

80^{of} 100**Xolile
Mabuza**

Here to be Regenerative

From recovery to reinvention:

Xolile Mabuza is turning
discarded tyres into
opportunity.

What began as part of Xolile Mabuza's personal recovery from a stroke has grown into a circular economy business transforming thousands of discarded rubber tubes into handcrafted bags while creating skills and opportunities for young people. For Xolile, rebuilding her life and building a business became part of the same extraordinary journey.

Raised in a village outside Mbombela in Mpumalanga, Xolile suffered a stroke in 2018. During her recovery, as she relearned how to walk, she began collecting discarded rubber tyre tubes from around her community.

Cleaning, cutting and stitching the material became a creative part of her healing process, but over time, she began to see something more in what others had thrown away. Those discarded tubes became the foundation for Tendalo Trading.

Officially registered in 2019 and fully operational by 2023, Tendalo has developed into a circular economy brand creating premium bags from recycled rubber tyre tubes. In doing so, Xolile has transformed a personal story of recovery into one that brings together sustainability, African craftsmanship and economic opportunity.

The impact is increasingly tangible. Tendalo has produced more than 3 100 handcrafted bags and recycled over 10 000 rubber tubes that could otherwise have ended up in landfills. The business has also trained 23 young people in production skills, 19 of them are women, creating opportunities for skills development and employment within rural communities.

What started in Mpumalanga has since attracted attention far beyond it. Xolile was named the 2025 Santam Women of the Future Rising Star and a Woolworths Youth Makers winner. Participation in the Création Africa Programme took her business to Paris in 2024, while she is also a 2026 Veuve Clicquot Bold Woman Award finalist. Through The Earthshot Prize Youth Programme, Xolile met Prince William and created a custom Tendalo bag for him.

Yet Tendalo's story remains grounded in the same idea that inspired its beginnings: something discarded can be given new purpose. Through every bag, Xolile is demonstrating that sustainability can create value not only for the environment, but also for people and communities. Her journey shows how innovation can emerge from the most unexpected circumstances and how rebuilding can become an opportunity to help others build, too. From learning to walk again to taking African craftsmanship onto international platforms, Xolile has turned recovery into reinvention and waste into possibility.

Your
story
matters

