

# bokgabane

*botoka le botoka – better and better*

from the Royal Bafokeng Operations Room

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# PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

## FEATURED PROJECT

### Employee Self Service and Premier HR upgrade

**Project manager:** Kagiso Mothoagae

Employee Self Service (ESS) is a web-based application that is fully integrated with the company's human resources and payroll systems. The introduction of this application is part of an effort by the HR department to refine existing HR processes and to empower staff in general with ease of access to information. ESS enables users to view their leave balances, process leave applications, view and print payslips and IRP5s and update personal and family details conveniently from their workstations.



The concern with the previous system of applying for leave was that it was long and involved the applicant having to confirm their leave balances at the HR department, seeking approval from their respective managers and finally the capturing of the transaction by the HR administrator. This increased the risk of leave forms being lost and employees going on leave without their leave transactions being fully processed resulting in incorrect leave balances.

ESS serves to have one leave application process, where once initiated by the applicant and approved by the manager on line, the transaction will be automatically captured into the HR system without the HR administrator having to capture it manually. The system incorporates a series of email notifications that informs both applicant and approver of the status of each transaction. In addition to being an efficient, time-saving system, it eliminates the possibility of human error in the capturing of the transaction and the risk of the transaction not being captured at all. Furthermore, it reduces paper usage and wastage as everything is done on a soft-copy basis on the system. From a managerial perspective, it serves to assist managers to track employee leave balances and patterns, by availing various leave reports, calendars and trends.

All the departments were trained on how to access and use the ESS application. Generally, it is viewed as an easy-to-use system and one could liken it to using an ATM. For those employees who do not have access to computers, an administrator is nominated who will submit leave requests on their behalf.

Other ESS features that will be introduced in the near future include the submitting of overtime and expense claims online and conducting performance evaluations. The system also allows scanned documents to be uploaded as proof of personal detail amendments or doctor's notes for sick leave verification.

All employees are expected to have made use of the ESS system by the end of March as the system is now implemented across all entities and departments. To date, the response is positive from the employees and we trust that the system will contribute to providing accurate and reliable human resource information.

## FEATURED PROGRAMME

### Primary School Mathematics

**Programme manager:** Adele Hartley

The National Curriculum Statement of the Department of Education, states that ‘Mathematics enables creative and logical reasoning about problems in the physical and social world. It is a distinctly human activity practiced by all cultures. Knowledge in the mathematical sciences is constructed through the establishment of descriptive, numerical and symbolic relationships. Mathematics is based on observing patterns with rigorous logical thinking; which leads to theories of abstract relations. Mathematical problem solving enables us to better understand the world and make use of that understanding in our daily lives. Mathematics is developed and contested over time through both language and symbols by social interaction and is thus open to change.



When performance is measured, performance improves. When performance is measured and reported back, the rate of improvement accelerates.

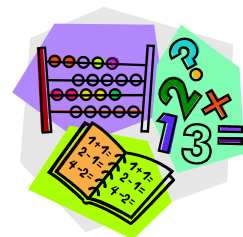
- Thomas S. Monson

‘Maths Education’ was a pilot project managed by Dave Ryan that started on 6 October 2009 in order to further develop and improve mathematics education in the RBN. In 2012, the Primary School Mathematics programme was registered as a continuation of the ‘Numeracy & Mathematics: Primary Schools’ programme. The evolution of this programme is a stellar example of how we can improve the way we do things by monitoring and evaluating our interventions and activities.

The programme aims to ‘Capacitate Bafokeng Mathematics teachers in teaching Mathematics in RBI primary schools’, to ‘Improve performance of the learners in Mathematics in RBI primary schools’, and to ‘Supply necessary resources in RBI primary schools’.

Mathematics teachers in rural areas are generally poor at the mathematical content and methodology themselves. These teachers tend to teach the way they were taught. Their underlying beliefs need to be challenged if the activities that take place in the “black box” (this are what researcher’s call the classroom since no one really knows what happens in the “black box”) are to be truly educational. The teachers need an understanding of the cognitive development levels for children at any age and the impact this should have on the teaching process. In addition, teachers need a level of mastery of mathematical knowledge. In the light of these challenges, the first objective will be achieved by supporting educators in doing a UNISA course, and by facilitating (RB)<sup>2</sup> cell meetings and Lebone.

In general, the learners have vast potential, yet they have been fed an inferior mathematical “diet”. This has resulted in poor performance in all assessment tasks at all ages. Improving this performance in RBI primary schools will be done by organising participation in the national Conquesta Mathematics Olympiad, by conducting ‘Stretch it’ classes at Lebone College and by monitoring the use of the Number Sense booklets.



The final objective seeks to ensure that the teachers have at their disposal all the necessary resources needed to best achieve the first two objectives and, ultimately, improve learner results and understanding of mathematics.

## PROJECT MANAGER OF THE MONTH: Andrea Jordaan

- **When did you join RBA?**
  - *I joined the RBA in July 2008.*
- **What is your role in the Research and Knowledge Management department?**
  - *I am Dr. Cook's PA and the departmental administrator.*
- **What sets you apart, in your opinion, from other administrators?**
  - *My sunny attitude! Ha ha...*
- **How do you believe does the RBN Events Calendar add value to the RBN?**
  - *The events calendar is great because when it is correctly populated you can see what is going on in the organisation and other entities at any time.*
- **Have you registered a programme on the Manage-by-Projects/Programmes System (MPS) and what does the programme entail?**
  - *I have registered a programme for the administration of taking minutes at our weekly staff meetings.*
- **How often do you log on to the MPS?**
  - *Probably, on average, once a day.*
- **What are the challenges you face in terms of compliance and cooperation from other staff members regarding events and meetings?**
  - *Our department is pretty cooperative when it comes to informing me of upcoming events and projects or programmes. They are also quite good about keeping their projects and programmes updated.*
- **Has the MPS assisted you in improving your planning and time management?**
  - *Definitely, and I don't even think I even really use it to its full potential.*
- **How has the Organisational and Project Management Office and the MPS assisted you in managing the Events calendar and your programme?**
  - *Because you have to complete the work breakdown structure and milestones on a project it means the planning has to be very thorough so the chance of forgetting to do something is greatly reduced.*
- **What advice can you give to other administrators about the Events Calendar and managing programmes on the MPS?**
  - *Get clued up on how it all works and use it! It is a fantastic tool with almost limitless capabilities which can help you keep track of things efficiently.*



## ➤ [www.rbnoperationsroom.com](http://www.rbnoperationsroom.com)

Web traffic on the Operations Room website:

Month	Site visits	% New visits	Average time on site	Average pages per visit
March 2012	1621 visits from 45 countries (1420 – SA; 33 – US; 25 – UK) 746 unique visits	36.83%	00:04:44	2.92
February 2012	1809 visits from 46 countries (1571 – SA; 46 – US; 25 – UK) 799 unique visits	37.07%	00:04:50	3.08
January 2012	1471 visits from 48 countries (1216 – SA; 33 – UK; 28 – US) 716 unique visits	37.12%	00:03:17	3.10

## ➤ PROJECT MANAGEMENT CORNER:

### Project phases

A traditional phased approach to projects identifies a sequence of steps to be completed. In the "traditional approach", we can distinguish 5 components of a project (4 stages plus "control") in the development of a project:



## Bokgabane Quiz:

**Have a go at the Bokgabane Quiz! Three winners will be randomly selected from the correct responses.**

1. By when should all staff members be using the ESS?
2. What is the second objective of the Primary School Mathematics programme?
3. What are the five components of a project?

**Last month's winners: Please come collect your prizes from the OPMO.**

Congratulations to:

1. Francina Selomane
2. Kagiso Matlhase
3. Thapelo Molobye

**BOKGABANE:**

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**Please send your answers, queries and/or comments on Bokgabane to the OPMO at [pmo@bafokeng.com](mailto:pmo@bafokeng.com)**