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## NEF loans radiology practice R12m to ramp up capacity in Thohoyandou

[SOUTH AFRICA,] – The National Empowerment Fund (NEF) has invested R12.17m in a 100% black women-owned radiology business to help ramp up operations to full capacity and meet the growing demand for the healthcare service in Thohoyandou, Limpopo.

Radiological Imaging Service Africa (RISA) was established in 2021, by Dr Rudzani Lufuno Tshivhase and Dr Salome Dlangamandla.

“They are both medical doctors who collectively have more than 20 years of radiology experience spanning the private and public sectors. They have demonstrated passion for making specialist healthcare accessible to rural communities. The company will also create 9 full-time jobs and 6 direct part-time jobs,” says Acting uMnotho Fund Manager Ms Nomazizi Siphondo, who also heads the Women Empowerment Fund (WEF).

### Located to meet a growing need

RISA is located at the recently-developed NHC medical centre in Limpopo’s Thohoyandou, which is the business administrative centre of the Vhembe District Municipality and the Thulamela local Municipality.

There is a lack of specialist healthcare services in the regions which means that patients are referred to other medical centres across provinces, hence the surge in demand for private healthcare facilities that are within reach of the local population, and specifically rural areas.

### Funding for expansion to increase offering

“The funding that the NEF has afforded RISA will go towards the acquisition of radiology equipment, IT software and renovations in preparation for the instalment of the new equipment. All this expansion will enable RISA to augment its service offering to a full suite of radiology services and will maximise our ability to help patients with increased efficiency,” says Dr Tshivhase.

“Once we have the new equipment, we will be able to offer a wide range of imaging services including X-Rays, Ultrasounds, CT scans and Mammograms for the benefit of referred and non-referred patients,” adds Dr Dlangamandla.

RISA seeks to address the healthcare challenges faced by the rural communities in and around Thohoyandou in respect to access to essential healthcare – including early medical screening. Early medical screening and diagnosis support early detection which aid prevention or early and successful treatments of many conditions.

### **Fund a woman, fund a nation**

Ms Siphondo says about R10m of the funding will be sourced from the WEF. The WEF was established 10 years ago to accelerate women economic empowerment through the provision of funding to businesses owned and managed by black women.

“Funding is provided from R250 000 to R75 million across the NEF’s existing product suite and investment instruments. Since inception, the NEF has approved 1,603 transactions totalling more than R14 billion, with over R9.614 billion disbursed to beneficiary companies. Over the years, more than 30% of the Funds’ annual disbursements have been to women-empowered business. In 2024 WEF disbursements accounted for 37% of total NEF disbursements, showing an improvement over time,” Ms Siphondo said.

Siphondo added that this year the NEF will be encouraging increased applications for funding from women like the two doctors from RISA, to help create jobs, expand, and transform the economy and increase the number of women investees.

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