

## Trans-Africa Mining

### Platreef offers skills training to people living with disabilities

The Enterprise and Supplier Development Department of the Platreef Project identified a need in its host communities to support commercial opportunities for people living with disabilities. The Project team partnered with leading skills and enterprise development specialists and local civic organizations, including: People Living with Disabilities in Business (LIPDIB); DRA Global Engineering; and Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS).

The objective of these partnerships is to equip people living with disabilities, in Platreef's host communities, with the necessary skills to access employment and economic opportunities within the local mining value chain and beyond.

The participants were given laptops and tablets to access online opportunities and tender platforms. The programme ran continuously over the 2018-2019 calendar year and also involved several accredited training interventions which the beneficiaries all completed successfully, including:

- GIBS Business Bootcamp
- Project management
- Tendering practices and supply chain management
- Business plan development
- Information technology and computer training

One of the selection criteria for the participants was that they should already be involved in business. This proved to be a key success factor in the program as the participants reported that they were able to apply the knowledge gained from the training to real-life situations in their own businesses.

One of the participants, Mr. Jack Masenya from Ga-Magongoa community in Mokopane is a successful business man who owns a restaurant and farm in the area. Mr. Masenya was employed as a mining load and haul operator at another mine in 2014 when he had a serious car accident that left him with brain and spinal cord injuries, and memory loss. Once Mr. Masenya was discharged from hospital and started to adjust to life in a wheel chair, he decided to start a small restaurant in a semi-urban community in Mokopane to help him regain his memory and strengthen his cognitive recovery.

Mr. Masenya was so successful in his endeavour that he was able to employ six permanent workers and several casual workers within three years. He also bought a farm, started a hatchery with lay hens, and established a cattle herd that he is focused on developing into a feedlot.

Already a successful business man, in spite of personal challenges, he found the entrepreneurial development training, facilitated by the Platreef team, immensely beneficial. He says that throughout his life, he had to learn how to adapt from point A to point B very quickly, and views the business training he received as tools equipping him to adapt and grow his business more efficiently. He especially found the training in financial and staff management systems helpful in improving the management of his businesses.

His goals are to become a significant supplier of red meat in the area and keep expanding his business. One day, he'd like to return to the mining industry as a skills development contractor, training young people to become load and haul operators, and make a positive impact on the lives of others.