



Top News

- Vumanhlamvu Digital Centre Launch
 - Warwick Junction Economy – Women Enterprise Development Session
 - Sisters Elevation Symposium
-
- Evolution of Women in Leadership Conference
 - Qhawekazi HERkathon
 - Learn to swim programme

The MKRI's newsletter is a showcase of the Institute's latest research insights, impactful community engagement initiatives, policy dialogues, and strategic partnerships. It highlights key events, expert opinions, and thought leadership that drive socioeconomic development in KwaZulu-Natal and beyond.

August was a purposeful and eventful month for the Moses Kotane Research Institute (MKRI). We celebrated Womens Month and our Hero: Mr Moses Mauane Kotane's birthday. We also featured meaningful community involvement, collaborative initiatives, and continued efforts to drive inclusive development. In this edition, we share highlights of the Institute's key contributions, stakeholder engagements, and programmes aimed at empowering communities and strengthening public-sector partnerships.



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Vumanhlamvu Digital Centre Launch

KZN Premier Hon. Thami Ntuli and EDTEA MEC Hon. Rev. Musa Zondi officially launched the Vumanhlamvu Digital Centre (Previously named Nkandla Digital Centre, but changed at the behest of the premier as this centre specifically serves the community in Vumanhlamvu) and Bizimali Digital Centres and the Adopt-A-School Entrepreneurship Programme at Vumanhlamvu Community Hall on the 11th of August.

This milestone is a joint effort by the KZN Government, KZN EDTEA, MKRI, DUT Innobiz and the Nkandla Local Municipality, aimed at empowering the rural community through digital innovation and entrepreneurship.

Warwick Junction Economy – Women's Enterprise Development



In partnership with Wear Your Brand, we marked the 120th anniversary of Moses Mauane Kotane with an impactful Enterprise Development Session for the women who trade at Warwick Junction in Durban. From financial literacy to legal compliance, health & safety to business growth strategies, women traders gained the tools, insights, and mentorship to grow their businesses and sustain the heartbeat of our local economy.

Masterclass - Enhance your leadership: Use Technology & Digital Tools

Dr. Precious Ellenson, CEO of the Moses Research Institute, led a masterclass on leveraging technology to enhance women's leadership skills. She emphasized five key digital capabilities: signal intelligence, decision analytics, using AI as a chief of staff, maintaining a digital presence with purpose, and workflow automation. Signal intelligence involves filtering noise to extract critical insights. Decision analytics simplifies complex data for clear decision-making. AI aids in drafting and summarizing documents. A strong digital presence requires credibility and accessibility. Workflow automation saves time and boosts productivity. Dr. Ellenson stressed the importance of consistent habits and integrating digital tools for effective leadership.

Evolution of Women in Leadership Conference



MKRI CEO Dr Precious Ellenson made powerful contributions at the Evolution of Women in Leadership Conference in Cape Town, where she joined two impactful panels on GBVF-related social challenges and inclusive economic development. She shared insights from her leadership journey and MKRI's work in enterprise development and driving social changes. Dr Ellenson was honored with an Honorary Award by the Wear Your Brand Foundation for her outstanding philanthropic work and transformative leadership.

Learn to Swim Programme



The MKRI "Learn to Swim" programme was launched with great excitement at the Point Yacht Swimming Pool in Durban. Specifically designed to equip Durban University of Technology (DUT) Maritime students with essential swimming skills, the initiative also drew enthusiastic participation from young learners eager to embrace a skill that offers both enjoyment and valuable future opportunities, and has also been extended to MKRI staff.

Qhawekazi HERkathon



The event aligns closely with MKRI's mandate to promote innovation and development within the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) region. In celebration of Women's Day, a group of Female learners from various schools in Babanango participated in the Herkathon. They have been given problem statements based on the three themes and are expected to develop innovative solutions. The key stakeholders involved in ensuring the success of the herkathon include MKRI, Spor trader, CHIETA, and Mthashana College.

Inhlalo Yabesifazane programme

Dr. Precious Ellenson, CEO of the Moses Kotane Research Institute (MKRI), addressed the Inhlalo Yabesifazane programme at 1 Trump Market Hall. Held in celebration of Women's Month under the theme "Celebrating the Power of Women in Business and Community."

She highlighted the resilience of women in the informal sector, who thrive despite challenges such as harassment and harsh conditions. "That strength inspires us at MKRI to champion your issues and guide the government in developing policies that uplift the informal sector," she said.

Dr. Ellenson reaffirmed MKRI's commitment to supporting initiatives that promote social cohesion, women's empowerment, and poverty eradication through entrepreneurship.



Sisters Elevation Symposium



MKRI participated in the Sisters Elevation Symposium at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, focused on empowering and supporting female students, particularly from underrepresented groups. The event aimed to inspire women to break barriers and make a meaningful impact.

Adv. Lihle Mapipa, Executive Manager at MKRI, was a guest speaker at the event, sharing her insights and experiences.

Career Day and Tertiary Funding Expo

The Moses Kotane Research Institute (MKRI) attended the Career Day and Funding Expo hosted within the Mandeni Municipal area. The aim of the event was to provide students with essential information on accessing funding opportunities for tertiary education, as well as to expose them to a diverse range of career paths across various industries.

International Conference on Public Administration and Development Alternatives (IPADA)



Our Research Services Unit held a meeting with the esteemed International Conference on Public Administration and Development Alternatives (IPADA), a non-profit academic association. The two parties discussed potential collaboration in various research and publication areas.

Pictured from left to right are: Professor Ngcamu (IPADA), Ms. Lunghile Mhlaba (Manager of Statistics, MKRI), Dr. Thandeka Ellenson (CEO, MKRI), Dr. Elton Chinyanga (Acting Executive for Research, MKRI), Professor Sebola (IPADA), Ms. Mamabolo (IPADA), and Dr. Mthunzi Khonjelwayo (Manager of Research and Publications, MKRI).

Together, they are pursuing effective partnerships for mutual benefit.

UCCSA – Women Empowerment



Advocate Lihle Mapipa addressed the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa in Groutville on “Women Empowerment: Legal Aspects & Skills Development.” She highlighted key issues such as marriage rights, the importance of having a will, children’s rights, and business opportunities through PTYs, sole proprietorships, and cooperatives. She also shared how MKRI supports innovators, provides access to 18 free digital centres across KZN, and offers bursaries and experiential learning opportunities.

KZN Tech Mbokodo Hackathon



The iMbokodo Hackathon kicked off in Durban with energy, purpose, and a powerhouse of women innovators! During Women’s Month, this 2-day event brought together brilliant minds to build tech solutions that restore dignity in underserved communities. It’s more than just a hackathon; it’s a movement for empathy, innovation, and inclusion. Adv. Mapipa articulated a powerful vision of dignity, not as a luxury, but as a basic human right. Ms Zama Dlamini, Manager Innovation & ICT, was a guest judge at the Hackathon.

UPCOMING

Public lecture on the repo rate in South Africa - 19/09/2025

Growth Fund Masterclass Launch - 20/09/2025

Mpofana Innovation Hub & Digital Centre - TBC

Eita Radio Launch - TBC

Moses Kotane Family Visit



On 15 August 2026, Dr Precious Ellenson, CEO of MKRI, happily received the delegation from the Moses Kotane family at the MKRI Campus in Durban, as a visit to check progress made by the institution on the research mandate, and to bless the new premises at KE Masinga Campus in the city of Durban. This follows the celebration of Mr Moses Mauane Kotane’s birthday on 09 August 2025, 120 years since the birth of their hero.

Left to right: Mr Mike Manikam, CEO of Power Heat Elements, Dr Precious Ellenson, CEO of MKRI & Mr Xoli Mahlalela, the representative of the Moses Kotane family.



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IN LOVING MEMORY OF

MOSES KOTANE

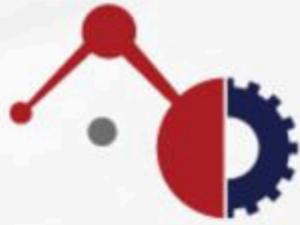
**CELEBRATING 120 YEARS
9TH AUGUST**

**ON THIS DAY, 120 YEARS AGO, A VISIONARY WAS BORN.
TODAY, THE MOSES KOTANE RESEARCH INSTITUTE HONOURS THE LIFE AND
LEGACY OF MOSES MAUANE KOTANE , A FEARLESS FREEDOM FIGHTER,
INTELLECTUAL, AND SERVANT OF THE PEOPLE.**

**HIS UNWAVERING DEDICATION TO JUSTICE, EQUALITY, AND THE LIBERATION OF
SOUTH AFRICA CONTINUES TO INSPIRE GENERATIONS.**

**HIS NAME LIVES ON THROUGH THE WORK WE DO, DRIVING RESEARCH,
DEVELOPMENT, AND TRANSFORMATION IN PURSUIT OF THE BETTER
SOUTH AFRICA HE DREAMED OF.**

**HAPPY HEAVENLY BIRTHDAY, COMRADE KOTANE.
YOUR SPIRIT LIVES ON IN EVERY STEP WE TAKE TOWARD PROGRESS.**



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N A T I O N A L

WOMEN'S DAY

09 AUGUST

The Moses Kotane Research Institute wishes all South African women a Happy Women's Day. The actions of approximately 20 000 women marching to the Union Buildings in protest against the country's pass laws in 1956, will never be forgotten.

WATHINT' ABAFAZI, WATHINT' IMBOKODO!



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