

83^{of} 100**Dr. Koketjo
Tsebe**

Here to be Humanising

Dr. Koketjo Tsebe:
Trailblazing the way
we think about
sporting performance.

Whether it's on the track or pitch, in the pool or field, there is a groundswell of evidence that peak performance doesn't only happen from the neck down. Dr. Koketjo Tsebe is a pioneer of this space in South African sport, instrumental in helping the country's national teams navigate the pressure of competing on the international stage while ensuring that the athletes carrying that pressure do not get lost in the pursuit of performance.

A renowned, multi-award-winning elite athlete psychologist, she has extensive experience supporting some of South Africa's leading athletes and high-performance teams. At the heart of Dr. Tsebe's work is a simple but important premise: an athlete is more than

their performance. Her career sits at the intersection of elite performance, mental health and the human being behind the athlete, helping athletes develop the psychological tools to manage pressure, recover from setbacks and perform when the stakes are highest.

Her work has taken her into some of the biggest arenas in international sport. She worked with Team South Africa at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games and has served as a psychologist to the Proteas Women, Banyana Banyana and Softball South Africa, among others.

Her experience includes major global tournaments such as the FIFA Women's World Cup and ICC Women's T20 World Cups, where the psychological demands placed on athletes can be as formidable as the physical ones.

The results speak for themselves. Her teams have achieved a FIFA Women's World Cup last-16 finish and silver medals at the 2024 and 2025 ICC Women's T20 World Cups. But for Dr. Tsebe, the measure of her work extends beyond medals. It is about helping athletes remain grounded, resilient and mentally healthy while operating under extraordinary expectations.

This philosophy has shaped her influence beyond the field of play. As Chairperson of SASCOC's High-Performance Psychology Working Group, she is helping to shape the

role of sports psychology within South African high-performance sport.

At the same time, as a senior lecturer at Unisa, she is helping to develop the practitioners who will carry the discipline forward. Having earned her PhD at just 30, Dr. Tsebe mentors master's and doctoral students, contributing to the growth of sports psychology scholarship while encouraging a new generation to see the discipline as an essential part of sporting excellence rather than an afterthought.

Her expanding interest in the wider role of sport has also taken her beyond performance psychology. Through her international sporting experiences, this sports psychology leader has developed a deeper appreciation of sport as a vehicle for diplomacy, international relations and soft power, prompting her to pursue a master's degree in Diplomatic Studies.

It is a natural extension of a career built on understanding what happens when people perform under pressure. For Dr. Tsebe, sport is not simply about what happens on the scoreboard. It is about people and the psychological foundations that allow both to flourish.

**Your
story
matters**

