

15^{of} 100**Kefilwe
Bopape**

Here to be Guiding

**Giving young people a
map to their future:
Unlocking opportunity
through education,
mentorship and hope.**

For many young people, success begins with opportunity. For others, it begins with information. Kefilwe Bopape understands this distinction better than most because she has lived it. Growing up in Hammanskraal, north of Pretoria, she was a bright and ambitious learner with dreams of furthering her education.

Yet like countless young people in underserved communities, she faced a challenge that often goes unnoticed: she simply did not know how to navigate the journey beyond matric. There were no smartphones, no easy internet access and very little career guidance. Information about universities, bursaries and career pathways was limited, leaving many learners to make life-changing decisions without the support they needed.

What followed was a difficult and frustrating gap year after matric. Despite applying to universities, communication barriers and limited access to information meant opportunities slipped through her fingers. Yet instead of allowing those setbacks to define her future, Kefilwe transformed them into a purpose.

Today, she is an accomplished leader, author, entrepreneur and advocate for social justice. Holding an MBA from the University of Johannesburg, she serves as a Non-Executive Director of Exxaro Resources and leads the Social Justice Department at the National Movement of Rural Women, where she champions issues including gender equality, education and rural development. Perhaps her most personal and transformative work is the initiative she founded: Life After Matric (LAM).

Created from her own lived experience, Life After Matric was born from a simple but powerful belief that no young person should feel lost when trying to build a future. What began as career guidance workshops has evolved into a comprehensive programme providing mentorship, tutoring, academic support and life coaching to learners who often lack access to these resources.

Over the past decade, LAM has impacted more than a thousand young people, helping many secure places at universities and colleges across South Africa. For Kefilwe, these successes represent more than academic achievements; they are proof that potential exists everywhere, even when opportunity does not.

What makes her approach unique is her understanding that education alone cannot break cycles of poverty and inequality.

Many young people grow up surrounded by stories of limitation rather than possibility. Through mentoring networks and coaching programmes, she works to help learners see themselves differently, to believe that their circumstances do not determine their destiny.

Her work is rooted in a philosophy of sustainable empowerment. Whether serving in boardrooms, advocating for social justice or mentoring young people, Kefilwe consistently bridges the worlds of corporate leadership and community development. She understands that meaningful change happens when leadership is connected to purpose and when success is measured not only by personal achievement, but by how many others are uplifted along the way.

Today, Kefilwe is doing far more than helping learners apply to university. She is helping a generation imagine bigger futures for themselves. By providing guidance where there was once uncertainty and hope where there was once resignation, she is proving that when young people are given the right tools, they can transform not only their own lives but entire communities.