

**THE CURRICULUM VITAE OF ZUKISWA MQOLOMBA
CHANGE-MAKER AND SOCIAL CHANGE AGENT: APPOINTED CHAMPION AND
DEFENDER OF SOUTH AFRICA'S CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY, HUMAN
RIGHTS AND HUMAN FREEDOMS**

Name: Zukiswa Mqolomba
RSA I.D.:
Date of birth:
Demographics: African female
Home Address:
Criminal records: None
Disability: None
Languages: English, Xhosa, Zulu, Afrikaans
Driver's license: code 8
Contacts:

I am a Public Office Bearer, appointed by the President of the Republic of South Africa to be a champion and defender of South Africa's constitutional democracy, human rights and freedoms. I'm particularly interested in being a defender and champion of the rights to equality, human dignity, life, along with rights to healthcare, education, and fair labour practices as Cluster Commissioner of the Ministry of Health, Basic and Higher Education and Employment and Labour at the Public Service Commission. I have 20 years of work experience, over 15 years worth of experience in the public service, 12 of which have been at senior management and executive levels. I am a Social Scientist by education and training and currently undertaking a PhD in Sociology with the University of Cape Town (currently on hold), as well finishing a PHD in Development Studies at the University of Mpumalanga, both in South Africa. I hold 2 Masters degrees: an MSOCSCI with specialisation in Sociology with a thesis on Public Policy with the University of Cape Town, as well as an MA Poverty and Development with the University of Sussex in the United Kingdom. I also hold an executive leadership training programme certificate in 21st Century Leadership with Harvard University, Boston, United States, as well as with the Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford through the AIG Foundation. I am a Mandela/Rhodes scholar, as well Chevening scholar with a keen interest in finding solutions to society's socio-economic challenges through sector innovation and transformation. Throughout my career, I have been a social change agent that is passionate about resolving the public sector, governance, and economic challenges of the country and continent, working on issues such as democracy and good governance, corruption, maladministration and malfeasance, public sector reforms and advocacy, public service values and professionalization, education, skills development, unemployment and poverty, economic growth, women empowerment and making a positive social impact in society. I am at the forefront of public sector reforms and change as part of a collective of Commissioners at the Public Service Commission with the responsibility of providing oversight on our work on professionalisation of the public service. I am involved in driving and pushing for public sector reforms, innovations and transformation. I have done work on building meritocratic states, including strategies on how to deal with corruption and professionalising the public service. I am an activist who is a co-creator, working in partnership with other social partners to address society's problems, to develop solutions of lasting, public value. I am actively involved in processes and structures to identify issues, diagnose problems, develop strategies, form partnerships, and work on problems to effect social change, and to do work of public value. I have consciously positioned myself to be in the forefront of the challenges of firstly of my own community, and then the economic, political and social battles of our societies and of our times.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

- 1. Ph.D (Sociology)**, Sociology Department, Humanities Faculty, University of Cape Town (August 2021 – June 2025, currently on hold). Thesis: The challenges of (re)building a professional state in the post-colonial setting of contemporary South Africa
- 2. Ph.D (Development)**, Development Studies Department, Faculty of Economics, Development and Business Sciences, University of Mpumalanga (March 2022 – present). Thesis: What is the role of cooperative governance between the three spheres of Government in realising the economic goals of South Africa's envisioned Developmental state?
- 3. Masters of Arts (Poverty and Development)**, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex (October 2010/June 2011). *Thesis: Afro/Silo Relations: Soft power and China's Energy Diplomacy in Africa. *Chevening Scholar*
- 4. Masters of Social Sciences with specialisation in Sociology (Research only)**, University of Cape Town (2009/2010). Thesis: Interest Group Analysis and the Politics of Public Policy in South Africa. **Mandela Rhodes Scholar*
- 5. Bachelor of Social Sciences (Honours)**, Workplace Change & Labour Law Studies, University of Cape Town (2007). **Johnson&Johnson scholar*
- 6. Bachelor of Social Sciences** in Labour, Organisational Psychology and Human Resource Management, University of Cape Town (2004 - 2006).
- 7. Matriculated with overall distinction**, Kaffrarian High School (2003)

Academic achievement: **Golden Key Society award** – top 15% Faculty of Humanities (2006/7)

WORK EXPERIENCE

1. National Commissioner (Deputy Chairperson), Public Service Commission (1 July 2022 – present). Nominated by Parliament and appointment by the President of the Republic of South Africa to fulfil the constitutional mandate of being a public service Commissioner, responsible for ensuring that the constitutional values of public service administration find expression in South Africa's public service as a whole, to address institutional capacity inadequacies and resolve public sector challenges, and to ensure public service innovation and transformation. Appointed to transform South Africa's public service, advance our constitutional and public administration values and to protect our constitutional democracy. Appointed to be an impartial and innovative champion of public administration excellence, and to actively promote public service excellence in public administration practices which result in a capable, ethical, innovative and developmental state. My role includes, and as part of a collective of Commissioners, engaging with the President, Deputy President, Ministers and their Deputy Ministers, as well as Director Generals and the general public and sector-wide stakeholders about public sector policy reforms, regulation, service delivery and conducting regulatory oversight work. It entails holding Public servants accountable to adhering to our Constitutional Values and Principles, to fair labour practices within the public service, to service delivery, and general public administration excellence. It entails reporting and accounting to Parliament about APP plans, targets and progress, as well as working with Chp9 Institutions Supporting Democracy. It also entails supporting the vision of the Chairperson and working together in leading the Commission.

Notable achievements include:

- Effective HR Advisory to the Chairperson of the Public Service Commission; the Executive Authority
- Spearheading the PSC Thoughtleaders Forum for the whole Public Service in South Africa as brainchild of Plenary through my Office as the Deputy Chairperson

- Spearheading the development of the PSC Constitutional Values and Principles Fellowship programme for young emerging public servant leaders through partnership with the Chandler Institute of Governance, the PSC Singaporean partners
- Overseeing the development of the implementation plan oversight plan of the PSC for the Professionalisation framework adopted by Cabinet in October 2022
- Overseeing the development of the PSC State of Public Service Report
- Successfully co-delivering the PSELF (Public Service Emerging Leaders Fellowship) training programme for young public servants in Kenya in 2023. Delivered localized content on Policy Design and Implementation
- Involved in delivering the Strong Nations in Africa Programme for Senior Managers and Leaders across Africa.

2. Executive Manager: Research, Training, and Monitoring and Evaluation, MDDA (State Agency)(01 July 2021 – 13 June 2022). Head of Research, Training, Monitoring and Evaluation. Reporting to the CEO. Influencing the country's development agenda on inclusion, marginalization and transformation. Ensuring that the voices of the marginalised take centre stage in national policy discourse. Responsibilities include the following: Performance contracting and People management; Annual Performance Planning; Quarter by quarter Performance reporting; Strategy development and Research agenda setting; Governance and Board (Committee) reporting; Bid and service provider management; Risk management; Financial management (Budgeting and Expenditure tracking); Stakeholder Management; Policy development and Policy Communications; Quality assurance and Process (re)engineering and Process improvements.

Achievements: Successfully developed the MDDA's first ever Research Agenda for 2022/2025, as well as its M&E Strategy.

3. Senior Sector Expert: Economy ("Senior Economist"), Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (Presidency of the Republic of South Africa) (20 January 2020 – 30 June 2021). Providing economic research and technical support to the National Planning Commission, as part of the National Planning Commission Secretariat. Preparing and reviewing economic policy research documents related to the National Planning Commission and National Development Plan and other key policy activities. Assisting in the management of the implementation of the National Development Plan; Providing technical support to the National Planning Commission; Conducting research in certain thematic areas that underpins planning at a sectoral level; Managing and coordinating economic policy research commissioned by the National Planning Commission.

Achievements: Successfully developed a review framework for the National Development Plan, which will inform the review work for the successive National Planning Commission.

4. Chief of Staff, Competition Commission (22 July 2019 – 17 January 2020). Providing executive support to the Office of the Commissioner. Leading, Directing and Managing the Office in terms of Communications, Stakeholder Relations and International Relations in achieving the main objectives of the Competition Commission. Implementing and maintaining appropriate systems and processes to ensure the effective functioning of the Office of the Commission in order to render a support service to the entire Commission. Duties include conducting research to support strategic decisions, performance management of the unit, drafting speaker notes for national and international speaking engagements, parliamentary liaison work, stakeholder relations (participating in high-level meetings with CEO's, Ministers and Director-Generals), strategy development and report-writing, and following up on major decisions taken at EXCO, MANCO and Commission meetings, just to mention but a few.

Achievements: Successfully developed an Institutional response (Annual Programme) to Gender-based Violence and Attacks on Foreign Nationals in South Africa. Also developed a discussion document on the "Economics of Migration in South Africa" to help guide the

institutional response to how the Commission deals with foreign nationals outside and within its ranks.

5. Mo Ibrahim Fellow (Office of the President), African Development Bank (AfDB) (1 August 2018 – 15 July 2019), Ivory Coast. Providing research, policy analysis, documentation-management, speech-writing, and programmatic support to the office of the President. I have planned and conceptualised, conducted, and supported innovative research projects in the President's Office. I have produced 2 research reports; developing a social capital collateral index in order to improve access for rural women to lines of credit in the financial services sector, as well as developing a continental strategy for African states to benefit from the China/Africa relationship. I conducted and managed these research projects independently.

Achievements: Contributed 2 research reports that adds value to how the Bank thinks of critical issues facing women and the poor in the African continent.

6. Director: Social Insurance Schemes, Department of Social Development (1 December 2015 – 31 July 2018). Research and policy analysis on social insurance schemes. Developing and reviewing policies and legislation in respect of social insurance and social assistance aimed at protecting households against life cycle contingencies such as unemployment, ill-health, retirement, disability or the death of a breadwinner. I have reviewed and analysed the business case on the institutional arrangements for the proposed social security alignments. I analysed the legislation of insurance schemes (e.g. COID, RAF, UIF) in collaboration with leading institutions and departments. I have also assessed the implications of ratification of different conventions authorised by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on the Department.

Achievements: Whilst there was a moratorium on recruitment, I led a very small team of researchers successfully in delivering our research objectives

7. Senior Researcher, ANC Caucus, Northern Cape Provincial Legislature (5 October 2015 – 29 November 2015). Doing political analysis of Annual reports from various provincial Government Departments in accordance to the Freedom Charter, National Development Plan and other strategic frameworks; Providing research support to Members of the Legislature (ANC) related Portfolio and/or Standing Committees; Supervising researchers and ensuring quality control of the research done by subordinates; Determining the research Methodology in terms of specifications, desired outcomes and nature of research projects; Consultations with the Members of the Legislature (ANC) on research needs.

Achievements: I developed the strategy that was aimed at rebranding and profiling the Office of the Chief Whip.

8. Director: Economic Research and Writing, Department of Public Enterprises (Aug, 4 2013 – August, 4 2015). Policy Analysis, Research-agenda setting, Macro-economic research, Research on South Africa's Industry sectors and the role of SOC in industry, Knowledge Management, as well as Speech-writing. I led the Department's Research and Policy agenda, leading topics on the Next Generation of Supplier Development, Public Public Partnerships, Trade routes and Regional Integration, SIPs and Management of Mega-projects, Contracting and SIPS etc. I've done research work on the National Development Plan, New Growth Path and the Industrial Policy Action Plan.

Achievements: I conceptualised and led the Department's Research Agenda, which received approval at the highest echelons of the Ministry.

9. ETC Consultant, World Bank (Washington DC)(April 30-May 30, 2013). Contracted to provide Project Management Office (PMO) support to the Vice-President responsible for Human Capital.

10. Consultant as Fellow, McKinsey & Company (Sub Sahara Africa) (July, 2011 – April, 2013). Consultant at world's leading management consulting firm. Responsible for leading a key portion of a McKinsey engagement, combining technical and analytical excellence to help solve a piece of the overall client problem. Worked directly with senior client leaders to implement change. As a Fellow in second cohort of distinctive leadership programme to accelerate the development of exceptional black South African leaders. Responsibilities included: Policy Analysis, Research, Knowledge management, Information Management, Problem-solving, Strategy development and Programme planning in the Public Sector and Energy sectors. Presented on job creation in infrastructure to the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission. I also developed an RFI design system (electronic) for a leading utility in Africa that made sure that RFI's were responded to on time. I organised workshops with key client stakeholders. I helped develop a BBBEE strategy for the firm. I also worked as a Research Analyst at the Africa desk producing research input in Tourism, Business Process Services (Call centres), Real Estate, Mining and Quarrying, Infrastructure, and Banking.

Achievements: I helped develop the firm's BBBEE strategy and helped improve its BBBEE score

11. Research Assistant, Professor Vusi Gumede (August, 2010 – July 2011). Policy Analysis and Research on Fiscal and Monetary Policy, the Economic recession, local economic development and building inclusive economies on the African continent, Land reform, Food Crisis, Good governance and Public policy, as well as the Democratic Developmental State in Africa.

Achievements: I provided research support and contributed a chapter to a book, which was eventually launched in 2013.

12. Assistant Director (Research, Policy and Planning), Labour Market Policy, Department of Labour (HQ)(2nd February, 2009 – 15 September, 2010). Preparing policy briefs, research working papers and speeches for the Minister of Labour (South Africa) on labour market social protection, with a focus on vulnerable groups i.e. rural women, youth, immigrants and unskilled workers. Led a research project on the social security arrangements available in the Creatives Industry in South Africa.

Achievements: I led and independently project-managed a research study, which received commendations at the highest levels of the Ministry, as well as the Presidency

13. Research Consultant Assistant, NEPAD (March 2008). Revised NEPAD's Strategic framework for NEPAD's Youth Programme (2005 – 2015); research-driven revision of its strategic framework and paradigm for youth development in Africa.

Achievements: I successfully produced a review on time, which received commendations at the highest levels of the organisation.

14. National Young Women's Network, Program Coordinator (Intern), National Youth Commission (Sep 2008 - Jan 2009). Providing strategic, research & administrative support to the Chairperson's program, reporting to the Chairperson.

Achievement: Developed the NYWN Strategy for building and up-scaling the programme

15. V8 Graduate Trainee, Johnson & Johnson (Jan 2006 - Jun 2008). Market research, recruitment and selection, basic labour law administration, as well as research, programme

design and HR administration e.g. Graduate recruitment, direct selling/stokvel network, reward and recognition and market research analysis.

Achievement: Part of the team that developed the company's reward and recognition programme, that developed the company's Direct Selling model through Stokvels.

16. Sub-Warden (Academics) (Nov 2003 - Nov 2004). Baxter Residence, University of Cape. Develop and provide academic support to the students of the residence, as well as provide support to the Warden of the residence.

Achievements: Successfully conceptualised and ran a tutoring and academic mentorship programme for young students at the residence.

SPECIAL INTERESTS

Writing opinion pieces, Debating, and Reading (News and Current Affairs), and Traveling

ASSOCIATIONS, BOARD MEMBERSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP OF PANEL OF EXPERTS

I am an Adjunct Faculty member and member of the Experts Network of the Chandler Institute of Governance headquartered in Singapore, appointed to train public sector leaders in Africa and across the globe (2023 - 2026).

I am also a member of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM).

I currently serve a Non-Executive Board member of PESA (Political Economy Southern Africa).

I used to serve as a Non-Executive Board member of the following organisations:

- South Africa Washington International Programme
- Pan African Youth Dialogue
- Board member of the Community of Mandela Rhodes Scholars

I used to serve as a member of the Panel of Experts, which has been tasked to develop a poverty alleviation and job creation strategy/policy for the Department of Public Works of South Africa.

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS

1. **Mail&Guardian Power of Women awards.** Top 5 in the Government and Politics Category. Top 100 of 1200 nominations in total (October 2025)
2. Selected to be **an SDG Champion for Africa's Transformation** by AIIDEV Africa. Chosen as a participant in their Africa SDGs Mentorship Programme. Selected Champions hail from Uganda, Tanzania, Ghana, South Africa, Kenya, Togo, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, the DRC and all corners of Africa (02 May 2024)
3. Chosen as the only South African and only non-Nigerian to participate in the **AIG Public Leaders Programme** hosted by Oxford University (Blavatnik School of Government) (03 October 2022 – 15 March 2023)
4. **Africa Youth Awards laureate winner** for the category of Governance 2021 (1 January 2022)
5. **Codesria 2020/2021 Democratic Governance Institute.** Fellowship Participant (9th to 25th August 2021)
6. **Codesria 2020/2021 Virtual Gender Institute:** Violence against Women and Girls in Africa's civic spaces participant. One of 3 South Africans amongst 40 participants from across Africa and her regions (19 – 30 July 2021)
7. **Africa 3535 Laureate.** Was awarded an award as the top 35 under 35's for my leadership and policy contributions in the public service (October 2020)
8. **Yenching Global Symposium, Yenching Academy of Peking University.** Selected amongst 60 international delegates out of 1500 applications to represent the continent. Beijing, China (24 – 26 March 2016).
9. **Governance for Development Residential School program.** Selected as the only South African to represent the continent. School of Oriental and Asian Studies. United Kingdom (23 – 27 March 2015).
10. **BIARI.** Selected amongst 5 South Africans to attend a week-long programme on energy and water. Brown International Advance Research Institutes, Brown University, United States (June 2014)
11. **2012 Economic Restructuring & Policy Adjustment seminar.** Chosen amongst 2 delegates to attend a seminar in China to learn about China's economic growth pathways. Hosted by China's National Development and Reform Commission. Selected by the Africa Institute of South Africa (April 2012).
12. **2010 Transatlantic Youth Summit.** Chosen amongst 100 youth to attend the co-seating of Heads of States, Military leaders, high diplomats in Portugal, Lisbon (17 – 23 November 2010)
13. **AU Consultative Workshop.** 20 youth delegates chosen to chart the development of a 10 year Action Plan for Youth Development in Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (23 – 25 September 2009)
14. **UNESCO Intergenerational Forum** on Human Rights Leadership. Chosen amongst 80 from over 800 applicants, Connecticut and New York (UN HQ). Presented a paper on Dealing with Youth Poverty and Unemployment in Africa (5 August – 14 August 2010)
15. **The Elders Intergenerational Forum.** Developing a Winning Strategy for a Winning Continent. Chosen amongst 80 African youth leaders to attend a seating of the Elders on Africa's future trajectory. Nominated by the Mandela Rhodes Foundation to participate (29 May 2010)
16. **Top 200 Youth Influential Leaders in South Africa,** Mail & Guardian (2012 and 2016). Chosen to form part of the top 10 representing Government and Politics in 2016.
17. **Vice-Chancellors Award** for 'Most Outstanding Student Leader in 2007', University of Cape Town (2007)
18. **ABE Bailey Fellowship Award** (2007). A competitive travel scholarship to travel to the United Kingdom and Scotland with other fellows
19. **SRC Student Residence Award** for 'Most outstanding Student Leader in the Residences sector', University of Cape Town (2006)
20. **SRC President, Member of Council and Member of Senate** (2007)
21. **SASCO PEC member and ANCYL BEC member,** University of Cape Town (2006/7)

22. **Student Parliament Deputy President, Humanities Deputy Chairperson, Baxter Head Student, Baxter Sub-warden**, University of Cape Town (2005/6)
23. **Prefect, Debating Committee Member, Interact Society Committee Member**

TRAINING/SHORTCOURSES

1. **DIRCO Protocol and Diplomacy Training** (30-31 July 2025)
2. **GCIS Media training** for Office-Bearers (July 2023 and 2024)
3. **AIG Public Leaders Programme** hosted by Oxford University (Blavatnik School of Government) (03 October 2022 – 15 March 2023)
4. **Nyukela Public Service SMS Pre-Entry Programme**, National School of Government of South Africa (22 March 2023)
5. **MALKIA, the ITCILO online course to empower women line managers** (9 November to 11 December 2020). The online course is hosted on the ITCILO eCampus. The training lasted five weeks (20 hours of online training), during which we: explored 5 self-placed learning modules on gender biases and core skills for line managers; participated in 3 live webinars to go deeper and exchange on key women empowerment initiatives; as well as benefited from 2 operation coaching sessions to develop autonomy in resolving challenges.
6. **Leadership in the 21st Century** (September 2016), Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government, Boston, United States. Selected as top 2 South Africans by the Distinguished Humphrey Leadership Fellowship.
7. **Leading in Public Life Programme** - (March 2015), Graduate School of Development Policy and Practice, University of Cape Town. Selected as top 25 people out of 109 applications received.
8. **Public Management** – (19 June – 06 August 2015), Mandela Washington Fellowship Programme, Young African Leaders Network, Virginia Commonwealth University, United States.
9. **Mini-MBA** (MMBA) at Alpine University, Austria, 2012.
10. **Policy Development and Management** – Pro-Active Public Service College (Pty) Ltd, NQF level 5 (26 – 30 July 2010). Policy analysis, Technical Evaluation, Financial modelling and planning (Theory, models and techniques)
11. **SPSS Training 18+ – Statistical Analysis** – SPSS South Africa (12 -16 July 2010). Computation and Statistical analysis (i.e. descriptive statistics, regression analysis, chi-square analysis etc)
12. **Labour Market Information Analysis** – Management College of Southern Africa (MANCOSA), 5-day Certificate course, NQF level 6 (17 – 20 Aug 2009). Labour market information analysis, Trend analysis, Basic economics, Policy analysis and development (decent work and labour brokering), Skills needs projections and analysis (modelling and projections) etc.
13. **Labour Market Policy for Poverty Alleviation**, Advanced International Training Programme 288 2009 Africa, Sweden (03 October – 30 October 2009) – Swedish Institute for Public Administration and Public Employment Service, Sweden. Comparable policy instruments for employment creation and poverty alleviation
14. **Speech-Writing** – Institute of Advanced Journalism, NQF level 5 (18 - 19 June 2009)

SKILLS ATTAINED

1. Policy Analysis and Policy Development
2. Research and Analytical skills
3. Monitoring and Evaluation
4. Project and team management, and general co-ordination
5. Strategic planning & policy formulation
6. Stakeholder engagement, negotiation and general networking skills
7. Problem solving and thinking skills

REFERENCES

- 1.** Zukiswa Potye (Former CEO of the MDDA, current Head of the Strategy and Monitoring and Evaluation of the National Energy Regulator of South Africa)
- 2.** Ashraf Kariem, Acting Deputy Director-General, National Planning Commission Secretariat
- 3.** Prof. Vusi Gumede (Mentor and Professor (Dean), University of Mpumalanga)
- 4.** Thabo Sephiri (Research Manager, Ekurhuleni Municipality)