

TRANSFORMING THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT



Ms Priscilla Mdlalose was recently appointed as chief executive officer at the Council for the Built Environment (CBE) on 1 October 2017. She holds a Masters Degree in Town and Regional Planning, a B.Ed degree, a certificate in Project Management and a certificate in Housing Policy Development. Her experience is rooted in education, the NGO sector, and local government. Ms Mdlalose joined the CBE as chief operations officer, and took over the reins as acting chief executive officer in November 2015. Her task is to ensure that the CBE implements the CBE Act 43 of 2000, as well as address challenges and transformation in the built environment sector. Here she shares her thoughts on her new role.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to reflect on my thoughts, perceptions (and perhaps misconceptions), and learnings as I take up the seat at the helm of the Council for the

Built Environment (CBE) as its chief executive officer.

In order to add meaning and value to the CBE's service delivery, it was imperative that I understood the reason for its existence. The CBE as an entity was created in 2000 with the passing of the CBE Act 43. Basically, this Act confers the role of custodian of the built environment upon CBE – to ensure that the construction sector contributes to the post-apartheid political, economic, and social landscape of South Africa.

For me this role is rooted in two 'Siamese twin' dynamics that pervade all the work of the CBE – stakeholder coordination and transformation, for which CBE must create fertile conditions so that:

- Historically disadvantaged individuals claim a greater share of the entrepreneurial space in the construction sector.
- Built environment disciplines are an attractive career choice for school learners.
- Race and gender imbalance is redressed in the sector by increasing numbers of non-white and women practitioners achieving professionally registered status.
- Life-long learning and the recognition thereof is the norm.
- Protecting the public from collusive cartels and unacceptable standards of work delivered.
- Research, policy, education, inter-

national collaboration to keep dated with best practice and a built environment relevant to South Africa's geo-political landscape.

The CBE is committed to hosting an annual Transformation Indaba to give sector role players a platform to interrogate issues with a view to enhance the integrity of the sector and undertake transformation initiatives jointly. This demonstrates the maxim that we cannot go at it alone; all sector role players have resource ingredients to contribute to baking the transformation cake.

My other focus is on the youth in implementing transformation – if they are the future of the country, it's important we understand the millennial perspective in developing them for this important role. Therefore career awareness, skills development programmes, and accreditation of tertiary built environment courses feature high on the CBE's priorities.

This is the sense and meaning I intend to give to the South African built environment in steering the CBE to fulfil the mandates of the CBE Act. In closing I want to wish you peace and safety over the holiday season, and a productive and fulfilling 2018; as a valued reader of this publication and stakeholder, I look forward to engaging with you.

Warm regards,
Priscilla Mdlalose

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