



☰ New Research Hub Launched to Study Health and Social Impact of Mining and Migration in Royal Bafokeng Nation

📁 Press Releases 📅 27 November 2024

JOHANNESBURG, 27 November 2024. The BAMMISHO Node, or Bafokeng Health & Demographic Surveillance System (HDSS), has been officially launched as the latest South African Population Research Infrastructure Network (SAPRIN) site in the Royal Bafokeng Nation, North-West Province. Located near Rustenburg's platinum mines, this research hub will focus on the social and health effects of mining and migration on local communities.

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Dr. Kobus Herbst, SAPRIN Director, remarked, "The addition of BAMMISHO as our seventh node marks an important expansion of SAPRIN's network. This new site will not only generate essential insights into the health and socio-economic impacts of mining and migration but also strengthen our collective research capacity to address the unique challenges facing South African communities." Dr. Kobus Herbst, SAPRIN director "welcomed BAMMISHO as the seventh and newest node in South Africa aiming to produce high-quality research and enhance research capacity."

Led by the AWISE collaboration—a partnership including Aurum Institute, Wits University, Sefako Makgatho University of Health Sciences, and Johns Hopkins University—the BAMMISHO Node is set to gather robust, long-term data on health, migration, and demographic patterns in the Bojanala District. Home-grown public health experts Professor Keitshepile Geoff Setswe and Professor Malla Mathildah Mokgatle, along with Professors Chris Hofman and Latifat Ibisomi, will guide this project, with Ms. Ireen Mosweu leading community engagement efforts.

"Our goal is to create a world-class research site that not only informs public health policies but also improves community health outcomes," said Prof. Setswe. The Node will serve as a platform for high-impact research, attracting international and local researchers while supporting Vision 2035 of the Royal Bafokeng Nation and the UN Sustainable Development Goal 3 on health and well-being.

Dr. Koketso Rakhudu, Kgosana of the Tsitsing village of the Royal Bafokeng Nation, welcomed the node. "This represents a significant step forward in our commitment to enhancing the health and well-being of our people, ensuring that the impact of mining and migration is thoroughly understood and addressed."

Key research activities include tracking 100,000 residents across 43,000 households to map demographic changes and health trends over time, addressing critical health challenges like HIV/AIDS, TB, chronic diseases, and the impacts of migration. The Node also aims to build a network of early-career researchers, offering financial support for smaller, community-based projects.

Dr. Malebo Maponyane, Head of Health and Social Development Services at the Royal Bafokeng Nation said "The launch of the BAMMISHO Node is a pivotal moment for the Royal Bafokeng Nation. As the Head of Health and Social Development Services, I am committed to leveraging this research hub to enhance our understanding of mining and migration impacts. By prioritizing data-driven decisions, collaborating with esteemed partners, and engaging with our community, we will drive initiatives that ensure a healthier and more resilient future for all Bafokeng citizens." With three core

units—implementation research and data management, clinical and laboratory research, and health systems research—the BMMISHO Node will support studies that address urgent health and socio-economic needs while driving policy transformation for long-term community resilience.

"Through our work in the BMMISHO Node, we aim to integrate behavioural and social research into our health initiatives, ensuring that we address the social determinants of health and improve access to services for all community members." shared Prof. Mokgatle, Head of the Department of Public Health at Sefako Makgatho University of Health Sciences

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About SAPRIN

South African Population Research Infrastructure Network (SAPRIN) is a major new long-term investment in a national research infrastructure, funded by the national Department of Science, Technology, and Investment (DSTI) and hosted by the SA Medical Research Council (SAMRC). SAPRIN's vision is equitable health and social wellbeing. Our mission is to achieve this through a dynamic and impactful research infrastructure underpinned by longitudinal population-based nodes in under-resourced communities across South Africa.

SAPRIN is a valuable resource for researchers and policymakers working to improve the health and wellbeing of South African communities. Through its focus on collaboration, partnership, and ethical research practices, SAPRIN is helping to build a more robust and responsive research infrastructure in South Africa, and to support evidence-based decision-making and policy development.

Of the seven SAPRIN nodes, four are rural and they are Agincourt (Mpumalanga), DIMAMO (Limpopo), AHRI (KwaZulu – Natal) and BMMISHO (North – West). There are three urban nodes; GRT-INSPIRED (Gauteng), C-SHARP (Western Cape), and USINGA (KwaZulu-Natal). <https://sapr.in.mrc.ac.za> (<https://sapr.in.mrc.ac.za>)


About The Aurum Institute

The Aurum Institute is a proudly African organisation working to advance health, science, and innovation to create a healthier world for future generations. We partner with governments, the private sector and civil society to design and deliver high-quality care and treatment to people in developing communities. www.auruminstitute.org

About Wits School of Public Health

This multi-disciplinary school produces skilled public health practitioners appropriately trained to address the range of public health needs and challenges within South African and African settings. www.wits.ac.za/publichealth (<https://www.wits.ac.za/publichealth/>)

Sefako Makgatho Department of Public Health

 Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University (SMU), as the only health sciences university in South Africa, is strategically positioned to focus on multidisciplinary health research that will provide solutions to ease the quadruple burden of disease facing the country. www.smu.ac.za/public-health-programmes (<http://www.smu.ac.za/public-health-programmes>)

The Royal Bafokeng Nation is a community in the North West Province of South Africa, primarily known for its rich cultural heritage and significant mineral wealth, particularly platinum. The Bafokeng people have a long history dating back to the 12th century, and they are led by a hereditary king, currently Kgosi Leruo Molotlegi.

This rural nation has successfully leveraged its mineral resources to invest in infrastructure, education, and economic development, making it one of the most prosperous rural communities in South Africa. The Royal Bafokeng Administration manages these resources and initiatives, aiming to create a sustainable and self-sufficient community. <https://www.bafokenginstitute.org.za> (<https://www.bafokenginstitute.org.za>)

About Johns Hopkins University

Johns Hopkins University, founded in 1876 as America's first research university, is a global leader in education, research, and innovation. With a mission to advance knowledge and foster independent thinking, Johns Hopkins is home to world-renowned faculty, groundbreaking discoveries, and transformative scholarship across disciplines.

The university's commitment to excellence spans nine academic divisions, including the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences, the Whiting School of Engineering, the School of Medicine, and the Bloomberg School of Public Health. Johns Hopkins consistently ranks among the top universities globally, driven by its dedication to addressing complex challenges and improving lives worldwide. www.jhu.edu (<http://www.jhu.edu>).



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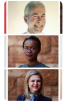


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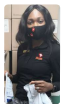
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