birth to businesses, and helping establish businesses. Many of us will remember those weekends when our mothers or aunts would host their gatherings. Food, snacks, and lots of money would be the order of the day. Families were able to embark on building and renovation projects from the funds raised through the stokvels.

What started as a savings club has grown into an industry that reportedly boasts more than R45 billion with groups of more than 800 000 across the country. This, as you can imagine, has drawn interest from big financial institutions, including banks. This exceptional phenomenon is also changing the long-held perceptions that stokvels are only for low-income earners. Stokvels are more than just about savings, many of them have grown to alleviate the financial burden of the current economic times, allowing their members to borrow from the coffers of the funds, with reasonable interest rates. With the 23.5% of our population remaining unbanked, it is critical to come up with solutions that will bring the almost quarter of our population that remains outside the banking systems.

We all know of the heart-breaking stories of people being robbed of the moneys coming out of the December division of funds among stokvel members. This points to an urgent need for both the stokvel industry and the banking sector to come together and bridge the gap,

while allowing the members to enjoy the financial benefits of belonging to a stokvel.

Yes, cash is king, but he now has an evil cousin called robbery. Where you find large amounts of cash changing hands, the risk of crime and robberies also increases. The question is how does the banking sector plan to work efficiently to bridge the gap and create financial products that will boost the stokvel industry and encourage more saving? I am sure we are aware of the poor saving incentives that ordinary South Africans endure. The economy for the past several years has been on a downward turn. This unfortunately is the driver of low savings in income per capita. Real household disposable income growth has declined over the years, for more than 30 years now. If we are to help South Africans save more, the financial incentives must make sense to ordinary consumers.

On the other side of the solutions is the need for technology. I appreciate that one of the topics that the panels will be tackling is technology and the role it can play in the management of stokvels. The revolution is here. More and more people are embracing it in every aspect of their lives. May the discussions in that area be fruitful and progressive.

The term stock fairs may bring a picture of men, out in a field somewhere, trading and running cattle auctions. However, a stokvel was created by women. According to a report by one of the big South African banks, "Stokvels create a community for women and an opportunity for them to save and learn valuable life lessons from each other." I simply could not agree more with this statement.

The same goes for cooperatives when you look at it. Across the globe, cooperatives have given women an opportunity to use the cooperative business models to support themselves, their families, and communities. More notably, cooperatives are among the first to give women the right to vote. This, we can all agree has enabled women to fulfil their potential. The right to vote remains enshrined in our Constitution and as cooperative leaders you must give yourselves a round of applause for having pioneered this right even before whole governments did.

There is no food security without a strong and thriving sector of cooperatives. Despite what people believe about Gauteng, our cooperatives. They remain important in economic development as well as helping to alleviate unemployment. Even municipalities such as the City of Johannesburg have embarked on a drive to empower youth owned cooperatives with compliance, training, and market access.

We know that most of the stokvel groups and their members come from the townships. For our part as the Gauteng Provincial Government, through the ground-breaking Gauteng Township Economic Development Act (TEDA), we are working tirelessly to support small and growing businesses located in the townships. Enacted in 2022, the Act was established in response to the urgent need to drive economic growth in the townships. Both Stokvels and cooperatives through finance, form one of the 10 high growth sectors in Gauteng. Through TEDA, the Gauteng Department of Economic Development is committed to delivering on the promise to salvage the economy from the destruction that came with COVID-19 and the lockdown. Together with our partners in the

private sector and our entities such as the Gauteng Enterprise Propeller are ceased with the implementation of the Act, to realise the goals and objectives articulated in the legislation. We are also working closely with partners such as In2Foods, who have a factory in Bonaero Park, within the O.R. Tambo Special Economic Zone, to introduce small famers into their database and therefore open doors for small farmers to produce and supply goods for use at the factory.

All these wonderful systems will not reach their full potential if government does not do its part at all spheres to invest, support, develop and collaborate with, in this case, stokvels and cooperatives. This is why you will start seeing more of our teams in the different locations across the province, setting up shop to assist entrepreneurs with the training and skills needed to perform to their full potential.

The time for talking and planning is gone. South Africa and Gauteng need boots on the ground and people who will work selflessly to deliver economic growth to all citizens.

THANK YOU.



**MEC TASNEEM MOTARA**  
Gauteng's MEC for Economic Development and Tourism

**We know that most of the stokvel groups and their members come from the townships.**

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GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
**SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORK**



Information Communication Technologies (ICT's) have become a meaningful part of the global economy. We now live in a time where information is readily available at our fingertips and we can access information anywhere and at anytime we want.

Over the last couple of years there has also been an increase in the use of social media platforms as a way of accessing information; many organisations have taken note of this and are now embracing social media platforms as an alternative way of reaching their stakeholders.

The Gauteng Department of Economic Development, as a department that is responsible for economic growth in Gauteng, wants all departmental information to be accessible to all members of the public, particularly the people of Gauteng.

Therefore the department is using various social media platforms as an alternative way of reaching the public.

Like our Facebook page:  
Gauteng Department of Economic Development



Follow us on Twitter:  
@GautengDED





Belgium's King launch of Pluczenik



# Consumer Champions





## MEC Motara on Economic Relationship-Building mission at Portugal

The MEC for Gauteng Economic Development Tasneem Motara recently visited Portugal on an economic relationship-building mission.

The visit aimed to promote investment opportunities and strengthen trade relations between the European nation and the Gauteng City Region (GCR). It included a visit to SAGAL EXPO (showcasing Portuguese brands in the food, beverage, and complimentary services sector), a meeting with the Portuguese Minister of Economy, Mr Antonio Costa e Silva, media as well current and prospective investors

Although only accounting for 0,1% of Gauteng’s trade, between 2016 - 2021 the GCR exported R2.9 billion worth of goods while receiving R9.7 billion of goods from Portugal, accounting for an aggregate 35% of South Africa’s trade with Portugal. The country is a key source market for Gauteng’s Plastics, Iron & Steel products, Mineral Fuels, Capital Equipment and Agro-processed foods.



## In2Foods Media Tour

The MEC for Gauteng Economic Development Tasneem Motara addressed the media on a tour of In2Food’s production facility at the OR Tambo SEZ. The tour forms part of the pre-media engagement of the SA Investment Conference.

In2Food, one of Africa’s largest premium food packing and processing companies, is one of the companies that pledged during the 2018 investment conference. The company expanded its footprint into the OR Tambo SEZ, where a purpose-built 22 735m<sup>2</sup> food production facility was completed.

The In2food factory aims to increase the export of fresh food products from OR Tambo International. To date, In2Food Bonaero (as the SEZ operations are known) has created some 2 240 jobs. The Company is also committed to supporting emerging farmers, providing them with off-take and helping them align to the quality standards of Woolworths.



## GDED Scoops Award at Rand Show 2023

The Gauteng Department of Economic Development won the Silver Exhibitor Award for best exhibition stand at the Rand Show 2023.

The voting was done by visitors on Facebook. Splash Coatings Africa, Pure B Baby Care, PMT Gardens Pty Ltd, Dinoko Automation Service and Repairs, Sibahle Bath Salts, Zaza Legacy Wines, and Yenza Footwear are just a few of the wonderful SMMEs that were there to exhibit and representing the department.

The Rand Show is one of the finest social cohesion events that bring together people from all walks of life who share common interests in commerce, fun, food, entertainment, fashion, education, and professions.

## GAUTENG LIQUOR BOARD QUERY MANAGEMENT CENTRE

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Email: liquor.queries@gauteng.gov.za  
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# Nasrec set to be a new Global Business Services hub

BY ELNA SCHÜTZ



A new planned global business services (GBS) hub at the Johannesburg Expo centre in Nasrec hopes to draw the interest of local and international employers and bring fresh job opportunities to township areas.

The Gauteng Department of Economic Development (GDED) has recently announced and launched a new hub for call centre operations and the like, which is set to start construction in the next months and hopefully start operating within the next year.

This partnership with business process outsourcing company Merchants for training, recruitment and placement, follows the successful running of a similar centre in Jabulani, which has provided around 200 jobs. Kevin Afrikaner, operations director at Merchants South Africa, says "what we are doing is taking our call centres out of the normal commercial centres, industry centres and rebuilding them in the townships."

He explains that there were a lot of learnings in setting up the Jabulani centre, in terms of identifying the best area and doing due diligence. But, it has been greatly successful and acts as a proof of concept for the following ventures in Nasrec and other areas like Alexandra. The area in which the Jabulani GBS hub is located offers residential, education, shopping and other facilities.

"Our staff don't have to travel into town or travel into Sandton

or wherever, but they can walk to work." Afrikaner explains that this has meant absenteeism being reduced and allowing increased word of mouth referrals. "And that helps us with our impact sourcing getting new people into the economy that have never been part of the economy. And that's how we get people employed."

GBS falls within the 10 high-growth sectors the Gauteng Provincial Government has identified to grow the economy, in line with the Growing Gauteng Together 2030 strategy. Overall, the department aims to attract regional investment and turn Gauteng into the country's mainstay for global business services. All things being equal, this will enable youth skilling and small and medium enterprises to thrive in the province in areas such as call centre, data annotation and business support services.

Chief director for sector and industry development at the GDED, Goitsione Tladi Motlounge, says that this venture is part of the department's bigger push towards creating jobs while uplifting township economies. The move towards GBS such as call centres came out of a greater analysis by the GDED to address practical ways in which to fulfill the need for jobs through economic development.

"We have a mandate of transforming the face of our townships and how we transform the face of the township is about creating economic activity," he says. "Townships are

actually other new gold, because that's where you've got the huge labor reserve."

Tapping into the large pool of young unemployed people and using it to drive the economy is key. "GBS is a labor intensive sector and that's where entry level jobs are found," Motlounge says. It is also ideal because it has a potential for growth and can be matched this with existing strengths in the provinces, such as connectivity and infrastructure.

Gauteng Economic Development MEC Tasneem Motara, adds that since South African English is considered easy on the ear for international businesses, the sector has a great potential to grow and thrive in the province. "For us it's important because we want to market South Africa and importantly Gauteng as a business processing service destination of choice, in particularly call centres."

Motara recognises that the cost of doing business is rising and that there are challenges of intermittent electricity supply, but says that projects like this give her hope. "I think, for us, an initiative such as this shows that business does still have confidence in doing business in Gauteng."

Afrikaner says that the Nasrec hub is still in its infancy, but that they are working on bringing in a client soon. "So it's early days, but the conversations have started," he says. But it is part of the wider expansion

of these centers, particularly ones that hold 150 to 200 call centre agents, rather than the 60 to 80 that Jabulani currently has. He says there is particular interest from clients in this higher bracket.

"We'd like to move as many as possible of our centers into townships and the biggest reason is our people," he says. "One of our founding principles or guiding principles is [caring for the] people in our communities and how can you talk about that if you don't go into the community?"

He explains that while these ideas have been around for a long time, the Covid-19 pandemic and increased working from home meant that companies like Merchants took the idea of building closer to where staff live to heart.

Motlounge indicates that there is even more untapped potential at Nasrec for further expansion. "The strategy right now is that we are introducing other potential operators because Nasrec has the potential to be scaled up," he says.

"The number of jobs will keep coming in because we are not stopping to recruit at Jabulani," Motlounge reminds. The GDED hopes to keep expanding the number of opportunities for job seekers, and expand to more sites.

**Interested possible employees can connect through [www.merchantscx.com](http://www.merchantscx.com)**



# Innovation Hub Awards 2022



BY BOITSHOKO MOSIANE-MPHELA

The Innovation Hub recently hosted their annual Gauteng Accelerator Programme (GAP) Innovation Competition Awards at a gala dinner held at the Innovation Centre in Pretoria.

Winners comprised of innovators, researchers and entrepreneurs that are working on novel ideas that will improve the efficiency of government service delivery, increase the competitiveness of the local economy and enhance the quality of life of ordinary citizens. Categories included ICT, Medical, Biosciences, Green Economy and Township Economy.

In her keynote address, Gauteng MEC for Economic Development, Tasneem Motara highlighted the importance of embracing opportunities for innovation and job creation within the digital economy, especially for those who have previously been excluded in the "old economy." The MEC gave a special mention of previous winners who have continued to even greater success such as Smartspot which developed a TB Diagnostic tool which has led to improved accuracy in TB diagnosis. The tool is currently being exported to more than 34 countries across the globe. Sawubona Mycelium which was a winner in 2019 became the first South African company to develop a fermentation technology to produce beta-glucans (type of glucose (sugar) molecules found in some plants, cereal grains, baking yeast and mushrooms) using micro-organisms. This technology enabled them to tap into the global cosmetics industry by developing 2 product ranges consisting of

a hydrating serum and an anti-aging serum. Motara concluded by saying that the calibre of entries demonstrates the capacity and capability of South Africa and encouraged the competition nominees and other innovators to help build a better tomorrow and Grow Gauteng Together.

This year, a new category, The Automotive SMME Innovation Award (ASIA), was introduced and is sponsored by sister agency, the Tshwane Automotive Special Economic Zone (TASEZ). This additional category aims to encourage new entrants into the industry and promote localisation. Winners will be included in supplier development programs and funds will be allocated for research & development, patent and IP protection. An incubation program to grow the companies up to industrialisation and commercialisation stage will follow as the category expands.

The next generation of entrepreneurs have received commercialisation support and seed funding, and a year-long incubation support at The Innovation Hub's Business Incubators: Maxum Smart, Climate Innovation Centre, BioPark@Gauteng and the eKasiLabs facilities situated in the townships. These companies are not only contributing towards the country's gross domestic product (GDP) but are creating jobs and addressing the triple challenge of poverty, inequality and unemployment. Their innovations are also contributing to different aspects of our lives including education, transport,

health and wellness.

The nominees and winners of the Innovation Competition Awards 2022

### GAP GREEN

**Nominees:** Purity Pipe; Décor Solar; Imperative Energy Group; Technological Plumbing Solutions; Botle Sanitary; Agang Bokamoso farms; Ikigai Gen; Basadi E-waste; Yacht Properties (recycling salon water) and Inertia Meadow.

**1<sup>st</sup> Special Recognition:** Inertia Meadow, prize money: R20 000

**2<sup>nd</sup> Special Recognition:** Technological Plumbing Solution, prize money: R20 000

### Winners

**3<sup>rd</sup> Imperative Energy Group,** prize money: R120 000

**2<sup>nd</sup> Agang Bokamoso Farms,** prize money: R140 000

**1<sup>st</sup> Basadi E-waste,** prize money: R200 000

### GAP ICT

**Nominees:** Password Kid; DaLes Programming & Robotics; Unitap; Chacks Creative Tech; Intelligent Load Moderation Solutions; Abiri Innovations.

**Special Recognition:** Chacks Creative Tech, prize money: R20 000

### Winners

**3<sup>rd</sup> Unitap.** Prize: R20 000 + R60 000 seed funding.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Dales.** Prize: R20 000 + R100 000 seed funding.

**1<sup>st</sup> Password Kid.** Prize: R20 000 +

R180 000 seed funding.

### GAP TOWNSHIP ECONOMY

**Nominees:** Coudio, Stayy.co.za; Content Aesthetics; Noble Investment Ideas; Cottollove, Florys Health & Beauty.

**Special Recognition:** Stayy.co.za. Prize: R50000.

### Winners

**3<sup>rd</sup> Flory Health & Beauty.** Prize: R100 000.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Coudio.** Prize: R150 000.

**1<sup>st</sup> Reslocate.** Prize: R250000.

### GAP BIOSCIENCES

**Nominees:** WITS Advanced Drug Delivery Platform Enterprises; Trichome; Igagasi Biotech; UJ Fighto DG; UJ HPV Group.

### Winners

**3<sup>rd</sup> UJ Fighto DG.** Prize: R20 000 + R80 000 seed funding.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Igagasi Biotech.** Prize: R20 000 + R120 000 seed funding.

**1<sup>st</sup> Wits Advanced Drug Delivery Platform Enterprises** R20 000 + R480 000 seed funding

### GAP Medical

**Nominees:** AI Diagnostics; 4<sup>th</sup> AI Holdings; Gideon Inno Textiles; AI Powered Health Software; CXC Biosciences.

### Winners

**3<sup>rd</sup> Gideon Inno Textiles.** Prize R20 000 + R180 000 seed funding.

**2<sup>nd</sup> CXC Biosciences.** Prize: R20 000 + R280 000 seed funding.

**1<sup>st</sup> AI Diagnostics.** Prize: R20 000 + R480 000 seed funding.

# Fixing what's broken:

## CERTIFIED CELLPHONE REPAIR TRAINING TO UPSKILL JOBLESS

BY ELNA SCHÜTZ

**This first-of-its-kind model hopes to revitalise township entrepreneurship and business**

An initiative by the Gauteng department of economic development (GDED) is under way to train young people in mobile device repair to create job and business opportunities for residents in townships and beyond.

Scores of young South Africans in Gauteng will be trained to become skilled distributors and repairers of devices such as cellphones, laptops, tablets and wearables. This cohort is the first of many in a programme that hopes to provide job opportunities while equipping an industry in dire need of skilled workers.

The project is led by the SA Mobile Devices Distributors and Repairers Association (Samddra), with funding from the Gauteng provincial government and the media, information and communication technologies sector education and training authority.

The Covid-19 pandemic was the death knell for many small businesses. This first-of-its-kind model hopes to revitalise township entrepreneurship and business. "We aim to organise the mobile device distribution and repair industry," says Samddra MD Mark Mpsa.

This is in line with the Gauteng Township Economic Development Act, which aims to move the township economy from the margins to the centre of the mainstream economy. This includes the multimillion-rand cellphone repair and aftercare industry.

### BUSINESS

Fixing what's broken: certified cellphone repair training to upskill jobless

This first-of-its-kind model hopes to revitalise township entrepreneurship and business

12 APRIL 2023 - 11:35ELNA SCHÜTZ  
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### PICTURE: 123RF

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This is in line with the Gauteng Township Economic Development Act, which aims to move the township economy from the margins to the centre of the mainstream economy. This includes the multimillion-rand cellphone repair and aftercare industry.

"There is a shortage of qualified SA cellphone repairers or mobile device repair technicians in the country," says Mpsa.

When companies asked Samddra for help in finding local technicians, they were only able to identify non-nationals working in SA or people who knew how to do a certain part of the repair but weren't fully qualified.

The training takes four months, and there are agreements in place with the Small Enterprise Development Agency and the Small Enterprise Finance Agency for additional

entrepreneurial skills training and possible small business financing. This is in line with broader efforts to ease market access barriers for new entrants in the sector. These include the procurement and provision of equipment and kiosks for the beneficiaries.

Through pilot projects, a number of people have already qualified. Mpsa says this is proof that concepts are yielding the required outcome. He said not everyone who is trained qualifies for the entrepreneurial ventures as some may want formal employment.

"We aim to reach 25,000 technicians across the country over three to five years."

While this may be ambitious, he says mobile devices have become ubiquitous and critical. "These are becoming intrinsic to our life, so we can't continue risks of getting them repaired by people that don't know how to repair them correctly and who cannot give us the devices within a reasonable time.

"We want to improve the security people have when the device needs repair — they will go to accredited technicians."

To ensure consumer satisfaction, Samddra plans to offer recourse for consumers unhappy with the service received from repairers affiliated to the organisation. "We want our technicians to be accountable to us as a professional body so the public can have better assistance, better services and a good recourse."

The hope is that beneficiaries become self-employed using the knowledge, skills and resources provided to them by the association and its partners.

"Not all of them would like to become self-employed; we are aware some still want to have a regular salary. This will [hopefully] allow the mobile network operators and private businesses to recruit qualified people who can do the job properly."

Mpsa says they are creating a path into an industry that is not easily accessible to the public. "The mobile market is huge, but it is not streamlined. Those that are informed are benefiting from it, but the majority are not. So it's about how can we put it together, share this big cake and localise it."

Tasneem Motara, the Gauteng department of economic development MEC, says it's important to put an accredited course in place to ensure the process is formalised and trustworthy. She says this is "so the workforce we put out is not a fly-by-night, but has been properly trained and accredited".

The MEC says support should not end with the qualification. "But I think the big issue will be providing funding for start-ups and equipment. That kind of support is necessary." Mpsa says this even applies to sourcing the material. "Everything we are using, we can safely say is 99% imported, so we're also setting sights on local manufacturing."

"We're looking at the entire value chain," the department's director for inclusive economy, Mathopane Masha, echoes. He says they hope to give graduates the necessary tool kits and starting placements in malls to begin working. Some of these agreements are already in motion.

"According to our records, each cellphone repairer is likely to hire one additional person. So if you have 3,000 cellphone repairers being trained, chances are we are likely to breach about 6,000 jobs. Some will grow and have more than one site."

While the first cohort of trainees is already under way, Samddra and the department hope for several to follow and a bright future for this industry.

**To contact Samddra or learn more about these opportunities, visit: [www.samddra.org.za](http://www.samddra.org.za), email: [info@samddra.org.za](mailto:info@samddra.org.za), or call 011 655 7313.**

# GOCA

*Slams Brakes*

## ON UNFAIR BUSINESS PRACTICES

BY BOITSHOKO MOSIANE-MPHELA

**The Gauteng Office of Consumer Affairs (GOCA) recently resolved a consumer dispute of unfair business practice involving a car dealership.**

When Thandi Nkosi\* a 25-year-old student from Kyalami bought a luxury car on 19 October 2022 from WeBuyCars Centurion branch, she never expected her set of wheels to have so many mechanical issues. Shortly after driving the Mercedes Benz C220D for only 4km, it came to a complete standstill with a warning message, "inoperative run-flat", flashing on the dashboard. Despite multiple attempts to contact the company's sales representative, Thandi was unable to reach the dealership. She lodged a complaint via the dealer's website and still no respond from the dealer.

Thandi's mother took the car to be inspected by a Mercedes Benz dealership. The vehicle inspection revealed not only an inoperative run-flat tyre, but also a leaky coolant and a faulty engine, which the dealer is legally obligated to disclose to the customer when selling the car. However, the dealer failed to do so during the purchase and delivery of the vehicle.

Thandi then took the car to a mechanic to be repaired because she urgently needed to use the car. However, during a trip to Polokwane from Gauteng on 26 October 2022, the car broke down and Thandi forked out over R8 000.00 (eight thousand rands) in towing expenses to return the vehicle to

Gauteng where it remained parked indefinitely.

With no response from the dealer, Thandi lodged a complaint to GOCA via email on 30 October 2022. Nthabiseng Kulwane, a Consumer Complaints Investigator, paid a visit to the dealer's premises on 3 November 2022 after the assessment and investigation of the case. The first email was sent to the dealer on 3 November 2022 and five follow up emails. However, the efforts of resolving the matter came to halt because the dealer failed to provide feedback regarding amicable resolution of the complaint.

On 2 February 2023, GOCA served the dealer with summons. The dealer filed for an acknowledgment of service, they agreed to cancel the transaction and refund the customer. Subsequently, Thandi received a full refund for the vehicle she had purchased, as well as the repair and towing costs she incurred on 10 February 2023.

According to consumer rights, consumers have the right to return unsafe or defective goods and request a full refund.

"I would like to thank you for the assistance in dealing with this

matter. I had already given up, and your intervention miraculously resolved the dispute, and I received the full purchase amount. Your office has proven that government departments do fight on behalf of citizens," says Thandi.

When contacted for comment, Alexia Kristopher-Koen, Marketing Manager at WeBuyCars states that as a responsible corporate citizen, it complies with all legislation. "A vehicle is a complex piece of machinery. WeBuyCars sell various types of vehicles, ranging from new to more 'experienced vehicles'. To assist consumers, we clarify the difference between A and B type vehicles, so that a client can make an informed decision when buying a vehicle from us."

"When we sell a category A vehicle under our finance terms and conditions or under our cash terms and conditions, we do the roadworthy on behalf of the consumer," says Kristopher-Koen. "With category B vehicles, our more experienced vehicles, we take great care to inform the consumer of every defect known on the vehicle. We have our own 360-degree photographs of the interior and exterior, available on the website."

The GOCA was established by the

Gauteng Department of Economic Development (GDED) in terms of the Consumer Affairs (Unfair Business Practices) Act No.7 of 1996 to protect and promote consumer rights.

It is crucial to note that consumers have the right under the Consumer Protection Act to receive products of good quality and that are free from defects. If goods do not meet these standards, the consumer has the right to return the goods to the supplier within six months and request a refund, repair, or exchange without penalty and at the supplier's risk and expense.

Sanele Mthuli, Consumer Protector at GOCA, says it is important for both suppliers and consumers to know their rights and obligations under the law when transacting.

"GOCA endeavours to speedily resolve all the complaints that come before it. Consumers who feel that they have received a raw deal from service provider should feel free to get in touch with our office for mediation," she says.

**For more information about GOCA or consumer related matters, please contact 011355 8006 or email [consumer@gauteng.gov.za](mailto:consumer@gauteng.gov.za)**





# Voiceout Deaf

## BOOSTS TOWNSHIP ECONOMY

BY KIMBERLEY NETSHIVHALE

Being a woman entrepreneur comes with a unique set of challenges. Being an entrepreneur with a hearing impairment compounds the difficulties faced in a tough economic environment. Yet, the indomitable Victoria Matebogo, a deaf entrepreneur, is unfazed by these obstacles. She lives by the motto: "I take every opportunity as if it's my only and last opportunity I will ever get."

Matebogo started her company, Voiceout Deaf (Pty) Ltd, a cooperative for deaf people based in Mohlakeng. Voiceout Deaf was part of the Agri-park program initiated by the Gauteng Department of Agriculture and was converted to a private company by Matebogo in 2017.

"Being deaf makes things more difficult because of my challenges of being unable to express myself. The community always sees deaf community as disabled and unable to do things for themselves," she says.

Matebogo left her corporate job at Standard Bank to start a business that would cater for the deaf community. Providing deaf people

with greater career opportunities was her goal.

"Often the deaf are given simple jobs where they are not interacting with direct customers or managerial positions. That's when I decided to start my own business and hire the deaf community and make a place where they can feel at home and express their skills."

According to a report by the Deaf Federation of SA, unemployment rate in the deaf community is at 70%. Therefore, Matebogo's business is a welcome relief. It employs 41 people, including 9 deaf employees. The company specialises in vegetable production and offers business development services and tour guide training to

the deaf community. It produces vegetables that are sold to local households, such as Pick n Pay, SPAR, and to retail shops in and near Mohlakeng.

In 2018, Voiceout Deaf applied for financial assistance at Gauteng Enterprise Propeller (GEP). They were assisted with Township Business Renewal for equipment purchase in 2018. "GEP assisted me with garden tools. When I started agriculture, I didn't have any working tools."

I always had to borrow from other farmers. We also received funds to buy bicycles for the deaf workers. The deaf had challenges travelling to work using public transport because of communication challenges."

In 2021, the business received Covid-19 relief funds. It was able to hire more employees, attract more customers, and improve its capacity. "The support made us more efficient since agriculture is a seasonal business. Workers were able to come to work on time and not share tools." Matebogo's outstanding performance has earned her awards from the Gauteng provincial government and the national Department of Agriculture.

Matebogo hopes to have her farm in the future. "We currently farm on a leased farm. Having our own farm will give us total control and growth," she says.



# Giving townships a new splash of paint

BY ELNA SCHÜTZ

The township-based company, Splash Coatings Africa is on a mission to make its affordable, high-quality paint accessible to more people - and thanks to the Gauteng department of Economic Development (GDED) it's now received the support needed to drive its expansion plans.

"We are not necessarily in the business of selling paint, we are in the business of selling the feeling of a home, and [for that] that will always be a need," says Bonga Masoka, Splash Coatings Africa's founding director.

"In essence, we paint houses with independent in-house painting contractors, using premium paint products that we manufacture ourselves and retail through in-house stores that are managed by independent young people."

Splash Coatings Africa has been piloting stores in Midrand and Ga-Rankuwa for the past two years. It is now in the process of opening retail outlets in Soweto, Soshanguve, and Dawn Park. The company owns some of the properties, where the stores are located, whilst other stores are based in leased retail spaces.

Masoka, a former business development executive, was introduced to paint manufacturing by a company partnering with the one he was working for at the time. He was so enthused by this company's approach to finding a balance between affordability and premium quality, that he eventually bought their paint formulations and started his operation, Splash Coatings Africa, in 2017.

"Coming from a rural village in the North-West, I knew that it was

a cultural norm to always paint [one's home] every year, and to a large extent the market didn't understand why," he says. "But after doing my research, I found that the difference between [having to paint every year as opposed to every 10 years] is basically paint quality, but quality paint is not easily accessible because of price."

Not only did Masoka want to fill this gap in the market but, for him, the process of painting one's home has a deeper meaning. He grew up in the houses of several family members and says he never quite felt like he had a home of his own. He dreamed of building his mother a home, though she sadly passed on before he could do so.

For Masoka, paint is a fundamental part of what gives a house the feeling of being home, and so he realised that by founding his own company, "I could live my dream of building my mom a home through other people, our clients".

Though Splash Coatings Africa has done limited marketing and advertising since its inception, the demand for its products and services has been high. Masoka says the personalised customer experience has played a big role in its success.

The business is now expanding thanks, in part, to a loan from GDED and Gauteng Enterprise Propeller

(GEP), an agency of the department. "The department has multiple efforts in place to enable the business to reach the highest level that it can," says Masoka, adding that his company's relationship with the GDED has brought it wider benefits such as greater access to the market.

Gauteng MEC of Economic Development Tasneem Motara explains that the department's investment in businesses in the township sector, particularly those which train or employ young people, is a way to strengthen the economy as a whole.

"We've got to create and sustain a growing tax base, formalising [businesses] and getting them into the mainstream economy, so that they directly contribute, and then we can grow the fiscus and then, at the back end, respond to socio-economic demands," she says.

The GEP offers a variety of financial support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMMEs). These loans include start-up finance, contract finance, growth finance, franchise finance, and microfinance. The GEP also provides grant funding to small enterprises that don't meet the qualification criteria for formal loans.

In addition, Splash Coatings Africa is one of the 200 targeted township-based enterprises receiving

support through the Township Economy Partnership Fund (TEPF). TEPF is a partnership between the GDED, GEP, and the Industrial Development Corporation, focusing on manufacturing, the taxi economy, ICT, backyard real estate upgrading, and retail.

"We want to create self-sustainable enterprises that can create jobs for other young people in the townships as well," says Mathopane Masha, Chief Director for Inclusive Economy at GDED. He adds that, by doing so, they also want to inspire hope.

Masha says that while there are other players in the township paint market, Splash Coatings Africa has a high level of product quality and success. "The intention is to celebrate the fact that we've got a young township-based entrepreneur, who is manufacturing paint, contributing to our re-industrialisation agenda as a province," he says. "But at the end of the day what is important is that his [company's] expansion must also have an impact in the township in the form of jobs and skills."

**To find out more about the GEP, visit <https://www.gep.co.za/> or call 087 057 2000. To find out more about the TEPF and apply, visit <https://www.gep.co.za/public-notice/township-economy-partnership-fund/>.**



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until it is done.”**

**- Nelson Mandela**

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