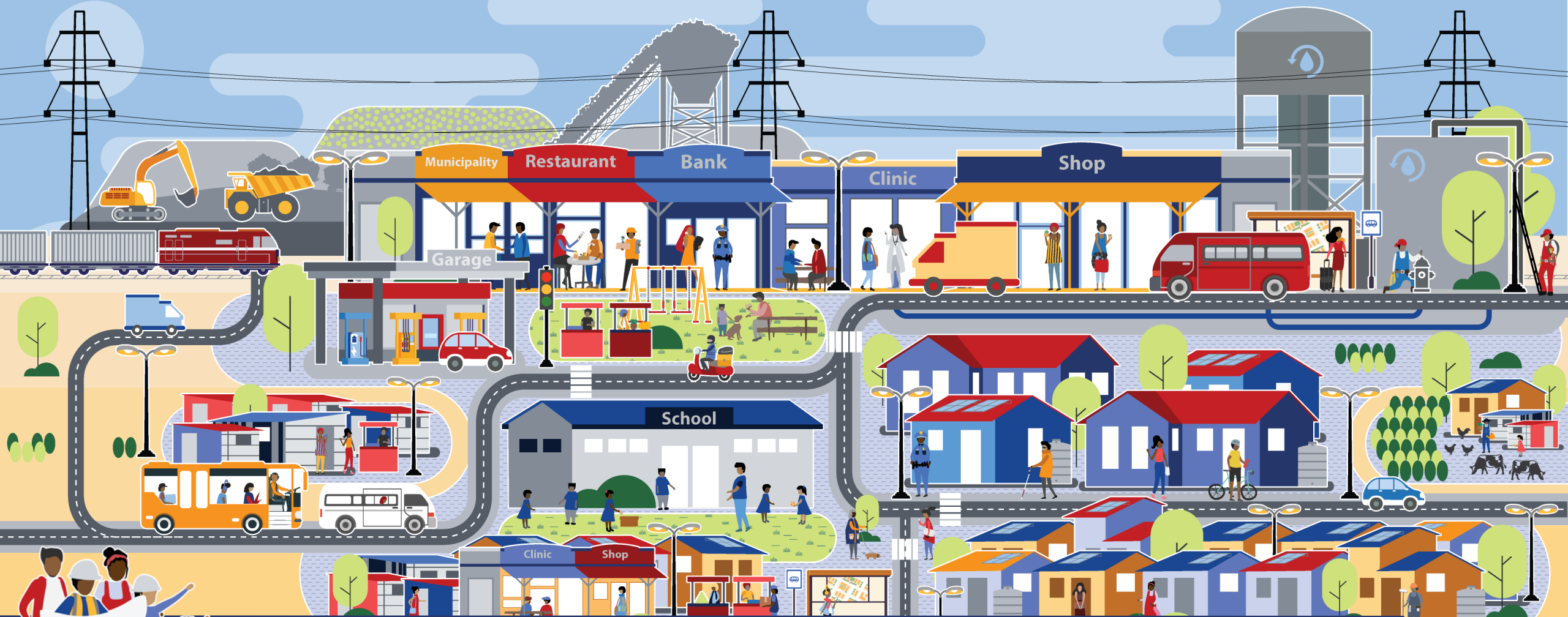




Gamagara Tsantsabane Regional Economic Transformation

24 – 25 November 2025; Kalahari Country Club, Kathu



Background and Objectives

Context:

The Gamagara and Tsantsabane Local Municipalities, in collaboration with the Office of The Premier, Northern Cape, hosted the Gamagara Tsantsabane Regional Economic Transformation engagement on 24 – 25 November 2025 at the Kalahari Country Club, Kathu. The work session, and ongoing regional engagements are supported by the Municipal Capability and Partnership Programme (MCPPE). The programme is sponsored by Kumba and designed to work closely with the two municipalities to improve service delivery and resilience for a post-mining future. Both municipalities are in the process of developing long term development visions and pathways, and have done substantial work in raising awareness and ensuring collaboration on the region's future, to which many role players, work sessions and this regional-scale engagement also contributed.

Purpose:

- To kick-start the shift into collective action, the move from Compact to Compacting, moving from planning to implementation to achieve regional economic transformation.
- It aims to create a shared understanding of the growth and development of **core sectors and associated pathways** emerging for the region, and to identify **the critical enablers** needed to drive progress.
- Importantly, the gathering aims to provide space for role players to work together in **establishing opportunities for collaboration** to unlock and kick-start investment into the development pathways.

Objectives:

- To demonstrate the progress and momentum made through the Compact by sharing the key actions that have been completed since the last gathering.
- Build shared understanding of what it means to be Compacting.
- To share the emerging clarity on the regional economic transition by detailing core sectors, developmental pathways and enablers.
- To emerge with a joint action agenda on the way forward.
- To identify implementable projects that present immediate opportunities to collaborate for results.

Facilitation Team:

- **Lead Facilitator:** Geoff Bickford
- **Online Facilitator:** Engela Petzer
- **Rapporteur:** Elsona van Huyssteen
- **Facilitation Support:** Somila Rozani & Themba Ndwene



- For background on the regional compacting, click [here](#).
- For the downloadable summary of a regional development pathway, click [here](#).
- For more information on the MCPPE, click [here](#).

Participants

Municipalities	Mining Sector	Renewable Energy Sector	National & Provincial Departments	Other
- Lebogang Seetile (Gamagara Local Municipality) - Marco Marks (Gamagara Local Municipality) - Othusitse Melokwe (Gamagara Local Municipality) - Ditebogo Sebuasengwe (Gamagara Local Municipality) - Edward Smith (Gamagara Local Municipality) - Kamogelo Semamai (Gamagara Local Municipality) - Gaonyadiwe Mathobela (Tsantsabane Local Municipality) - Mack Jacobs (Tsantsabane Local Municipality) - Simozana Mdala (Tsantsabane Local Municipality) - Phuluso Giliana (Tsantsabane Local Municipality) - Rotondwa Madala (Tsantsabane Local Municipality) - Boitumelo Matebele (Tsantsabane Local Municipality) - Tinus Galloway (ZF Mgcawu District Municipality) - Ontebile Dube (John Taolo Gaetsewe District Municipality)* - Rethabile Masiane (John Taolo Gaetsewe District Municipality)* - Lindelwa Gaetsewe (John Taolo Gaetsewe District Municipality)* - Dr Gerrie van der Westhuizen (John Taolo Gaetsewe District Municipality)*	- Theodor Moeti (Kumba Iron Ore) - Jessica Seekoei (Kumba Iron Ore) - Keobaka Matilo (Kumba Iron Ore) - Mmoloki Khumo (Kumba Iron Ore) - George Benjamin (Kumba Iron Ore) - Musa Jack (Anglo American) - Vanessa Naicker (Anglo American) - Daleen Botha (Assmang Beeshoek) - Boitumelo Seboko (Assmang Beeshoek) - Tumelo Leeto (South 32) - Keageletse Naledi (Kemore Holdings)	- Mathapelo Mokeng (Acwa Power) - Nomonde Mpetsheni (Acwa Power) - Samantha van der Heever (Jasper Power Company)	- Dr Gerrit Botha (NC Office of the Premier) - Siyavuya Mlwayo (SALGA) - Nondumiso Twalo (SALGA) - Thixounathi Mntoninshi (SALGA) - Lesang Daniels (SALGA) - Lebo Netsisaulu (SALGA) - Thelma Maseko (SALGA) - Nompendulo Kubheka (CoGTA) - Vinny Rabothata (CoGTA) - Christopher Sikhupelo (NC Provincial Treasury) - Nokufa Bocibo (DLLRD) - Obakeng Mareko (National Development Agency) - Phelegetso Mabejane (DSD) - Letlhogonolo Setlhabi (NC DEDAT) - Karabo Masunya (NC DEDAT) - Delia Starr (COGHSTA NC)* - Roy Mackenzie (DFFE)* - Janco du Plessis (DLRRD SPLUM NC)* - Liesel Ahjum (DLRRD)* - Zouna Meades (DLRRRD)* - Akosua Danso (NC Provincial Treasury)* - Nomfundo Skhosana (NC Provincial Treasury)* - Vanessa Wiener (StatsSA)*	- Jonathan du Preez (Futureworld) - Alex Khumalo (Minerals Council) - Lesego Mogapi (Minerals Council) - Richard Pfaff (Tshikululu Social Investments) - Shimmy Macomo (SIOC-CDT) - Victor Chisolm (V3 Consulting) - Geoff Bickford (MCPPI) - Louis Boshoff (MCPPI) - Werner Fourie (MCPPI) - Elsona van Huyssteen (MCPPI) - Themba Ndwene (MCPPI) - Bheki Zwane (DBSA)* - Cassandra Nkuna (DBSA)* - Matlhodi Lethetsa (DBSA)* - Kamo Mothibedi (DBSA)* - Ronell van Staden (Futureworld)* - Juana Hatfield (Futureworld)* - Avik Singh (Infrastructure SA)* - Dorette Loggenberg (Infrastructure SA)* - Engela Petzer (MCPPI)* - Mark Oranjé (MCPPI)* - Pryaska Naidoo (MCPPI)* - Somila Rozani (MCPPI)*

* Virtual participants

ONE: Opening and Partner Inputs on Purpose & Progress

Ms Musa Jack, Programme Manager for the MCPP at Anglo America provided an overview of the purpose of the session.

- She emphasised the likelihood of mine closure in the Gamagara-Tsantsabane Region. She also provided an overview of the significant mitigation efforts, led by Gamagara and Tsantsabane Local Municipalities (GLM & TLM), the agreement reached between the MMs and the Office of the Premier to prioritise the plight of the region and ensure galvanising opportunities for regional economic transformation. She acknowledged the support by the district municipalities, several national departments, and industry partners. She also outlined that these initiatives are closely linked to Kumba's livelihood and agriculture strategy, as well as its social transition planning. She also acknowledge the support for the region's transformation initiative received from the National Department of Cooperative Governance and SALGA.
- **She mentioned that in engagements during the year it became evident that Stakeholders broadly agree on the proactive approach to prepare for a post-mining economy** — a first in South Africa. Government views this work as a potential national best-practice model.
- She reiterated that success depends on the collective effort from all stakeholders. The MCPP (led by AA and the CSIR as implementation partner), providing technical support, shared progress and encouraged active participation to refine the strategy and implementation framework.



22 July 2025: MCPP delegation supporting the GLM and TLM Municipal Managers as they presented the Gamagara-Tsantsabane Regional future development scenarios, to mitigate the negative impacts of impending mine closure.

The official opening was done, and participants were welcomed, by Mr Gaonyadiwe Mathobela, Municipal Manager of TLM.

- He expressed appreciation to the stakeholders present — including Anglo American, Kumba, Kolomela, the CSIR, the Minerals Council, officials from Tsantsabane and Gamagara (G&T), various government departments, and private-sector partners in the renewable energy sector — who have been involved in the MCPP for the Tsantsabane and Gamagara Municipalities.
- Mr Mathobela reflected briefly on the G20 Summit held over the weekend and the positive leadership and opportunities it presents for the people of South Africa. He encouraged participants to consider the work done to prepare for a post-mining future by Tsantsabane and Gamagara Municipalities (supported by the MCPP) in this context and to use this engagement as an opportunity to reflect on (1) progress made to date, (2) lessons learned, (3) how best to leverage opportunities emerging from this process to address community and environmental challenges, and (4) how to build the capacity required to achieve long-term sustainability. He urged all participants to remain grounded, focused, and committed to ensure the success of the programme.



Lebogang Seetile, Gamagara Municipal Manager, acknowledged the collaboration with Tsantsabane and the significance of regional economic transformation.

- He indicated how he, after the initial shock of mine-closure news, realised that it was an opportunity for regional renewal. He thanked government and private-sector partners for their support and stressed the need for collaborative planning beyond traditional municipal boundaries.
- MM Seetile highlighted pressures on services due to migration and youth unemployment, underscoring the urgency of a strategic transition to avoid economic decline. Gamagara has drafted its Spatial Development Framework and LED strategy, focusing on economic diversification into green energy, logistics, tourism, agriculture, and SMME development. Catalytic projects have been identified, and he urged partners to move from planning to implementation, warning against delays.
- He called for investment in infrastructure, skills alignment, and policy support from national departments, noting the G&T corridor's strategic importance to South Africa's GDP.
- MM Seetile concluded by emphasising that this is a generational responsibility, not a compliance exercise, and appealed for sustained collaboration to ensure resilient communities and a thriving economy beyond mining.



Session 1: Partner inputs on Purpose & Progress (cont.)

DAY 1

Dr Gerrit Botha, representing the Northern Cape Office of the Premier, indicated their commitment to collaborate with role players in the region to enable the transformation required.

- He emphasised the collective responsibility of government and private-sector stakeholders in shaping the region's future. While acknowledging the importance of planning, he stressed that successful implementation is critical, urging participants to adopt a unified, team-oriented approach beyond administrative and institutional boundaries. He highlighted the Compact as a platform for integrating diverse plans into a coherent regional strategy, warning that vision without execution remains incomplete.
- Dr Botha presented the Gamagara and Tsantsabane Regional Economic Transformation Framework, linking it to the National Spatial Development Framework (NSDF) and positioning the region within South Africa's post-apartheid spatial vision. He challenged participants to leverage the region's geographic location as an opportunity for growth.
- Key points included:
 - **Implementation Focus:** Medium-term development success will be measured by tangible progress.
 - **Strategic Positioning:** Connect local goods and services to national value chains; develop the Northern Cape as a distribution hub and gateway for economic growth.
 - **Economic Diversification:** Move beyond mining toward sectors such as green energy, logistics, tourism, agriculture, and circular economy opportunities.
 - **Environmental Integration:** Incorporate ecological protection and capitalise on the region's natural beauty.
 - **National Spatial Action Areas:** Respond to transformation corridors and strengthen regional nodes.
 - **Collaborative Development:** Align local initiatives with provincial priorities and national frameworks to unlock sustained benefits.
 - **Partnerships:** Prioritise housing and infrastructure development to support ambitious regional growth.
- Dr Botha concluded by underscoring that strong partnerships and practical implementation pathways are essential for realising the region's economic potential.

For link to Dr Botha's input on the region's role in the NC PSDF & NSDF, click [here](#).

- **Mr Tinus Galloway, representing the ZFM District** provided a clear indication of the importance and value of the work being undertaken in the Gamagara-Tsantsabane Region, and how it has been taken up and supported actively through the ZFM District Plan. This sentiment was echoed by online participant Dr Gerrie van der Westhuizen, JTG – in spite of challenges with online connections.
- **Mr Vinny Rabothata from DCOG**, as the custodian of the MCPP programme and national department responsible for supporting local government with economic development, indicated the importance of the initiative for the Department and the significance of this innovative initiative as a first to proactively mitigate against expected mine closure.
- **Mr Alex Khumalo, Minerals Council** – Ongoing support. Hosted a Mine-Municipal Workshop on Infrastructure Asset Transfer Guidelines, to improve collaboration and sustainability and impact of investment. Hosted in Kathu.

OTHER

- **Ms Nondumiso Twalo (SALGA)** – created a special institutional arrangement to support the regional compacting and align support through the various SALGA support programmes.
- **Ms Vanessa Naidoo (AA)**: Ongoing commitment from Anglo America and Kumba.
- **Ms Dorette Loggenberg (ISA)*** – Re-iterated Infrastructure South Africa's support and the fact that the various organisations already supportive should act as “evangelist”. is providing a key support role, specifically supporting the development of applications through the Budget Facility for Infrastructure in Gamagara and Tsantsabane. Progress have been made, but a “push” is required to ensure this gets finalized and submitted in 2026.

As part of Session 1 – The facilitator requested the group to reflect on what it takes to act and show up as developmental leaders? The video clip titled: [Above The Line](#) was shared and evoked meaningful reflection... do we act below the line or above the line? What does it take?

* Virtual participant

Session 1. Partner inputs on Purpose & Progress (cont.)

DAY 1

Compacting Partner Progress Reported on for 2024:

Municipal Specific

- **Tsantsabane – Draft Municipal Spatial Development Framework** (Developed in support of Regional Economic Transformation), Capital Investment Framework Project Portfolio in support of enabling environment. Developed by TLM with support of MCPP. Council approved for Public Participation.
- **Gamagara – Draft Municipal Spatial Development Framework** (Developed in support of Regional Economic Transformation), Capital Investment Framework Project Portfolio in support of enabling environment. Developed by GLM with the support of MCPP. Next step: Council approval for Public Participation
- **Gamagara – Local Economic Development Strategy, Draft –** Developed to leverage on regional economic development sectors and pathways for economic diversification and transition. Technical support provided through MCPP (Kumba Funded).

Inter-Municipal

- **1st Joint Tsantsabane Gamagara Political and Administrative Leadership engagement on Regional Collaboration** with clear commitment to the need and value of collaborating for regional economic transition, 30-31 October 2024.
- **Awareness raising and training through the “Collaborative Regional Development for Development Leaders”**. Course 1 of 3 Course Series, 30-31 October, Kathu. The work sessions are facilitated through MCPP as a combination of facilitated regional engagement and training for a Certificate Course. This was adapted for the region by the University of Pretoria Department of Town and Regional Planning as a contribution to regional development. Kagiso Trust provides a collaborative governance input to these engagements, ensuring lessons learning from other initiatives.

Inter-Governmental

- **Support obtained from Office of The Premier:** MM's for Gamagara and Tsantsabane on 22 July 2025 led a delegation to present the Gamagara-Tsantsabane Regional future development scenarios, to mitigate the negative impacts of impending mine closure to the Office of The Premier, Northern Cape DG, and DG CoGHSTA.
- **Cluster Recommendation by HOD's Northern Cape Province** for urgency and support for Gamagara-Tsantsabane Regional Development to mitigate mine closure as part of the Provincial Gamagara Spatial Action Areas
- **Implementation of NSDF and PSDF Spatial Action Area and Recognition in the NC PSDF** for the regional action area, as well as the important regional economic role of Kathu, and the important role of Postmasburg as a node anchoring green industrialization in the region.
- **District support** through project and proposal take-up in JTG and ZFM DDMs, District IDPs.
- DCOG

Regional Capacity for Collaborative Development

- **Compacting for Regional Transformation:** Facilitation, Advocacy, Technical support, as well as logistical support f by MCPP, funded by Kumba, implemented under the leadership of Gamagara, Tsantsabane Municipalities, and Office of the Premier, Northern Cape.
- **Collaborative Regional Development certificate** course for municipal administrative and political leadership through MCPP Capacity Support - (Kumba Funded) and EUP, Kagiso Trust, SALGA Contributions



22 July 2025: MCPP delegation supporting the GLM and TLM Municipal Managers as they presented the Gamagara-Tsantsabane Regional future development scenarios, to mitigate the negative impacts of impending mine closure.



30 to 31 October 2025: Two-day Developmental Leadership training session for Gamagara and Tsantsabane political and administrative leaders in Kathu.

Session 2: Our Regional Economic Transition Pathways

The purpose of the session was to share an emerging **regional vision and strategic pathway** for economic transition, diversification and post-mining resilience in the Gamagara–Tsantsabane region.

The material presented built onto the “Hope Materialised” scenario as agreed upon by role players in previous regional, local and one-on-one engagements. It drew directly from ongoing **local planning processes** including the Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs) and Local Economic Development (LED) strategies of the two municipalities, as well as regional-scale analysis, scenario modelling and collaborative engagements undertaken with support from the Municipal Capability and Partnership Programme (MCPP). It also recognizes the plans, strategies, investments and project pipelines of stakeholders as shared since the latter half of 2024 during these processes.

Important to note, this is not a final plan, but reflects work that is still **in formation**, being tested, refined and strengthened through Council processes, public participation, sector engagement and intergovernmental collaboration.

The intent of the work session was to **create a shared point of reference** and engage the proposed pathways, the scale of opportunity, and the importance of coordinated action.

The regional narrative is grounded in evidence and local planning, and serves as a call for innovation and action; highlights opportunities for investment and collaboration; and provides a platform to explore what needs doing, and how we can collectively contribute to shaping a resilient and inclusive regional future.

The presenters for the session was:

Louis Boshoff (MCPP Technical Lead Gamagara) for in-person attendees; and

Werner Fourie (MCPP Technical Lead Tsantsabane) for virtual delegates.

For the downloadable summary of a regional development pathway, click [here](#).

2.2 KEY ECONOMIC FOCUS SECTORS AND CRITICAL ENABLERS OVERVIEW

The following Key Economic Focus Sectors were identified as focal in the achievement of the future regional vision:



The following Critical Enablers are crucial for the successful development of the Key Economic Focus Sectors:



Session 2: Our Regional Economic Transition Pathways (cont.)

Participant inputs [In-person]

1. Costing and Financing:

- Concerns about the overall cost of implementation, its feasibility, and the roles of mines and Independent Power Producers (IPPs) in funding.

2. Need for a Regional Plan:

- Participants questioned whether the transition requires a broader regional strategy beyond local municipal boundaries.

3. Job Creation:

- A discussion on the feasibility of employment potential in the renewable energy sector, including clarification that figures referenced cover both direct and induced jobs.

4. Alignment and Competition:

- Discussions on how proposals align with district and provincial plans (especially DDM) and whether they compete with other green industrialisation initiatives identified that all alignment is in place, and that strategies are mutually supportive with existing initiatives and planned initiatives.

5. Institutional Capacity:

- Discussions highlighted the need for strong municipal systems and institutional support as prerequisites for successful implementation.

6. Scale and Investment:

- Gamagara & Tsantsabane municipalities currently in the 2 SDFs have ~238 projects requiring R5.9 billion over a 15-year horizon. Immediate action is critical, with significant private-sector and development finance involvement needed.

7. Financing Mechanisms:

- Consideration of outcomes-based financing and coordinated financial instruments.

Participant inputs [Virtual]

1. Alignment with legal spatial frameworks:

- Delegates emphasised that precinct plans and proposals must align with **SPLUMA** requirements, as the **Spatial Development Framework (SDF)** is the legally recognised instrument guiding municipal spatial planning and development decisions.
- The Gamagara–Tsantsabane Regional Economic Transformation Strategy should explicitly incorporate local SDF proposals and ensure consistency with **NSDF** and **PSDF priorities**.
- The alignment was confirmed, noting that precincts (e.g., R380 corridor, Beeshoek, Postmasburg industrial precinct) are embedded in municipal SDFs. Draft SDFs for Tsantsabane and Gamagara are near completion, with public participation planned for early next year.

2. Role of District SDF:

- Delegates stressed the importance of considering the **District SDF** for bulk infrastructure planning, and alignment between municipal and district SDFs were confirmed, supported by tables showing cross-framework integration.

3. Origin and Approval of the Strategy:

- The need originated from the **Mine–Municipal Compact** and scenario planning exercises, with strategy development actually taken place through the Gamagara and Tsantsabane Municipal SDF processes, and the Gamagara LED – all being developed by the municipalities (with MCPP support) to enable regional scale economic transformation. Municipal strategies will undergo formal approval (Council, public participation), while the regional strategy remains a high-level coordination tool. It does not have a formal legal home but serves as a **regional strategic framework** to guide municipal LED and SDF processes.

4. Regional SDF Consideration:

- Delegates suggested creating a **regional SDF** for better enforceability, covering the entire mining and renewable energy corridor, but funding remains a challenge.

5. Social and Economic Dimensions:

- Delegates requested a breakdown of projected jobs by **youth and gender**. Werner acknowledged this gap and committed to exploring it for inclusion in the M&E framework.
- Concerns about **water scarcity** for proposed smelters were raised. Werner confirmed feasibility studies will address water sourcing, possibly from mine dewatering.

6. Integration into Broader Planning:

- Catalytic projects from the strategy and SDFs must feed into LED, IDP, and DDM processes to ensure implementation.

Session 3: Implementation through Collaborative Action: *The Iron Orchard Story*

DAY 1

The Story of The Iron Orchard was shared as an illustration of what is possible through collaborative action:

Presenter: Ronell van Staden (Futureworld) on Kumba's Iron Orchard Initiative

- Reflecting on the day's discussions, Ronell said that two words resonated strongly with her - "planning" and "implementation". A strategy, she noted, must translate into operational reality; without implementation, plans never "take off."
- **Futureworld's Role:** The organisation works at the intersection of strategy and execution. Futureworld partnered with Anglo American three years ago on a Horizon 3 Futures programme (a 30-40 year perspective).
- **Agricultural Opportunity:** Agriculture was identified as a major opportunity stream due to land and water availability.
 - After three years of feasibility studies and permitting, Iron Orchard was launched, the first farm in the region.
 - Apprenticeship programme is underway, training locals as assistant production managers with Anglo's support.
- **Innovation in Crop Selection:**
 - Shifted focus from livestock to horticulture; engaged major players like Karsten Group.
 - Identified eight viable crops, of which pistachios proved highly suited to local conditions, matching California benchmarks.
 - Goal: Develop 1,000 hectares of pistachios (current national total: 200 hectares), positioning Northern Cape as the only region capable of large-scale pistachio farming.
- **Challenges and Solutions:**
 - Permitting delays (Environmental Impact Assessment and Water-use License Authorisations take up to two years vs. two months in neighbouring countries).
 - Overcame soil challenges (calcrete-rich areas) with Anglo's support.
- **Sustainability & Value Chains:**
 - Emphasis on regenerative agriculture, circular micro-businesses, and integrated value chains.
 - Initiatives include invasive-species processing (wood products, biochar, Boskos feed) and small harvesting teams.

- **Community Development:**
 - Training partnerships with Department of Agriculture, Sol Plaatje University, Vine Academy.
 - Vision: Convert unused mine land into smallholder farms (2-5 hectares) for trained community members, creating an outgrower network.
- **Global Market Potential:**
 - Interest from international buyers (e.g., Saudi demand for 20,000 hectares).
 - Northern Cape positioned to become a global pistachio hub.
- **Next Steps:** Permitting is expected to be finalised by April or May 2026, with the first production blocks to be established soon thereafter. Ronell expressed deep gratitude for the collaboration with Anglo, government partners, and the agricultural sector.
- Her final message was one of optimism, noting that the project has reached a turning point—land, water, skills, and markets are aligned. With sustained commitment, the Northern Cape could achieve a transformative economic breakthrough and serve as a national model.



Session 3: The Heights of Collaboration

Participants were requested to build the tallest free standing balloon tower with the resources available in 5min. Groups immediately assumed it was a competition – focussing on internal instead of inter-group collaboration. What does collaboration mean? What does it take? Do we compete or collaborate? What does it take to collaborate?

Many reflections were shared on what it takes to collaborate.

Start doing small things, showing up in ways people are not expecting.

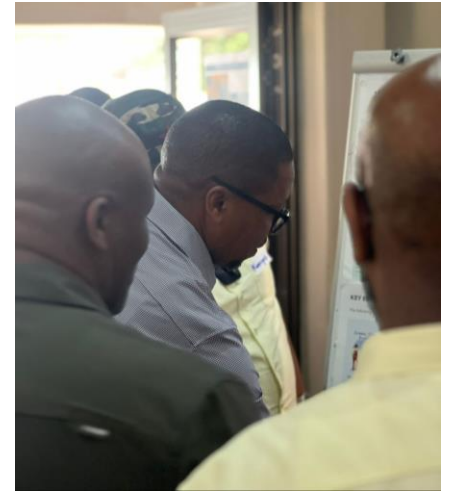


Session 4: Our Sense of the Transition: Let's get real

DAY 2

Participants were invited to take some time to engage the proposed Development Vision, Sector specific strategies and Pathway towards regional economic transition, presented and discussed on Day 1, through a “gallery walk...”

For the downloadable summary of a regional development pathway, click [here](#):





Session 4: Let's Get Real Discussions and Deliberations

Context and Intent of the Session

This session was deliberately framed as a **reality-check discussion**. Participants were invited to move beyond aspirational language and engage honestly with the **real constraints, failure points, and enabling conditions** that currently shape development outcomes in the region. The discussion focused on what is *actually getting in the way* of collaboration and implementation, and what must change if the region is serious about a long-term (10–15 year) economic transition beyond mining.

What Is Really Holding the Region Back

Across all discussions, there was strong convergence around a set of **practical, recurring constraints** that continue to stall progress, despite the presence of plans, funding instruments, and institutional mandates.

Governance and political alignment challenges were raised repeatedly. Participants highlighted:

- Inconsistent political leadership and messaging across municipalities and spheres of government.
- Political interference in administrative and technical processes.
- Weak continuity across political cycles, undermining long-term planning and investor confidence.
- Misalignment between district and local decision-making, resulting in stalled regional-scale facilities and projects.

Planning and implementation gaps were identified as a major bottleneck:

- Many statutory and sector plans exist, but **do not translate into implementable, prioritised project pipelines**.
- Projects are often poorly packaged — lacking costings, sequencing, risk mitigation, O&M planning, and clear custodianship — which deters funders.
- There is limited discipline in moving from strategy → programme → bankable projects → delivery.

Session 4: Let's Get Real

Discussions and Deliberation (cont.)

Technical and institutional capacity constraints were described in very concrete terms:

- Outdated infrastructure master plans (water, sanitation, roads, electricity), in some cases more than a decade old.
- Missing or unreliable as-built drawings and GIS data, increasing cost, risk, and delays.
- Critical municipal vacancies, skills shortages, and overstretched teams.
- Weak internal coordination between planners, engineers, finance, and LED units.

Funding and regulatory bottlenecks were not seen as a lack of money, but as a systems problem:

- Misalignment between municipal plans and national/provincial funding submissions (e.g. BFI, WSIG, INEP, B5).
- Weak revenue systems, inaccurate indigent registers, and billing problems undermining funder confidence.
- Regulatory complexity and red tape slowing approvals, land release, and project execution.

Stakeholder coordination and engagement failures were acknowledged openly:

- Planning and implementation continue to happen in silos across government, mines, and other partners.
- Stakeholder forums are weak or inactive, leading to duplication and parallel initiatives.
- Community engagement methods are outdated, limiting buy-in and legitimacy for long-term transition initiatives.

There was also frank recognition of **behavioural and cultural barriers**, including:

- Competition between institutions rather than shared ownership.
- Reluctance to take the first step or be accountable for follow-through.
- A tendency to remain in dialogue mode rather than committing to execution.

Session 4: Let's Get Real

Discussions and Deliberation (cont.)

What Needs to Change — Tangible Shifts Identified

Participants were equally clear that many of these challenges are **fixable**, provided there is discipline, alignment, and collective commitment.

Key practical shifts identified include:

- **From fragmented planning to consolidated project packaging**
The region needs a **single, prioritised portfolio of well-packaged regional projects**, with verified data, costings, phasing, risks, and clear institutional ownership, to engage funders with confidence.
- **From siloed governance to enabling regional coordination**
Strong support emerged for exploring a **formal regional coordination mechanism**, such as a Special Purpose Vehicle, with the technical and financial capacity to coordinate planning, funding, procurement, reporting, and delivery across municipalities and partners.
- **From outdated systems to credible technical readiness**
Updating infrastructure master plans, consolidating as-builts, cleaning GIS and financial datasets, and aligning planning instruments were seen as non-negotiable foundations for unlocking infrastructure funding.
- **From political inconsistency to shared leadership and accountability**
Participants emphasised the need for consistent political messaging, joint ownership of the regional strategy, and governance arrangements that can withstand leadership changes.
- **From consultation as compliance to consultation as legitimacy-building**
Modernised, continuous community and stakeholder engagement is required to build trust, manage expectations, and secure social buy-in for transition initiatives.

From “below the line” behaviour to collaborative practice

The session highlighted the need for partners to consciously adopt collaborative behaviours — openness, curiosity, accountability, and shared responsibility — as a condition for successful implementation.

The “Let's Get Real” session reinforced that the region's challenge is not a lack of vision, strategies, or goodwill, but the absence of strong execution systems, aligned governance, and disciplined collaboration. Participants acknowledged that meaningful progress will require difficult shifts — politically, institutionally, and behaviourally — but also recognised that many of the levers for change already sit within the collective control of the partners in the room.

The session created a grounded platform for the Action Agenda that followed, anchoring commitments in a shared understanding of what must realistically change for regional economic transformation to move from intention to impact.

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Session 5: Our Contribution in the next 6 months

Participant inputs

Context and Purpose of the Session

The final session of the workshop was structured as a forward-looking reflection, inviting each partner group to consider what practical actions they can commit to over the next six months to support collaboration for regional economic transformation. Rather than focusing on new proposals, the session emphasised realistic, near-term actions within existing mandates, resources, and planning cycles.

Feedback was provided per stakeholder group and shared in plenary, creating a collective view of how different actors can contribute—individually and jointly—to maintaining momentum and strengthening alignment following the workshop.

Collectively, the action agenda demonstrated a strong willingness across all partner groups to **move from dialogue to practical collaboration**, using existing tools, resources, and planning cycles. While constraints were openly acknowledged, the commitments reflect a shared intent to build momentum, strengthen alignment, and support regional economic transformation over the coming months.



Session 5: Our Contribution in the next 6 months:

Participant inputs: Online (Day 1)

ONLINE DISCUSSION SHARED IN DAY 2 DISCUSSIONS

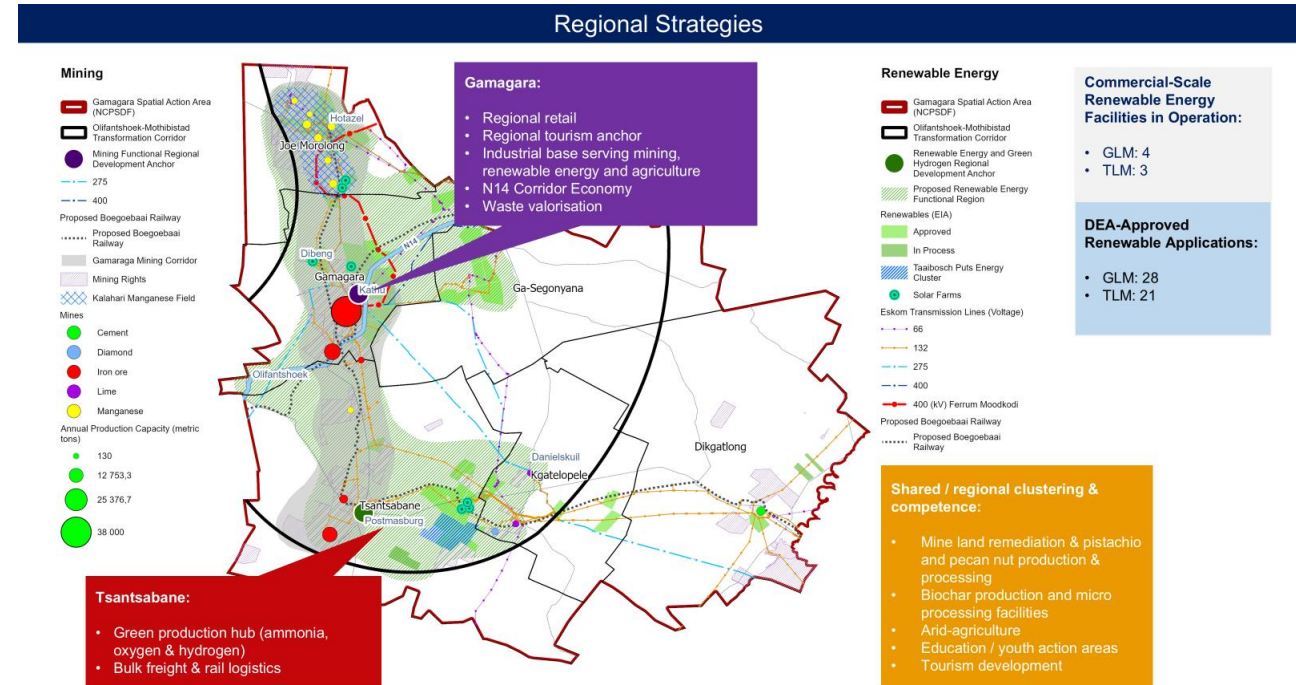
Discussion - warned against overemphasis on producing static plans, advocating for continuous, iterative planning. Stressed urgency given Beeshoek's imminent closure and urged participants to interrogate feasibility and voice concerns or alternative ideas to avoid failure in distressed communities.

Explore joint approaches to skills development, SMME support, enabling infrastructure, and regional diversification initiatives.

Participants were asked how they envision their organisations contributing to this transition over the next six months and whether they foresee themselves playing a meaningful role.

- Department of Rural Development** – committed to aligning future involvement with precinct planning and critical enablers. A new funding cycle window opens in January. Highlighted plans to consult internally and with provincial stakeholders on precinct priorities to support local planning and a possible engagement on a regional SDF. Also raised issues around stakeholder engagement, farmer production support units, and skills development, stressing the need to align training programmes with provincial gaps and engage TVET colleges.
- DBSA** confirmed readiness to support municipalities with project preparation and financing solutions, including feasibility studies and municipal master plans. Emphasised the need for clarity on budgets, loan capacity, and grant allocations (e.g., MIG) to enable DBSA's involvement.
- Infrastructure South Africa** - echoed concerns about the gap between planning and implementation, cited examples from Gamagara's BFI submissions, noting that catalytic projects such as Kathu Housing Development and Industrial Park remain stalled, risking Treasury's confidence. Highlighted municipalities' lack of capacity for complex tasks such as land-based financing and called for private-sector participation and dedicated municipal champions for key projects.

The discussion acknowledged the depth of insights shared and reaffirmed the need to link these contributions to actionable next steps.



Session 5: Our Contribution in the next 6 months

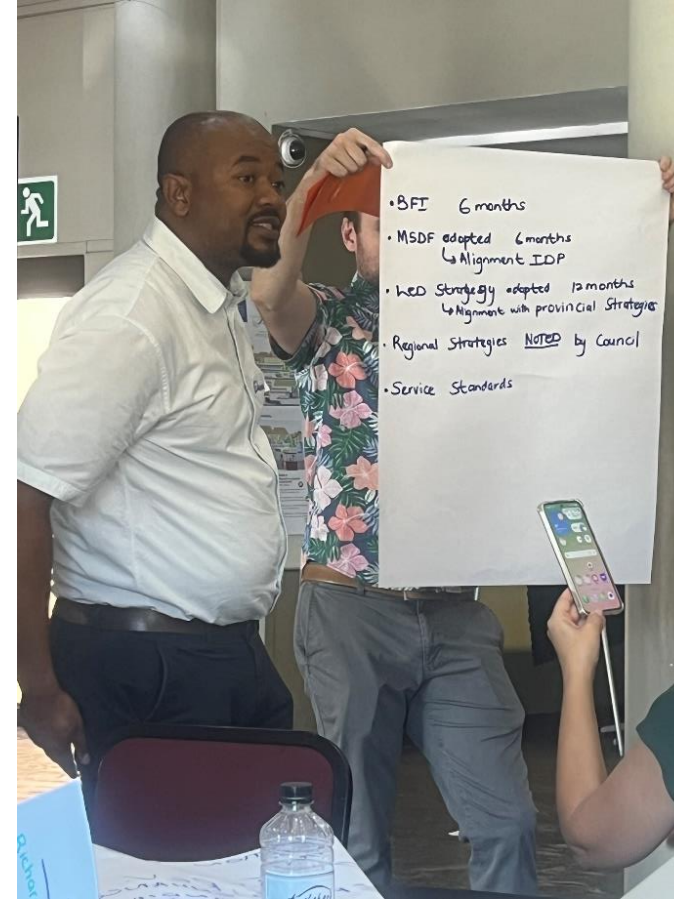
Participant inputs (cont.)

Municipalities: Action Agenda (Next 6–12 Months)

- Municipal feedback focused on strengthening **institutional readiness, planning compliance, and implementation capability** as foundational requirements for regional collaboration and investment.

Key municipal commitments include:

- **Prepare and submit Budget Facility for Infrastructure (BFI) applications**
Develop technically sound, well-motivated BFI submissions for both municipalities within six months to unlock catalytic bulk infrastructure funding.
- **Finalise and adopt key statutory planning instruments**
Complete the adoption and promulgation of Municipal Spatial Development Frameworks (MSDFs) and Land Use Schemes (LUS), ensuring alignment with priority precincts, industrial areas, logistics nodes, and renewable energy developments.
- **Align Local Economic Development (LED) strategies with the regional vision**
Update or adopt LED strategies that support mining transition pathways, SMME development, agriculture, tourism, and green-industrial opportunities.
- **Secure political endorsement for the regional strategy**
Table the regional economic strategy to Councils for official noting, creating a governance mandate for continued joint planning and implementation.
- **Stabilise basic service delivery to support investment confidence**
Improve performance in water, electricity, roads, and waste services as a prerequisite for precinct development and economic activity.
- **Strengthen implementation and revenue systems**
Establish cross-functional municipal workstreams to drive implementation and develop revenue protection and enhancement strategies focused on billing accuracy, collections, and data integrity.



Session 5: Our Contribution in the next 6 months

Participant inputs (cont.)

Local Government Support Agencies and Others

- Support agencies focused on advocacy, capacity building, and system alignment to strengthen municipal performance.

Key commitments include:

- Advocate for increased municipal transfers at provincial level
Lobby for improved fiscal support to municipalities facing transition pressures.
- Support capacity building for councillors
Provide targeted capacity development ahead of upcoming local government elections.
- Assist with alignment of IDPs and LED strategies
Support municipalities to better align planning instruments with regional priorities.
- Advance regional spatial alignment initiatives
Support RSDF processes in collaboration with relevant national departments.
- Drive coordinated advocacy through organised local government platforms
Use SALGA structures to elevate municipal priorities.
- Link municipalities to funding institutions and pilot initiatives
Facilitate access to finance and support pilot programmes, including in areas such as livestock and rural livelihoods.



Session 5: Our Contribution in the next 6 months

Participant inputs (cont.)

Provincial and National Government: Action Agenda (Next 6 Months)

- Government feedback emphasised the importance of **coordination, alignment, and targeted support** to enable municipal and regional initiatives.

Key commitments include:

- 1. Improve intergovernmental coordination around the regional agenda**
Strengthen alignment between provincial and national departments to reduce fragmentation and duplication.
- 2. Support alignment with Executive and sectoral plans**
Ensure regional priorities are reflected in relevant EXCO plans, sector strategies, and implementation programmes.
- 3. Provide support on BFI processes and requirements**
Assist municipalities in navigating Treasury and sector requirements related to BFI applications.
- 4. Enable access to national department capacity and expertise**
Mobilise technical and institutional support where municipal capacity constraints exist.
- 5. Support revenue enhancement and financial sustainability initiatives**
Assist municipalities with revenue improvement measures as part of broader institutional strengthening.
- 6. Contribute to the development of a coordinated funding and investment master plan**
Help align funding instruments and programmes with the regional strategy.



Session 5: Our Contribution in the next 6 months:

Participant inputs

Mining Industry Partners

Mining feedback highlighted opportunities to leverage existing assets, influence, and statutory processes to create near-term value and alignment.

Key commitments include:

1. Make existing mining capabilities available to support the region.
 - Provide access to training facilities, accredited programmes, and engineering and mechanical expertise to address skills gaps and support early projects.
2. Use mining networks to strengthen advocacy for the regional strategy.
 - Elevate the Regional Economic Framework Strategy across government and industry platforms, including engagement with the DMRE/DMPR and onboarding additional mines.
3. Support the establishment of a Regional Consultation Framework.
 - Co-develop a unified engagement mechanism to harmonise consultation processes across municipalities, mines, regulators, and communities.
4. Align Social and Labour Plans (SLPs) with the regional strategy.
 - Conduct structured reviews of existing SLPs to identify alignment opportunities, gaps, and areas for strengthened regional impact.
5. Use upcoming SLP cycles as alignment windows.
 - Embed regional priorities in forthcoming SLP processes, including Sishen's SLP4 and Khumani's anticipated review.
6. Pursue cross-mine coordination on shared priorities.



Session 5: Our Contribution in the next 6 months:

Participant inputs

Independent Power Producers

Mining feedback highlighted opportunities to leverage existing assets, influence, and statutory processes to create near-term value and alignment.

Key commitments include:

- IPP feedback reflected both **regulatory constraints** and **practical areas where contribution is possible**, particularly in enabling and skills-focused interventions.
- **Support SMME development through skills and equipment support**
Contribute to supplier and contractor development within regulatory limits.
- **Focus on enabling interventions**
Support initiatives related to education, skills development, and workforce wellness as part of broader regional enablers.
- **Share plans and learning through the IPP Funders Forum**
Use the established forum to coordinate ideas, align initiatives, and share MCPP-related opportunities.
- **Contribute to longer-term programme planning**
Align contributions within required three-year programme cycles and quarterly reporting obligations.
- **Engage selectively in pilot or catalytic initiatives**
Participate in well-defined, manageable projects that fit within regulatory and budgetary constraints.



Session 6: We can Kickstart Action

Example: Start-up SMME Support for Biochar Production

- The green-economy scenario was one of the available practical opportunities discussed. It frames invasive plants—not as an environmental burden—but as a direct entry point into a workable local economic value chain. Large areas across the region are covered by invasive species that reduce grazing land, strain water resources, and undermine agricultural productivity. Turning this biomass into economic input material offers a realistic pathway for job creation and small-business development.
- A key strength of the model is its accessibility. A start-up SMME needs only basic equipment, costing about **R111,000**, making it possible for emerging entrepreneurs to enter the sector. Work begins with manual and mechanical clearing and expands gradually as income and skills grow. The financial case is straightforward: clearing **100 hectares can generate about R1.7–R2 million**, with profit margins of roughly **R500,000** after expenses. At scale, this approach could support thousands of jobs across the districts.
- The model also connects well to broader green-economy activities. Cleared biomass can be processed into fodder, soil-restoration material, charcoal or biochar, and other low-carbon products. Biochar in particular creates an entry point into established carbon-credit markets, offering a measurable sequestration benefit that could attract climate-finance support. This positions the intervention as both economically useful and environmentally restorative.
- Concerns about ecological integrity were addressed directly. Clearing invasives does not remove vegetation indiscriminately; rather, it opens space for indigenous species to recover, improves water systems, and restores grazing capacity. The model balances economic use with ecological repair.
- The discussion highlighted a simple requirement: municipalities need to take ownership for the opportunity to succeed. This includes identifying clearing sites, coordinating access with landowners, ensuring compliance, and helping small businesses navigate any licences they need. Local processing points are also important, so SMMEs avoid high transport costs that would reduce their income.
- Overall, the scenario is **immediately implementable**. It does not depend on new laws, advanced technology, or heavy institutional capacity. It requires political commitment, basic funding, and coordinated site allocation. In a region preparing for post-mining transitions, the green-economy model offers a moderate, realistic, and scalable option that strengthens local livelihoods while restoring degraded landscapes.



Session 7: Closing & Way Forward

The session action agenda was summarized by Elsona van Huyssteen (CSIR. MCPP Implementation Team Lead), who highlighted that the collective action agenda demonstrated a strong willingness across all partner groups to move from dialogue to practical collaboration, using existing tools, resources, and planning cycles. While constraints were openly acknowledged, the commitments reflect a shared intent to build momentum, strengthen alignment, and support regional economic transformation over the coming months.

Partners	Summary of Key Action Items
Municipal Partners	• Prioritise the submission of the BFI applications with ISA and Provincial Treasury to budgets, IDPs. • Adapt SDFs, realise the linkages. • Wrap up the LED Strategies. • Improve standards for service delivery.
Provincial and National Partners	• Alignment and prioritizing investment in support of regions. • Opening doors & strengthening access for Municipalities to utilise relevant opportunities for funding. • Exploring the possibility of support for a regional development plan.
Mine Industry Partners	• Advocacy - Take strategy to mine leadership of the mining industry partners in the region (those in the room and out of the room). • Commitment to explore how to use current and future SLPs in support of the regional transformation Strategy.
IPPs	• Commitment to engage in forum. • Explore how next round of SED investment can be directed in support of the strategy.
Support Organisations	• Lobby for dedicated and context specific municipal support for 2026, especially for master planning and integrated transportation planning.
MCPP	• Continue to collaborate closely with Gamagara and Tsantsabane Municipalities on strengthening the enabling environment, moving from planning to implementation. • Collaborating with Municipalities to finalise SDFs, Capital Investment Frameworks, Project Portfolios. • Strengthening regional collaboration through Leadership Development training and networking in collaboration with Enterprises University of Pretoria and Kagiso Trust. • Continued support for regional compacting through specific workstreams, support for online and in-person work sessions, exploring what will be required to support regional compacting and transformation and lobbying for regional innovation facility and platform to support action, implementation and monitoring of progress.

MM Mathobela closed the session, thanking everyone that participated, the MM Gamagara and Office of the Premier for collaboration and acknowledged Kumba & MCPP team for their efforts in enabling the session and ongoing collaboration.

He emphasized that this is the time to drill our roots down and ensure resilience, and to strengthen relationships with local regions and municipalities. He ended of urging delegates to take action—“The importance of this work is not about the future; it is about now. If we don’t act immediately, what we have achieved will be in a dire situation. Immediate focus and action are critical to sustain progress.”



Commitment to Action

PARTICIPANT REFLECTIONS & PERCEPTION

MCPP

Municipal Capability &
Partnership Programme



Reflections on Value Created...for myself and organisation in attending the session

- Networking
- Understanding that development is not easy but achievable when we work as a team
- Stakeholder relations are critical to development
- Better understanding of the compact
- Support for the two municipalities and other colleagues from the mining industry
- Relationships with the municipalities and other colleagues from mining industries.
- Proposals on how SALGA can further support the two municipalities
- Clearer understanding of where livestock fits into the overall MCPP strategy and better understanding of stakeholders
- Reminder that we work in silos and very competitive
- We can, but we don't, why?? We don't take the first step
- Information is available
- Willingness is there but no strive for implementation
- Participated in developing sustainable future possibilities of the region
- Broaden my collaborative efforts with other stakeholders
- Mirror holding session for myself and company
- Empowerment
- Hopes that the structure of the TLM will improve
- Diverse opportunities besides mining activities
- Alignment with others with importance of coming together, the seriousness of what needs to be achieved post mining and learning & understanding the role that should be playing.
- To support job creation & SMME Development in my space
- Align with stakeholders and implementing a plan
- Financial value delivered
- Commitment to promote funding decisions
- Understand the stakeholder perception on planning matters
- To assist with planning and capacitation within the two respective municipalities
- Advocating for development within the respective municipalities
- Resource mobilization
- More knowledge on the development of SDF
- Enabled myself and adopt the draft SDF
- Paved a way for public participation for on consultation of SDF
- Stakeholder engagement and collaboration
- Enable Salga to be able to influence other government departments to ensure work is known on more influential platforms where Salga is able to lobby for this initiative to succeed.
- Establish/ establish new support networks and share information about plans, risks and opportunities
- Connect with key stakeholders and crafting a way forward
- Get a better understanding of the strategy and focus areas with the Tsantsabane & Gamagara area.

Reflections on significant collaboration shifts

- There has been vast engagement with different stakeholders: local, Provincial, National and private.
- Through this partnership model, the municipality was able to develop plans and necessary programs.
- I only know of a few. We still need to sit around the table for more collaboration.
- Most partners do not have [such] annual collaboration sessions.
- The Office of the Premier is slowly but surely directing resources to one direction for a meaningful impact.
- The collaboration and partnering is being influenced by the common goal.
- At least in as far as creating our futures (future plans) as a collective ... now we need to act.
- Organisations are now seeing roles that are specific to them that they can play to make the project a success.
- There is a lot of information session structures where we get information on different stakeholders' products and services.
- Alignment of plans. Commitment from numerous roleplayers. Municipal plans are realistic and adopted.

Hashtags / titles of participant narratives

- | | |
|---|---|
| • #Low hanging fruits | #Collaboration |
| • #Let's get cracking | • Importance of partnership |
| • Support Group Municipality | • A story of hope |
| • Top-notch Planning | • #Collaborative |
| • #MCPD our Enabler | • We are more alike than we are different |
| • Eye Opener | #togetherness |
| • Future is bright for those willing to build it. | • #Collective Action |
| • From bad attitude to great altitude. | • #MovingForwardTogether |
| • #Onwards and Upwards | • #Siyahuba #Integration |
| • #We can do it | |
| • #Development #Growth | |