

ROAD SAFETY INITIATIVE EMPOWERS 21 FACILITATORS WITH EXPERTISE TO DELIVER ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION ACROSS 22 SCHOOLS IN BLOUBERG AND MUSINA

The Limpopo Road Safety Programme (LRSP), in collaboration with the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP), Road Safety Partnership South Africa (RSPSA) and the South African Red Cross, has provided VIA training to 21 road safety facilitators who will facilitate road safety education in 22 selected schools across the Blouberg and Musina municipalities.

The VIA training, globally renowned for its effectiveness in designing tailored road safety strategies and interventions, was conducted by GRSP and RSPSA in Musina for the 21 participants. The objective was to equip road safety school facilitators with the expertise needed to deliver road safety education in a creative manner, inspiring behavioural change among learners and young people.

"The objective of the VIA educational training programme is to strengthen young people's knowledge of road safety and enable them to develop their thinking and adapt their behaviour. It is built on internationally recognised child road safety education best practices, drawing from the experience of road safety practitioners from several industries.

The programme is modular and can be adapted to the needs of different environments," explained a representative from GRSP, Michael Chippendale. Borrowing from the VIA educational programme, the RSPSA – an organisation that is committed to reducing road injuries and deaths, has been appointed by the LRSP as the local implementor in Musina and Blouberg Municipalities.

"Many people exhibit recklessness on the roads, seemingly unaware of the constant danger. This behaviour is often emulated by children in Limpopo, and indeed everywhere else, which is concerning.

The VIA training programme recognises this challenge and seeks to address it by educating young people in schools about road safety. We hope that through the knowledge we have shared with the road safety facilitators, they will be equipped to educate learners so that they have control over their lives and safety, "said Mthuthuzeli Ngcongo, Facilitator: Road Safety Partnership South Africa.

In 2021, the Anglo American initiated a commitment to prioritise road safety in their host communities, leading to the formation of the Anglo American Community Road Safety Task Team, which included the Impact Catalyst and De Beers Group. Subsequently, this effort resulted in the establishment of the Limpopo Road Safety Programme which consists of 13 unique projects, funded by the Anglo American Foundation.

Among these initiatives is a focus on both the schools and community areas. The Impact Catalyst together with De Beers Group (Venetia Mine) have identified Musina and Blouberg Municipalities as crucial areas which need this initiative.

Mzwandile Damane, De Beers Group Community Health Specialist– PCA elaborated: "Musina and Blouberg hold significant importance for us as our contracted bus operates within these communities. Additionally, we recruit employees from these areas for our operations, underscoring our commitment to ensuring their safety. However, we are deeply troubled by the alarming rate of

fatalities resulting from driver negligence and speeding on our roads. Through dedicated road safety initiatives, our aim is to empower school learners with essential knowledge that instills responsible road safety behaviours. By fostering awareness among students, we envision them becoming advocates who share this vital information with their peers at school, friends within their local communities, and family members at home. This collaborative effort is crucial in cultivating a culture of safety and responsibility on our roads.”

As part of supporting this initiative, the South African Red Cross has seconded their volunteers to the VIA programme as road safety facilitators. As a partner, the South African Red Cross is facilitating the payment of the volunteers on behalf of the LRSP.

Reflecting on the training, one participant, Desree Kwinda shared her key takeaways from the session and how it will equip her in her role as a road safety school facilitator.

"Now that I am equipped with the tools to engage and empower young minds, I strive to transform road safety education into a journey of joy and discovery for the youth of Limpopo. By infusing fun into the learning process, we shape not only their understanding but also their attitudes and behaviours toward road safety. For children, this education is not merely about rules, but about fostering a culture of responsibility and care.”

Utilising the knowledge and tools acquired from the VIA training programme, road safety school facilitators will develop educational programmes for implementation in the 22 selected schools situated in Musina and Blouberg Municipalities. The educational activities will be specifically designed for school learners in grades 4 through to grade 10.

"The ultimate goal we aspire to achieve collectively is behavioural change. This involves collaborating with learners and facilitators to devise customised interventions that consider existing attitudes towards road safety and address observed road safety challenges within schools.

Through these efforts, we aim to empower school learners and our educators to take ownership of road safety initiatives within their schools and surrounding areas," stated Dr Jonathan James, Impact Catalyst LRSP Programme Manager.

