

## Tshwane skills programme targets the youth

When Nteseng Mogorosi finished matric in 2004, he always knew that he wanted to be in business because he believed it would give him the freedom to own his life.



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He didn't want to be limited in what he could achieve in life, based on what someone else had to offer. So he enrolled at the University of the Witwatersrand to study for a Bachelor of Accounting Science.

He chose the course because he knew it would help him in business. But unfortunately he did not complete his studies as he had to drop out because of financial challenges.

As luck would have it, power utility Eskom gave him a second chance to study for a National Diploma in Financial Management at the Central Johannesburg College, through a learnership by the entity.

When he completed his studies, he was offered a permanent job as an accounts payroll officer at Eskom in 2009.

As much as he was doing well at Eskom, he never let go of his dream of starting his own business, so in 2011, Mogorosi resigned from his job to start a transport business.

His family discouraged him from starting his own business because they did not believe he was going to be successful in his endeavour.

Even though quitting his job was a huge risk, Mogorosi continued to pursue his dream. He bought a truck which he used to deliver goods to Zimbabwe from South Africa.

As his family had anticipated, Mogorosi's business failed after his truck was involved in an accident.

"It was a terrible time when the business failed. It was one of the hardest times of my life. But, I could not give up because I had a child to support.

"During that time, I read a lot of books about successful people and most of those people who are successful had failed once or twice. Knowing that, pushed me not to give up on my dream. I was 25 years old at the time so I thought that I had plenty of time to recover because I was young," Mogorosi says.

## **City of Tshwane Tshepo 10,000**

In 2013, he found out about the City of Tshwane's Tshepo 10,000 youth skills and entrepreneurship programme and grabbed the opportunity to be part of the programme with both hands.

The programme was conceptualised with the purpose to empower the youth from Tshwane to create opportunities to make a living for themselves.

The programme comprises skills development through entrepreneurship and financial literacy training as well as the formation of co-operative entities.

The programme also provides work on procurement opportunities through the City's supply chain management initiatives and provides mentorship to increase the survival rates of a co-operative and ensures sustainable job creation.

After Mogorosi completed the training, he and his business partners, which he met through the programme, applied for the registration of a co-operative known as Mokopu Group.

In March 2014, the business which offers services in industrial cleaning, grass cutting, pest control as well as supplies cleaning products, was registered.

The business currently employs 17 people full time and 60 people are employed on a temporary basis.

"The biggest challenge that the co-operative faced in the beginning was funding. It was a problem because when we got a purchase order, the city of Tshwane expected us to deliver with our own money and we would only get paid after 30 days.

"Also, the bank does not recognise co-operatives, they do not have policies to fund cooperatives so from the banks side of things we never got funding," Mogorosi says.

He says the partners in the business would loan money from family members so they could deliver on purchase orders.

"When we started, each member had to contribute R100 a month towards the business which we used for transport, doing business related activities such as acquiring a BEE certificate, a tax clearance certificate and to register the business,"

Mogorosi says.

Initially, when the business was registered, there were nine people who were part of the co-operative but four of them quit when challenges of starting a business became too much to bear.

As the country marks the 40th anniversary of the June 16 student uprising, the 30-year-old now encourages young people to start their own businesses.

“If you look at the successful economies in the world, most of the economic activities in those countries come from small businesses.

“The Tshepo 10,000 is a brilliant initiative because many people who joined the programme at the time were unemployed and looking for a job.

“With the education that the programme offered, a lot of people were able start their own businesses because they realised they did not have to sit at home and wait for someone to employ them,” he says.

## **More than 50,000 apply for the programme**

When the programme was launched in July 2013, the city received 52,000 application forms from all seven regions in Tshwane but only 10,000 people were selected to be part of the programme.

According to City of Tshwane Mayoral spokesperson Blessing Manale, the co-operatives that have been provided with technical work have created more than 2662 contract jobs.

“The City has also provided 279 co-operatives with opportunities at a total of more than R247,809,696.71,” Manale says.

These opportunities include the supply of goods and provision of technical work by the co-operatives.

The technical work includes cemetery maintenance, road markings, cleaning services in council buildings, grass cutting services, installing meters, painting and building renovations.

Mogorosi says his co-operative is planning on venturing into franchising and property.

“We are working on starting a business that does not depend on government contracts. If you have a good franchise you make money every day, you don’t have to wait for a tender to make money and in that way we will be securing the future of our business,” he says.

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