

WRITTEN BY SHEENA ADAMS

# OFF THE WALL

Mam' Flora Manaka has bright red Spitz sandals on and a feisty attitude of which the tavern owner across the road is wary.

Faded signage (painted illicitly) for his sideline pavement car wash business, stretches across one side of her boundary wall on Alexandra township's famous London Road.

Across the rest of the wall is an incoming-producing Nedbank mural, sold to her by Anisa Kale, a young marketing ingénue whose township-inspired business is booming. Since the photoshopped HD Nedbank mural rose alongside the signage for London Car Wash, Manaka's become increasingly irritated by her wall-thieving neighbour. "I could make money from that wall," she tuts.

The arrangement with Kale is a happy *quid pro quo*. Kale leases walls "like Mam' Flora's" for a modest amount and sells them on to Nedbank, Nike, Wimpy, a few government departments and a healthy number of other clients around SA, maintaining murals for six- to 12-month contracts.

Most of the walls she leases belong to *gogos* in townships like Alex and Soweto in Gauteng and even Mdantsane in the Eastern Cape. She's enjoyed a 35% growth rate since launching Keys Communication in 2009.

Kale calls her business the "perfect philanthropical-cum-entrepreneurship model". "I can have my cake and eat it too," she says of the clever division of profits – which probably paid for both Mam' Flora's sandals and the chunky investment timepieces on Kale's and her husband Kabelo's wrists.

"I was introduced to business and entrepreneurship by my father, who had a small township retail outlet selling all sorts of things when I was growing up. I saw how he interacted with people and how knowing your consumers leads to an everlasting relationship... Kabelo and I were inspired to create this company by our passion for the township. But we also wanted to keep money rotating in it to uplift communities," she says.

She worked long hours to convince brands like Nedbank of the value of township murals, handing them out freely at first and taking wide-eyed executives on township tours of the sites. These days brands are using her innovative medium nationally to launch new products.

Kale banks on the strong need by many companies to be front-of-mind in the township consumer market, going as far as coating recognised branding in a paint finish she calls "township raw essence". "I'm a ghetto child. The township pretty much made me, so now it's my turn to make the township. And, at the same time, make enough money to put my two kids through school and further my vision," she says.

Anisa Kale (standing) with Mam' Flora Manaka