

# Women In Mining

each one  
teach one


EMPOWERING  
STORIES FROM  
OUR WOMEN

**NORTHAM**  
PLATINUM HOLDINGS LIMITED

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A woman with blonde hair pulled back, wearing tortoiseshell glasses and a black blazer over a black top, stands behind a glass railing. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a modern interior with a stone wall and a potted plant.

“Women have  
always been vital  
to developing and  
improving the lives of  
those around them”

# Introduction

**Women have always been pivotal to developing and improving the lives of those around them, and it is no different in the workplace. This publication celebrates the important role that women play at Northam Platinum Mines.**

In South Africa, Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is a widespread problem, impacting almost every aspect of life. This pandemic, which disproportionately affects women and girls is systemic, and deeply ingrained in institutions, cultures and traditions.

Northam has taken a strong stance against this form of violence and is no stranger to fighting this practice. We have made it clear, through our code of ethics and conduct, as well as official statements, that we will not tolerate any forms of harassment.

We are proud of the achievements of our women, women who come from diverse cultures and backgrounds. We support everyone who is speaking out and sharing their unique story.

The theme “each one, teach one” echoes the empowering stories from our women in mining, and I have been privileged to hear about these women’s hopes and dreams, how they have overcome challenges, and how they are making a real difference to their communities, and in our company.

At Northam, I have met incredible women who have inspired, supported, and encouraged me. Again, the ethos of “each one, teach one” encourages us to better ourselves and improve the lives of others.

Together, we aim to harness their qualities to make a real, lasting difference, now and into the future. It also highlights our responsibility and commitment to educate each other and pass on our learnings, spreading knowledge for the betterment of our community, and making the collective stronger.

I am certain that the Board of Directors and Executive Management salute you, basadi (women), for your sterling contributions toward our company, Northam.

**Alet Coetzee**  
*Chief Financial Officer*  
Northam Platinum Holdings Limited



# Becoming agents of *change*



**“The world needs strong women – women who will lift and build others, who will love and be loved, women who live bravely, both tender and fierce, women of indomitable will.” - Amy Tenney**

Join us in this publication, as we celebrate 33 remarkable women who raised their hands to become “agents of change”. These women share their incredible personal life journeys and achievements to empower and enlighten others to navigate the same challenges that they have faced.

Testament to these stories, the theme “each one, teach one” sprouts new perspectives and inspirations to all women at Northam, our communities, country and the world.

The essence of “each one, teach one” resonates across all genders, cultures and traditions. It is about individual journeys, reimagined, through telling stories that authenticate women’s perseverance in the face of adversity whilst finding solutions to empower others.

The origins go back in history, during the time of slavery, when Africans were denied education and being able to learn how to read. However, when an enslaved person was taught to read, it became their duty to teach someone else, spawning the phrase, “each one, teach one”.

The mining industry is no different, it is tough, especially for women. The nature of the work is demanding; operating heavy machinery and working long hours across frequent shift cycles, means always keeping alert, both for the safety of the individual and the well-being of their dependents and broader families.

The demands of the job are physical and exhausting and include extensive walks within multiple deep levels below surface to confined work areas with higher-than-normal temperatures. This and, in most instances, not seeing daylight until the end of a typical shift. Northam’s Zondereinde mine is the deepest platinum mine in the world and is inherent to these challenging working conditions. Our Booyssendal and Eland mines are a combination of multi-modular mining complexes that are rather shallow and mechanised in comparison to Zondereinde, which provides an added advantage to its mining workforce. We are proud of our employees and their contributions to the company, communities and economy.

Our 2022 Women’s Day event was special. We had the honour and privilege of hearing narratives of victory from pioneering women. Key topics such as unemployment, education, parenthood, career development, gender-based violence, the health and well-being of ourselves and our colleagues, were openly shared and deliberated on. These discussions and stories awoke the giant in each one of us, instilling the common purpose of working together to bring about effective change.

We call on all employees working on surface to appreciate their sisters and brothers who work in these challenging environments.

Please join me in honouring Northam’s remarkable women. Through the “each one, teach one”, philosophy we wish to remind every woman that they can turn weakness into strength and battles into victory, for it is by going through the valley, that we learn how to grow!

**Nametsegang Matthews**  
*Communication Specialist*  
Northam Zondereinde

**each one  
teach one**



# Northam Platinum WOMEN'S DAY – *Celebrating you!*

**Northam Platinum Holdings Limited, across its operations hosted Women's Day celebrations under the theme: "each one, teach one" to serve as an encouragement for women to be ambassadors of change and positively influence others.**

Our women experienced life changing moments through various activities in their respective operations as they marked the South African national commemoration day on the 9th of August. Women were treated to a beauty masterclass and face makeovers to embrace their femininity.

A life coach from the Tears Foundation inspired the women to harness their natural born strength and advised them about what to do when they are faced with Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

The Tears Foundation is a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) responsible for crisis intervention, advocacy, counselling and prevention services for those impacted by GBV, domestic violence and child sexual abuse.









# Studying for success

# Mammule Tshiane

MECHANISED MINER, BOOYSENDAL

**“I started working at BooySENDAL in 2013 when I was in my early 20s, fresh from university where I had just faced the disappointment of being unable to continue with my studies in Mechanical Engineering, due to financial constraints.”**

Mammule was unfamiliar with mining and found it daunting at first. “To be quite honest I found the environment and the tasks extremely challenging but I was encouraged by a family member to continue at Northam, and it has been one of the most rewarding decisions of my career.”

Mammule started working as a PTV (Pipe, Track and Ventilation Officer), cleaning waiting places, and the diesel and oil bowzers in her section. She was then elected by her crew to become a Safety Representative. “Throughout my life, I have always been hungry to do and be more. I accepted the opportunity and went on to study Safety Representative Level 2,” she explains.

In 2016, Mammule was lucky to be selected to take part in BooySENDAL’s first Blasting Certificate Learnership Programme for employees. “It was an amazing opportunity that required hard work and dedication. Fortunately, I obtained my blasting certificate on my first attempt.”

Mammule notes that there have been failures and triumphs along the way but, through it all, she learned that any woman can achieve whatever she sets her mind to. “BooySENDAL opened a whole new career path for me and broadened my horizons. It has been a quantum leap from cleaning oil and diesel bowzers, to becoming a miner. I have many dreams for the future, and I’m thankful for the many opportunities BooySENDAL affords us to advance our careers,” she concludes.

“No matter who we are, we can achieve whatever we want to be if we work hard and believe in the power of our own dreams”





# Martha Luphoko

JUNIOR ANALYST, ZONDEREINDE

**Martha is passionate about science and medicinal discoveries and believes there is value in traditional medicine research. She holds an MTech degree in Analytical Chemistry and is currently working at Northam's Processing Plant Laboratory with over 13 years' experience in the mining industry.**

**“Be the change you want to be and never forget to learn”**

Martha's burning desire is to share her fascinating discovery during the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic when she participated in scientific research on a medicinal plant during her studies at the Tshwane University of Technology.

“The studies on Pelargonium Sidoides, which is used for the treatment of respiratory tract ailments, changed my views about traditional health practitioners. Traditional health practitioners have indigenous knowledge, which is sought after by scientists to develop modern drugs. Linctagon, for example, is found in local pharmacies, and there is a variety of products with root extracts from Pelargonium Sidoides as part of the ingredients. Traditional Health Practitioners' practice cannot be confined to medicinal healing, as it also involves spiritual healing,” she said.

She believes that Covid-19 has taught South Africans a valuable lesson about the different health practices of indigenous and modern medicine. Despite the challenges these two health practices carry, she reckons the gap has been bridged, and the market is now more accepting of traditional medication.

“The pandemic brought a series of revelations prompting us to do things differently. Many people gravitated towards the use of herbal medicine as part of treatment or preventative measures against Covid-19. A medicinal plant called “Lengana”, “uMhlonyane” or “Wilde Als” was in hot demand as South Africans sought relief for their Covid-19 symptoms. A modern herbal essential oil, Eucalyptus oil, was also in demand for steaming as part of the relief for Covid-19. Lately, scientists are researching more about medicinal plants, and I also participated in this research during my MTech studying at the Tshwane University of Technology,” explains Martha.

While on her journey, Martha defines her highs as gaining exposure to a variety of scientific research topics in South Africa through the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Conference, as well as interacting with school learners promoting STEMS (Science and Technology, Engineering and Mathematics & Statistics) education through the Eskom Young Scientist Expo.

“My lows were finding balance between being a full-time mother with family responsibilities and pursuing career development, which is never easy and a struggle for most women,” concluded Martha.



# Ntombizandile Nonabe

MINER: DEVELOPMENT, ZONDEREINDE

“I am a woman who is capable of performing difficult things”

**Ntombizandile (Zandi) Nonabe is proof that female inclusion and diversity is not just a numbers game at Northam Platinum mines.**

After obtaining her matric certificate in 2012, Zandi joined Northam Zondereinde as an Explosive Issuer underground. In 2017, through the guidance of her mentor, she enrolled for a year programme in Human Resource Management to equip her to manage people.

In 2018, Northam Platinum then gave her the opportunity to obtain a Blasting Certificate and she enrolled in a learnership programme. This was a significant achievement thanks to the opportunities associated with obtaining the qualification.

These developments shaped Zandi's career path and her success today. She now has two years mining experience under her belt and is a Miner in Development.



Zandi obtained her Shift Supervisor Certificate in September 2022 and is now pursuing more mining-related certifications, including a Miner Overseer's Certificate of Competency. She has also transitioned to a Stopping Section to gain the relevant experience, and is studying for a qualification in Human Resource Development.

“I have become someone who embraces and welcomes change. I do what needs to be done,” Zandi explains. “This is my mantra that helps me to push when the going gets tough.”

Zandi wants to remind women that it is okay to prioritise and invest in themselves, and to remove the shackles of self-doubt. “When people asked me, ‘What do you want to be when you grow up?’ I often reject the question! I don't box myself into a single career choice – my path is diversified.”

Zandi has worked hard to navigate the male-dominated mining environment, which implies that its success is a by-product of male competence. “It has been difficult, but I have found my footing and I am grounded in knowing that I'm capable and competent. I do not try to compete with men to gain respect, but always strive to be myself,” she explains.



“Refuse to  
be mediocre”

# Khanani Ramoshaba

OCCUPATIONAL HYGIENE SPECIALIST, ELAND

**Motivated by Sacha Guilttry's quotation: "The little I know; I owe to my ignorance", Khanani Ramoshaba keeps an open mind and wants to continue learning for her personal development. These commitments are what kept her going when she was studying for her master's degree in Public Health.**

Khanani describes herself as a strong-willed individual who does not give up easily on her dreams and aspirations. As a young professional in a position of influence, she understands that many people look up to her; from her siblings at home to young women who aspire to be in similar positions. She wants to motivate women to study STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), to acquire qualifications leading to roles such as Occupational Hygiene.

Khanani realised that she wanted to pursue a career in occupational hygiene in her second year at university. Her lecturer inspired her to specialise in this area. A couple of years later, Khanani found herself doing what she loves and furthering her studies so she can continue to be great at it.

"I love my work as it enables me to interact with people and make a change. The work I do at the mine has a significant impact on employees' well-being. It is our responsibility to ensure that employees leave the mine in the same state they came in, and to protect them against occupational diseases," says Khanani.

Khanani suggests people create personal pillars to help them get through life. Her own pillars – agility, hard work, commitment and persistence – guide Khanani to influence change in the mining industry. She regularly enhances her skills and knowledge, keeping abreast of the latest technology.

Khanani has had the opportunity to mentor and make a positive change to people's lives. She has altered employees' perspectives on occupational health hazards through education and awareness and contributed to mining industry's best practices.

With a holistic approach to life, understanding there is no "one size fits all" solution. Khanani says she is open-minded and employs multiple approaches when dealing with different people.

"I have no regrets, as my past has shaped me to be the woman I am today." Khanani also collaborates with other people to find the right answers. She explains, "Reminding myself that I must be 'a better version than I was yesterday' is my coping mechanism. Whenever I feel stuck, I now know it's okay to ask for help and get a different perspective. My partner, Gugu, has seen me through the good times and helped me get out of the bad. Hard times will always be there, as much as we love the good times. It's those hard times that make us better people."



# Career-focused women

# Andile Jantjies

FINANCIAL MANAGER, CORPORATE OFFICE

**Women have proven they can achieve many things and are able to juggle a full-time job, a career and being a mother or wife. Yet society often questions: Can a woman have a successful career, be a good wife and dedicated mother? Yes! There is evidence that women can excel in all these roles, as well as create their own identities.**

Society can judge career-driven women harshly for prioritising work. However, in a male-dominated world, many people are unaware of the responsibilities they fulfil and the sacrifices that women make.



Fortunately, Andile has achieved both professional and personal success. Her most recent victory is reaching the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, Africa's highest mountain, which is 5,895 metres above sea level.

A solid family structure and the support of Northam Platinum have made this possible. Andile is also a wife, mother and, above all, a pillar of strength for her family and children. She recognises the value of supportive leaders and colleagues whenever faced with mom duty calls. When not working 9-5, Andile can be found attending her son's soccer practice, hiking and spending time with her family. She admits, "It is hard to strike a balance between work and family life, without potentially affecting one or the other."

However, she shares a few secrets of her success: creating a work-life balance by being organised, having a to-do list, and attending to the most important priority – yourself! "Women can handle personal and professional lives at the same time. While it's in a woman's nature to create a wholesome and peaceful environment for people involved in her life, she also has a right to dream and fulfil her goals."

What keeps Andile going is the comfort of knowing she works for a company that believes in making a difference in the communities where it operates. She says, "I recently worked on Northam's environmental, social and governance report and its B-BBEE (Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment) report. Both reports demonstrate how Northam uses its capital to create value, and how this value is filtered through to all stakeholders."

**"No matter the setting, I will always remain true to who I am"**



# Juliet Mphahlele

HUMAN RESOURCES BUSINESS PARTNER, ELAND

**Ecclesiastes 9:11 “The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong, nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant or favour to the learned; but time and chance happen to them all.”**

With a career-driven mindset and taking full responsibility to carve her own career path to success, Juliet Mphahlele always goes above and beyond the call of duty, and explains, “I am always open to new learnings to empower myself and build my technical abilities. I am focused on growth and overcoming obstacles that may come my way.”

When she started her Human Resources career in mining at 22 years old, Juliet never knew where that leap of faith would take her. Today, the mining industry is still the only one she knows. “Mining has become a big part of my everyday life.”

“The institutional mindset is why we don’t see more women in positions of influence and leadership, especially in the mining industry. People still have negative assumptions about women that are driven to succeed, based on societal stereotypes. It will take us women to change that mindset, and champion work environments that are inclusive and representative of all genders.

“We have a voice and we can contribute, not just from behind; all we need is a platform and resources to unleash our potential,” Juliet emphasises.

She believes that being career-driven requires a spirit of resilience, especially in the mining industry. Even when you don’t want to push through, a strong will and determination make you keep on keeping on. This motto has helped Juliet navigate challenges in her personal life when she wanted to give up. “I am reminded where I come from which makes me committed.”

Juliet is motivated by looking back at how far she has come. “Nothing is impossible, I am a product of my own hard work. I’ve never received handouts – I’ve showed up every day and got on with my work,” she says.

With a positive outlook on life, Juliet believes if something does not serve her then it is not worth her while. Having worked in different mining operations, she always had to work far from home, and adapt and face changes fearlessly. Her family has been her strength throughout.

Juliet finds the HR profession very fulfilling, particularly when people seek counselling. “They confide in us and while we cannot be everything to everyone, we are always there for our employees,” Juliet explains. Where differences exist, she focuses on things that will build her personally and professionally.

For her, being career-driven also means that you keep your options open, and have a back-up plan in case it doesn’t work out. Juliet feels that she is still a “work in progress” and each day is a building block towards her success, so she focuses on learning and acquiring new skills so that she can become a well-rounded individual.

Juliet has learned that having a mentor, especially in the early stages of a career, is important. She appreciates the sense of community at Northam Platinum, especially at Eland operation, and explains, “You feel like you are part of building something significant.”

“Lebelo ga le na  
motloga pele!”

–This means that when you are in a race, being the  
lead runner will not guarantee you first place





# Emily Masanabo

ENGINEERING PLANNER, BOOYSENDAL



**“As long as I keep pushing, nothing is impossible”**

**“I’m like an octopus. I have my hands everywhere in hope of bettering myself and being the best mother I can be. And when it comes to my career, I keep pushing for greater heights and aim to break boundaries wherever possible,” says Emily, a mother, planner, and entrepreneur.**

“The biggest victory I have had so far is seeing my child grow into a fearless girl who is determined and refuses to give up. The thought of waking up every day and seeing her is enough motivation for me to keep moving forward,” adds Emily.

Emily’s belief in taking up space prevents her from sticking to one job. “I use my passion for planning by also planning events in my spare time. In return, I get paid – talk about a win-win situation!” she explains.

Whenever it gets too much, prayer, meditation, and her mentors helps Emily to cope. “Most of my lows are when my child is unwell, or when I have a work deadline and an event coming up at the same time,” she explains. Emily feels a great sense of accomplishment when her hard work and effort pays off. “I’ve learned that you can get anything you want if you want it bad enough. There is no shortcut to success, but with perseverance and determination, you will get there.”

“Only through trial and error can you discover your true strength. As a result of all the challenges I had to overcome, I’ve learned that I am stronger than I thought. As long as I keep pushing, nothing is impossible with God by my side.”

Emily’s career has transitioned from being a Learner Artisan to an Engineering Planner. For Emily, Northam Platinum is a blank canvas that allows her to be who she is and where she wants to be, with many opportunities. “I adore the fact that there are no limits to growth at Northam Platinum – it all depends on how much you want it!”

# Omphile Nawane

LEARNER BOILERMAKER, ZONDEREINDE

“Do not be afraid  
of the future.  
Build it!”



**Omphile Nawane has always enjoyed working in complex and interesting spaces and is no stranger to hard work.**

She comes from a small village. “Growing up was tough, as I come from a big family of seven children and I am the youngest. As a child, I had little support from my elderly parents,” Omphile says.

After finishing matric, Omphile studied Mechanical Engineering (Boilermaker N2) at Orbit TVET College in Rustenburg. Her life-changing moment was when she joined Northam Zondereinde immediately after completing training. Omphile’s first full-time job was as an Artisan Assistant, based at the Concentrator Plant. She has since built her career at Northam, and adores it.

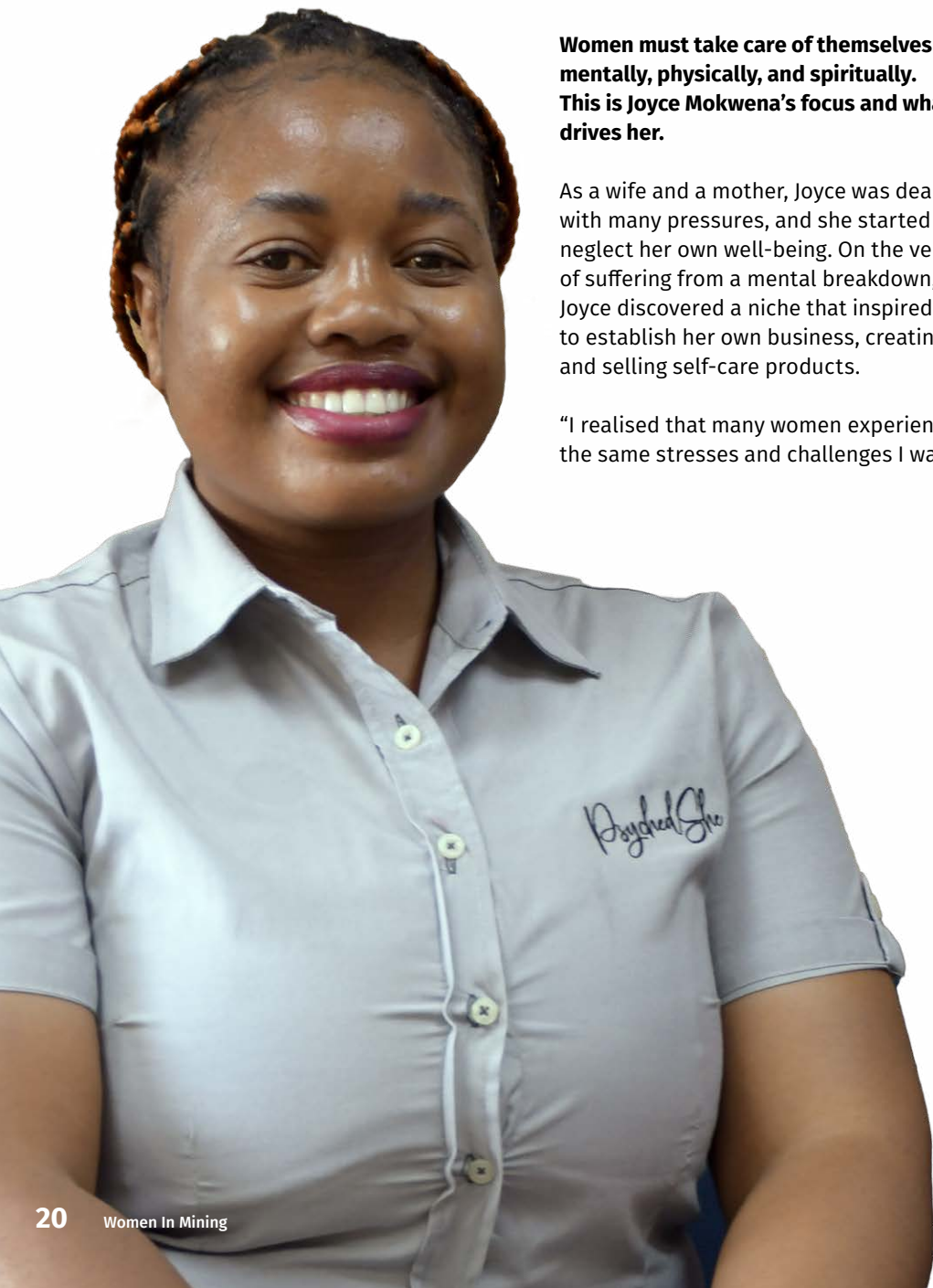
“It’s an interesting career; it challenges me as an individual as it requires me to think on my toes. I’m responsible for my own safety and that of others. Going to work each day reminds me of my responsibilities, which need care and money, and helps me to put food on the table,” explains Omphile.

Omphile’s work includes developing layout, planning the sequence of operations for fabrication, and assembling structural steel. Boilermaking is a male-dominated career field, and Omphile admits being taught by men can be difficult. “Men can undermine you and many believe women are weak. But it’s a privilege to work at Northam, in an environment where we treat each other with mutual respect, regardless of gender,” says Omphile.



# Joyce Mokwena

METALLURGICAL LAB SUPERVISOR, ELAND



**Women must take care of themselves mentally, physically, and spiritually. This is Joyce Mokwena's focus and what drives her.**

As a wife and a mother, Joyce was dealing with many pressures, and she started to neglect her own well-being. On the verge of suffering from a mental breakdown, Joyce discovered a niche that inspired her to establish her own business, creating and selling self-care products.

"I realised that many women experience the same stresses and challenges I was

going through, so I launched my new venture PsychedShe, which means a woman who is excited and full of anticipation. We sell self-care and home-care products, inspired by women who need a break after a hard day's work," explains Joyce.

PsychedShe's success improved Joyce's deteriorating mental health and boosted her quality of life, with happy customers sharing their positive testimonies on PsychedShe products. "I love it when my customers share their videos and pictures as this is my validation that I'm on the right path. Best of all, women are now treating themselves like queens," Joyce adds.

As a strong believer in God, Joyce now looks at life with a more open mind. "Since I started taking more care of myself, I am now a better lover and mother. I avoid people with negative energy. I focus on places and situations where I am appreciated, and this made me give more love in return," says Joyce.

Her family remains her biggest motivation; Joyce's husband is her biggest support, and she uses her life lessons and victories to set a good example for her daughter, who she aims to inspire to be a strong woman.

**"Simple. Luxurious. Lifestyle"**

– PsychedShe

# Christinah Moruwa

LOCO DRIVER, ZONDEREINDE

“The route to parenting is different for each family”

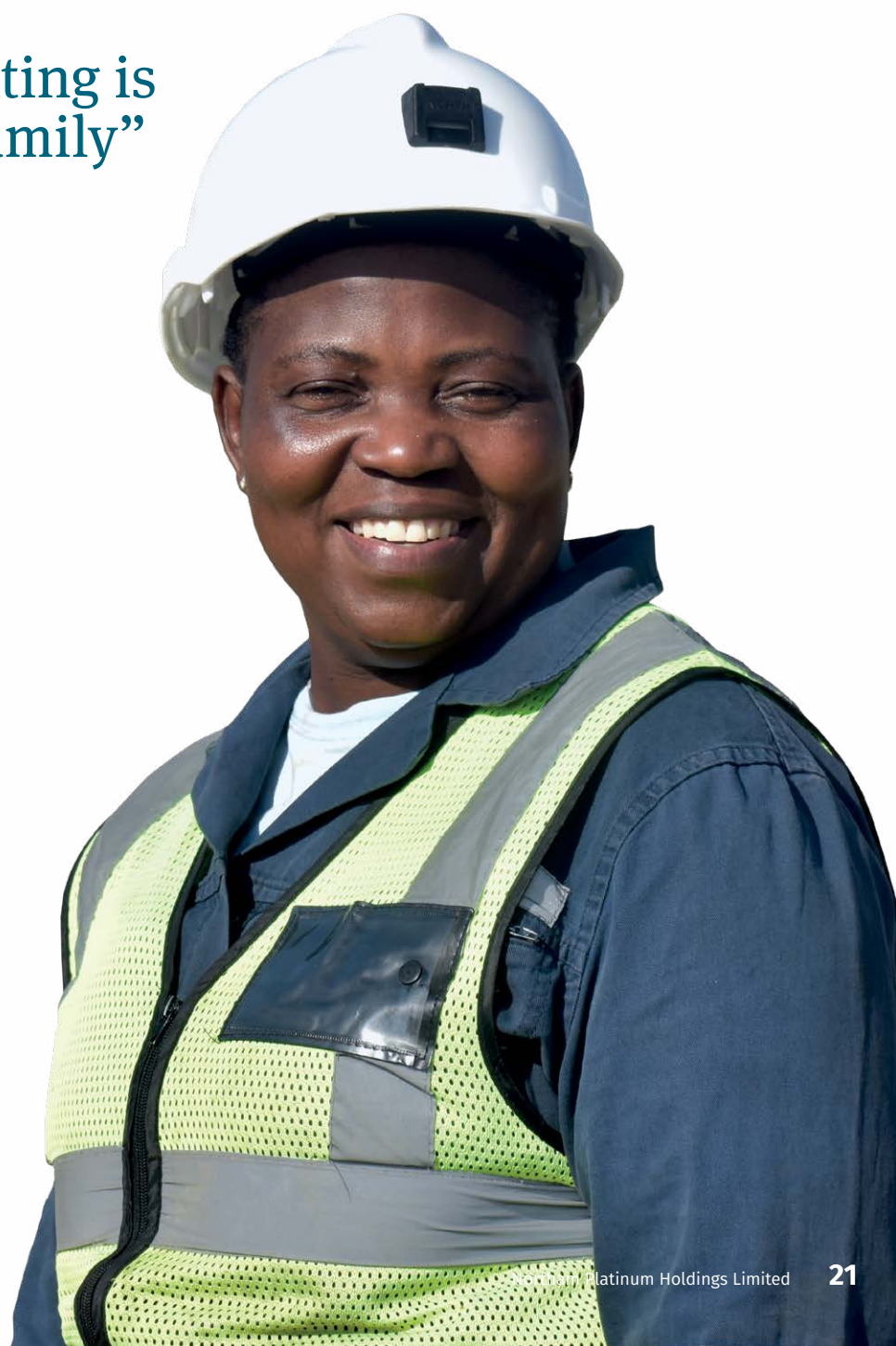
**We all take on responsibilities, depending on the shape and size of our families. The route to parenting is different for each family.**

Christinah, a 49-year-old single mother, has a strong sense of responsibility. She is raising four of her late siblings' children, and has taken on the role of caring for and nurturing them, although Christinah has no children of her own.

With the added pressure of parental responsibilities, she decided to look for a job at Northam Zondereinde mine. As the main breadwinner, Christinah runs the household and takes care of all the children's needs. “I would like to have my own house one day. While I'm trying to make that a possibility, I need to consider my family's current needs,” says Christinah.

It takes courageous single mothers such as Christinah to be selfless in creating a future for their children. As bumpy as the road has been for Christinah, seeing one of her family succeed makes it worthwhile. “One of my nephews is currently studying law, and I'm very proud of him for dedicating himself. This is a reminder to always stay positive,” she adds.

For Christinah, work always comes first. She is immensely grateful to her managers at Northam Zondereinde for their support to her as a single parent and working mother. “I know if it was not for Northam Platinum, I would not be where I am today. I want to encourage every woman out there to work for themselves and be independent,” she says.





# Keneilwe Sanyane

ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR, ELAND

**“We once lived in a world where a woman’s place was in the kitchen and men went to the office to work. This belief is slowly changing, forcing society to view life differently and adapt,” explains Keneilwe, a mother of four children, who has faced her own challenges juggling motherhood and young mother and a successful professional life.**

Raised by a single mother, Keneilwe noticed the biggest challenge for working women was navigating career opportunities and motherhood. “I always wanted to have children and I understood early on that I would have to create a balanced life. I am now a woman who wears many hats; I’m a wife, mother and professional,” Keneilwe explains.

“Working in a male-dominated industry, the perception is that women can only excel in one aspect of their lives. My life proves that women can multitask as primary caregivers and equally make decisions in the Boardroom.”

Keneilwe believes the lessons she has learned both personally and professionally help her navigate difficult situations in life. “As a career woman and mother, one must work twice as hard at home and in the workplace.

I had to put my studies on hold to deal with family issues, and sometimes missed my children’s achievements, milestones, and netball matches. But would I change it? Never! I will continue to juggle both roles and put in the same effort,” she says proudly.

Northam Platinum played an influential role in Keneilwe’s professional growth, from when she started at the Zondereinde operation to climbing the career ladder as an Environmental Coordinator at the Eland operation. Northam Platinum has also enabled her to take time to be a mother. “With a positive culture throughout our company, I wouldn’t have chosen any other place to grow as a working mom,” Keneilwe adds.

Keneilwe’s family has shaped who she is today, with a husband and mother who are “the epitome of a solid support structure”, and she urges women to, “Never give up, settle, or change their dreams – because nothing is permanent. Being a mother and having a career is possible – it just requires a few sacrifices along the way.”

“I am a woman  
of many hats”



# Nomathemba Ingrid Mudzielwana

LABORATORY ANALYST, BOOYSENDAL



**As one of the first female employees trained and licensed to operate the XRF (X-ray Fluorescent) system at Northam Booyseendal, Ingrid is a force to be reckoned with. She states: “I am a woman of strong values; I am important and what I do is important.”**

She is passionate about her career as a Laboratory Analyst, “I am a perfectionist; I not only aim for success, but also work hard towards achieving it,” she says.

Ingrid’s career high was when she joined the team conducting the development and validation process for a new analytical lab technique to assess samples. She is now responsible for implementing a new sample handling data system and conducts training on how to use the equipment. “This remains my experience of a lifetime. It is a real challenge, but I love the responsibility that comes with change,” explains Ingrid.

Ingrid believes that even if you are a mother or wife, you can still have a career and be successful. Staying positive helps Ingrid cope with the responsibilities. “I know I can not control what the next person says or does – but I can control myself and my behaviour.”

She understands that Northam always offers opportunities, but you need to show enthusiasm and a willingness to move out of your comfort zone. “I love the fact that Northam Booyseendal could become the largest company in the mining sector. Being a part of that process is a dream for many, and I’m living it!”

**“Even if you don’t believe that education is the key to success, get the key anyway, so you have the opportunity to open that door”**



“Be yourself –  
every day is  
a second chance”

# Ziphorah Laka

CLEANER, ELAND



**Motivated by working at a shop that repaired couches, Ziphorah identified a business opportunity and established her own tailoring and alterations business. With her business partner, she designed and sewed clothing for special events.**

Things took a huge downturn when lockdown struck, which meant no special occasions, and no business for Ziphorah. She could not provide for her family, and so started to explore alternatives.

A company from Australia approached her and other small businesses to assist with producing face masks for their noble cause. The opportunity came in handy but was temporary. Ziphorah explains: “What would happen once the kids had the masks?”

From being a businesswoman who worked her own hours and paid her own cheque, Ziphorah then found a new job as a cleaner at Northam Platinum.

She is grateful for this offer as it ensured she could put food on the table. “Northam came through for me and my family when I lost my clients,” Ziphorah explains.

When lockdown regulations were eased, people once more approached Ziphorah to make clothes and as business was slow, she stayed working two jobs. With the help of her daughters, who assist in the production process, Ziphorah can once more build up her tailoring business.

“I believe everyone must look good on special occasions or events. With my hands, I create magic, and my children are my models for social media marketing, which will build my tailoring business,” she adds.

Ziphorah has no regrets, as she believes that her challenges made her the strong woman that she is today.

# Gender-Based Violence survivors



# Mosibudi Salome Mosito

MECHANISED MINER, BOOYSENDAL

**“I was working in the Amandelbult area. It was during the wee hours of the morning when I felt someone on top of me, I tried to scream, but he overpowered and strangled me—he proceeded to violate me in the worst way possible: I was raped.”**

This is Salome, who had a life-changing experience when she was brutally raped by a family member, just over a decade ago. Struggling to live with what had happened to her, Salome found love and hoped it was a turning point in her life. “In 2014, I married the love of my life. Little did I know that I would be subjected to another level of Gender-Based Violence,” she says.

“I never enjoyed my marriage as I was physically and emotionally abused by my husband. I became bitter and was angry towards men. I was a miner, leading men, but I was broken inside. I thought all men were the same. I lost respect for my male subordinates, and I lost focus on my career,” Salome admits.

In June 2021, Salome started a course of counselling, and began her internal healing process, with the support of her family and supervisor. “This was my turning point. It was hard to let go of my marriage and abuse, but I finally had the courage to move out. In the process of healing, my peace was restored, and I became closer to God.”

**“Healing and support allowed me to start afresh”**

“Healing allowed me to finally divorce my abusive husband and start afresh. I released the way I thought about men after the rape ordeal. My relationship with my male subordinates improved drastically, and my passion for mining ignited once again.”

Salome has since learnt to put herself first and appreciates the support from Northam Platinum. “My supervisors and my counsellor have played a major role in helping me get my life back on track.”



# Daphney Motaung

MINE OVERSEER CLERK, ZONDEREINDE

**Daphney Motaung was trapped in a severely abusive marriage for almost three years. She was determined to stop at nothing to escape her violent husband, and succeeded finally in getting a divorce to escape him.**

However, the victory of divorce and winning her freedom did not come easy; Daphney was emotionally and physically scarred, with an amputated finger. She picked up the pieces of her broken life, slowly put it back together, and four years later met a partner. She took him in, but he was equally abusive. The new man lost his income, leaving her to provide for him and her three children.

He later found a job at a mine in Rustenburg and while working away from home, told Daphney over the phone that he was no longer in love with her and had moved on. "Difficult as it was, I accepted and respected his choice, only to find him wanting me back," explains Daphney. "He refused to take no for an answer and threatened to kill me with every chance he got. I sought the court's assistance with a protection order, which was granted in July 2017, and hoped it would buy me and my family some peace."

However, the court order made the man even more angry. One night, Daphney had the shock of her life: he had broken into her house while Daphney was asleep, together with her children and cousin. "The perpetrator had a gun and petrol container, and I knew I needed divine help to escape death. I tried to take the gun away from him and a physical fight ensued. I fell on my knees and the man shot me three times. He then turned on my 14-year-old son and my cousin; he shot three bullets into my cousin's stomach before burning my house and car," explains Daphney. The man left and went straight to her mother's house, pointing the pistol at her, with a promise that she would be next.

Despite the extreme adversity that Daphney faced, her story teaches us to never stop chasing our dreams. She channelled her pain into studies, supported by Northam, and has since completed her Diploma in Human Resources Management. Daphney's greatest lesson is to never take to heart what society says about you, "remove yourself from the victim mentality."

To Daphney we say, **"Halala Mbokodo!"**

**"Never give up!"**





# Alexa\* (Anonymous)

ANONYMOUS, (PSEUDONYM ALEXA)

“I’m stronger by  
being a survivor”

**Gender-Based Violence feeds on shame and silence, but Alexa has learned to reclaim her power by speaking out and seeking justice. Currently in counselling, Alexa hopes that by sharing her story she can inspire other survivors.**

Alexa was assaulted in October 2021. She believes that being raped at an early age has made her stronger and she refuses to let the experience bring her down. Alexa explains, “I am not going to allow someone to take over my life. I am stronger by being a survivor. I’ve become more aware of my surroundings. I’m a stronger woman today and vow to teach other women to be more alert.”

Alexa is grateful for her mother and her loved ones who have been a great support system. She regrets that something this brutal happened to her, but she aims to support others. “In life, you need to learn that you cannot trust everyone,” Alexa explains. She pleads with all women to be cognisant of their surroundings, and urges women to speak out against such injustices. “We also need to speak out. When we do this, the hold shame has on us is broken.”

She draws strength from the scripture Psalm 46: 5, “God is within her; she will not fall; God will help her at break of day.”

\* The victim’s name as been changed to protect her identity





# Phumeza Nonabe

CONTROL ROOM OPERATOR, ZONDEREINDE

**Phumeza faced many challenges as a young woman working shifts and as a pastor's wife. She shares her painful past, cautions women against domestic violence, and explains the healing process.**

Like any young lady, Phumeza Nonabe had big dreams. She came from a small town in the Free State, Virginia. Certain choices found her as a 16-year-old mother of a baby girl, without a father taking responsibility, which she describes as a “detour” and an “eye opener”. Phumeza’s loving mother played a good, support structure until Phumeza was back on her feet.

One of Phumeza’s happiest moments was when she joined Northam Platinum in July 2012, which she feels gave her a second chance in life. On her way to work, Phumeza often waited for her father, also working at the mine, to pick her up at her usual spot a few kilometers from Northam.

One day, she was brutally attacked by a stranger, who assaulted and raped her. “I was badly beaten up before the rape ordeal, and after he violated me, he stepped on my body that was lying on the ground and told me not to move until I could no longer hear his footsteps. It left me broken and I vowed to never trust men – until I met my now ex-husband, who is a pastor.”

Three years into her marriage, Phumeza discovered different women whom she believes had affairs with her husband, a pastor, who had also started to physically abuse her. It was yet another traumatic experience, which stole Phumeza’s joy, confidence, and peace.

“The physical abuse became so bad that I had to report to work with a broken nose. I was later admitted to a mental institution for three months and diagnosed with psychosis and chronic depression,” says Phumeza. She finally found the courage to leave her husband in 2018, with the support of her mother and colleague (Rachael Mokoena), only to discover that she was infected with HIV.

Phumeza dealt with her pain and life challenges by looking inside herself to understand how she got to where she is today. One of her life lessons is to never allow an incident to go unaddressed whenever you feel strongly about something.

“I now realise I was an enabler of my ex-husband’s behaviour, and that cost me a great deal. The first affair, the first slap across my face – those should have been my reasons for ending the marriage. Life gave me a second and third chance. I’ve found love again and I’m happy and healthy. I’ve found healing in sharing my story.”

“I know not all men are bad. My mentor and pillar of strength is a man I will always hold in awe. Kenny Mothae, a male colleague at Zondereinde mine, has been there for me through every single heartache and joyous moment. Soon I will be publishing my book “My heart still aches for having lost ‘me’.”

**“Do not stay in that state of brokenness, heal!”**

# Tsholofelo Rakuba

LAUNDRY ASSISTANT, ZONDEREINDE

**South African women learn about rape at an early age and yet many still become rape victims, which becomes an enduring nightmare. Sadly, Tsholofelo Rakuba is one of many young South African females who have suffered sexual abuse. Her dream of becoming a good mother was nearly made impossible due to horrendous abuse and rape at a young age.**

In households throughout our country, young women take on huge responsibilities; heading households as single parents, and stopping at nothing to put bread on the table. Tsholofelo had no choice but to accept a job as a night shift worker, putting her safety on high alert as she relied on public transport to and from work.

Tsholofelo was raped in her mid-20s on her way from work at a leading resort and leisure casino business, while working night shift. After getting off a work bus, she was walking home when two strange men approached her and threatened her life if she attempted to scream. They dragged her to a nearby veld, where she was violated and raped.

As she relates her ordeals, Tsholofelo painted a picture of a life characterised with physical and emotional abuse from her then boyfriend, suffering at the hands of a man she dearly loved and trusted. She was renting a room a few kilometres outside Northam, sharing life with the ex-partner.

A few years later, anxious to be at work on time, she asked her boyfriend to accompany her to the road in order to hitch-hike to work (Zondereinde).

A car with two men inside stopped, and Tsholofelo got in. It then took a detour off road, which made her suspicious. Tsholofelo threw herself out of the vehicle while it was moving. She was lucky to get away, but Tsholofelo suffered memory loss and has had to undergo counselling.

Her biggest takeaway from all these experiences is that one must always be on one's guard. Tsholofelo's gut feeling was telling her not to get in that car, but her boyfriend convinced her that it was perfectly safe.

Tsholofelo now urges women to refrain from hitch-hiking, and to never compromise on safety – no matter what! She left her abusive relationship and moved into safe company accommodation at Northam Platinum, which is an employee benefit. Tsholofelo also underwent medical referrals through Northam's medical aid benefits and sick leave support, until she fully recovered. She is grateful to her colleague Maria Matsikeng, who she says has been a pillar of strength and supported Tsholofelo when she needed it most.

“Time and tide  
wait for no man”





# A message from Paul Dunne

“We are bound by our values and our code of ethics and conduct”



**In our industry, specific working conditions could lend themselves to situations where women could feel unsafe, threatened and abused.**

These threats are real for many of the women in our industry, and those who work at mines in our broader Northam group. These women are frequently sole breadwinners who are working to provide food, shelter and education for the next generation. They deserve our respect and our support.

Nobody should turn a blind eye to prejudice, bullying and violence in our places of work.

I call on all the men and women to be aware, to be vigilant and to speak up. We all need to take responsibility in ensuring that every incident is reported and dealt with.

There is no excuse for abuse.

Gender-Based Violence and sexual harassment are endemic in our society. Inevitably, the mining industry reflects these trends.

At Northam, we acknowledge that we need to proactively support women. We need to look out for signals and situations which cause discomfort, fear, anxiety and pain. Everybody is required to report situations which could make women feel unsafe.

**Paul Dunne**  
*Chief Executive Officer*  
Northam Platinum Holdings Limited

**We will not tolerate intimidation of any kind**

**If it feels or seems uncomfortable, it is**

**Nobody should feel afraid to go to work**

**JUST  
BECAUSE  
YOU ARE A  
WOMAN,  
DOESN'T GIVE  
ANYONE THE RIGHT....**

**STOP  
SEXUAL  
HARASSMENT  
AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE**

*Report any sexual harassment to  
the ethics and fraud hotline*

**0800 152 539**

**Independent • Anonymous • Confidential**

**NORTHAM**  
PLATINUM HOLDINGS LIMITED



# Creating a future for Women in Mining



**“Women in the South African mining industry face a range of challenges, some shared by their male counterparts, with many more, which only women, working underground have to deal with.” Minerals Council South Africa.**

At Northam, people are integral to our business, and are the key drivers of our success. A skilled, engaged, and diverse workforce is testament to this, as we continue to deliver on our strategic intent.

Diversity in the mining sector has become increasingly important. Although there have been great strides in women participating across all spheres in mining, the inherent challenges and limitations within the sector persist.

Women in mining, where a patriarchal and sexist culture is prevalent, face numerous challenges – particularly in South Africa.

Women experience varying forms of harassment, including assault, verbal abuse, and even rape. Mining presents its own challenges and makes the working environment even more difficult. The women working underground are of childbearing age and this naturally has broader implications in terms of their personal well-being.

Pregnant women cannot work underground. It is essential that this stance is recognised across the industry, for both the health and safety of mother and unborn child. We continuously call on all women to

## “We at Northam are committed to supporting and protecting women in mining”

report their pregnancies to the company. As a people business, we will not tolerate any form of discrimination toward pregnant women. As a company, we have also made great strides, providing our women with meaningful and sustainable maternity benefits, as well as enhancing our range of protective, personal equipment. This to enable our women to perform their work in relative comfort while still being safe.

“South African women have played a key role in above-ground mining positions, long before they were legally allowed to work underground in 1996” Minerals Council South Africa.

We at Northam are committed to supporting and protecting women in mining. We partner with the Minerals Council South Africa through participation in the “Women in Mining Leadership Forum” (WiMLF). This to increase representation and development for women in the industry.

We have well-established diversity and inclusive training programmes at Northam. Through these programmes, we continue to develop the skills and capabilities of our people. We stand proud of this, and the role we play in the sector. Our code of ethics and conduct (code), embodies our commitment to operate our business in accordance with all applicable laws, rules and regulations. Our policies and procedures, align with our code, and demonstrates that our values form the foundation of all our interactions, decisions, and

activities within the business. It is these values that underpin our ethical standards, and guide us towards our mission, to transform our workplace and build diverse teams.

We pride ourselves and strive to work towards a more inclusive and gender-diverse workforce. Our efforts are yielding positive results. The number of women working at our mines has positively increased to around 18% from comparative periods, while women participation in the various learning programmes shows a similar trend.

Our focus is and remains to create a productive work environment that is both, safe and healthy, one that is supported by a robust culture, where both men and women collaborate and flourish.

By encouraging more women to pursue careers in mining, we are not only playing an active part in creating a brighter future for the industry, but for our country, and the well-being of the broader South African economy. I thank every woman for being a woman and quote Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, “I have chosen to no longer be apologetic for my femaleness and my femininity, and I want to be respected in all of my femaleness because I deserve to be.”

### **Ncedisa Maqoma**

*Group Human Resources Manager*  
Northam Platinum Holdings Limited

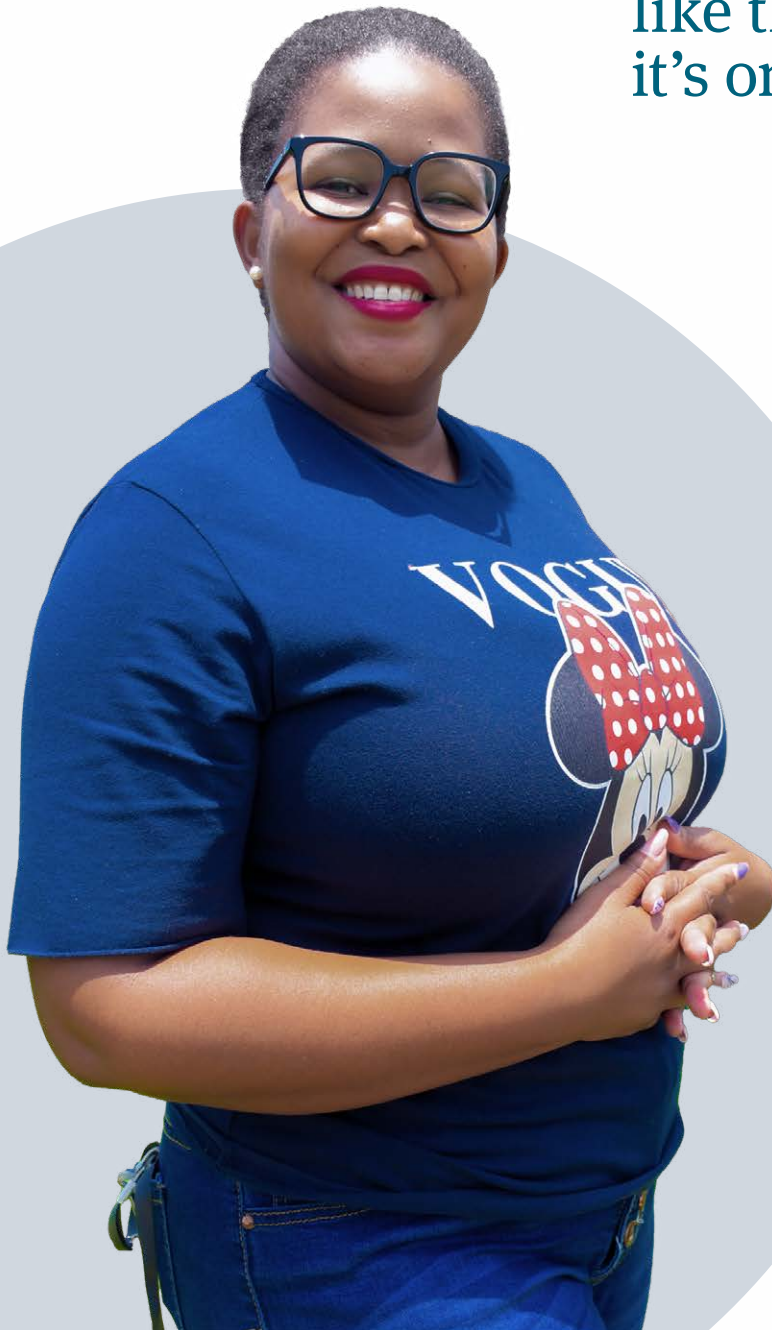


# Hope in the face of adversity

# Bonolo Pico

HUMAN RESOURCES BUSINESS PARTNER, ELAND

“Do unto others as you would like them to do unto you, it’s only fair”



**Bonolo was diagnosed with a cataract at 19 years old, but the doctors failed to find its cause and called it a “traumatic cataract” – a term that Bonolo still now finds difficult to accept.**

A cataract is a cloudy lens, positioned behind the coloured part of the iris, that develops slowly and eventually interferes with vision. Cataracts are more common in older people, and can be removed by surgery. Bonolo’s poor vision impacted her life. She could not complete her university studies, or treat her condition, as eye surgery was too expensive.

With hope in the face of adversity, Bonolo was lucky to find the Association of Catholic Tertiary Students (ACTS) and Father Patrick Towe, leader of the ACTS Free State, who motivated and supported Bonolo. She moved from Free State to North West, changed university and started studying again. Bonolo feels this change of scenery brought about her recovery, even though she needs professional counselling.

She has also learned a lot about eye health and has since taken different direction in life, which she now believes was God’s plan. “My experience completely changed how I look at life: it has made me stronger, and taught me to love myself and to take care of every aspect of my health,” explains Bonolo. She has no regrets, and has learned that even through unexpected things happen, they can make you stronger and a living testimony to your inner strengths. Bonolo values most the support and care from her colleagues at Northam Platinum. “We work with integrity,” she explains, adding that she loves the diversity at the company.





“Mind over matter, take one day at a time”

# Jenesca Coetzee

HUMAN RESOURCES BUSINESS PARTNER, ZONDEREINDE

**As difficult as it was for her to speak openly about her painful health journey, Jenesca Coetzee, a mother of two, bravely shares her story in the hope that it will change more lives.**

Jenesca is a young mother and wife, who enjoys balancing work and leisure and participating in short and long distance marathons to keep healthy and fit. Little did she know that soon she will be unable to do what she enjoyed, including looking after her newborn baby.

Her nightmare started shortly after giving birth. Barely a month later, Jenesca had trouble walking, let alone doing any normal routine. Jenesca's mother stepped in to look after the newborn, while the new mother underwent many health checks and tests. A specialist doctor finally diagnosed Jenesca with chronic lung disease and a rare autoimmune disease. Even if she is lucky enough to get back to normal life, or simply survive, Jenesca was told

that she could never run long distance marathons again. However, with hard work and a positive mindset, she entered for a half marathon in 2022. “I’m no longer aiming to run in a certain time; being able to take part is good enough for me.”

Jenesca appreciates that underlying stress is a hindrance to healthy living, and that your life can change in an instant. She now teaches others that every day is a blessing. “I am reminded to be thankful for the little things. Disaster can strike anyone at any time and does not care if you come from a point of privilege.”

She has also learned to carry positivity throughout her life journey, and to surround herself with love and great family support. “In my experience, positive thinking has allowed me to take control of my health and mental state,” she explains.

While working for a caring company such as Northam Platinum, Jenesca's condition has been treated with the utmost care, particularly during the heightened Covid-19 pandemic, when many employees with comorbidity were allowed to work from home to mitigate the risk of their exposure to the pandemic.

# Kgaugelo Salom Selala

MECHANISED MINER, BOOYSENDAL

**“When I was in Grade 12, my mind was set on becoming a surgeon. I was told that I wouldn’t make it because I am too slow, and patients would die during the operation. My dream was shattered, because I also could not afford tuition fees.” So Kgaugelo Salom decided to pursue a career in the mining industry.**

To encourage more women to join the mining industry, Kgaugelo wanted to share her thoughts on being “career driven”.

“When you set yourself a personal goal, you must focus and fuel your passion until you succeed. Second options sometimes are the most viable option; never be discouraged, no matter how things may look.”

After she passed her matric, Kgaugelo enrolled in N3 Metalliferous Mining. “Two years later, I got the opportunity to become a Learner Miner at Everest Platinum (now Booyseendal South Mine). I obtained a Blasting Certificate and became a Mechanised Miner, a position I still hold today.”

Kgaugelo credits her late mother for teaching her to treat everyone with respect, in order to receive respect. She believes this approach has helped her greatly in her career, especially as a supervisor in a male-dominated field and has vowed to prioritise her job and work smart.

As a Northam employee, Kgaugelo is grateful for the equal opportunities for all. “It’s an honour for me to be a woman in the mining industry. Women in supervisory roles may find it challenging to deal with men, but I encourage women to persevere,” says Kgaugelo.

**“Women are more capable than society has made them believe”**



# Pumeza Matiyela

COMMODITY SPECIALIST, NORTHAM GROUP SERVICES

**Every generation experiences single parenting, yet very few people acknowledge the strength, determination, positiveness, and success of most single parents.**

In the olden days, the spirit of “ubuntu” was still alive. It took a whole village to raise a child, and single parents never felt the burden of raising their children alone because help was always available in the community – from grandparents to; aunts, uncles and neighbours. Everyone was willing to help.

Pumeza believes that nowadays single parenting has become a serious challenge, because there is no support structure. “If you are a single parent, you are on your own. You are expected to be emotionally stable, yet no-one is willing to assist you emotionally. Financially, you are on your own, because the other partner or their family are not assisting you.

“At times your situation demands that you leave your children to earn for them, but it’s not safe to leave them by themselves. We cannot trust our own families, let alone neighbours, because chances are your children become exposed to abuse,” explains Pumeza.

And when it comes to relationships, you are at risk as people tend to take advantage of your situation.

Pumeza remembers begging the father of her child to be involved in their son’s life, but he never got involved; she will never be able to force him to be present. When she was unemployed, Pumeza had to sell her clothes to have enough money for rent and food for the month. She missed job opportunities as she could not move in the middle of the year as that would have affected her son at school.

Through it all, Pumeza learned and understood the true meaning of love, “I can say without doubt that my child loves me unconditionally and I love him equally, if not more,” she says. She learned to be humble and selfless, to balance life, and to survive with the little she had. Pumeza’s son is her motivator; he makes her fight every day, so she can win.

Pumeza understands that many people face difficulties in life, yet we often fail to try to understand why they act in a certain way. She is now more patient with people than before. “Life did not give me any options to sit and feel pity for myself, every day I had to show up and be a parent. I had to be my own support, my own counsellor, and my own financial support,” she says.

“The day I accepted that this journey was mine alone and that it was for my own personal growth, I stopped expecting anything from anyone and accepted the challenge. It has been a journey and I can joyfully say I am a victor”, explains Pumeza.

She has no room for regrets; what she went through has made her a better and stronger person, and she believes that she would choose her life all over again. “I have definitely grown professionally and personally since I joined Northam Platinum.”



“Be a blessing: be it by sharing a smile, a kind word, a helping hand – contribute positively to others, without expecting anything back”



# Tanya Greyling

ELECTRICIAN, ZONDEREINDE

**As a transgender woman in the mining industry, Tanya has faced her fair share of difficulties and scrutiny. However, her willingness to embrace herself and stay true to who she is has propelled her to shine more brightly.**

At eight years old, Tanya realised she was different, but it took a while for her to truly live the life she wanted. At the age of 39, Tanya transitioned, and that came at a cost of losing her job and family. "I came to a crossroads: either transition or end my life," says Tanya.



"I was fired from my old job on allegations of sexual harassment for using the female toilets. This came after I submitted a letter from the doctor stating that I am transsexual," she recalls. Although the case was settled, Tanya's employer at the time said she was an embarrassment; she was called names and treated as less than human.

Years later, Tanya has managed to find inner peace after transitioning. She describes the journey of finding herself as filled with tears: some happy, and some full of hurt and sorrow. "It's a hard life, and one I don't wish on my worst enemy. It takes a brave, strong person to walk this path. But if I had to do it all again, I would," explains Tanya.

Although her voyage to self-discovery was not all roses, not all was lost. "Throughout this process, I'm grateful to Rita, the love of my life, for standing beside me during challenging times. She is my pillar of strength," says Tanya, who is also grateful to work at Northam Platinum, as her colleagues and the company embrace her diversity.

In her fierceness, Tanya is a lover of life and to all those going through a similar journey sends a message of staying strong and true to yourself: "It is worth every insult and tears to have inner peace."

**"Love me, hate me,  
once you meet me, you  
will never forget me"**

# Zanele Sithole

DIESEL MECHANIC ASSISTANT, BOOYSENDAL

“Life goes on”

**For many women, pregnancy is a natural part of life. Sometimes it can be a scary and an unusual experience, especially when your line of work is male-dominated and in hazardous conditions. This is Zanele’s story.**

When she found out she was pregnant, she began to have reservations about reporting it to work. “I was scared to report my pregnancy, because I thought I would lose my job and salary.” To add to her doubts and uncertainties, Zanele did not want to worry her mother. “I’m the breadwinner and I didn’t want my mother to be stressed,” she explains.

With the help of her doctor, Zanele alerted Human Resources Department, which managed her maternity leave application process in a professional manner. “After I got my first pay while I was on maternity leave, I was so happy and so relieved, and all my discomfort went. During my pregnancy journey, my faith in God kept me going. I’m a firm believer in the saying: ‘We may plan, but God decides.’”

She encourages all women to report their pregnancy on time. “I reported my pregnancy when I was nearing the end of my second trimester. We should not feel guilty for falling pregnant: It is a natural part of life. I am now a proud mother of a healthy baby girl called Lethabo.” Zanele adds, “I love working at Northam Booysendal, because it has a fair remuneration strategy. I also received support during my pregnancy and when I was on maternity leave.”





“Nothing changes  
until your mind  
changes”

# Thandokazi Bareileng

DATA CAPTURE CLERK, BOOYSENDAL

**Motherhood plays a critical role in family dynamics: each one of us is here, because of a mother. And as a mother, we can love, care, and show compassion – even when we face difficult trials.**

“I’m a mother to two boys aged six and nine. My youngest was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes when he was just 18 months. Type 1 diabetes is a condition in which your immune system destroys insulin-making cells in your pancreas. These are called beta cells, and the condition is usually diagnosed in children and young people,” explains Thandokazi.

For Thandokazi, her lowest point was when her son was in ICU for a month due to DKA (Diabetic Ketoacidosis – a serious complication of diabetes that can be life-threatening). She could not see him due to Covid-19 regulations and admits, “It was the hardest time of my life.”

Despite his chronic condition, Thandokazi’s son never lets anything stand in his way. “He’s been admitted to the hospital more than three times, but he always finds a way to accept his situation.”

“His experience and condition have taught me that life will throw trials and obstacles along the way, but how you deal with them is up to you,” says Thandokazi.

“As a mother, the joy of my children consistently telling me how wonderful I am, and how they love and show appreciation, is the one of my highlights. They’ve changed my outlook on life, as they have taught me to accept that it is okay to express emotions, and to not be afraid to show love and be myself. I have also learned that in everything I do helps to shape my children as they grow, and what I do affects them mentally, physically, and spiritually.”

“The Bible has always been the book where I find help, because it gives wisdom and knowledge.” For Thandokazi, seeing her son fighting for his life has also kept her going, “My husband and family stood by me and were supportive,” she adds.

Healthy  
body,  
healthy  
mind



# Cindy Rossouw

IT COORDINATOR – CORPORATE GOVERNANCE, NORTHAM GROUP SERVICES

**Cindy Rossouw believes being healthy in body, mind and spirit should be a lifestyle, and takes care of herself for her own self-esteem and image. She feels looking after our physical and emotional health is key to reducing stress and preventing burnout in our professional and personal lives.**

“I realised that an unhealthy work-life balance influenced my emotional well-being, relationships, and eventually, my health,” explains Cindy, who understands how women can get bogged down with work and family responsibilities. She believes that we should make time for ourselves to be healthy in body and mind and give back to others.

Cindy has overcome health challenges including miscarriages, Bell’s palsy, cancer scares and a life-threatening oesophagus surgery. During times of anxiety, her family and local church encouraged and strengthened her faith.

She was determined to regain her health, restore her self-image and in the process, lost 15 kg of body weight and gained confidence. Recovering from her setbacks means Cindy can now live a purposeful life, contribute to her loved ones, society, and her workplace, and feel fulfilled.

Cindy now feels she has a quality life, social well-being, and a positive outlook. Her ultimate high was when she completed a 21km race, but unfortunately soon after, she tore her tendon. “Recovery and life itself are a process of achievements and setbacks, what is important is to always get up and continue the journey,” she says.

This year, Cindy celebrates 20 years at Northam Platinum. She started at the Payroll, in the Finance Department, then later joined the IT Department and recently obtained a Diploma in Information Systems Management.

“Northam is not just an employer – Northam is family. It has been a very secure working and living environment for me and my family, and I’m happy to announce that I’ve just bought a home, thanks to Northam Platinum’s ongoing assistance.”

“For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted”





“It’s never too late to positively influence other people’s lives”

# Lebo Malgas

HUMAN RESOURCES BUSINESS PARTNER,  
PROCESSING, ZONDEREINDE

**When Lebo is not dealing with employee matters and employee well-being at work, she sells natural health products in her spare time.**

Believing that it’s never too late to positively influence other people’s lives, Lebo is creating awareness about sea moss, a great natural health product that boosts the immune system; it contains 92 of the 102 minerals that the body needs.

Lebo believes it is important to create additional income to support the high cost of living in South Africa. Selling Esylife products helps her achieve financial freedom, while saving lives.

She speaks with passion in her eyes when she talks about the wonders of being financially free, while helping others. “We’re living in uncertain times and creating multiple streams of income to supplement your lifestyle is liberating,” says Lebo.

Without making one medicinal approach less important than the other, Lebo highlights the importance of indigenous medicine over modern medicine. Indigenous medicines are comprised of plants and plant extracts to treat diseases, while modern drugs were originally extracted from plant sources, and now produced synthetically.

Lebo has one regret – she wishes she had learnt about more natural health products earlier, and saved more lives in the process.

# Suelen “Sue” Malomane

LABORATORY ANALYST, BOOYSENDAL

**“From 2014, I experienced episodes that almost led me to depression; I’d run out of breath and collapse out of nowhere. I was then told I had a calling, and this led me to become a healer (*intwaso* – both traditional and spiritual). I learned about indigenous medicine, and how to dig, prepare and administer it. Fortunately, I also understood modern medicine.”**

Sue highlights that traditional medicine co-exists with modern medicine; the difference is that traditional medicine is administered pure, without other components added (spirituality is used). Modern medicine is prepared using instruments to assist in grinding and packaging, and is scientifically tested.

For Sue, the opportunity to learn about indigenous medicines and their purposes, and the process of healing others during consultations, was a positive experience. She says, “I studied indigenous medicine in the traditional way, and I relate better to it. However, I also realised that the process required lots of money, which I didn’t have.”

“And I’ve no regrets, both my husband and grandmother motivated me. My journey from being initiated, to becoming a Sangoma, to then being a Christian, is more than a victory for me,” explains Sue.

Sue chose to become an *intwaso* healer as it can be particularly helpful for women’s health, and she wanted to educate them about traditional medicine, herbs, and the benefits of using such medicines. In Sue’s experience, both medicines work and can save lives. But she advises women: “Be aware of both medicines, so you are able to purchase from shops, rather than consulting.”

Sue is grateful to work for a company that believes in nature conservation and sustainability. She also feels fortunate that Northam has been there as part of her journey to Christianity, and that she works for a company that is invested in upskilling its employees through internships, learning and development programmes.

She has learned to be humble, forgiving, strong and to be her own person. “I’ve learned to not lean so much on others,” Sue adds.

**“I’m my own person now and I’ve learned not to lean on others”**





# Nonhlanhla Madonsela

ELECTRICIAN, ELAND

“Keep your eyes on the prize. Every day is a second chance and tomorrow is another day”

**Nonhlanhla Madonsela is a health and fitness enthusiast, who has participated in and completed five of the largest and longest-standing gruelling ultramarathons in the world, and the Comrades Marathon.**

She enjoys running and exercising as part of improving her overall well-being, and believes that her healthy lifestyle has kept her from falling ill.

“Every journey to becoming a better version of yourself starts with you. A healthy lifestyle is my highest blessing, and I do not take it for granted. Taking care of myself and prioritising my mental strength is also a source of happiness for me,” Nonhlanhla explains.

Her love for running started in 2015 and swiftly became a fundamental part of her life. “I developed healthier eating habits, which boosted my confidence, as well as my physical and mental well-being. I always tell myself that food is fuel, not therapy,” she adds.

A year later, Nonhlanhla entered her first 90km Comrades Marathon, which she completed at a running time of 9 hours and 44 minutes. Her latest addition to the Comrade accolade was in August 2022.

Nonhlanhla is now a member of the Northam Wolverines Running Club, which has encouraged her to take on new challenges, “I’m treated with respect, given daily encouragement, and I feel valued for what I bring to the club,” she says, adding, “My goals are bigger than my obstacles; where some people see barriers, I see opportunities. For example, running gives me opportunities to increase my physical, mental and emotional well-being.”

As a single mother raising two boys, life is not always easy but Nonhlanhla remains positive. “The journey to becoming a better version of yourself requires discipline, consistency, effort and patience. Consistency is what transforms average into excellence,” she says.



# Plantinah Mashishi

LABORATORY ANALYST, BOOYSENDAL

“My relationship with food has become healthier and has given me a positive outlook on life”

**After giving birth to her first child, Plantinah gained weight, which motivated her to try different diets. As part of this process, Plantinah learned more about nutrition, what she was consuming and the benefits of eating healthily.**

“Eating the right food, such as tomatoes, avocados, and nuts, and doing exercise, has helped slow down my ageing process and has kept me disease-free. I still look young and healthy compared to my peers, and I am free of any chronic diseases,” explains Plantinah.

“My turning point was when my father was diagnosed with high blood pressure and diabetes. These two chronic diseases are genetic, so this development helped convince me to continue with a consistent approach to my good health.”

Plantinah is happy to have achieved a healthy relationship with food, and now has a more positive outlook on life. She is committed to leading a healthy lifestyle and wants to live longer for her children’s sake. “I am enjoying what I am doing with my health. Just waking up and looking at my children motivates me, because I know they need their mother to live a structured life and be healthy,” adds Plantinah.

“It is a blessing to work for a company such as Northam Platinum, as it is a well-established and successful company,” she concludes.





# Melani Grobler

SENIOR NURSE, BOOYSENDAL

**“As a Senior Nurse, it is essential I maintain a healthy body and a healthy mind, supported by good nutrition, It’s my life and only I am responsible for it,” says Melani.**

“Everyone knows the popular saying, ‘health is wealth’” Fitness helps us to look, feel and do our best at our finest. And what we eat affects who we are – “You are what you eat,” explains Melani. “Nutrition plays an integral role in our lives and directly manifests itself on a daily basis,” explains Melani.

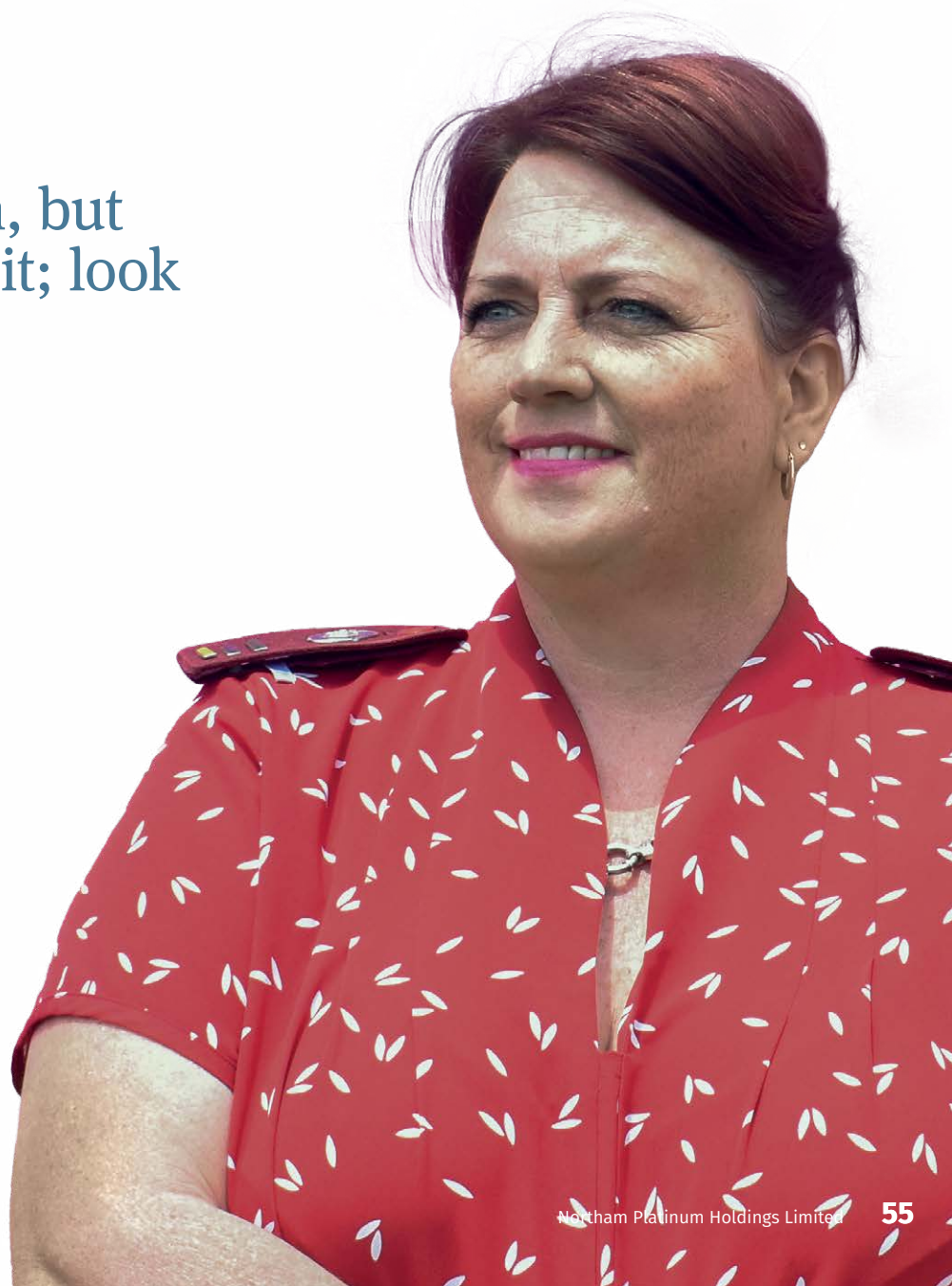
“Health is wealth, but you cannot buy it; look after yourself”

“When I eat healthy food and keep up personal hygiene, I feel young and vibrant, my performance is good, and I can cope with a lot of challenges. But when I eat a lot of unhealthy food, I feel depressed, stressed and I feel unworthy. I resent myself and this affects my ability to do my tasks to the best of my ability,” she adds.

Melani notes that as she grows older, she has become more aware of the importance of looking after herself. “You cannot buy health; you need to look after yourself. Knowledge is power. If you must, use natural supplements and exercise!”

“My turning point was when I woke up one morning and realised there were a few things I was unable to do, such as jumping or climbing stairs without effort. I suffered from extreme shortness of breath (especially after walking fast).”

Melani feels fortunate to work for Northam Platinum, which offers opportunities to grow and encourages employee development. “If there’s something I have learned in life, it is that you should live with no regrets; if you fail, you can always start over.”



# Local Entrepreneurs

# Ayanda Thompo

OWNER, AYATHOMA HOLDINGS

**Ambitious and entrepreneurial Mogwase-born, 30-year-old Ayanda Thompo has made strides in the construction industry.**

Ayanda became interested in running her own business in 2016, while she was working as an administrator for a construction company. “I was fortunate enough to interact with existing and prospective clients, which exposed me to the marketing and operations side of the business. This inspired me to become an entrepreneur,” says Ayanda.

Two years later, Ayanda established Ayathoma Holdings, a construction company that focuses on building, civil works, electrical repairs and maintenance. She formed a relationship with Northam as part of an incubation programme. “I was part of the programme until 2020. When I felt ready to be independent, I sought advice from Procurement, which assisted me with the application process of getting vendors and explained all the requirements,” adds Ayanda.

Ayathoma has successfully tendered for Northam projects, including building change houses at the PMRF, a 6km installation of clearview fencing at the Smelter Plant, and the upgrading and renovation of Zondereinde offices.

“Always remain humble and kind, because you never know what life may throw at you”

Ayathoma is also carrying out continuous renovation works at the Mine Housing Department at Setaria village.

“I could write a book on how much assistance I’ve received from different divisions of Northam; from end-users, to Finance and Procurement. The projects we have worked on have all contributed to Ayathoma’s growth. I’m so grateful to Northam for having faith in me and hope its approach extends to more upcoming young female entrepreneurs,” Ayanda says.

As a woman working in a male-dominated industry, life has not been easy for Ayanda, but she is determined to thrive. She explains, “As a woman, you need to work twice as hard to prove your abilities, simply because society often still lacks faith in women’s capabilities.”

Operating a business with minimal resources and funds is another key challenge. However, Ayanda strives to hire local people and to develop her team by instilling ethics and skills development throughout the business. She wants to expand beyond construction, explore business potential in the mining industry, and become an expert in underground mining.

Ayanda shares her thoughts to inspire upcoming local businesses, “The fundamental of business is hard work. You need to put in more than 100% to keep afloat. Keep in mind that you will always learn something new, therefore being humble and open-minded is essential. Most importantly, shy away from any sense of entitlement, as it will cloud your growth.”







“Put your mind to it and get started! Focus on something you are passionate about, because when you love something, it never feels like work”

# Noxolo Sontie Motswakhumo

SONTIE BROWS AND BEAUTY SPA OWNER

**Noxolo Sontie Motswakhumo is a young entrepreneur and the owner of Sontie Brows and Beauty Spa, a successful local business. She also supports local female entrepreneurs. Noxolo talks through her experiences and explains how she built her business.**

Noxolo set-up Sontie in 2021, which offers microblading, skin-tag removal, facials, nail design and treatment, waxing, and massages in Dikweipi, North West, 40 km from Northam Zondereinde.

As a young girl, Noxolo was fascinated by beauty, fashion and make-overs. Her first big break in the beauty industry was working on a cruise ship as a massage therapist.

Apart from the challenges of intense long hours, strict rules and demanding guests, this opportunity allowed Noxolo to travel to distant places that some people only dream of. Noxolo explains, "I would sleep while the ship was in Jamaica and wake up in the beautiful blue waters of the Bahamas. The opportunity challenged me to up my game in the beauty industry, while experiencing the world and different cultures."

Covid-19 lockdowns hit businesses hard, and restrictions on travel led to retrenchment for Noxolo. "Covid-19 affected me badly and I was severely depressed. I had to return home, from travelling the world, to being locked down for months," Noxolo says.

However, travelling to different countries reignited her passion for working in the beauty industry, and after returning home from the United States in 2021, Noxolo established Sontie Brows and Beauty Spa.

Northam partnered with Sontie at the 2022 Women's Day celebration. Sontie was a selected local business invited to showcase its services, and Noxolo offered customers discounts for treatments.

She is ambitious to grow a reputable business and understands that success is not an overnight quest. "I've learned that perseverance is essential, to be creative in my work and lastly, to understand that failure is not the end of everything, but the chance to a new beginning," Noxolo explains.

Noxolo is not only focused on building her business, she's also sharing her experience to help others. She teaches women in her community portable skills, such as nail treatment, facials, and therapy massages. Her students work in orphanages and homes for the elderly to gain work experience. In her spare time, Noxolo also supports and advises fellow female entrepreneurs who want to start a business.

**We wish to pay a special tribute to Noxolo Sontie for her participation. She met her untimely death before Women In Mining Publication went to print.**

**RIP 17 December 2022.**

# Acknowledgements

We take this opportunity to express our warm thanks for the inspiring production of this Women In Mining Special Publication, which could not be completed without the efforts and co-operation of all Northam Platinum Operations – Booysendal, Eland and Zondereinde.

To all our publication's participants, thank you for trusting us and sharing your heartfelt stories. It is through these stories that we believe women will form networks to support one another; to trust that other women will experience life-changing moments and summon up the courage to speak without fear of judgement.

In closing, we thank the Communications Teams across the company for your commitment in producing a phenomenal publication and fulfilling the purpose of our "each one, teach one" theme.

Let us share this light of inspiration with other women so we can all receive rays of hope from this publication.



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