

KFC promotes Akhona Qengqe to general manager for Africa

KFC has appointed Akhona Qengqe as general manager for Africa, effective 1 April 2023. She will replace outgoing GM Dhruv Kaul, who is moving into a GM role for KFC Pan Europe.



Akhona Qengqe, KFC's new general manager for Africa. Source: Supplied

Qengqe is no stranger to KFC in Africa having started with the business in 2015 as development director, after which she was promoted to lead the brand's Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (EI&B) agenda, before being promoted to chief people officer (CPO) for KFC Africa in 2020 and more recently, appointed to chief development officer.

Her experience spans across multiple industries including petroleum, property, marketing, operations and convenience retail. She has also served as the chairperson of the board of the Franchise Association of South Africa.

"Akhona has spent the better part of her eight years at KFC as an intrinsic part of the KFC leadership team in Africa and has worked closely with Dhruv and the team to ensure sustainability of the business but also, growth of local female talent. In fact, she has been instrumental in the team achieving diverse talent, with the Africa L12+ leader population now transformed at 50% women," says Sabir Sami, KFC global chief executive officer.

The fast food chain states that in partnership with the leadership team, Qengqe helped the KFC business navigate a disruptive pandemic that impacted not only business but also staff from a wellness and workplace perspective. Furthermore,

KFC says that she has been central to the business's development programmes – enabling a heart-led, high-performing people culture.



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Qengqe has also spearheaded the KFC Add Hope programme, assisting the team in driving this pillar of purpose for the business to create access to nutritious meals for those less fortunate.

"This role really is a dream come true, a continuation of a journey where I often times did not know where it would lead but trusted that as long as I owned the seat I was given at the table with intentionality, rigour and determination, the rest would take care of itself.

"As someone who grew up in the rural parts of the Eastern Cape, having faced many similar challenges to the majority of women in our country, being able to fill this role and represent others that look like me is showing them that it truly is a dream that can come true, is what gives this real meaning and purpose for me," comments Qengqe.

Leading gender empowerment

As a gender parity and female empowerment advocate, Qengqe conceptualised and launched KFC Africa's Women on the Move programme, which was created in 2021 as a 12-month programme to equip women with tools and resources that will help them leverage their innate leadership qualities and fuel results within the KFC business locally.

"Akhona has been central to the development and success of KFC Africa's equality programmes, taking them to new heights both on the local front as well as from a global perspective," continues Sami.



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She also created and launched KFC's global Community of Belonging (COB), Shine - a safe and brave space for people to connect, belong and lead. Through this, she built leadership experience in creating an environment of inclusion and belonging, with a restaurant-first mentality.

"This programme allows the business to not only partner with other leaders from around the world and be at the forefront of leading change for our people, but also become a visible ally for our communities, bringing together our women and LGBTQIA+ communities from around the globe," KFC explains.

Qengqe concludes, "I believe in Africa, I believe in its people and the incredible untapped potential that still exists. As a business, we have shown tremendous growth, momentum and acceleration through very challenging times in the past few years but due to the people we have in our business and our ongoing commitment to a high-performance, heart-led culture, we have shown that the impossible is in fact possible. I cannot wait to see what we can collectively achieve."