

A word from Mpumi Sithole

Over the past few months, I have watched community members take bold steps into new chapters of their lives, from entrepreneurs settling into the industrial park in Mhluzi, to 61 Thuthukani graduates sharpening their businesses, to resettled families at Mafube turning new skills into real livelihoods.

Together, these stories show what development looks like when it is practical, people-centred and focused on building long-term opportunity.

This edition of *Umphakathi* brings those moments to life. You will read about township entrepreneurs in Mhluzi gaining a modern cafeteria that anchors their industrial park; Thuthukani beneficiaries taking the stage at the G20 Young Entrepreneurs Alliance Summit; community members in Sikhululiwe Village and Hlalamnandi turning logistics and business training into income; and families in Steve Tshwete and Govan Mbeki experiencing the impact of safer roads, solar-powered lighting, sanitation and waste management projects.

Across our operations, we have seen what becomes possible

when we back entrepreneurs with the right support and training, invest in community infrastructure and work with partners who share our commitment to development. Whether through business development, accredited skills programmes, livelihood restoration or tools that help small enterprises grow, each initiative reflects our belief that empowering people with skills and opportunity is one of the most sustainable investments we can make.

In this edition, we are reminded of the power of everyday progress, the courage of emerging entrepreneurs, the determination of community members rebuilding their livelihoods and the partnerships that help people see new possibilities for themselves.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome our new CEO, Moses Madondo. He joins us with a wealth of experience in mining leadership across Africa and North America. His passion for people, safety and performance excellence aligns with Thungela's commitment to empower communities, prioritise the wellbeing of our workforce and unlock long-term opportunities. I look forward to what lies ahead in this new chapter.



Mpumi Sithole, executive head for corporate affairs, Thungela

In this issue



Steve Tshwete's industrial park gets a modern cafeteria facility

Page 02



61 entrepreneurs graduates from Thuthukani ESD programme

Page 03



Communities get solar-powered streetlights and solar panels

Page 13

A new space for enterprise and community growth in Mhluzi



In Mhluzi's industrial park, small businesses keep the local economy moving. The park is abuzz with businesses, including mechanics and welders, caterers and hairdressers. As more entrepreneurs settle into the park, the need for a shared space to meet clients, grab a meal and connect with one another has grown. The new cafeteria answers that need, creating a central, welcoming space that supports enterprise and everyday community life.

In many townships, entrepreneurship is not just a career path but a necessity. It is how families earn a living, how young people create opportunities and how communities build their own economic futures. Yet many small business owners lack access to space, support and an environment where businesses can take root and grow.

To support the growth of this hub, Goedehoop Colliery invested in constructing a modern cafeteria facility valued at R4.9 million. The cafeteria facility forms part of Goedehoop's long-term vision to revitalise local economic spaces and help township

entrepreneurs move from informal operations into more secure, sustainable business environments. The idea began in 2021, when Goedehoop invested in the first phase of the industrial park through its social and labour plan.

The cafeteria is designed to bring people together, support small business activity and improve the daily experience of those who work and trade in the park.

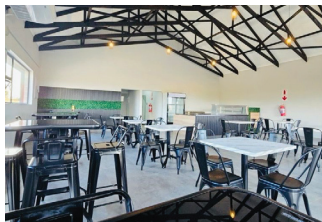
Speaking at the handover ceremony, Goedehoop general manager, Tman Mphokane said, "This township has no shortage of economic activity. What is often lacking is the platform, a space where entrepreneurs can grow and where businesses can become formalised and create jobs," he said. The cafeteria provides a central space where business owners, workers, customers and visitors can gather. It is a place that brings energy, connection and convenience into the industrial hub.

The handover ceremony was attended by community leaders

and representatives from the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, including executive mayor councillor Mhlonishwa Masilela, who expressed his appreciation for the partnership, noting that the cafeteria will benefit both existing businesses and those still to be established as the industrial park expands.

Johannes Silas, local economic development director: development and strategic support, anchored councillor Masilela and said: "This is a company that goes all out for the betterment of Steve Tshwete. The cafeteria is just one example of a long list of projects that support sustainable economic development and job creation in our municipality," he shared.

The construction of the facility created temporary employment for seven (7) local workers, and eight (8) local SMMEs were subcontracted. Now that it is complete, it will create further opportunities by enabling a small business to manage on-site cafeteria services.





Unlocking opportunities through enterprise support

Through Thuthukani, Thungela's enterprise and supplier development programme, local businesses are shifting from survival to growth. Since 2022, entrepreneurs in communities hosting Thungela operations have been supported with targeted training, technical enablement, mentorship and strategic guidance.

Each business begins with a detailed gap analysis and then receives

tailored support that guides them through financial management and bookkeeping systems, marketing, sales, project strategy, leadership development, ISO preparation, audit and certification, and personal growth and personal growth. The focus is practical and aims to help small enterprises grow, become more competitive, and unlock larger opportunities in their markets.

This year, 61 entrepreneurs graduated,

marking the third group to complete the programme.

"Thuthukani is more than a business development initiative. It is a catalyst for local economic resilience. Each graduate represents a point of impact that causes a ripple effect, creating jobs and opportunities that uplift families and communities," said Mpumi Sithole, executive head, corporate affairs at Thungela.



61
entrepreneurs
graduated



32
enterprise
development
beneficiaries



29
currently provide
goods or services
to Thungela



50
achieved technical
enablement
accreditation
& certification



Others
became members
of the Federated
Hospitality
Association of
Southern Africa and
the Institute of Waste
Management South
Africa and BEECA
Cleaning
Association



Among the graduates is a growing group of women-led businesses gaining real traction in their industries.

Juliet Mahlangu, owner of Mpangela Industrial Holdings and a beneficiary of the programme said, “Before Thuthukani, I lacked the systems and structure to manage and scale my business. The mentorship and technical training helped me implement better financial controls, and I now feel more confident approaching new clients and bidding for contracts.”

Another beneficiary, Giji John Motau, owner of Gemad Pty Ltd, shared about his experience in the programme saying: “My journey with Thuthukani has been transformative. I have gained a clearer understanding of what it takes to build a sustainable business,” he expressed.

The Thuthukani programme is delivered in partnership with Raizcorp, whose mentorship model provides long-term, practical support to entrepreneurs.

“Watching this third cohort grow in confidence, capability and market reach shows the true value of partnership,” said Jeanne Renou, strategic relations and projects manager at Raizcorp.

Thuthukani application criteria and process

To apply for the Thuthukani ESD programme, you must:

- 1 Have a **registered** business
- 2 Have a business that is **51% black owned**
- 3 Operate in **one of the three municipalities:**
 - eMalahleni Local Municipality
 - Steve Tshwete Local Municipality
 - Govan Mbeki Local Municipality

Visit our website:
www.thungela.com

- > Suppliers
- > Enterprise and supplier development programme





Thuthukani beneficiaries take the stage on national and global platforms

Ten entrepreneurs from the Thuthukani enterprise and supplier development (ESD) programme recently took part in the G20 Young Entrepreneurs Alliance Summit hosted in Johannesburg. The Summit is a youth entrepreneurship gathering held as a side event to South Africa's presidency and hosting of the G20 summit, bringing together young business leaders from the world's major economies.

The event brought together more than 600 young business owners and leaders from countries such as the United States, China, Germany, India, Brazil and the United Kingdom.

For the Thuthukani beneficiaries, the experience was eye-opening as they were exposed to global business trends, new networks and insights into how young business owners in other countries navigate challenges similar to their own.

One of the participants, Fehmida Silas, founder of Middelburg-based JFK Business Solutions and a Thuthukani beneficiary, joined a panel on bridging the gap for women-owned businesses. Fehmida, who provides services to several of our operations, spoke about the need for finance models that go beyond collateral, partnerships that de-risk lending and mentorship that builds investment-ready entrepreneurs.

Meanwhile, Thungela's enterprise and supplier development manager,



Sandile Mkono, also contributed as a panellist, focusing on financing young ventures. He highlighted Thuthukani's co-funding partnership with Absa as an example of how corporates and financial institutions can collaborate to enable emerging businesses.

The conversation was also linked to the Black Business Council Summit, held in Ekurhuleni, where 20 Thuthukani graduates joined President Cyril Ramaphosa, national business leaders and policymakers. The gathering provided entrepreneurs

with an opportunity to engage with key decision-makers, explore possibilities, and gain a deeper understanding of the national landscape and policy environment shaping small business development.

As part of our commitment to enterprise development, we continue to create opportunities for entrepreneurs to access knowledge, networks, markets and financing that help them move from surviving to scaling.





Livelihood restoration programme helps families rebuild and reimagine their futures



Since 2024, Mafube Coal has been running a programme to help families who were resettled in Middelburg, Mpumalanga, rebuild their ways of earning a living. The focus is on practical skills that make it easier to find work, start small businesses and support their households. This kind of support is known as a livelihood restoration programme.

This year, 39 community members from Sikhululiwe Village and Hlalamnandi graduated from two skills training programmes delivered through the initiative. “As part of the livelihood restoration programme, community members received business development skills and a Level 4 accredited qualification in freight logistics, backed by exposure to real business environments. This sets them up for both employment and entrepreneurship,” said Sherperd Nkadameng, general manager at Mafube Coal.

The programme also helped participants with the basics of setting up and running small businesses. They were introduced to budgeting, business planning, financial literacy and practical ways to generate an income. A few have already started their own businesses and are now better able to provide for their families.

These include Tsepo Jele, who has set up a rapidly growing ice-supply business, and business partners Audrey

Mtsweni and Amanda Sikudo, who co-founded a laundromat, secured contracts with local clients and have since expanded into cleaning services.

Friddy Mahlangu used her beadwork skills to start a small business, gaining traction beyond the village. At the same time, Sinenhlanhla Mngomezulu saw potential in her cultural heritage and began renting traditional woven grass mats for ceremonies.

Another graduate, Matshidiso Motsapi, opened an internet café in the village to provide essential services such as printing, photocopying and internet access. Matshidiso shared that the training opened her eyes to possibilities she didn't think were available to her. “For the first time, I have a plan to start my own business and the knowledge to make it real,” she said.

For Portia Mbuyane, the logistics programme helped her gain confidence and a clearer sense of her professional direction. She shared that being exposed to real companies through the work-integrated learning component helped her better understand where she could see herself in the job market.

Taken together, these stories show how the programme is helping resettled families rebuild strong and sustainable livelihoods through skills and practical support.

“For the first time, I have a plan to start my own business and the knowledge to make it real.” Matshidiso Motsapi, livelihood restoration programme graduate.



Helping communities progress and thrive

For many families, the difference between 'getting by' and moving forward is access to real skills and real opportunities. At Zibulo and Goedehoop Collieries, we are investing in programmes that help community members, especially young

people, learn income-generating skills, build their confidence and take practical steps towards independence.

These initiatives are shaped together with local training partners, suppliers and community organisations so that

what is offered matches local needs and can last. In this way, every course, workshop and placement becomes more than an activity, it becomes a pathway for people to progress and thrive in their own communities.

Sewing programme graduation

In Phola and Ogies, Zibulo Colliery recently celebrated the achievements of 30 aspiring designers who completed an accredited sewing programme through Loko Sewing School and Training Academy. The six-month course is focused on real skills that translate into business growth and income, including garment finishing, costing, production planning and client presentation.

For graduate Katlego Letswalo, the programme opened a path to new possibilities. "This course helped me sharpen my craft, but most importantly, it improved how I present my work and approach clients. It gave me the confidence to see myself as a professional," he shared.

His journey did not stop at graduation. A personal protective equipment (PPE) contract offered him early



industry exposure, and after several funding attempts, Katlego succeeded in securing support from the Nkangala District Municipality. With six (6) new industrial machines, he launched his streetwear brand Proud Monkey, fulfilling a vision he once believed would take years to achieve.

Unlocking business growth and strengthening communities



Meanwhile, Goedehoop Colliery's Tools of the Trade programme works with local suppliers to provide small businesses with essential resources to help them grow. As part of the programme, a local supplier, HCC Industry, sponsored a full professional photography starter kit, enabling a local business owner to expand into new markets and improve the quality of their services.



At the same time, recognising the importance of safety at home and in public spaces, Goedehoop Colliery hosted a community emergency preparedness training session that brought together local community leaders, members of the community policing forum, and farm-dweller communities for hands-on training on responding to fires, accidents, and other emergencies.



The session was facilitated in partnership with municipal emergency services and the Working on Fire agency and provided practical knowledge that can save lives.

By equipping communities to respond effectively in critical moments, we promote resilience, awareness, and strong networks of local leadership.

Contractor partnerships open doors for community businesses



During the R2 billion capital project at Annea (formerly Elders) Colliery, 453 community members gained employment on site. A further R10 million was invested in accredited training programmes, with 314 local residents obtaining recognised qualifications that can support more stable work opportunities, both within and beyond the mining sector. Other community members also obtained Code 14 driver's licences, opening up additional income options in the

transport and logistics sector. These results came from a deliberate decision to put local people and enterprises at the centre of the project from the very beginning. From planning through to implementation, Annea required its main contractors to commit to inclusive procurement and skills development, and to clearly show how they would bring value to nearby communities in the Govan Mbeki Local Municipality, through jobs, training, enterprise support, and social investment.

Local enterprise development was another key focus. Contractors committed to buying goods and services from community-based suppliers, spending a total of R313 million locally. Businesses supplied items such as personal protective equipment (PPE), diesel and lubricants, plant hire and building materials. For many entrepreneurs, this was an opportunity to grow capacity, create jobs and build a track record they can use to compete for future work.

The project also invested in community spaces that improve everyday life. This included refurbishing a community hall used for cultural gatherings, installing solar-powered boreholes to provide reliable access to clean water, installing eco-latrines to support dignity and health, and supporting local schools and disability centres.

Together, these efforts show how a capital project can do more than develop a mine, it can help strengthen families, businesses and community facilities for the long term.



453 community members gained employment

314 local residents obtained accredited qualifications, opening doors to sustainable employment within and outside the mining sector.



R10 million invested towards accredited skills training programme

Other community members obtained **Code 14** driver's licences



Caring beyond the classroom: Thungela's holistic approach to education in Mpumalanga



We have signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the University of Pretoria's (UP) Department of Educational Psychology to bring psychosocial support into schools in our host communities in Mpumalanga.

As part of this collaboration, master's students from the Department of Educational Psychology will be deployed in schools across the Nkangala and Gert Sibande districts to provide psychosocial support to children in the foundation and intermediate phases. They will work with teachers and learners to offer counselling, guidance and everyday emotional support where it is most needed.

The programme is part of Thungela's education initiative launched in 2024 to improve the quality of education for Grade R to 4 learners in 45 no-fee schools in the two districts. It also aims to improve school readiness, literacy and numeracy outcomes for learners.

"We recognise that educational performance is not only shaped by access to resources but also through the psychological and emotional well-being of both learners and educators," said Mpumi Sithole, executive head of corporate affairs at Thungela. "Working with the University of Pretoria, we are equipping schools with the professional support needed to respond to the complex realities facing learners and educators."



The partnership also creates practical learning opportunities for UP's master's students, who will gain valuable field experience while supporting schools under the supervision of district educational psychologists. Their work will contribute to the Department of Basic Education's screening, identification, assessment and support (SIAS) policy.

Also, as part of the education initiative, 140 teachers and school administrators have received accredited Level 1 First Aid training to help them respond quickly and confidently to medical emergencies in the classroom and on the playground.

The course, facilitated by the Netcare Education Faculty of Emergency and Critical Care, covers critical first aid procedures, emergency response, injury management and basic life support.

Each school has received a comprehensive first aid kit, with

Highveld Hospital donating fully equipped sickbay furniture, including adjustable beds, cardiac tables, side lockers, and bedding.

"Safety is our number one value, and it is essential that we extend this commitment beyond our operations to the communities in which we operate," concluded Sithole.



A new computer centre bridges the digital divide for learners in Lephalale

Learners at Motlhajwa Secondary School in Lephalale have mostly heard about computers rather than used them every day. That reality is now changing. As the school prepares to introduce Computer Applied Technology (CAT) as a subject, a new computer centre is opening the door to digital learning for the first time.

With funding support from one of our contractors in the coalbed methane project in Lephalale, Mecopol Construction, the school received 26 computers, a projector, and a printer for the new centre. These tools will support the launch of CAT in the new year and help learners build the computer literacy they need for further study and future work.

The handover was welcomed by learners, educators and community leaders, who gathered to celebrate a milestone that brings the school closer to modern, technology-based learning. For many learners, this is their first direct



access to computers, and it will shape how they study, explore information, and prepare for life after school.

By working with local enterprises like Mecopol Construction, we can respond to real needs in neighbouring schools and communities, ensuring the benefits of our projects reach beyond the mine and into the classroom.



Improved sanitation and waste system strengthen community wellbeing in Steve Tshwete and Govan Mbeki Local Municipalities



For many farm dwellers and families living in rural areas, access to safe, dignified sanitation is not always guaranteed. While nearly half of households in Steve Tshwete Local Municipality have access to flushing toilets, a significant number still rely on pit latrines, buckets, or open bush areas. For farm dwellers, this reality has daily implications for health, safety and a sense of dignity.

Thungela recognises that access to safe and dignified sanitation is essential for health, well-being and everyday life. In partnership with Mphikeleli Engineering and Services, Goedehoop Colliery installed 50 Amalooloo toilets for households in Wards 4 and 32, helping families live with greater safety, cleanliness and dignity.

The project also invested in local economic participation, with seven (7) local job seekers appointed for temporary work opportunities and a local black-owned company, Mphikeleli Engineering and Services, awarded the installation contract, helping to keep investment circulating in the community.

With an investment of just over R1 million, the project has not only

improved everyday living conditions but has also strengthened local livelihoods by prioritising community suppliers and job creation.

Meanwhile, in Govan Mbeki Local Municipality, Isibonelo Colliery is supporting efforts to create cleaner and safer living environments for local communities. Waste management plays an important role in creating safe and clean communities. When it's not properly managed, it can lead to illegal dumping, pollution and health risks that affect communities, businesses and the local environment. These challenges were intensified in Embalenhle when the local landfill

site closed due to budget constraints, leaving the community without an adequate alternative for waste disposal.

To help address this need, Isibonelo partnered with the municipality to design a new waste transfer station that will ensure waste is collected, sorted and transported safely, reducing illegal dumping and improving the cleanliness of the area.

These initiatives support dignity, well-being, and quality of life, helping create communities where people can thrive with confidence and pride in their surroundings.





A new road improves access and mobility for Sikhululiwe Village



Sikhululiwe Village in Ward 7 in the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality is home to more than 400 households who rely on safe, reliable access to schools, clinics, and places of work. For many years, the gravel road connecting the village to the R104 made travel difficult, especially in bad weather. It affected school attendance, delayed essential services, and created challenges for small businesses and communities in the area.

In response to this, Mafube Coal, Thungela's joint venture with Exxaro, invested in the construction of a 3.4 kilometre road, including a 220 metre direct link to the R104. The R54 million project has transformed mobility in the area, offering a safer, smoother and more dignified route for everyday travel.

The project was driven by community consultation and shaped by local needs identified through a baseline study.

"The upgraded road now provides a route that supports better connectivity and enhances public safety," said Tamara Qwatekana, Mafube Coal general manager. "Reliable road infrastructure is a foundation for development. It allows communities to access opportunities and services with dignity," she said.

What makes this project meaningful is the role of local businesses and job creation. Fifteen (15) job opportunities were created during construction, and five (5) local plant suppliers and a local fuel supplier were engaged. Several small businesses also took part, including Sakhisene, which was responsible for constructing the perimeter fencing. This ensured that the investment supported livelihood opportunities while keeping economic value circulating locally.

The road was constructed by G4 Civils, with engineering support from JG Africa, Venn and Milford as quantity surveyors, and project oversight provided by Mafube's Stay in Business Capital Projects Team.

For the community, the impact is already being felt. "This road has transformed Sikhululiwe Village. It has made travel safer and easier,

especially for those who need to reach schools and healthcare facilities," said Iddy Mahlangu, Ward 7 councillor. "We are grateful for the partnership and for Mafube's investment in our community."

Councillor Mhlonishwa Masilela, executive mayor of the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, echoed this sentiment: "This initiative is a great example of what can be achieved when government and the private sector work together. The project has improved access, created local jobs and strengthened the infrastructure that supports our communities."

The project reflects Mafube Coal's commitment to supporting socio-economic development and improving access to essential services in the communities surrounding its operations.



Restoring light and safety in Steve Tshwete and Govan Mbeki local municipalities

Reliable electricity brings dignity to daily life. It powers basics like lighting, learning, safety and staying connected. Yet for many rural communities and farm dwellers in the Steve Tshwete and Govan Mbeki Local Municipalities, electricity has been out of reach for years, making even simple tasks, like charging a phone, difficult.

Today, those communities are seeing meaningful change through sustainable energy and community infrastructure programmes designed to restore dignity and improve safety.

Powering homes and restoring dignity in Steve Tshwete Local Municipality



In the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality's remote wards 32 and 4, up to 91% of farm-dwelling households do not have electricity. To help improve daily living conditions, Goedehoop Colliery handed over portable inverters and solar panels to 60 households.

Speaking at the handover event,

Tman Mphokane, general manager at Goedehoop Colliery, highlighted the significance of the initiative saying: "We are not just bringing electricity to homes. We are lighting up futures and strengthening communities," he said. "Reliable electricity means learners can now study with proper lighting instead of candlelight, families can charge their

phones with ease and for the first time, households can watch TV."

Ward 4 committee member Carlos Vilankulu thanked the mine for leading by example, noting that the project "restores dignity and hope for many households."





Safer streets and brighter evenings in Govan Mbeki



The project created 10 short-term jobs, hiring five workers from each village.



This initiative has instilled a sense of security in our communities and contributed meaningfully to improving the dignity and quality of life of our residents,” councillor Nhlakanipho Zuma, executive mayor of the Govan Mbeki Local Municipality



Meanwhile, in Vlakkuilen and Umcebo near Bethal, Annea Colliery has delivered a solar energy project to improve both safety and energy access.

The project, valued at R2 million, included installing 80 solar-powered streetlights and delivering 82 portable solar inverter systems to households, improving visibility and boosting energy security for more than 450 residents.

After consulting with the community, Annea identified poor night lighting and frequent power outages as key concerns. In collaboration with Mecapol, the project was piloted first

by testing five units before scaling up to ensure reliability.

“We considered a number of options to help power the community, and solar made the most sense,” said Tman Mphokane, general manager at Annea Colliery. “We are proud to support households with energy that is safe, sustainable and makes daily life easier.”

Sibongile Motau, a community representative, said the project has brought real change, noting that residents now feel safer when walking at night and that the portable inverters have improved daily living and restored dignity in many households.



Restoring safety through light in Leandra

In Leandra’s township of Lebohang, eight (8) high-mast lights that once stood dark due to vandalism and system failures have been restored by Zibulo Colliery.

The refurbishment included installing energy-efficient LED fittings, upgrading hoisting mechanisms for safer maintenance and securing the fixtures to reduce vandalism.

“This initiative reflects our commitment to community safety and improving essential services in communities surrounding our operations,” said Matome Moremi, general manager at

Zibulo Colliery. “Safety is our number one value as a business, and this extends beyond our mining operations into communities where we operate. Public areas’ lighting infrastructure is a basic but important part of a community, and we are pleased to support the residents of Lebohang in improving their safety through restoring the high mast lights.”

The Govan Mbeki Local Municipality welcomed the upgrade, noting its positive impact on public safety and service delivery.

“This is a meaningful upgrade for the people of Lebohang,” said councillor Nhlakanipho Zuma, executive mayor of the Govan Mbeki Local Municipality. “We always welcome this kind of investment, which strengthens infrastructure, improves and safeguards

the lives of our residents.”

The project also created short-term local employment for seven (7) community members through a local electrical contractor - an act which promotes inclusion and contributes to the development of local skills. This aligns with Thungela’s broader focus to improve the quality of community services where we operate.



Mafube Coal paints izindlu zikaGogo in Sikhululiwe Village



A new chapter of cultural pride and community restoration has unfolded in Sikhululiwe Village in the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, where seven (7) ancestral huts, known as izindlu zikaGogo, have been beautifully painted in traditional Ndebele colours, bringing heritage, meaning, and identity back to the homesteads of families who were relocated.

The indlu kaGogo is a sacred place where cultural rituals are performed and families maintain a spiritual connection with their ancestors. Because of their importance, the

huts are built, painted, and decorated differently from all other structures in a homestead.

Through the project's compensation framework, Mafube Coal committed to replacing cultural assets for relocated households in a manner that honours their beliefs and traditions. This includes reconstructing and restoring izindlu zikaGogo for every family that previously owned them, ensuring that no cultural or spiritual identity is lost in the transition.

The project, with an investment of R69,754, also created three (3)

temporary jobs for local women who were appointed to paint the huts.

A further three huts will be painted once construction is completed.

Through this initiative, Mafube Coal has demonstrated that responsible mining is not only about infrastructure and land use but also about honouring the stories, traditions and heritage that make communities whole. In these newly painted huts, culture lives on colourfully and proudly for generations to come.



This project is about respecting the spiritual identity of families and ensuring that cultural heritage is not lost but celebrated. Restoring these huts is restoring dignity.



Bontle Bostander, regional social performance manager.



Thungela's human rights commitment: Turning policy into practice

Human rights are the foundation of dignity, equality, and opportunity. At Thungela, we are committed to respecting these rights, guided by our Human Rights policy premised on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and rooted in our values and day to day operations.

In this edition, we focus on the right to human dignity, which is everyone's right to be valued, respected and to live safely. Dignity is about comfort, being seen, valued and given the opportunity to thrive.

At Thungela, we recognise that restoring and respecting human dignity requires us to contribute towards addressing the social and environmental conditions that shape people's lives, from access to clean water and sanitation, to safe housing, energy and livelihoods. Our community development initiatives and programmes are designed to ensure that progress is felt in real and tangible ways, empowering individuals and families to live with pride and purpose.



The right to human dignity: Restoring worth and building futures

Everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected. Through our social investment initiatives, we are committed to ensuring that communities around our operations experience progress that respects both their humanity and their future.

Our efforts include:



Dignified sanitation

Through projects such as the Amalooloo ablation facilities, we help families access dignified sanitation and improve everyday quality of life.

01.



Energy security and safety

We are improving daily living conditions by powering communities and households with portable energy devices and lighting infrastructure.

03.

Environmental health

We support efforts to create cleaner, healthier, and safer living environments for local communities through projects such as the waste transfer station we designed for the Govan Mbeki Local Municipality.



02.

Commitment to human rights



To help respect human rights, we have made it easy for people to speak up. Concerns can be reported through human resources, a formal grievance process, or anonymously through our **HAIBO! Tip-offline**, which is run by an independent external company.

The line is available to employees, contractors, suppliers, and community members and can be used to report any unethical or unsafe behaviour.



Free Call: 0800 555 117



Email: Thungela@tip-offs.com



Website: www.tip-offs.com

Reports are treated with care, urgency, and in the language of your choice.

Responsible mining: Standards that guide each phase

In our previous edition, we explored the natural life cycle of a mine from discovery and development to production and closure.

In this edition, we turn our focus to the standards that guide responsible mining practices at every step of that journey.

These standards help ensure that mining is done safely, transparently and in a way that protects communities, the environment and future generations.

01 Discovery (Exploration phase)



Before any mining begins, experts explore the land to understand what minerals lie beneath the surface and whether mining can be done responsibly. Geologists study the land, rocks, and soil, while surveys, sampling, and sometimes minor test drilling are carried out. Environmental and social studies are also done to understand the area's plants, animals, water, and the local economic situation. Communities may notice survey teams and specialists in the area. During this time, various permits are applied for, including environmental approvals, Social and Labour Plans, and mining rights. This phase helps determine whether mining should go ahead and ensures it is done responsibly from the very start.

02 Development (Preparation phase)



Once a mineral deposit is confirmed, preparations for mining begin. Land may be cleared where necessary under permit requirements, and roads, offices, processing plants, and other facilities are built. Environmental protection measures, such as water management systems, are put in place. Even at this early stage, closure planning is considered so that the land can be restored in the future. Community engagement continues throughout this phase, and the implementation of socio-economic initiatives begins, including Social and Labour Plans (SLPs) and Corporate Social Investment (CSI) programmes.

03 Production (Mining phase)



This is when minerals are actively extracted, processed, and transported. Mining operations run daily, providing jobs for workers, contractors, and local service providers. Local businesses also benefit by supplying goods and services to the mine. Continuous environmental monitoring is carried out, checking air and water quality and protecting biodiversity. Mining teams also implement and monitor all permits in line with regulatory requirements. Environmental management continues throughout, and closure planning is updated regularly as operations evolve.

Each phase is carefully planned to ensure mining supports local communities, protects the environment, and creates opportunities for economic growth while keeping safety and responsibility at the heart of every operation.



Stay with us!

In the next editions of Umphakathi, we will explore what happens during mine closure and how effective closure practices can open new opportunities for communities, the environment, and future generations.

Meet Nkulo Trust's board of trustees

Nkulo Community Partnership Trust is led by a board of trustees – people from the community, independent experts and founder-appointed members who work together to guide its work. Their role is to ensure the Trust is run responsibly and that projects deliver real, long-term benefits to the communities in the areas hosting Thungela's operation.



Professor Hellen Myezwa,
Chairperson

An academic at the University of the Witwatersrand. She has over 30 years of experience in public health, rehabilitation and community development. She leads the Trust with a focus on people-first solutions and long-term impact.



Michael Mpanza,
Independent

Michael has a background in finance, auditing, compliance, and governance. In this role as trustee, he helps ensure the Trust operates transparently and that community development resources are used effectively.



Dr. Bhekefini Mthethwa,
Independent

Dr. Bhekefini is a passionate advocate for education, inclusion and lasting impact. As a qualified community education and training specialist, he brings expertise in addressing the needs of underserved communities, particularly those lacking education, employment, or training opportunities.



Nomfundo Cebekhulu,
Founder-Appointed

Nomfundo is a Chartered Accountant by profession and works at Thungela. She brings expertise in business development, mergers and acquisitions and strategy. She also serves on the boards of various companies, an experience that strengthens her ability to guide the Nkulo Trust with foresight and accountability.



Sihle Nkomo,
Founder-Appointed

Sihle is a member of the human resources leadership team at Thungela. He has a strong background in human resources and talent development and focuses on equipping communities with practical, portable skills that create long-term opportunities.



Mpumi Sithole,
Founder-Appointed

Mpumi is the executive head of corporate affairs at Thungela. She plays a key role in shaping the Trust's direction and ensuring that Nkulo Trust's initiatives align with Thungela's values.



Nontobeko Mtshali,
Community

Nontobeko is an accounting graduate from the University of Johannesburg and a passionate entrepreneur. Through her role, she hopes to inspire a generation of changemakers who build sustainable livelihoods and drive community growth.



Sthembiso Mthimuye,
Community

Sthembiso brings extensive experience in community development, gained through initiatives that support persons with disabilities and other marginalised groups. This hands-on work has strengthened her ability to advocate for vulnerable members of society and ensure that their needs are addressed.



Bongani Thwala,
Community

Bongani brings expertise in project management, financial management and governance. He is committed to using his skills to uplift the community and create opportunities for the young people.

Nkulo Trust call for proposals

Nkulo Trust is inviting eligible organisations to submit project proposals for funding consideration. This call focuses on sustainable and community-driven initiatives that support long term socio-economic development in Thungela’s host and labour-sending communities.

The Trust is seeking proposals that:



Address clear, evidence-based **community needs**



Create lasting **social and economic value**



Strengthen local **capacity, opportunity and wellbeing**

Align with the Nkulo Trust’s focus areas, including:

- Access to education and skills development
- Health, welfare and social orientation
- Growth in alternative economies and legacy projects

Key points to note

- Only one project proposal may be submitted per form.
- Proposals must be comprehensive and include sufficient detail.
- Each proposal will undergo a structured evaluation process based on predefined metrics aligned with Nkulo Trust’s eligibility criteria and requirements.
- The focus is on fostering value creation through investment in legacy-changing socio-economic development projects.
- All projects and activities are conducted in a non-profit manner with altruistic or philanthropic intent.
- Funds are allocated to meet needs that align with the Trust’s focus areas, PBO activities and mandate.

Geographic eligibility

Projects should support communities hosting Thungela operations and labour-sending areas, including:

Mpumalanga host communities:	Labour sending areas may include:
• Goedehoop • Greenside • Annea • Isibonelo • Khwezela • Zibulo • Mafube	• Gauteng • Limpopo • KwaZulu-Natal • Eastern Cape • Lesotho • Eswatini • Mozambique

Who can apply?

Non-profit, academic institutions, private companies and sole traders who are demonstrating alignment with Nkulo Trust’s objectives.

Proposals must be submitted with the application form and all supporting documents to 25 Bath Avenue, Rosebank, Johannesburg 2196 or e-mailed to: info@nkulotrust.com by 27 February 2026 at 16:00.

Visit our website for more information and to download the application form: www.nkulotrust.com

19

Complaint | Grievance procedure and contacts

Thungela maintains a reliable system for community members to submit complaints and grievances. This process ensures that the respective colliery will acknowledge any complaints and grievances within 24 hours and respond within no more than five business days of receipt. Community members are encouraged to use the official channels provided by Thungela to voice their concerns and complaints, promoting transparent and efficient communication between the mine and residents

How to contact us in writing

Goedehoop
faith.mashego@thungela.com

Zibulo north shaft project
Msizi.myeni@thungela.com

Zibulo
zibuloengagement@thungela.com

Mafube
nonkululeko.msinga@thungela.com

Isibonelo
isisp@thungela.com

Khwezela
lindokuhle.a.maseko@thungela.com

Greenside
lebogang.raboshakga@thungela.com

Annea
Musa.Mitileni@thungela.com

How to contact us in person

Site security officer

Provide the following information:

Date and time

Your name and
contact details

Nature of complaint

Resolution sought

Visit our website and social media pages for more information:



www.thungela.com



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