

ROOTED NEWS

Ideas & impact from the African Continent

A space where governance meets humanity—where stories of purpose, discipline and leadership reminds us that systems change begins with how we focus our attention each day.

LETTER

- Governance
- Sustainability
- Inclusion
- African-led

NOVEMBER 2025

vol.3

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FOUNDER'S MESSAGE

GOVERNANCE BEGINS IN THE BODY

From the Desk of Katlego Majola

- Every governance system has a hidden engine.
- For nations, it's institutions.
- For organisations, it's culture.
- For individuals, it's physiology – the body we lead from.



This edition arises from a simple but transformative idea:

You cannot govern what you do not understand – including yourself.

Across the continent, leaders are experiencing silent metabolic struggles that affect decision quality, creativity, resilience, and national productivity. When a generation enters the “critical decade” (35–45) with rising lifestyle diseases, the issue becomes systemic, not personal.

This volume introduces the emerging discipline of **Metabolic Governance** – the lens through which biological regulation shapes leadership capacity, decision-making, and institutional performance.

Wellness is not luxury. It is strategic infrastructure.

with purpose,

FOUNDER: KM NALA ADVISORY

Welcome to Volume 3.

SPOTLIGHT ON IMPACT

John Taolo Gaetsewe
Developmental Trust

CONNECT WITH US



TURNING THE TITANIC:

My Journey from 110 kg to Wellness

BY BONGANE MALULEKA, PR ENG., MBA

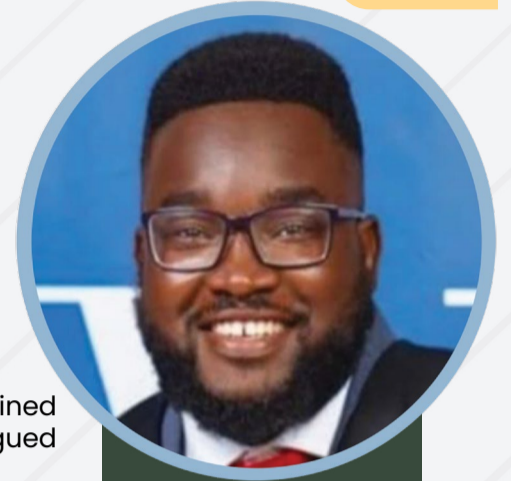
Last December, I was a 110 kg executive with a waist size of 38, low energy levels, low self-esteem, and heavy snoring. My confidence was at rock bottom, and my lifestyle was sedentary—a true couch potato. I knew something had to change, and fast.

A friend challenged me to a 75-day program that combined weight loss and reading books. The weight-loss aspect intrigued me, so I joined and took it one day at a time.

What stood out was the emphasis on setting personal goals and learning how to achieve them. That was the turning point.

As I read and listened to countless podcasts, I stumbled upon a concept that changed everything: insulin resistance. For years, I had tried losing weight without understanding what truly causes weight gain—a futile exercise. Learning about insulin resistance was a paradigm shift. It explained why diets fail and why our modern food systems are making us sick.

Today, I weigh 80 kg—a feat I thought impossible at age 38. I moved from mkhamba to a six-pack. But this journey wasn't just about aesthetics; it was about reclaiming health and vitality.



BONGANE MALULEKA, PR ENG., MBA

HERE ARE THE LESSONS I LEARNED:

- **Start with why:** Understand why losing weight matters to you.
- **Learn the process:** Insulin resistance is the silent driver of obesity and chronic disease.
- **Master the art of eating:** Eat for function, not pleasure.
- **Respect circadian rhythms:** Optimise your sleep routines.
- **Health is wealth:** It feels like turning the Titanic around.
- **Avoid ultra processed foods:** They are the main culprit behind insulin resistance.
- **Make it a lifestyle:** Take time to lose weight and maintain it.
- **Move your body:** As executives and professionals, our sedentary lifestyles are killing us. It is vitally important to take up a gym membership and start moving.
- **Rethink alcohol:** Alcohol is ethanol—a slow poison.
- **Understand the critical decade:** We have entered what metabolic scientists call the critical decade (ages 35–45), where all diseases of lifestyle begin to show.
- **Know the science before you start:** Executives should never attempt weight loss without understanding these concepts:
 - **Carbohydrates and glucose:** How carbs convert to glucose and impact blood sugar.
 - **Insulin and insulin resistance:** The key link between insulin and weight gain.
 - **Ketones vs. glucose:** Two fuel sources and how they affect metabolism.
 - **Hunger hormones:** Ghrelin (hunger signal) and leptin (satiety signal).
 - **Stress hormone cortisol:** How stress drives fat storage and cravings.

This isn't just a personal story—it's a public health issue. Africa is facing a surge in chronic diseases like diabetes and hypertension, driven by changing diets and the dominance of ultraprocessed foods. There's a food system designed to depress us and make us overeat. Breaking free from it is liberation.

We need an African-led conversation on food governance, wellness, and sustainability. Health is not a luxury; it's the foundation of productivity and prosperity. My journey proves that change is possible, but it starts with knowledge and intentionality.

If we can shift our mindset from eating for pleasure to eating for function, and if we can challenge the systems that profit from our ill health, we can turn the Titanic—not just for individuals, but for communities and nations.

PROFILE: Bongane Maluleka, Pr Eng., MBA

Professional Highlights

- Senior Manager, Control & Instrumentation, Proconics (2021–2025)
- MEng (Project Management, in progress); Honours in Chemical Engineering (Wits)
- Winner, Famous Brands New Venture Business Challenge (Wits Business School, 2019)
- ECSA Council Member (2025–present)

Community & Mentorship

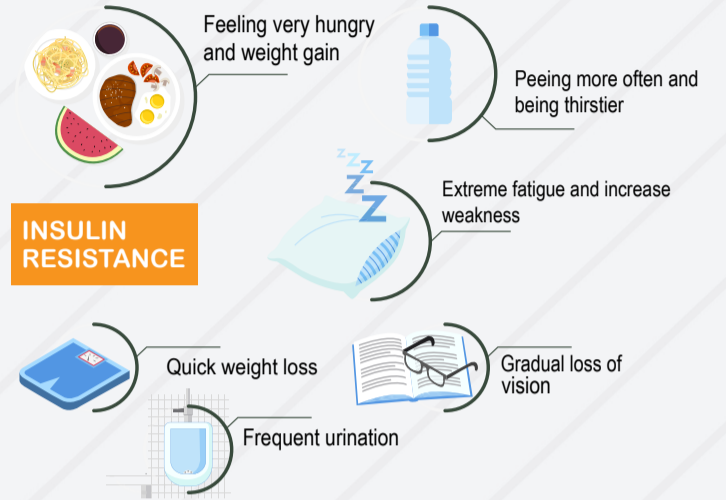
Founder of Proconics Toastmasters, District 74 Director, and active mentor through FutureNow and informal coaching networks.



THE HIDDEN METABOLIC CHALLENGE

Bongane’s story illustrates how understanding the body becomes a form of governance. For African women leaders, this biological landscape is often even more complex.

Conditions like **PCOS (Polycystic Ovary Syndrome)** – affecting up to one in five women – amplify many of the metabolic dynamics he describes. The challenge is not lack of discipline; it is navigating a system with heightened physiological demands during the same decade when many women ascend into senior leadership.



The Reality	The Leadership Impact
PCOS intensifies metabolic pressures	Heightened hunger cues, disrupted energy patterns, and greater hormonal volatility.
A “shadow governance system”	Women must regulate biological feedback loops while leading organisations.
Strengths forged through complexity	Greater self-awareness, routine discipline, empathy, and anticipatory risk management.
The cost of inadequate support	Brain fog, fatigue, inconsistent energy, and burnout – often misinterpreted as performance issues.
The strategic imperative	Leadership programmes must include metabolic literacy and stress-regulation support.

Supporting women’s metabolic health is not wellness programming – it is leadership retention strategy.

HOW POSITIVE THINKING

SUPPORTS MENTAL HEALTH IN WOMEN WITH PCOS

PCOS adds metabolic and emotional load. Positive thinking helps build the mental resilience needed to navigate symptoms while leading and performing at high levels.

<p>Stress & Anxiety Reframing challenges calms heightened stress responses.</p>	<p>Emotional Resilience Helps bounce back from energy dips and mood shifts.</p>	
<p>Physical Health Optimism supports steadier heart health and immunity.</p>	<p>Healthy Habits Encourages consistent routines that stabilise symptoms.</p>	
<p>Self-Esteem Positive self-talk counters confidence drops.</p>	<p>Growth Mindset Turns biological and work challenges into learning.</p>	<p>Happiness Boosts daily satisfaction and emotional stability.</p>



SPOTLIGHT



NORTHERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA

Focus: Health • Education • Social Infrastructure

Bongane’s experience shows how personal health transformation begins with access to knowledge and consistent support. At a community scale, this requires infrastructure – the kind the **John Taolo Gaetsewe Developmental Trust (JTGD)** has built across the Northern Cape.

✦ **Strategic Interventions**

- 10 obstetric ambulances procured
- Medical equipment upgrades for all district health centres
- Rea Fola mobile clinic programme reaching remote areas

These interventions address the primary obstacles to early detection, chronic disease management, and maternal health – the foundations of metabolic stability in communities.

✦ **Takeaway:**

Health infrastructure is governance infrastructure. Communities with access to preventative care create citizens with the vitality needed for economic participation and leadership development.

EXPERT VOICE

The Traditional African Diet as Strategic Infrastructure

Bongane’s personal journey exposes a systemic truth: Africa’s rising metabolic disorders are not a failure of individual willpower but of the food environment.

Traditional African diets – diverse, minimally processed, and nutrient dense – offered metabolic resilience. The shift to ultra-processed, low-nutrient foods reflects structural inequities: affordability, access, marketing, and policy gaps.

What Governance Must Address

Revalue traditional dietary knowledge.
Use policy tools (taxes, subsidies) to reshape the food environment.
Strengthen local, community-led food systems.
Food security must be measured not only by availability, but by the quality and metabolic impact of food.
Metabolic health is a cornerstone of national performance.



WHAT'S ON OUR RADAR

THINK



LISTEN



ACT



THINK

Metabolical – Dr. Robert Lustig
A foundational read on food systems and chronic disease.



LISTEN

ZOE Science & Nutrition
Episode: How to eat in 2025: 7 science-backed tips
A practical guide to understanding metabolic signals and food choices.



ACT

- Audit your pantry for ultra-processed foods.
- Book a metabolic health check.
- Choose one weekly habit that strengthens metabolic discipline.

UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



DECEMBER 2025

Springer Nature Publication:

Leadership, Innovation & Responsibility in Global Business Featuring two chapters by Katlego Majola, CRM Prof (SA).

DECEMBER 2025

Site Visit:

Uthando Solutions – Empangeni, KZN

JULY 2026

Launch:

KM Nala 2026 Governance Outlook

Register at www.kmnala.co.za



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CALL FOR CONTRIBUTORS



Got something to say? CALL FOR CONTRIBUTORS

At Rooted, we believe that diverse African voices are essential to reshaping systems.

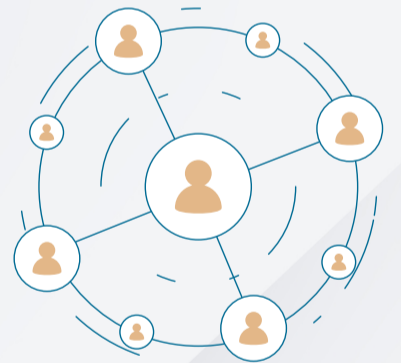
We are looking for original insights from professionals, researchers and community practitioners who are:

- Insightful - Grounded in experience or research
- Action-Oriented - Focuses on what works
- Context-Rooted - Centered in African realities

**Submit your idea or article (600-800 words)
info@kmnala.co.za**

Let's build this platform together.

**FINAL NOTES +
STAY CONNECTED**



"Leadership begins when we choose to act with purpose, not just power." - KM Nala

How to connect

Let's keep the conversation going:

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