

Behind the shelves: The woman who helps feed a nation

Kelebogile Mongale isn't just moving stock, she's moving mountains.

A quiet force of determination with a deep sense of responsibility, Kelebogile helps to keep supermarket shelves fully stocked. As a Senior Planning Manager at [the Shoprite Group's Riverfields Distribution Centre \(DC\)](#), she leads with purpose, and a personal mission to make every day count. Not just for herself, but also for her team, for the company, and for the millions of South Africans who rely on affordable groceries.

Born and raised in Mafikeng in the North West, the 33-year-old Kelebogile's journey began in a home filled with love, discipline, and ambition. "We were raised to work hard, be determined, and dream big," she reflects. Central to that nurturing environment was her mother, who juggled multiple roles with unwavering dedication. "She wore many hats and somehow gave every aspect of her life 100%. My achievements are a direct reflection of her encouragement and example."

That foundation carried Kelebogile all the way to North-West University, where she earned a BCom in Statistics and Economics, followed by an Honours degree in Operational Research. "I've always been a numbers person. Mathematics was my thing," she says.

After learning more about the retailer through a university career fair, she applied for the Graduate Programme and in January 2015, her journey with the company officially began.

Today, with 10 years of experience and a series of promotions behind her, Kelebogile leads a team of 14 people that is central to the successful functioning of the Riverfields DC. It is the third largest in the Group's national network, servicing over 500 stores across Gauteng. "My team and I ensure that customer and store demands are met in the most effective and cost-efficient way possible," she explains. "We schedule deliveries, monitor promotional execution, and manage stock flow, right down to the nitty-gritty of new store openings."

While the work is technical and complex, it's the human element that drives her. "It energises me to know that customers are receiving what they need, on time and in full," she says. "There's a real sense of pride in knowing that what we do every day makes a difference."

Especially during peak periods like the [Checkers XXL promotion](#) – that requires the DCs to ensure high volumes of various promotional items are delivered every week for six weeks, or Black Friday, when the pace is relentless and the stakes are high. "It gets intense, because there's anticipation, adrenaline and sometimes a little stress," she admits. "But we're a team. We hold regular meetings, share progress, and there's always support from management. We pull together."

That collaborative spirit is also key to her most important message: the work her team does isn't just about big moments, it rather is a continuous, behind-the-scenes effort that helps keep food affordable for everyday South Africans. "Through smart planning, efficient routing, and balancing operations, we

save on transport costs, and those savings are passed on directly to our customers,” she explains. “It’s not just during promos. It’s something we focus on every single day.”

Beyond the numbers and planning dashboards, Kelebogile is a proud mother to a five-year-old daughter and shares her home with her partner. “Family means everything,” she says. And she wants her daughter to grow up seeing that women can lead, solve problems, and still be fully present at home.

In her free time, she enjoys hosting friends and exploring new places. She is always curious, always growing, very much like she is in her career.

For Kelebogile, her career at the Group has been more than a job. It’s been a journey of growth and purpose. “It’s a place where young people can build real careers,” she says confidently. “There’s opportunity, stability, and space to learn.”

Her next big dream? “To become a Distribution Centre Manager and lead at an even greater scale, using everything I’ve learned. But no matter the title, my goal stays the same: to serve with excellence and make a real impact.”

In a business that moves fast and demands excellence, Kelebogile is a steady force. A planner. A mentor. A leader. And above all, a woman who cares.

- **University students currently enrolled for their 2nd, 3rd or 4th year studies in Supply Chain or Logistics-related fields can apply for a Shoprite Group bursary [here](#).**