

MSc and PhD Candidates recruited under the Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDEs) and Biodiversity in the Khakea/Bray Transboundary Aquifer project, funded by JRS Biodiversity Foundation and Implemented by SADC Groundwater Management Institute (SADC-GMI) in collaboration with a team of independent research scientists from the Aquatic Systems Research Group (ASRG), University of Venda and University of the Free State's Institute for Groundwater Studies (IGS).

GIS AND REMOTE SENSING CANDIDATES:

Mangana B. Rampheri – PhD University of the Western Cape

Mangana B. Rampheri is a first year PhD candidate in Environmental and Water Sciences at the University of the Western Cape. Her research interest centers on the application of GIS and Remote Sensing on Water Resources and Environmental Management. Currently, her PhD research focuses on the application of GIS and Remote Sensing in mapping Groundwater independent water ecosystems in Khakea Bray Transboundary Aquifer System. She holds BSc in Environmental and Resource Studies and MSc in Geography and Environmental Sciences (with Cum laude) from University of Limpopo. Her MSc research focused on “Community involvement in Biodiversity Conservation and Management”. Her study involved the use of cutting edge spatial explicit GIS and Satellite-based methodologies to assess tree species diversity before and after community involvement in biodiversity conservation. While pursuing her MSc, she also got involved in tutoring undergraduate students (1st to 4th year) in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at University of Limpopo. As part of her MSc, she managed to author four journals’ articles, three of these have been published in ISI peer-reviewed journals, and the other one currently accepted with minor comments. She also presented in a local conference including the SADC Groundwater Conference organized by the SADC-GMI.



Kudzai Shaun Mpakairi – MSc University of the Western Cape



Kudzai graduated with a BSc Hons in Environmental Science from the University of Zimbabwe in 2018. To date, Kudzai has published several articles in SCOPUS indexed journals on climate change, ecology and natural resources management. Most of these articles emphasize the use of GIS and Earth Observation techniques in climate change, ecology and natural resources management.

Kudzai has also worked extensively with several governmental and non-governmental organizations in Zimbabwe as a research technician. Some of the organizations include Vision RI, UNDP, African Wildlife Fund (AWF), Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA) and University of Zimbabwe.

BIODIVERSITY CANDIDATES:

Chipo Perseverance Mungenge – PhD Rhodes University

Chipo Perseverance Mungenge holds a BSc. Hons in Biological Sciences (2013) and MSc in Tropical Resource Ecology (2015) from the University of Zimbabwe. She is currently a PhD candidate with the Department of Zoology and Entomology at Rhodes University. Her research interests center around limnology, plankton ecology, fish ecology, aquaculture and fisheries management. Her past work as an aquatic ecologist with the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Authority has garnered her years of work experience while looking at the limnology and ecology of various freshwater systems in Zimbabwe. Her work has been published in various peer-reviewed journals. Her current research is on how within-system processes shape plankton diversity in groundwater dependent ecosystems in the Khakhea/ Bray Dolomite Trans boundary Aquifer. She believes that research must be accessible and extend outside of academia into practical application.



Fannie Mfaniseni Masina – MSc University of Mpumalanga



Fannie Mfaniseni Masina is an MSc student at the University of Mpumalanga. He graduated with BSc Hons in Agriculture at the University of Mpumalanga. For his BSc Hons, he focused on Vegetable growers' perceptions on pest management strategies in selected areas of Nhlazatshe. For his MSc studies, he will be focusing on Assessing the influence of macrophytes diversity and structuring on macroinvertebrate communities in Austral temporal ponds.

Tafara Frank Bute – MSc Rhodes University

Tafara Frank Bute graduated with a 1st class BSc Hons in Applied Biosciences and Biotechnology at Midlands States University, Gweru, Zimbabwe in 2018. He graduated as one of the best students in the department with 31 distinctions. After completing his Degree, he got an opportunity to work for the Ministry of Health and ChilCARE (MOHCC), Zimbabwe.

Tafara's involvement in the Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems and Biodiversity in the Khakea/Bray Transboundary Aquifer project this project will involve studying phytoplankton and microbial dynamics of the wetland ecosystems in the transboundary Aquifer of Khakea and Bray dolomite region.



GEOHYDROLOGY/HYDROGEOLOGY CANDIDATES:

Brighton Munyai – PhD Candidate University of the Free State



Brighton is a Hydrogeologist with an MSc in Hydrogeology and has experience encompassing groundwater resources development, mine hydrogeology, water use licensing and environmental hydrogeology. He has worked in Botswana, Malawi, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, holding positions in groundwater consulting companies, mining houses and academia. He is currently employed by the SADC Groundwater Management Institute as the Senior Groundwater Specialist while pursuing his PhD with the University of the Free State.

Brighton will be developing a numerical model for Transboundary Aquifer, to be used as a management tool for the TBA with special focus on Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems

Thandeka Ngobe – MSc University of the Free State

Thandeka is currently enrolled for master's degree at the University of Free State. Thandeka received financial aid to pursue her studies from the JSR Biodiversity through the SADC-GMI under the GDEs and biodiversity in the Khakea/Bray Transboundary aquifer project. On this project her focus will be mainly on the hydrogeological investigations such as aquifer characterization which includes quantifying the groundwater quality and quantity around the identified groundwater dependent Ecosystem.



Thandeka holds a bachelor's degree in Environmental and Engineering Geology and a BSc Honours degree in Hydrogeology from the University of Pretoria. She acquired and enhanced her professional skills through the SADC-GMI Young Professional programme and through an 18-month internship at WaterAid Eswatini where she was introduced to project management and completed Project Management for Development Professionals (PMD Pro) course through Water Aid learning platforms.
