

# TUBERCULOSIS PLATFORM

## CONTACT DETAILS



**Prof Martie Van Der Walt**, BSc (Agric); MSc (Agric) (Animal Health); MBA (Technology Management); PhD (Biotech)

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Publications:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/myncbi/martha%20louiza.van%20der%20walt.1/bibliography/public/>

Professor van der Walt has led the SAMRC Pretoria TB Platform since 2007 and is an Extraordinary Professor in the Department of Medical Microbiology, University of Pretoria. She initially concentrated on animal health but since 1989 focussed on tuberculosis research. She has published on TB/HIV, drug-resistant tuberculosis, maternal TB and prevention of TB in health care settings. She is passionate about research translation, health promotion and introduction of new knowledge in policy and practice. She approaches her research from a health systems and patient perspective, aiming to offer comprehensive, patient-centred care and including technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution using Artificial Intelligence to increase universal health coverage.



**Ms Emily Gomes,**

**Administration: Chief Officer**

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Ms Gomes provides half day secretarial duties to Prof Martie van der Walt and TB Staff. She started at the SAMRC in 1989 as a Data Capturer.



**Ms. Tebogo Sole, M. Psych (Research)  
Psychologist & Data Manager**

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Ms Sole qualified as a psychologist in 2017 after doing her internship at the Military Psychological Institute. She joined the SAMRC in 2017 as a Data Manager and overseas qualitative research. She has a focus on mental health and social domains of tuberculosis. She is currently enrolled for a PHD titled "Using a mobile health (mHealth) technology driven tool to support medication adherence schedules in newly diagnosed Tuberculosis (TB) patients". Her MSC was on "Women's fuel choices and fuel stacking practices in urban households: a narrative study" and obtained in 2016.

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**Sikhethiwe Masuku, MNurs  
Research Nurse**

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Ms Masuku's research interests are TB infection prevention and control. She has a broad background in health, with specific training and expertise in nursing management, multi-drug resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) and operational research. She was involved in ART roll out in Zimbabwe for many years and worked since 2006 in various aspects of TB/HIV integration including the PMTC programme. Her M degree was titled "Protective wear on TB prevention: Knowledge and practices of healthcare personnel in Gauteng and her PhD is on "Creating a living document for Tuberculosis Infection, Prevention and Control Policies".

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**Dr Awelani Mutshembele, MSc (Microbiology); PhD (Veterinary  
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**Postdoctoral Research Fellow**

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Dr Mutshembele joined the SAMRC, TB Platform as an Intramural Postdoctoral Research Fellow in 2017. She has a strong background in Biotechnology and Molecular Biology that she achieved while working as a laboratory assistant and studying towards her Masters and PhD degrees. She studied the molecular epidemiology of *Anaplasma marginale* in cattle in South Africa during her PhD studies before joining the SAMRC as a bioinformatician. She currently studies the molecular epidemiology of M TB.

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**Elisha Khoza,**  
**Financial Administrator**

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As Financial Administrator, Mr Khoza oversees all areas of budgeting, finance and administration. He oversees the Platform's contracts and grants acquisition and management. He provides strategic analysis for senior management to determine project viability and risk analyses. He is responsible for subcontracting to funders and liaise with funders and subcontractors.



**Jeanette Brand, BSc**  
**Chief Research Technologist**

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Ms Brand is a BSc graduate from the North West University. She started her career at the SAMRC in 1984 as a Medical Technical Officer in the Tuberculosis Laboratory. She has 30 years' experience in TB bacteriology and oversees laboratory aspects of the TB Platform's research. She has co-authored many technical reports and publications and presented research findings at National and International Conferences.



**Jophas Ngobeni,**  
**Data Capturer**

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Mr Ngobeni joined the SAMRC TB Platform unit in January 2018 as a driver. He is responsible for the collection and transportation of research specimens from study sites to the laboratory for testing. He is also currently working as a Data Capturer.

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**Lebo Molokwane, Dip Admin**  
**Data Capturer & Research Assistant**

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Ms Molokwane holds a diploma in Office Administration from Varsity College. She started working at the SAMRC in January 2018 as a Data Capturer.

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**Linda Olivier,**  
**Research Assistant**

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Ms Olivier joined the SAMRC in 2006 as a Data Capturer and provides managerial support to the Platform Director. She provides administrative support to projects and assists with field work.

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**Pregonia Chauke,**  
**Data Capturer & Field worker**

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Ms Chauke joined the SAMRC as a field worker in 2017, where she is currently working as a field worker and Data Capturer.

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**Sonja Botha**, Dip Nurs; B.Soc.Sc  
**Research Nurse**

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Ms Botha trained as a Professional Nurse with Midwifery, Community Care, Psychiatry and Health Administration and obtained her B.Soc.Sc degree at the University of the Free State. She gained many years of experience while working in the TB control programme as well as in the field of implementation of policies and guidelines. Her speciality is in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis as well as drug-resistant tuberculosis. Her current interest is mainly on drug-resistant tuberculosis research.



**Mike Manzini**, N Dip (Administration Management), B.Tech  
(Management)  
**Project Administrator**

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Mr. Manzini joined the SAMRC where he assisted in the administration of the first TB survey in the country. He supports projects with financial administration and has extensive experience in administration, project management and stakeholder liaison. He is currently registered at the University of South Africa studying towards a B. Com degree in Financial Management.



**Thuli Carol Penelope Mthiyane**, MPH  
**Project manager**

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Ms Mthiyane completed her MPH at Medunsa (now Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University), in 2002 with her thesis titled "Comparison of Treatment adherence between patients supervised at clinics and those supervised by lay DOTS supervisors". She is a qualified nurse and joined the SAMRC TB Platform in 2017 as a project manager for the South African TB prevalence survey team. She has extensive experience in TB clinical trial management and is currently enrolled for her PHD.

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