

# Blue IQ CEO Nomhle Canca a hard act to follow

By **DIKATSO MAMETSE**

AS we celebrate Women's Day, Nomhle Canca, CEO of Blue IQ, remembers her two grandmothers as her inspiration and the strong women role model she has admired since she was a little girl.

"My grandmothers from both sides were incredible entrepreneurs. One started off as a nurse and went on to open up several health centres in her community.

"My other grandmother's husband was politically active and was away from home a lot. She nevertheless managed to develop a 200ha sugarcane farm on her own and sent seven children to universities in different countries," she said.

Her grandmother's entrepreneurial genes must have rubbed off on Canca.

After having spent 20 years in exile, she worked as a management trainee at Anglo American, and later became executive director of Women Investment Portfolio Holdings (Wiphold).

About three years ago, she started her own advisory consultancy

company in the financial services industry, Canca Financial Services.

At 40, she sits on boards of Sentech, SA National Parks and Land Bank and still manages to be a wife and mother of two children.

"How do I manage to handle it all? I married well. I think my husband didn't quite know what he was getting himself into when he married me, but I think he's adjusted well.

"I don't aspire to be a super woman. My family have to deal with my imperfections, I just try to do my best in everything I do."

Canca qualified as a stockbroker on the New York Stock Exchange and as an investment adviser in the state of Georgia before coming back to South Africa in 1991.

Now she's at the helm of multi-billion rand Gauteng provincial government initiative as the CEO of the Blue IQ, having taken over from Pradeep Maharaj in September last year.

Blue IQ was launched in 2000 as an agency within the department



**NOMHLE Canca - CEO of Blue IQ**

of finance and economic affairs of GPG under its then MEC, Jabu Moleketi.

It was launched with a budget of R2,3bn to bring nine mega-projects to fruition:

- ICT – The innovation Hub;
- Gautrain Rapid Rail Link;
- High-value added manufacturing;
- The Wadeville-Alrode Industrial

Corridor;

- City Deep Logistics Hub;
- Gauteng Automotive Cluster;
- Johannesburg International airport Industrial Development Zone;
- Tourism;
- The Cradle of Humankind;
- Dinokeng; and
- Newtown.

Since then, Blue IQ has also taken on and delivered the Gauteng Film Agency, the Kliptown urban renewal programme with the Walter Sisulu Square of Dedication, the Automotive Industry Development Centre, Constitution Hill and Mary Fitzgerald Square

"Three projects are no longer with us – Gautrain, Cradle of Humankind, and the Dinokeng game reserve fall under the finance and economic affairs department," Canca says.

By early 2004, Blue IQ recognised that having achieved a significant measure of success in its start-up phase of operations, it was time to move on to the next phase of effecting the implementation of

the smart plan. That's where Canca comes in.

The Blue IQ Investment Holdings Act of 2003 made it possible to commercialise Blue IQ into a private company, which could hold shares, invest and list subsidiaries.

Today, Blue IQ Investment Holdings operates as a corporate holding company, a separate entity from the department of finance and economic affairs.

"The commercialisation of Blue IQ was legislated by the Blue IQ Investment Holdings Act of 2003 to realise returns on the investments we made and secure a sustainable future growth of our province, which accounts for 33,9% of our country's GDP," Canca said.

R3,7bn has been spent on projects to date, and 30 000 temporary and permanent jobs have been generated.

Canca says there aren't any immediate plans to start up new projects. She says she'll be concentrating on making sure that all projects become self-sustainable. – [dikatso@moneyweb.co.za](mailto:dikatso@moneyweb.co.za)