



**MASDT**  
MOBILE AGRI SKILLS  
DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING (NPC)

## NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2015

### EXCITING TIMES IN OCTOBER

October has been busy at MASDT with a jam-packed month full of training for our staff and our clients. Firstly, we would like to extend a warm welcome to two new directors on our board. Mr Malembe Mtsweni and Adv Geraldine Khoza have joined our ranks and will replace outgoing directors Mr Tevern Jafta and Mr Richard Magududela. Welcome to the team!

Last month we covered the Saudi-Arabian incubator's tour and we were very excited to welcome the second group to our beautiful region, but alas, the translator turned ill and their trip to us was unfortunately cancelled. We were saddened by the news as the previous group crept into our hearts with their jovial and kind nature. Hopefully they can reschedule and we may still get to meet them in future.

For the next couple of months we are going to focus on training as there were a lot of ongoing training programs. During October, Jacob Mkhabela went on a SME workshop hosted by Seda, our Fleet team underwent tractor training provided by Barloworld and Learnership courses in Bushbuckridge are in full swing under Contractual facilitator Fanie Bezuidenhout. Finally, the reader will meet our two bursary students, Lesley-Ann and Justian.

Just when we thought we cannot possibly be blessed any more, the heavens finally opened after a sweltering couple of weeks and I'm quite sure the farmers are heaving a sigh of relief as the rain continues to fall in the Lowveld!

### Highlights

LEARNERSHIPS IN FULL SWING in BUSCHBUCKRIDGE

MASDT BURSARY STUDENTS

BARLOWORLD TRACTOR TRAINING

DR. GRASSMAN COMES TO NELSPRUIT



### JACOB AND THE SME WORKSHOP

Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) have been identified as productive drivers of inclusive economic growth and development in South Africa. Some professional estimate that SME make up to 90% of all formalized businesses, provide employment to about 60% of the labour force and total economic output accounts for roughly 34% of GDP in the country.

Nevertheless, there are a lot of challenges that SME's face, including lack of adequate management skills and skilled labour. Luckily government has placed a huge spotlight on the need for skills and enterprise development and they are actively promoting education and training in this department through its various agencies and institutions.

Seda held a training program on 'Business Development skills for incubators' from across the country and Jacob Mkhabela represented the company. The training program was held at the Protea Hotel at O R Tambo International Airport from 6 - 9 October.

The course was conducted by Seda officials and presentations included 'Acts regulating the small enterprise sector', the 'Economic cycle and its impact on small enterprises' and international small enterprise models. The presentations were done in a relaxed atmosphere and Jacob felt this also gave the nearly 30 incubators time to get to know each other better. After each session the learners were divided into groups for group discussions to make sure everyone understood the facts, and to discuss the session.

Jacob said the course was intimate and thank Seda for a successful and very informative workshop – "I learned that small businesses need to be supported because they play an important role in our economy and in alleviating poverty since they create employment and they also create a platform for skills transfer to the people employed by the small business".





## LEARNERSHIPS IN FULL SWING IN BUSCHBUCKRIDGE

MASDT, funded by AgriSETA, is currently training ten farmers based in the Bushbuckridge area of Mpumalanga. The program aims for agricultural education and training of farmers recruited by MASDT, and events kicked off in July 2015 under the watchful eye of contractual facilitator, Fanie Bezuidenhout. One farmer has since retracted but out of the remaining farmers there are still seven women and two men. The course is an Animal Production NQF level 2 Learnership and started off with basic administration skills like proper record keeping as well as effective communication skills. Hands-on training includes subjects like animal nutrition, breeding practices and animal anatomy and morphology. The course runs for 10 months and should conclude in April 2016. This Learnership program offers valuable information to the farmer to lead their businesses effectively and in turn, to educate their employees so that they can have superior knowledge of production and put forth a quality product.

Continuous assessment of the Portfolios are done by the Assessor and will be Moderated at the end of the learning period in April 2016. Competency certificates from AgriSETA will then be issued to the competent learners. The newly acquired knowledge will surely add immense value to the community.



## BARLOWORLD TRACTOR TRAINING

If it's one thing that makes MASDT stand out from the rest, it is our hands-on approach through our mobile services. This includes the tractor services which we offer to our clients. Mr William Tsheisi from Barloworld's Head Office came to Nelspruit to conduct an advanced training workshop to our fleet division. The three day workshop was attended by BDO's Thulani Tshobole and Goodwill Mbenyane, IT and Fleet Officer Pieter Jordaan and MASDT mechanic and driver – Johanne Lusenga. Our tractor drivers, who service the different regions in Mpumalanga, also attended. They are Timothy Sekgobela from the Piring area, Elliot Nyalunga from Mkhuhlu and our two Buffelspruit drivers – Philemon Sithole and Dumisani Manikela.

The training was conducted in sessions over three days on one of our SCV tobacco farms in Buffelspruit and Pieter said it was extremely interesting to learn about the mechanics of tractors. The workshop delved into the various aspects of tractor maintenance and safety. Some of the subjects covered the basics like the correct way to idle, drive and maintain a tractor to a more advanced lesson in how to hook a carrier the correct way, and identifying implement parts.

The fleet team said they gained valuable information, and they feel it will benefit the quality of the tractor service which will in turn benefit the client.

## DR. GRASSMAN COMES TO NELSPRUIT

Dr Marius Grassman from CTE Water Tech in Johannesburg came to Nelspruit as promised with the long awaited equipment and chemicals to be installed in the MASDT Mobile Laboratory. He arrived on October 19 and gave Collen a quick refresher course on testing for water and soil quality. Nicolaus van Zweekel from NWU and Collen assisted him to install the brand new equipment in the Mobile Lab. Thank you to Dr Grassman for coming all the way and for overseeing the installation.





# EMPLOYEE FEATURE

## Meet Johanne Lusenga



Johanne Lusenga is MASDT's mobile Lab truck driver and all round fleet mechanic. He has been living in a settlement on the outskirts of Nelspruit called Msogwaba for the past 33 years. He shares his life with his lovely wife – Ennie – to whom he has been married for the last 13 years and together they have four children. Johanne is also the Jack-of all-trades at MASDT and if he is not away on an errand, he has head under a bonnet maintaining the MASDT fleet with meticulous care.

**a) What do you do at MASDT?**

I am the mechanic at MASDT and the mobile Lab truck driver.

**b) How long have you been with the organisation?**

I have been here for 2 years

**c) How long have you been working in corporate and what did you do before you joined MASDT?**

I worked for 14 years as a hydraulic mechanic and driving trucks for Edan Trade in Johannesburg. When I was 20 I moved to Nelspruit to join Buco as a driver. I joined MASDT in 2013 as the Mobile Lab truck driver.

**d) What is your experience like at the organisation?**

To work with humble and Christian people is very rewarding.

**e) What's the best part about your job?**

I like this job because we train disadvantaged people and I like the look on their faces when we deliver the seedlings.

**f) Tell us a bit about your family?**

My wife Ennie is a very caring woman and my 4 children are my pride.

**g) What are your hobbies?**

Soccer, Rugby and cricket

**h) What do you enjoy for relaxation?**

There is no time to relax! When I don't work I spend time with my family watching movies and I go to church on Sundays. I also enjoy gospel music

## MASDT BURSARY STUDENTS

In case you haven't noticed – MASDT is passionate about education. Together with AgriSETA and British American Tobacco (BAT), we are currently sponsoring two aspiring young people from disadvantaged communities to continue their studies in their respective fields.

Justian Ludick is a 21 year old from Calitzdorp in the Western Cape and is studying NHCACC Accountancy at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. He is the breadwinner of the family, and is currently in his third year of his studies. Despite it being a tough course, he is keeping his head up and staying motivated.

Lesley-Ann Muller is also 21 and matriculated in 2012. She hails from Oudshoorn in the Western Cape and is in her third year of studies at the University of Stellenbosch. She is doing remarkably well in her BSc in Food Science and even received a distinction this year! We wish both of these students the greatest of luck with their final exams and we hope they will continue to make us proud.





# SUCCESS STORY:

## Ngogolo Chicken Farm



Thobani Lubisi is a young man who has what it takes to be a young entrepreneur. Drive and ambition is one and he started a chicken farm and piggery on 3.5ha land that he named Ngogolo Farm in the heart of the Nkomazi region of Mpumalanga in 2009.

He is a hard worker and though him and his wife – Nomaswati – physically worked the farm and made a living, they only survived. What Thobani wanted to do was thrive. Ngogolo was incorporated into MASDT's incubation program in 2013. After close consultation with the client it was established that what Ngogolo needed was a better market for their product and, because they wanted to farm on a larger scale – more equipment, machinery and infrastructure.

Then BDO Inocent Makuwaza took the project under his wing and while Ngogolo was receiving technical training and priceless information in all the aspects of animal production, our Procurement Officer – Chris Botha was sourcing better quality feed for the animals from Rossagro.

Rossagro not only gave them feed of superior quality, but also through MASDT's connection, gave it to them at discounted prices. The business therefore reduced its production costs which improved their profit margins.

It was during this time that Zanele Mbokazi joined Thobani and Nomaswati. She is a young Animal Scientist who was qualified in Animal Production, freshly graduated, and she was employed as farm manager.

Gallito's was impressed by the quality of the meat and today the farm delivers up to 1 500 chickens to the Nelspruit outlet. Ngogolo is now a fully fledged chicken farm – with the pigs been done away with, except for a huge boar and his sow which are regarded more as pets today.

The chickens are in great condition in their aerated houses and under close supervision from Zanele and her staff. The farm has made a turnover of almost R700 000.00 in the three years during incubation.

Inocent has since been promoted to Business Development Manager and new recruit – Thulani Thsobole has taken over the project. He says the farm is running so smoothly that only bi-monthly visits are done to make sure that the clients do not need anything.

Ngogolo Chicken Farm has certainly come a long way and when they are set to graduate in 2016, MASDT can with confidence say that this fledgling has turned into a soaring eagle that has earned its right to be in our hall of fame of success stories.