

ENHANCING AND OPTIMISING SERVICE DELIVERY AT LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

BACK *to* BASICS

INDEPENDENT QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

Volume 7 // May 2024



Executive Mayor of Rustenburg Local Municipality,
Cllr Shiela Mabale-Huma

Addresses issues of service delivery through Mayoral Imbizos in the area as part of her response to the needs of communities

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CONTENTS







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**Service
delivery**

COVER STORY

**Executive Mayor of
Rustenburg Local
Municipality, Cllr
Shiela Mabale-Huma**



**Eskom Outlines
Plan for
Sustained
Electricity Supply
Amidst Renewable
Energy Push**

**Dr. Samuel
Motsuenyane:
Visionary Leader
and Father of
Black Business
Passes Away at 97**

**Ekurhuleni Mayor
Vows
Comprehensive
Service Drive
Amid Fiscal
Challenges**

17

**Navigating the
2024 Political
Terrain: Public
Relations and
Reputation
Management
disciplines are at a
crossroads**

28

20

**Record 27.7
Million Voters
Registered for
Upcoming May 29
Elections,
IEC Confirms
Readiness**

35

22

**The best and
worst-run
municipalities in
South Africa**

40

Foreword

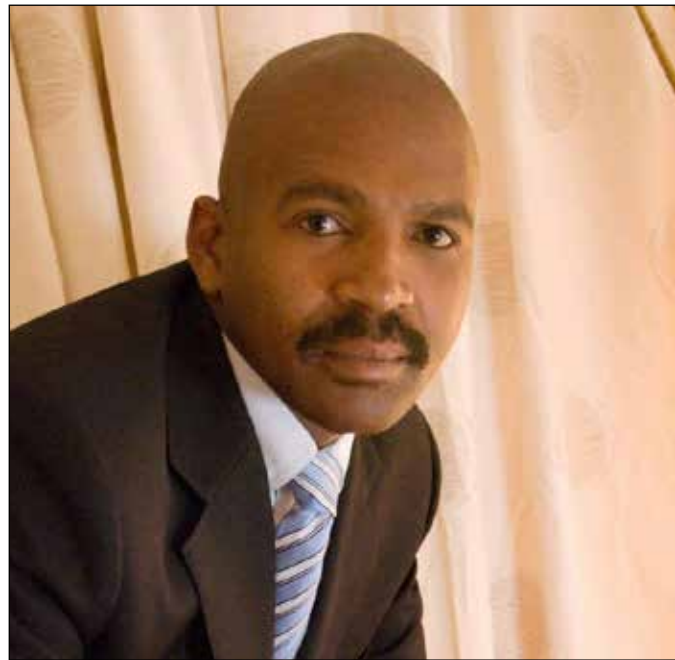
Decisive Democracy: Over 27 Million South Africans to Shape the Future in Historic 2024 Elections

As we stand on the brink of another monumental moment in South Africa's democratic journey, the historic general election on May 29, 2024, beckons as not just a date on a calendar, but as a defining crossroads for our nation. This year, an unprecedented 27 million voters are expected to cast their votes, making choices among over 70 political parties and 11 independent candidates. Such a wide array of options reflects not just the diversity of our society, but also the complexity and depth of the issues that we grapple with daily.

This election occurs at a pivotal time when South Africa commemorates 30 years of democracy—a period that has seen both remarkable transformations and significant challenges. As we step into the polling booths, we do so amid a landscape of confusion and uncertainty. Yet, it is evident that our collective heart beats with a desperate desire for transformative change—a change that ensures stability, equity, and prosperity for all citizens.

In this edition of Back 2 Basics Magazine, we delve deep into the essence of what these elections mean against the broader backdrop of our democracy's milestone. We explore the current state of service delivery, which remains a critical issue as our municipalities continue to wrestle with fiscal stability. The complexity of governance in a time of economic strain and social unrest is more than just a political challenge; it is a test of our resilience and commitment to democratic values.

As we navigate these turbulent times, we also take a moment to pay homage to the icons of our nation who have left an indelible



mark on our history and communities. Figures like Dingan Thobelo and Dr. Samuel Motsuenyane have not only shaped our past but continue to inspire our future. Their legacies are reminders of the strength and spirit required to drive genuine change.

This year's election is more than a routine civic duty; it is a call to action for every South African to contribute to the writing of the next chapter of our national story. As we mark 30 years of democracy, let us recommit to the ideals that those before us fought so valiantly to achieve. Let us vote with hope and the earnest belief that our actions at the polls will help forge a future that is inclusive and reflective of the dreams of all South Africans.

Thank you for turning to Back 2 Basics as your guide through these times of significant national reflection and decision-making. Together, let's explore the complexities of our present and consider how we, as a nation, can build a path forward that honors our past while boldly embracing the challenges and opportunities of the future.

Lawrence Mofokeng

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The Mayoral Outreach Program (imbizo)

In the year 2024, the Municipality's strategic plan focuses on upholding the vision and mission of being a "world-class city where all communities enjoy a high quality of life." Throughout the previous year, the Municipality engaged in extensive consultations with communities through the Mayoral Outreach Program. These engagements provided a platform for communities to voice their frustrations, concerns and suggestions, which were taken into consideration. The consultations were well-received and have helped foster a sense of familiarity and confidence within the communities towards the Municipality.

It is essential that the legitimacy of local government stems from the people it serves. Building trust and communication with elected public representatives is crucial for the success of the Municipality and the well-being of its communities. It is our responsibility to engage in effective communication, both formally and informally, recognizing that the choices we make today will significantly shape the future of our municipality. I am optimistic that over the course of my term as Executive Mayor, we will strengthen our relationships and foster collaboration that leads to greater success and overall benefits for all.

I would like to reassure you all that our Council is dedicated, with the support of a capable and professional administration. Together, we have extensively evaluated, reviewed, planned, and prioritized the needs of our municipality more comprehensively than ever before. We encourage the community and staff to actively participate in this journey by providing full transparency and regular updates to keep you informed, inspired, and motivated to work together. As we look back on the past financial year, we can recognize the shared journey of Rustenburg Local Municipality, marked by numerous achieve-



The Executive Mayor of the Rustenburg Local Municipality; Cllr Shiela Mabale-Huma



ments, celebrations, and undoubtedly, some challenges."

This piece of an article also serves as part of our commitment to accountability and transparency, and we will continue to utilize various platforms to keep our constituency informed about the government's ongoing work. Efforts are also being made to establish an administration that values its employees and fosters a positive working environment, supports local businesses, and prioritizes community members. This includes transforming municipal systems, safeguarding limited resources, and developing anti-corruption strategies to enhance service delivery in alignment with the Integrated Development Plan (IDP).

The Mid-Term Report for the 2023/24 financial year and the Annual Report for the 2022/23 financial year were successfully presented in accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Finance Management Act, 32 of 2000. This presentation followed a Qualified Audit opinion issued by the Auditor General for the 2022/23 financial year. As part of our ongoing commitment to transparency and accountability, we strive to provide a clear overview of our revenues, expenditures, and the outcomes of our performance objectives and targets, while also identifying areas for improvement. The Auditor General played a key role in the presentation of these important reports, further emphasizing our dedication to open and honest financial reporting practices and identification of the areas of improvement within our municipality.

It is important to increase our revenue collection efforts by implementing our credit control and debit recovery policy, improving revenue collection strategies, and motivating the community to settle their debts. By doing so, the municipality can reinvest in providing superior and more advanced services. Additionally, the municipality



Rustenburg Local Municipality: Municipal Manager, Adv Ashmar R Khuduge

is actively working on an anti-corruption strategy and addressing all identified risks to ensure smooth operations.

The municipality is dissatisfied with its current levels of target achievement on critical deliverables outlined in its Service Delivery Budget and Implementation Plan (SDBIP) for the 2023/24 financial year. To address this issue, strategies related to meeting sustainable community needs are being revised. Furthermore, the municipi-

ality's operational challenges are exacerbated by having a partial complement of senior management, leading to administrative instability and hindered implementation of key council decisions.

Meeting these challenges will necessitate strong leadership, a concerted effort to implement effective improvement strategies, sound financial management, a transformation of the organizational culture, and a cohesive team of management and employees.

Handover Ceremony of Tshukudu Multipurpose Centre at Thekwane Village

To observe this completed multimillion project, the smelter handed over the facility to the Royal Bafokeng Administration (RBA), which was attended by Kgosana Nthebe Ntsimane – Head Infrastructure and Development, the Executive Mayor of Rustenburg Cllr Shiela Mabale-Huma, Merafe Resources' CEO Zanele Matlala, as well as the Glencore Ferroalloys CEO Japie Fullard and Conroy Van Der Westhuizen the Chief Corporate Social Responsibility Officer.

The Handover Ceremony of Tshukudu Multipurpose Centre at Thekwane Village. The Rustenburg Local Municipality in partnership with the mining industry in Rustenburg enhances access to critical services for local communities. This facility will accommodate various governmental institutions, including the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA), the Department of Home Affairs (DHA), and the South African Police Service (SAPS) amongst others.



Picture by: Koketso Mokale – The Tshukudu Multipurpose Centre in Thekwane Village.

The Executive Mayor of Rustenburg, Cllr Shiela Mabale-Huma expressed her gratitude at the opening and handover ceremony of the Tshukudu Multipurpose Centre at Thekwane village, accompanied by Councillors, Members of the Mayoral Committee (MMCs), Traditional Leaders,

and executive staff from Glencore Ferroalloys Mine. The gratitude goes to Glencore Alloys Mine as the project forms part of its Social and Labour Plan (SLP) amongst other projects. This high-impact project plays a significant role in fostering growth

in communities, such projects have an enormous approach to tackle the needs of our communities instantaneously. To ensure the successful completion of such projects, it is required that we collaborate with all relevant stakeholders.



Picture by: Koketso Mokale – Unveiling of the Tshukudu Multipurpose Centre in Thekwane Village. The Executive Mayor of Rustenburg Local Municipality Cllr Shiela Mabale-Huma; the Glencore Ferroalloys Chief Executive Officer Mr Japie Fullard; Glencore Ferroalloys Chief Corporate Social Responsibility Officer Mr Conroy van Der Westhuizen; Kgosana Nthebe Ntsimane, Head of Infrastructure and Development (RBA).



Picture by: Koketso Mokale – The Executive Mayor of Rustenburg Local Municipality with the Glencore Ferroalloys and Merafe Resources Management, Cllr Brian Phiri, Cllr Poppy Morapedi, and Kgosana Nthebe Ntsimane, Head of Infrastructure and Development (RBA) at the Handover ceremony of Tshukudu Multipurpose Centre, Thekwane Village

Reservoir handover to the Community of Seraleng, Boschfontein and Nkadla, Ward 43 at Seraleng Township

SERALENG – The Executive Mayor of Rustenburg Cllr Shiela Mabale-Huma on 22 September 2023, handed over the reservoir to the communities of Seraleng, Boschfontein and Nkadla in Ward 43, at Seraleng township.

The Executive mayor in her speech, alluded that, “one of the municipality’s obligations is to ensure a sustainable provision of clean consumable water within its jurisdiction as provisioned in our South African Constitution. The city is on a course to create a conducive environment for water security through the harnessing of the social and productive potential of water to the benefit of all, ensuring its destructive potential is sufficiently contained. Therefore, it is the Municipality’s commitment to improve access to water services. This reservoir tank will tremendously reduce the time spent, mostly by women and girls, on gathering water and will afford them more time for productive activities, adult education, empowerment activities and leisure.

The Executive Mayor further, stated that “the completion of the Seraleng Ground Water Augmentation Project is an invaluable accomplishment that will have a lasting impact on the lives of our residents”. “The community of Seraleng has long grappled with the dismal reality of water scarcity, their basic human right to access



PHOTO: By Koketso Mokale – The Executive Mayor of Rustenburg Cllr Shiela Mabale-Huma; The Speaker of the Rustenburg Local Municipality Council, Cllr Lebo Ndou-Pule; Members of the Mayoral Committee, Cllr Thabang D Rampou, Cllr Virginia Mputle; Cllr Nombulelo S Xhatazi at Seraleng, Boschfontein and Nkadla (Ward 43) reservoir handover.

safe and clean drinking water was drastically compromised. However, today, we can proudly say that we have taken a sig-

nificant step towards addressing this pressing issue and fulfilling our commitment to the human right to water for all”.



PHOTO: By K Mokale – The community of Ward 43, Seraleng, Boschfontein and Nkadla.





Picture by Koketso Mokale: The Executive Mayor of Rustenburg Local Municipality, The Speaker of the Rustenburg Local Municipality Council and MMC for Infrastructure and Technical Services and the ward councillor opening the Ward 43 Reservoir pump.

The Seraleng area is supplied through the Magalies Water Vaalkop Bospoort System, this system has been the primary source of water for many years, however, it become increasingly strained due to the increasing demand. Therefore, the demand has reached a stage where it greatly exceeds supply on this scheme, and finding alternative sources of water has become imperative. It was noted with concern that water demand had increased, and the existing supply was no longer adequate for the Seraleng Boschfontein and Nkandla in Ward 43 Community. Evidently, it experienced the low pressure or lack of water supply experienced by our residents. This is due to the rapid

population growth, housing development projects within the vicinity, and the mushrooming of backroom dwellings in the Boschfontein area.

In response to these challenges, the Rustenburg Local Municipality took decisive action to ensure the provision of adequate and sustainable water services to the Seraleng area by implementing the Seraleng Ground Water Augmentation Project in 2020. This project was implemented by the municipality through the Water and Sanitation Infrastructure Grant (WSIG). Upon completion of this project, a setback struck: the site was vandalized, and the transformer was stolen. But the

Municipality did not give up but rose to the occasion and committed more than ever to the provision of water to its residents.

The Directorate of Technical and Infrastructure Services Water Unit, together with the office of the Executive Mayor of Rustenburg, reached out to the Rand Water Foundation for assistance. Through their invaluable support, the Rand Water Foundation breathed new life into the Seraleng Boreholes. This project involved the installation of solar panels, the drilling of two additional boreholes, the installation of larger pumps, and the repair of the Vandalized Palisade fencing.

Pilanesberg Water Scheme

The demand from this scheme exceeds supply on the Vaalkop water treatment plant, and this is projected to worsen over the coming years.

This scheme supplies water to the greater Boitekong area and the Tlhabane Upper reservoirs which supply the whole of Tlhabane, Tlhabane West, Geelhoutpark, Zinniaville, Noord and neighbouring settlements owned by the Royal Bafokeng Administration (RBA).

RLM is facing an exorbitant increase in population and a subsequent increase in water demand within the scheme.

In the quest of water augmentation in Rustenburg, the Pilanesberg Scheme project has commenced.

The construction of a 1,000 mm diameter pressurised pipeline and a 30 ML Reservoir adjacent to Tlhabane Upper reservoirs is underway.

The project is being implemented by Magalies Water and will augment the current System. The new Pilanesberg scheme will also give ease to the Bospoort System which is also under great supply strain.

With the increased capacity from the Pilanesberg Scheme, Rustenburg Local Municipality will cater for water demand within the scheme for a minimum of 20 Years.

This also includes the Kortbegrip scheme project, which seeks to increase supply to Modikwe, Bareseba, Bethanie and Makolokwe villages. The projects will increase capacity from 12 ML/day to 24 ML/day.

Phase 1 of the project which is currently underway entails of the construction of a new bulk gravity main supplying the local storage reservoir located at Modikwe and Bethanie from Kortbegrip reservoir.

Phase 2 will include the construction of a new pump station, rising main and reservoirs for Makolokwe.

The reticulation upgrades of Bethanie, Barseba, Modikwe and Makolokwe will be addressed in Phase 3 of the project.





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- Account queries
- Meter reading

WARDS	DATE	TIME	VENUE
Ward 27 & 28	13 October 2023	8:00 to 16:00	B-Tause Community Hall

To get more information on this, please log on to www.rustenburg.gov.za or visit your municipal offices. T&Cs apply.

#MyCityMyResponsibility
www.rustenburg.gov.za

Handover of electricity substations

The Minister responsible for the Department of Mineral Resource and Energy Hon Gwede Mantashe officially handed over the Modderfontein Electricity Substation and Arnoldstad Substation respectively to the Executive Mayor of Rustenburg Local Municipality Cllr Shiela Mabale-Huma and Management of the Western Chrome Mines unveiled the said substations in Rustenburg.

The completion of the said projects was applauded and the Executive Mayor in her address, stated that “the rate at which electrical infrastructure is vandalised is a serious cause of concern. He strongly condemned the rampage as a tool to air the grievances of the community and damaging the property whether government or private is a NO.” The Executive Mayor has warned that the repairs and replacement of such infrastructure lead to further delays in the allocation of other services to be delivered to the communities or rather society at large. She further alluded with concern that “criminals commit these im-



Picture by: Boitumelo Mareume - Modderfontein Electricity Substation

moral and nefarious acts under the pretext of service delivery protests.

In addition, the Executive Mayor indicated that “in as much as people have a right to illustrate their frustration and dissatisfaction, may it be demonstrated within

the legal framework, vandalism is a crime that compromises the livelihoods of other people. He made a plea in his address to the citizens of Rustenburg jurisdiction to refrain from committing these illegal acts and earnestly take good care of their infrastructure.



Picture by Boitumelo Mareume: Modderfontein Electricity Substation.



Picture by: Boitumelo Mareume- Modderfontein Electricity Substation officially unveiled.



Picture by: Boitumelo Mareume – Presentation by the Executive mayor, Cllr Shiela Mabale-Huma at the Modderfontein Substation Handover.



Picture by: Koketso Mokale – Arnoldstad Electricity Substation officially opened.

My City my responsibility campaign

TLHABANE - The Executive Mayor of Rustenburg Cllr Shiela Mabale-Huma as the champion of this initiative, launched the programme at Tsholetsa Disability Centre, in Tlhabane (Ward 11).

The Executive Mayor in her address highlighted that, ‘Thuntsha Lerole’ is a North-West Provincial Government programme aimed at monitoring and ensuring service delivery is implemented in the province. The ‘Thuntsha Lerole’ finds expression in the initiative delivered by Premier Kaobitisa Bushy Maape on 16 December 2021, driven by the desire to respond to the demands for provision of basic services in the province.

The primary objective of this initiative is to also mobilise communities to be part of a solution in addressing service delivery challenges confronting the province in general.

This Accelerated Service Delivery Programme (ASDP), ‘Thuntsha Lerole’ initiative is also intended at activating and mobilising the communities to be solution oriented in addressing service delivery challenges in their environment and amongst others, to fast-track the provision of the essential basic services to communities, and in addition, serve as a platform for constant feedback to communities on progress achieved by government in responding to their demands and the provision of basic services such as water and sanitation, electricity, housing and road infrastructure.

Thuntsha Lerole programme in Tlhabane with the participation of various sector departments and other organs of state servicing the community of Tlhabane, led by various political principals, the Executive



Mayor of Rustenburg, Single Whip of the Council, Speaker of Council, and Members of Mayoral Committee, Mayor (Acting) of Bojanala District Municipality; Ward Councillors; including the Municipal Management and Officials.

Residents came in their numbers seizing the opportunity Rustenburg Local Municipality presented in partnership with both national and provincial spheres of government.

At the launch venue were services directly targeted at residents including, among others, ID registration by the Department of Home Affairs; indigent registration; billing and billing-related issues by the municipal accounts unit from the Rustenburg Local Municipality; registration of Small Medium and Micro Enterprise (SMMEs); Department of Social Development; Department of

Health; Department of Education for education and skills development information; and guidance on municipal by-laws.

The services delivery activities executed involved the clearing of illegal dumping sites, fixing of internal roads, patching of potholes, business compliance, veterinary services to local farmers, and handing over of agricultural produce to identified beneficiaries.

Other services rendered in various wards of Tlhabane comprise the road markings; unblocking sanitation sewer systems; repairing and or replacement of the leaking water pipes; and grass cutting.

This continued ‘Thuntsha Lerole’ programme will be maintained and carried out in all areas of Rustenburg, ward by ward and street by street.



War on leaks campaign

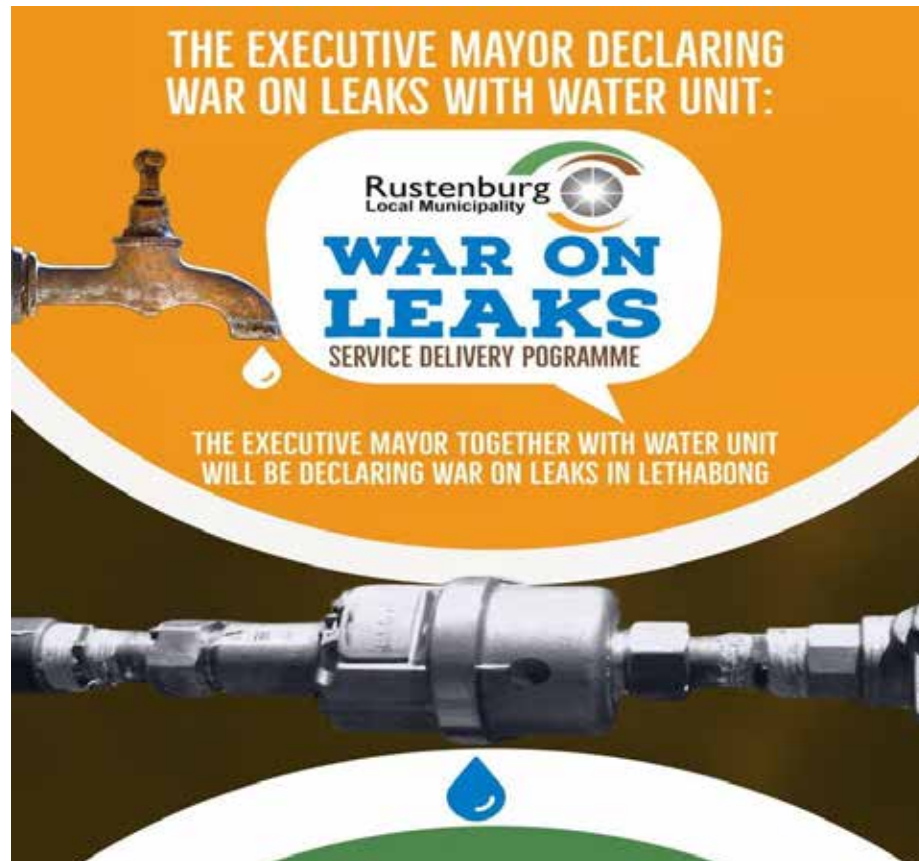
Rustenburg Local Municipality have taken a significant step towards improving the water supply in the Rustenburg Local Municipality. By working collaboratively with other units within the municipality, they plan to tackle the issue of water loss head-on and eliminate it completely in the near future. This initiative will go a long way in ensuring that the residents of Rustenburg have access to a reliable and sustainable water supply.

The Executive Mayor of Rustenburg Local Municipality, Cllr Shiela Mabale-Huma together with the Directorate of Infrastructure and Technical Services, Water Unit launched a successful water service delivery campaign termed "WAR ON LEAKS". This initiative was launched in Lethabong ward 27 and 28.

The aim of this campaign is to contribute to more efficient water pipe operations and maintenance, reduce the water leakage rate by repairing the leaking pipes and replace the worn-out water pipes and water meters in every location within the Rustenburg Jurisdiction. The rate of water loss due to pipes and meter leakages is a major concern, water is life, therefore, water should be conserved.

The assistance of various units within the municipality ensured that a number of water pipe leakages and water meter leaks were successfully repaired and replaced during the initial implementation. Encouraged by this achievement, the initiative expanded its efforts to address leaks in the following wards: 1, 9, 10, 12, 20, 21, 25, 30, 34, 40 and 41 and to date, a total of 240 water pipe leaks and 319 water meter leakages have been repaired and replaced during this initiative. This initiative will be indefinite to cater for all 45 wards under the Rustenburg Local Municipality.

Access to clean drinking water is a fundamental human right that millions of people are currently deprived of. This issue is becoming increasingly critical as the global water supply decreases at an alarming rate. According to ESI Africa, it is projected that by 2025 and 2030, water scarcity will reach critical levels. Climate change, population growth, and limited access to existing water sources in developing countries, especially in Africa, worsen the situation even further.



Water conservation is a major challenge in South Africa due to the lack of knowledge, skills, and resources. It is important to conserve water to ensure its availability for future use. The Water Unit and the Office of the Executive Mayor have launched an initiative called "WAR ON LEAKS" to address the significant loss of water in Rustenburg Local Municipality and its affected wards.

The Rustenburg Local Municipality is responsible for providing residents with

clean drinking water in accordance with the Constitution and the Water Services Act. Ongoing maintenance of water systems is necessary to ensure a continuous supply.

The municipality currently loses approximately 20% of its water supply due to leaks and pipe bursts on the water network. It is therefore crucial to support and effectively implement initiatives such as "WAR ON LEAKS" to preserve water for future use.

Internal roads and stormwater drainage system handover

The Executive Mayor of Rustenburg Cllr Shiela Mabale-Huma introduced and handed over the newly appointed contractor to the community of Phatsima to address the service delivery issues in the area, which amongst others is to refurbish and rehabilitate the internal roads and stormwater drainage system. This appointment and introduction of the service provider follow the issues that were raised during the Mayoral Imbizo and as the response to the needs of the communities. In addition, this project will have few job opportunities for the local inhabitants of Phatsima.

The community of Phatsima received the new contractor with warm hands and the Executive Mayor further stated that she is glad in this regard that this project will allow an ease of mobility in the area. The Executive Mayor humbly requested the community to take good care of their property and refrain from the criminal act of vandalism and theft.



World book and copyright day

World Book and Copyright Day is a global occasion to promote reading and celebrate the significance of books. This annual event, held on April 23, is dedicated to recognizing the transformative power of books which serve as bridges between the past and present, and across generations and cultural divides. Established by UNESCO's General Conference in 1995, this day also commemorates the anniversary of the deaths of noted authors Miguel de Cervantes, Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, and William Shakespeare.

The day serves to honor both literature and writers while promoting access to books for as many people as possible. Books transcend geographic boundaries and can be powerful tools in fighting poverty and fostering lasting peace. They are among humanity's most enduring and effective means of disseminating ideas.

Local celebrations are a key feature of this memorable day. In Rustenburg, the festivities centered around the Lethabong Community Library, where the main event showcased presentations by various NGOs, the South African Police Service, and the Department of Health. These organizations highlighted their services to the community, including support for vulnerable groups such as child-headed households and children affected by sub-



Rustenburg Public Library

stance abuse, and initiatives focused on safety, security, and health services like circumcision.

The Unit Library and Information Services educated attendees on the history of the book, tracing its evolution from stone slabs and palm leaves to papyrus in ancient times, and later to parchment and paper, laying the foundation for modern

bookmaking. Community members were also informed about the importance of copyright and its role in protecting the creations of authors, emphasizing respect for these rights, particularly in a library setting. Additionally, the event provided an orientation on library facilities and services, guiding community members on how to access and benefit from these resources.



Lethabong Community Library members in attendance



A story telling activity at Rustenburg Public Library by the Librarian to commemorate this day by Kroondal Primary School.



Eskom Outlines Plan for Sustained Electricity Supply Amidst Renewable Energy Push

Following 26 consecutive days free from load shedding, Minister of Electricity Kgosisentso Ramokgopa announced that Eskom is poised for a significant increase in electricity generation. Speaking at a weekly briefing on the implementation of the Energy Action Plan, the Minister detailed how Eskom's enhanced maintenance and growing generation capacity are contributing to a more stable power supply.

An assertive expansion in renewable energy, particularly through residential solar projects, has helped reduce the need for load shedding. However, Ramokgopa warned, "While load shedding is becoming

less frequent, we must still prepare for occasional unforeseen disruptions."

Over the next six months, Eskom plans to augment its power generation by 2,580 MW. This boost will be partially attributed to the upcoming activation of Unit 4 at Medupi Power Station and Unit 6 at Kusile Power Station. Additionally, the Kusile nuclear power station is anticipated to receive a renewed license by September, extending its operational lifespan by 20 years.

Another key contributor will be the Scatec ASA project in Kenhardt, Northern Cape, which has just become fully operational.

This project, under a 20-year power purchase agreement with Eskom, will deliver 150 MW of dispatchable power daily from early morning until late evening.

Addressing recent accusations from DA leader John Steenhuisen, who suggested that Eskom might delay load shedding until after the national elections, Ramokgopa dismissed these claims as "unsubstantiated and preposterous." He clarified that although the use of diesel in open-cycle gas turbines has exceeded budget forecasts, these turbines are now being engaged less frequently, primarily during peak demand periods in the mornings and evenings.

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Dr. Samuel Motsuenyane: Visionary Leader and Father of Black Business Passes Away at 97

His enduring legacy shines through his pioneering contributions to South Africa's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship.

Dr. Samuel Motsuenyane, revered as the 'Father of Black Business' and a founding figure of the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Nafcoc) as well as the African Bank, has died at the age of 97.

"Dr. Motsuenyane passed away peacefully, leaving an indelible mark on South Africa's business environment," announced Public Interest SA in a statement following his death on April 29, 2024. The statement highlighted Dr. Motsuenyane's significant role as a champion of entrepreneurship and ethical business practices.

Known for his pivotal contributions to the development and mentorship of Black business leaders and entrepreneurs, Dr. Motsuenyane earned the title "Father of Black Business."

In 1964, he co-founded Nafcoc, aiming to establish it as the preeminent business voice in South Africa. The concept of African Bank was conceived during the first Nafcoc meeting in Soweto, envisioned as a solution to the financial barriers experienced by Black communities.

As the inaugural chairman, Dr. Motsuenyane spearheaded the launch of African Bank with an initial investment of just R70, and the opening of its first branch in 1975.

After retiring from Nafcoc in 1992, Dr. Motsuenyane entered politics, serving as the leader of the house of senate and subsequently as South Africa's first ambassador to Saudi Arabia from 1996 to 2000, with concurrent accreditation to Oman, Yemen, Kuwait, and Bahrain. Following his death,



Dr. Samuel Motsuenyane

tributes have flowed in recognition of his contributions.

"As we reflect on Ntate Motsuenyane's remarkable journey, we take comfort in knowing his legacy will continue to influence South African entrepreneurship," remarked Tebogo Khaas, chair of Public Interest SA and chief entrepreneur at the Institute of Chartered Entrepreneurs.

The Dr. Sam Motsuenyane Foundation stated, "Their determination for economic independence helped rally black communities to raise the R1m needed to fund the opening of the bank's first branch in

Ga-Rankuwa in 1975."

President Cyril Ramaphosa praised Dr. Motsuenyane's diverse roles, stating, "His extraordinary life as an entrepreneur, business leader, parliamentarian, and diplomat exemplifies our national resilience and the principles of ubuntu."

"He leaves behind a philosophy of self-sufficiency now ingrained in our constitutional rights, ensuring that everyone has the freedom to choose their trade, occupation, or profession, underpinned by our socio-economic rights," the president added.





Ekurhuleni Mayor Vows Comprehensive Service Drive Amid Fiscal Challenges

The Executive Mayor of Ekurhuleni, has openly addressed the city's financial challenges while committing to an intensive service delivery initiative. This statement came during his first State of the City Address on Tuesday.

Ekurhuleni, like its Gauteng counterparts, is grappling with political upheaval and

stringent economic constraints, further complicating its struggle with service delivery issues.

In the 2022/23 fiscal year, Ekurhuleni was one of only two metros in South Africa to secure a clean audit. However, this status deteriorated in the following year, with the city facing deepening financial troubles. "Our financial health is precarious, primar-

ily due to insufficient revenue collection and misalignment of our finances with our strategic priorities," stated Mayor Xhakaza. The previous year's audit flagged over R20 million in irregular expenditures and highlighted deficiencies in the city's contract and procurement management.

Despite the challenges, the Auditor General confirmed the city's financial statements

were fairly presented, complying with accepted accounting principles. "There has been a slight regression, shifting from a clean audit to an unqualified opinion. Nevertheless, we aim to rectify these issues within the current financial year and achieve a clean audit next year," Xhakaza affirmed.

Additionally, following a downgrade by Moody's, the city sought a review from Global Credit Ratings, which reaffirmed its national scale long-term and short-term issuer ratings at BBB(ZA) and A3(ZA), respectively.



Service Delivery Commitments: Mayor Xhakaza promised to "pull out all the stops" to ensure continuous improvements in service delivery. This pledge comes amid voiced frustrations from residents in areas like Springs, Benoni, Kempton Park, and Thembisa concerning the provision of energy, water, and sanitation services. Furthermore, Ekurhuleni reports having

electrified 97% of households, with the remaining 3% prioritized for urgent action.



New Initiatives and Economic Development: The upcoming Khanyisa Mhlali program will focus on expanding electrification projects and maintaining street and high mast lighting. Plans also include supporting township economies by facilitating training and development for local entrepreneurs in various sectors, from electronic repairs to clothing manufacturing.

Governance and Revenue Management: The mayor emphasized the importance of enhancing revenue collection and implementing stricter credit controls under the Siyacima Manje Namhlanje program to tackle non-payment from capable businesses, particularly targeting the Top 1,000 Companies. "We are also prioritizing the eradication of erratic billing and the adoption of smart digital billing systems," he added.



Employment and Skills Development: Ekurhuleni is set to create 16,000 jobs and further develop skills among 4,300 youths through the newly established Ekurhuleni Skills and Bursary Fund, a collaborative effort with Seta and the private sector.



As Mayor Xhakaza leads Ekurhuleni through these turbulent times, his administration remains focused on strengthening governance, enhancing economic opportunities, and improving the quality of life for all residents.

Expansive Government-Led Skills and Job Creation Initiatives Set to Address Unemployment Crisis



In a determined effort to tackle the persistently high unemployment rates, Minister Thulas Nxesi has detailed a comprehensive government strategy focused on massifying skills development and expanding job creation programmes. The initiatives, leveraging substantial partnerships with the private sector and spanning diverse industries, promise to significantly uplift the country's workforce and stimulate economic growth.

The government's approach, as articulated by Minister Nxesi on Thursday, April 11, 2024, involves both creating a fertile environment for private sector investment and directly intervening in the labor market through strategic, demand-led training and job preservation schemes. These efforts are rooted deeply in the national objectives set forth by the National Development Plan 2030 and are anchored in long-standing programs like the Expanded

Public Works Programme and the more recent UIF Labour Activation Programmes (LAP).

Central to these initiatives is the robust involvement of the UIF, which, beyond its traditional role of disbursing benefits, has now taken on a pivotal function in funding job preservation and creation. This includes backing enterprise development and driving economic growth through strategic investments of its reserves.

The Minister highlighted the strategic deployment of these resources in projects that offer both immediate employment opportunities and long-term career prospects in sectors critical for the country's development. These sectors include agriculture, ICT, construction, engineering, and more. The targeted areas, selected for their economic potential and demand for skilled labor, aim to generate 2 million opportu-

nities over the next three years through the LAP 'Training for Employment and Entrepreneurship' programme.

One of the notable recent launches is the Nasi Ispani Project in Gauteng, which kicked off on April 6th, exemplifying the government's resolve to synergize efforts across departments to maximize impact. This project alone envisages creating substantial opportunities across 24 sectors by pooling resources and ensuring coherent and efficient use of government funds.

Quality assurance measures have been implemented to guarantee that the programmes are not only compliant with policy and legislation but also effective in delivering tangible employment outcomes. This meticulous planning and oversight are expected to position these initiatives as a cornerstone of the government's response to unemployment.

The budget earmarked for these expansive efforts stands at an initial R15 billion, potentially rising to R23.8 billion, dependent on the availability of funding.

The expected return on this investment is anticipated to bolster the UIF's financial sustainability through increased contributions and investment revenue.

As the nation approaches the official national launch of the expanded LAP programme in KZN on April 16th, followed by a phased roll-out across other provinces, there is a cautious optimism about the potential impact of these initiatives.

Minister Nxesi's assertion that the "proof is in the pudding" underlines a commitment to not only implement these programmes but also to closely monitor their effectiveness in addressing the profound challenges of unemployment facing the country.



Experts Highlight Threats of Disinformation to Elections and the Role of Cybersecurity in Safeguarding Democracy

Collaborative Efforts and Advanced Technologies Key to Neutralizing Election Interference

During a recent media briefing hosted by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Dr. Zubeida Dawood, a leading cybersecurity expert, emphasized the critical impact of disinformation on the integrity of upcoming elections. She pointed out how manipulated information could shape public opinion and influence election outcomes, underscoring the need for voter vigilance.

Dr. Dawood stressed the significant role social media plays in accelerating the spread of false information due to its broad reach and viral nature. She advocated for enhanced cybersecurity protocols and advanced technologies to detect and mitigate manipulated content. According to her, this effort requires a concerted collaboration among governments, tech companies, research institutions, and universities.

The CSIR media briefing also addressed measures to combat fake news and misinformation during election periods. Dr. Dawood highlighted the development of a human-centric framework by CSIR to detect fake news, which will soon be available to the public. This framework, still in the research phase, is designed to be accessible and effective for everyday users, fostering trust and encouraging community engagement to verify information.

Furthermore, Professor Vukosi Marivate from the University of Pretoria's Data Science for Social Impact research group



discussed the evolving landscape of social media data access. He called for updated policies and regulations to enable researchers to study mis/disinformation, particularly in the African context.

Dr. Dawood also mentioned the role of the CSIR's Mzansi advanced cybersecurity learning factory in preparing the Independent Electoral Commission's (IEC) staff to counteract cybersecurity threats like phishing and malware, which could compromise election data. She highlighted the importance of building a skilled cy-

bersecurity workforce to protect election systems from evolving threats.

In addition to technological solutions, Dr. Dawood noted the importance of human judgment in the process, which can add cultural nuance often missing from technological tools. The CSIR is working with linguistic experts from the University of Pretoria and the University of Cape Town to integrate natural language processing capabilities, ensuring the framework can effectively serve South Africa's diverse population.

TALK OR TORQUE?

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Navigating the 2024 Political Terrain: Public Relations and Reputation Management disciplines are at a crossroads

Election season is always silly season, 2024 general elections is heating up.

In the everchanging landscape of South Africa's business environment the interplay between public relations and reputation management takes on heightened significance, particularly in the year of an election that will change the trajectory of the country. As companies navigate the complexities of political transitions and

shifting public sentiment by the day, the need to safeguard and enhance their reputation becomes paramount. Especially with the weaponization of social media. Public and media relations cannot exist in isolation; instead, they must be seamlessly integrated into a comprehensive reputation management strategy.

At the heart of reputation management lies the fundamental principles of trust, credibility, transparency, and integrity. These principles serve as the bedrock upon which companies build and nurture their reputation, ensuring that they are perceived positively by stakeholders and the public alike. In the context of a general election year, the stakes

are even higher, as companies must navigate the heightened scrutiny of their actions and decisions e.g. Old Mutual social media pension pay-out furore comes to mind.

One of the central tenets of reputation management during an election year is the need for authenticity and honesty in communication. Companies must avoid the temptation to spin or manipulate narratives for short-term gain. By being transparent and forthcoming in their communications, companies can build trust and credibility with their audience, fostering stronger relationships and loyalty in the long run (bank of goodwill).

Moreover, engaging with stakeholders and listening to their concerns is essential for effective reputation management, especially if the communication teams are highly trained and prepared. Amid a looming general election, companies must be highly attuned to the shifting socio-political landscape and adapt their communication strategies accordingly. Proven time and again, this proactive approach to communication allows companies to address potential issues and mitigate reputational risks before they escalate into crises, and for political parties to hop onto the bandwagon and use this for political scoring. Another critical aspect of reputation management in an election year is the importance of simplifying messages for ease of understanding (less jargon please).

With political rhetoric dominating public discourse (think of MK Party vs ANC, RISE Mzansi vs DA), companies must cut through the noise and convey their messages clearly and concisely. By distilling complex ideas into digestible nuggets of information, companies can ensure that their messages resonate with their audience and are not lost in the cacophony of election-related chatter.

With election campaigning now in full swing, rumours and misinformation can spread like wildfire, posing a significant threat to a company's reputation. By implementing robust communication protocols and monitoring channels for potential misinformation, companies can mitigate the risks associated with false narratives and ensure that their reputation remains safeguarded. Ultimately, effective

reputation management during a general election requires a proactive, flexible and strategic approach to communication.

By adhering to the principles of trust, credibility, transparency, and integrity, companies can weather the storm of political uncertainty and emerge with their reputation intact. In an era where public perception can make or break a company, reputation management is not just a luxury but a necessity for survival in a competitive landscape of South Africa's business environment.

Author: Oscar Tshifure writes in his capacity as a Seasoned Public Affairs professional, MBA candidate and President-Elect of the Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa (PRISA)



GAUTENG SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ON TRACK IN DEALING WITH SOCIAL ILLS

Poverty is the single biggest burden on South Africa's people and the direct result of the apartheid system and the skewed nature of business and development which accompanied it (RDP Document 1994 p14).

“A cornerstone of the Government's programme has been to tackle poverty. Through the use of various instruments, such as social grants, food relief, and the delivery of basic services and housing, the government focuses on the relief of income, non-income, and asset poverty.”

The Gauteng Provincial Government adopted a plan to guide the Sixth Administration in the fight against poverty, called the Gauteng City Region Urban Poverty and Elimination Strategy and it remains the guiding pillar in driving the provincial elevated priority of eliminating poverty and inequality for the poor and vulnerable citizens in the province.

FOOD RELIEF

The government continues to roll out food support programme for impoverished families. It targets very poor families, pensioners, child-headed homes, and homes where breadwinners are ill or incapacitated. The Gauteng Department of Social Development is coordinating this programme and it includes food parcels as well as food growing starter packs. An important part of poverty relief is school uniforms and material assistance.

“At the beginning of the term in 2019, the Gauteng Department of Social Development committed to reaching over two million food-insecure people by 2024, and to date, we have reached and impacted 4 507 909 beneficiaries who accessed food relief programmes, and the height of this massive intervention was during the COVID-19 period. As Gauteng, we have declared hunger and food insecurity as enemies of our people,” said MEC Hlophe.

In addition to this number, an additional **98 106 individual beneficiaries produced their own food** through the initiatives of the Gauteng Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment, bringing the total achievement of the two Departments to 4 606 015 individuals benefitting from food security programmes.



Food parcels distribution

Late last year, the Department of Social Development embarked on two expansion plans for food relief, where the target of Community Nutrition and Development Centres (CNDs) moved from 2588 and reached **28 716 beneficiaries**. This is in part to respond to StatSA figures of rising hunger in GP.

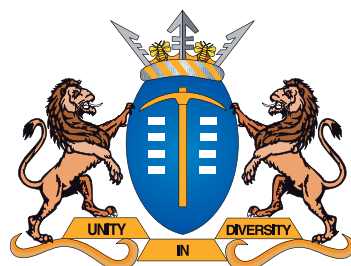
The two Departments have noted massive achievements against the enemy of our people - the food insecurity of people in Gauteng.

- As per GCRO 2021 survey, food insecurity in Gauteng stood at 52%, which equates to about 8.3 million people, inclusive of severe and moderate food-insecure individuals. However, the food relief initiatives from both departments have reached **4.6 million food insecure individuals which translates to 54% of 8.3 million food insecure individuals**.

- The GCRO Quality of Life Survey confirmed a slight decrease of 1% in children missing meals, an indication of the impact of our work in fighting hunger and poverty
- The Department of Social Development delivers food relief through food parcels distributed by food banks, daily meals through

Community Nutrition and Development Centres (CNDs) and Home Community Based Care Centres (HCBC), food gardens within TISH (households, schools, hostels, municipal land, informal settlements, clinics)

“These numbers reflect the day-to-day work we do in especially challenged communities in TISH areas. Integrating seeds within the food parcels for planting will enable our beneficiaries to have sustainable means to eradicate poverty. Gauteng government is awake to the fact that hunger cannot be postponed, and that instant relief and assistance in food production are must-dos by our committed officials to defeat the enemy of our people – hunger and food insecurity,” said MEC Mbali Hlophe. In ensuring sustainability and fighting off food insecurity, the Department now includes seed packs with every food parcel being issued, which will see many households planting food for themselves.



GAUTENG PROVINCE
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

GGT2030
GROWING GAUTENG TOGETHER



Mobile Homeless Shower for people living in the streets

HOMELESSNESS

In caring about the less fortunate and providing dignity to the homeless, the homeless programme was elevated as one of the key priorities of the Gauteng Department of Social Development. Through our various interventions, homeless people were able to exit the homeless programme and reunited with families, others started their own businesses while others were placed in jobs and some recruited into the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP).



In addition, life skills were provided, and others participated on accredited and non-accredited skills development programmes to increase their chances of employability. The Department also enrolled some of the homeless people in substance rehabilitation programmes and in other health related interventions.

In a major move, the Department invested in the mobile wash/shower trailers and five mobile offices for the homeless and these have been delivered to the NPOs to operate as mobile bathrooms for the homeless. Five trucks were also purchased to tow these wash trailers and mobile offices in order to make sure the service reaches homeless people in identified hotspot areas across all five corridors of Gauteng.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

National Drug Master Plan (NDMP 2019-2024) is a blueprint for combating the scourge of alcohol and substance abuse which has reached epidemic proportions in South Africa.

The overarching goal of the NDMP is to prevent drug use before it starts, early intervention to ensure substance users receive treatment and rehabilitation services and reduce the demand for illicit drugs.

The government is committed to tackling the scourge of alcohol and substance abuse in South Africa. In this regard, the GDSD has established the Central Drug Authority, a multisectoral forum to tackle the scourge of alcohol and substance abuse.



MEC for Social Development, Agriculture, Rural Development and Enviroment Mbali Hlophe interacting with former substance users at Clinix Treatment Centre in Johannesburg

The war on drugs and substance abuse remains one of our critical elevated priorities. The work we have done includes;

- **Rehabilitation of 205 071 individuals addicted to drugs including aftercare**
- **15 832 764** beneficiaries of substance abuse reached through prevention programmes
- The Department of Social Development has entered a public Partnership with Clinix Health Group of hospitals for the provision of inpatient treatment services which include 119 Inpatient treatment beds, 200 Outpatient treatment programs and 160 Halfway house beds
- Through a partnership with SANDF on treatment facilities and training programmes, 252 inpatient treatment beds will be made available
- GDSD is currently doing work at Dr F&F Phase 1B to add an additional 144 by the end of June 2024
- The Department will utilize the recently employed Sawubona Mhlali Service Delivery Brigade to fast-track substance abuse services to communities



Former substance user being trained in welding at Xilembeni Skills Development Centre at Bapsfontein.

EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS

Unemployment is one of the major issues affecting the people of Gauteng, and this is not surprising noting that Gauteng is the golden pot of South Africa and of the continent where people come from all walks of life for opportunities, be it business or employment.

A study by the South African Institute of Race Relations (IRR) found that for every employed South African, there are nearly three dependents (2.8 to be precise). This is significantly higher than the global average. A total of 3000 young people are being employed by the department through Sawubona Mhlali Service Delivery Brigade. So for each person employed, a minimum of three people will benefit from that one salary.

Also, through the Welfare to Work Programme, the department aims to move young people from social security grant recipients and other beneficiaries of social services such as drug addicts, homeless individuals and youth exiting Child & Youth Care Centers to sustainable livelihoods through youth development structures, job centres and cooperatives.

About 85 354 grant beneficiaries were reached through the programme surpassing our target of 76 906.

The Welfare to Work Programme is at the centre of all skills development programmes for social welfare beneficiaries. Furthermore, we have funded the establishment of two trade test centres, in the centres of excellence wherein youth can be tested for full qualification as artisans. The Department is currently concluding engagements with various private entities to maximize the impact of skills development programmes of the department.

In addition, the department provides accredited skills training programmes through partnerships with accredited training partners and has expanded the state-of-the-art Trade Test Centre in Xilembeni Centre of Excellent for the youth of Gauteng.

President Ramaphosa Awards National Orders to Champions of Freedom and Justice



In a dignified ceremony held at the Se-fako M. Makgatho Presidential Guesthouse in Tshwane, President Cyril Ramaphosa conferred National Orders on 32 individuals, recognizing them as pivotal to the narrative of South Africa's liberation. The event honored both living and posthumous recipients for their significant contributions to the nation's history and development.

The National Orders represent South Africa's highest honors and include the Order of Mendi for Bravery, the Order of Ikhamanga, the Order of the Baobab, the Order of Luthuli, the Order of Mapungubwe, and the Order of the Companions of OR Tambo. Each order celebrates distinct achievements in fields ranging from bravery to arts and science, acknowledging those who have excelled beyond the ordinary.

"This year, as we mark three decades of freedom, we remember that our liberty was achieved on the backs of those who dared to fight for justice," President Ramaphosa stated. "Today's honorees have each helped forge the free South Africa we cherish now. Our country is eternally grateful to them."

Among the awardees, the Order of Mendi for Bravery was posthumously given to anti-apartheid activists whose courage shone during the height of oppressive rule. President Ramaphosa commemorated them as figures whose "sacrifices will never be forgotten."

Recipients of the Order of Luthuli were recognized for their outstanding contributions to democracy, human rights, and peace, with special mention of Nokuthula Simelane, a victim of the apartheid era whose story remains a poignant memory of struggle.

The Order of Ikhamanga was bestowed upon South Africans who have distinguished themselves in the arts and media, reflecting on the significant role of free speech and journalistic integrity in society's advancement. "We also celebrate those who stood firm in truth, whose media work under challenging conditions set a high standard for today's media professionals," remarked Ramaphosa.

The Order of the Baobab honored individuals making strides in business, sci-

ence, and innovation dedicated to social justice, while the Order of Mapungubwe was awarded for exceptional contributions in the aerospace sector, signaling a forward-looking vision for South Africa's scientific endeavors.

The international solidarity shown during South Africa's struggle for liberation was recognized through the Order of the Companions of OR Tambo, highlighting foreign allies who significantly supported the anti-apartheid movement.

In his closing remarks, President Ramaphosa emphasized the democratic nature of these selections, as they are nominated by the South African public. He lauded the recipients' unwavering commitment to justice and equality, underscoring their deeds as acts of conscience and dedication.

"Congratulations to all honorees and their families. You are forever esteemed as Members of the Orders, and the people of South Africa salute you," concluded President Ramaphosa, encapsulating a day of remembrance and honor. – SAnews.gov.za

Record 27.7 Million Voters Registered for Upcoming May 29 Elections, IEC Confirms Readiness



With a historic 27.7 million voters now registered, South Africa is gearing up for its largest electoral roll since its inception in 1999. This update comes from the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) Chairperson Mosotho Moepya during a recent event where political parties signed the Electoral Code of Conduct ahead of the elections scheduled for May 29.

As South Africa marks 30 years of democracy, Moepya assured the nation of the IEC's preparedness to conduct the elections, adhering to constitutional standards and international best practices. "We are fully aware of the immense responsibility we hold. Our commitment is to uphold our democratic duties without fail, lest history remembers us unkindly," he stated during his readiness report.

Moepya highlighted significant advancements including the success of the IEC's

online registration portal, launched in July 2021, which has seen 2.4 million new or updated registrations. He noted a promising increase in youth engagement, with voters aged 20 to 29 comprising nearly half of the new registrations.

Female registrants total 15.3 million, surpassing male registrants who total 12.4 million. The provinces of Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal represent 44% of the national voter base, with 6.5 million and 5.7 million voters respectively, followed by the Eastern Cape with 3.4 million.

The IEC has expanded its voting station network to 23,292 locations nationwide and plans to publish a comprehensive list of these stations by April 12. The upcoming election will feature 14,903 candidates vying for 887 seats across the National Assembly and Provincial Legislatures.

To ensure the smooth operation of the polls, 202,000 officials will staff the voting stations.

These officials are currently receiving training through a blend of online and practical sessions. Additionally, to enhance the accuracy and efficiency of the vote counting process, three specialized staff members will be assigned to each voting station and substation.

Addressing potential challenges, Moepya called on the media and political figures to promote ethical reporting and discourage the spread of misinformation, which could undermine the electoral process's integrity. He emphasized the media's critical role in maintaining a transparent electoral environment and urged political leaders to protect and respect journalists' safety.

In his closing remarks, Moepya reiterated the IEC's dedication to delivering an electoral outcome that faithfully represents the will of the South African people. "Our foremost commitment is to ensure that the voter's choice is accurately reflected in the election results," he affirmed.



South Africa’s Energy Sector Leaders Discuss Innovative Strategies for a Sustainable Future

Industry leaders convened at the University of Pretoria’s Gordon Institute of Business Science for the first ‘Sasol Superlead Live Leadership Conversations’ event on April 24. The discussion featured prominent figures from Sasol Energy, Eskom, and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), focusing on pioneering solutions to diminish South Africa’s carbon footprint.

Eskom’s innovative approach involves utilizing ash, a by-product from coal-fired power stations, in constructing roads. “These ash roads not only meet infrastructure needs but also contribute to reducing our carbon footprint,” explained Mteto Nyati, Eskom Board Chairperson.

Sasol is tackling waste reduction by repurposing biosolids typically incinerated

at high costs. Through thermolysis, these biosolids are transformed into sludge and reintroduced into the production cycle, leveraging the residual carbon content, noted Thembakazi Mali, Sasol’s Senior Vice President of Research and Innovation. Moreover, Sasol is adapting its electrolyzers to generate green hydrogen.

Eskom is also exploring green hydrogen opportunities, with plans to develop a business case for its implementation. “Green hydrogen represents the future economy, but achieving competitiveness requires affordable electricity and robust infrastructure,” stated Thabo Hlalele, Head of the Energy Centre at CSIR.

He highlighted a completed study examining the feasibility of exporting green hydrogen from South Africa, suggesting that

oversizing renewable energy plants could not only facilitate hydrogen production but also contribute surplus electricity to the national grid and support water recycling for agriculture.

Further innovations at Eskom include the use of remotely piloted aircraft systems to expedite inspections and repairs of power lines nationwide and the installation of synchronous condensers to enhance grid stability amid increased renewable energy production.

Nyati emphasized the necessity of balancing urgent energy needs with future-oriented strategies. “While we envision a renewable future, immediate concerns must be addressed to ensure Eskom’s relevance and operational stability today,” he remarked.

New Era of Public Service: Enhancing Citizen-Centric Governance Through Directive Implementation



As the Deputy Director-General for Government Service Access and Improvement, I am thrilled to discuss the transformative impact of the recently issued Directive on the Institutionalisation of the Public Service Charter, a key initiative launched by Minister Noxolo Kiviet of the Public Service and Administration. This initiative is a cornerstone in our ongoing effort to bolster public service delivery and deepen the trust between the government and the citizens it serves.

The Directive’s primary objective is to ensure comprehensive adherence to the Public Service Charter across all departments. By embracing the approved Batho Pele Revitalisation Strategy, outlined in Annexure A, we aim to promote a culture of professionalism and place the needs and aspirations of citizens at the forefront of public service endeavours.

Central to this Directive is the development of a functional Service Delivery Forum in each department. This multi-disciplinary team will play a crucial role in

governance and facilitate ongoing discussions to improve and refine service delivery strategies. The Directive also mandates the adoption of the Operations Management Framework to optimize the use of public resources and tailor service delivery to the specific needs of communities, guided by newly established Batho Pele Standards and performance indicators.

A significant feature of the Directive is the establishment of mechanisms to enhance access to government services. By implementing a robust complaints and compliments management system, we can actively respond to citizen feedback and pinpoint areas requiring improvement, ensuring that our services are both responsive and accountable.

Moreover, the Directive underscores the need to create a supportive environment for public servants. The introduction of an organizational culture and employee satisfaction assessment tool will help us monitor and enhance working conditions within departments. This focus on the professional development and well-being of

our staff is essential for enabling them to provide high-quality services.

Additionally, the Directive encourages the recognition of exemplary service through a non-monetary rewards system. This system acknowledges the hard work and achievements of individuals and teams, fostering a spirit of excellence within the public service.

The phased implementation of this Directive, effective from April 1, 2024, is designed to ensure a seamless integration of these principles into daily operations. Strict compliance is required, and any deviations will be addressed under the Public Service Act provisions.

This Directive represents a pivotal step towards creating a more accessible, accountable, and citizen-focused public service in South Africa. By institutionalizing the Public Service Charter, we set the groundwork for a new era of governance where professionalism, citizen-centricity, and continuous improvement are at the heart of all we do. Together, we will forge a future where every citizen feels valued and supported by their government.

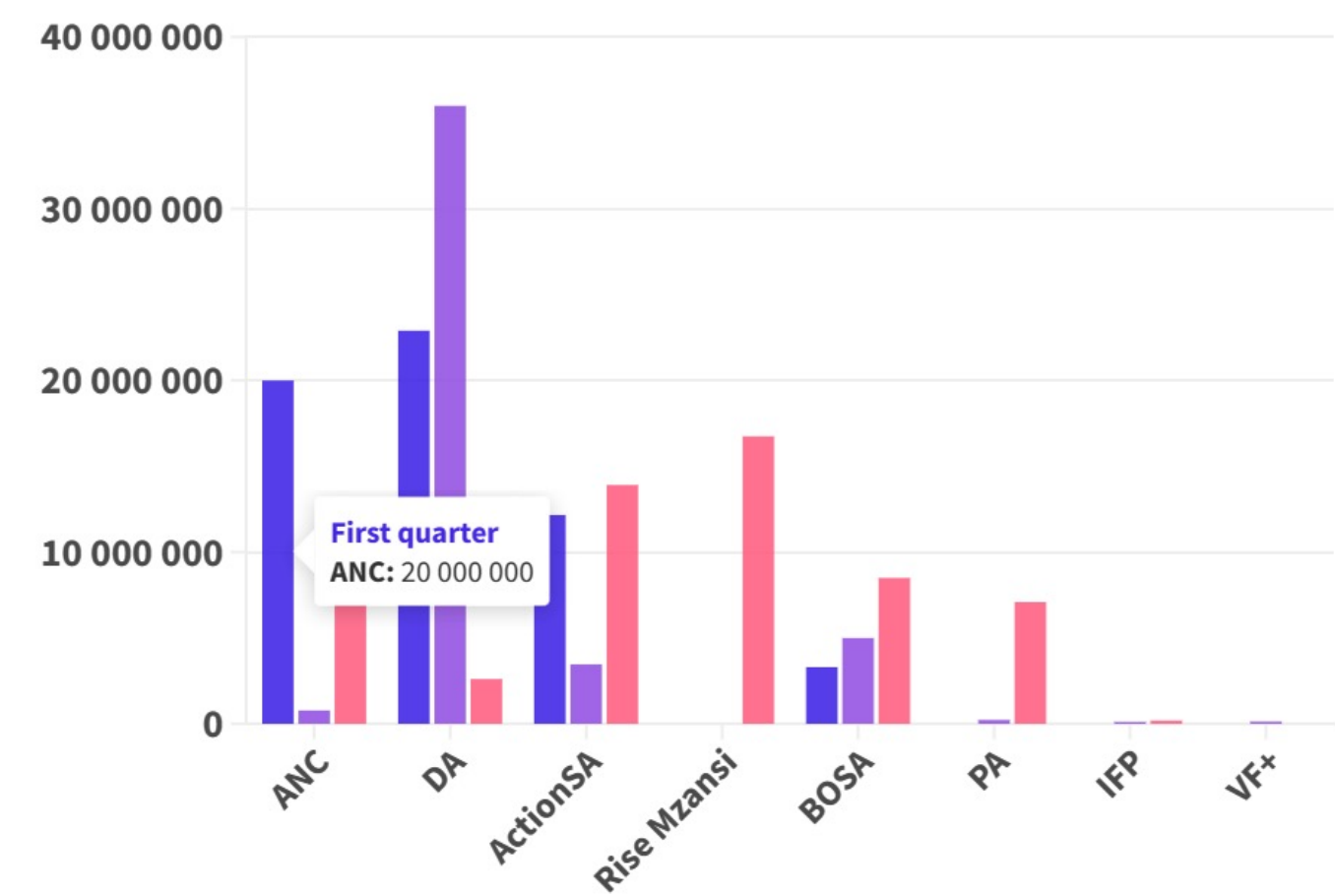
South African Political Parties Garner Over R160 Million in Donations as Elections Approach

As South Africa gears up for the general elections on May 29, political parties are intensifying their fundraising efforts to fuel their high-stakes campaigns. The latest disclosure from the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) reveals that donations close to R59 million were reported by seven political parties for the third quarter of the 2023/24 financial year, spanning October to December.

Under current regulations, parties are required to declare any donations exceeding R100,000. This transparency allows for public scrutiny of the sources fueling political campaigns. The newcomer Rise Mzansi topped the donation list for the quarter, followed by ActionSA and the African National Congress (ANC). The donation details for this period are as follows:

- Rise Mzansi: R16,744,186
- ActionSA: R13,912,450
- ANC: R10,000,000
- Build One South Africa (BOSA): R8,500,000
- Patriotic Alliance (PA): R7,096,380
- Democratic Alliance (DA): R2,608,009
- Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP): R191,040

Declared donations and contributions in the 2023/24 financial year



Source: Party Funding Disclosure Reports - IEC



Over the first three quarters of the fiscal year, a total of R160.8 million in donations has been declared to the IEC by eight political parties. Notably absent from the list is the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), which has not declared any donations.

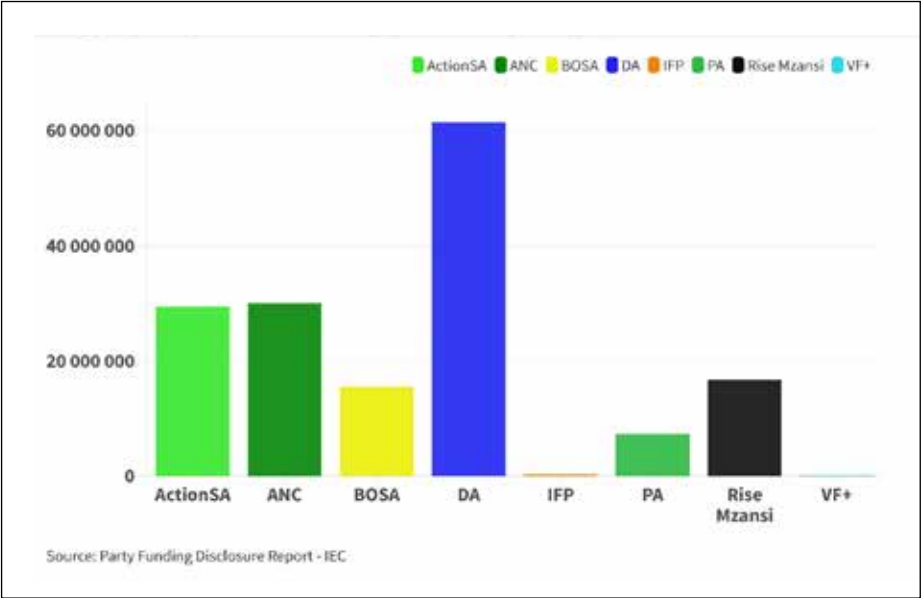
Eight political parties have disclosed donations in 2023/24 - amounting to over R160 million.
The DA leads the donation board, more than doubling second place ANC

- DA: R61,431,172
- ANC: R30,000,000
- ActionSA: R29,406,860
- Rise Mzansi: R16,744,186
- BOSA: R15,500,000
- PA: R7,321,380
- IFP: R303,515
- VF+: R131,000

Key donors for Rise Mzansi include billionaire heiress Rebecca Oppenheimer, who contributed a significant R15 million, positioning the party prominently in its inaugural funding cycle.

The party also received donations from Main Street 1564 (Pty) Ltd and in-kind support from InJozi Design CC and Kairos Communication (Pty) Ltd. ActionSA's donations were purely monetary, with substantial contributions from regular donors Victoria Freudenheim, Martin Moshal, and several corporate entities.

The ANC's funding came exclusively from the Chancellor House Trust, with two sep-



arate donations totaling R10 million received in December 2023.

BOSA's major contributions came from Jessica Bridget Slack Jell and Martin Moshal, among others, reflecting a continued support from established political donors. The Patriotic Alliance's funding included significant contributions from its party leader, Gayton McKenzie, and deputy president, Kenny Kunene.

The DA's largest donations came from Artemis Properties (Pty) Ltd and Beacon Rock Limited, along with other supporters. A noteworthy contribution to the Inkatha Freedom Party was an in-kind donation re-

lated to training for party members.

Additionally, the Multi-Party Democracy Fund, managed by the Electoral Commission, received a R5 million donation from Standard Bank. This fund aims to distribute private sector funds to political parties based on both equal and proportional representation.

This detailed funding report underscores the significant financial resources mobilized in the lead-up to South Africa's 2024 elections, reflecting both the competitive nature of the political landscape and the broad interest of various stakeholders in shaping its outcome.

The best and worst-run municipalities in South Africa

Good Governance Africa (GGA) has published its 2024 Governance Performance Index (GPI) to “provide the most accurate, publicly available portrait of the state of local governance in South Africa.”.

The report looked at all of South Africa's 257 municipalities, which is made up of:

- 8 metropolitans municipalities;
- 205 category B local municipalities;
- 44 category C district municipalities.

For the 2024 GPI, municipalities were evaluated from publicly available data under the following categories:

- Administration & Governance;
- Leadership & Management;
- Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation;
- Service Delivery (heaviest weighting).

The 8 metropolitan municipalities were evaluated with an additional category of

Economic Development.

These were rated on standardised on a scale of 1 to 5 – with 5 being optimal performance.

It is important to note that the extensive list of data used by GGA predominantly comes from 2021-22 reports, with its most recent coming from 2023.

Background
This report comes at a time when “South Africa's system of local government is presently undergoing its most widespread sequences of changes” since the dawn of democracy, said GGA.

The 2021 local government elections saw a record number of hung councils, where no single party achieved a majority. This has seen a rise in political instability in many councils, which has led to national departments wanting to amend legislation which governs them.

According to the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), “political instability impacting the effective functioning of administration” and service delivery have been some of the most commonly identified issues of local government by residents.

There are 32 municipalities across the country that are currently under administration, with 66 out of 257 being labelled as ‘dysfunctional.’

These shifts in the focus and functioning of many local governments “raise the question of how South Africa's existing municipal system is currently performing when considering the role the Constitution envisages for local authorities,” said GGA.

Provincial results
Looking at the GPI scores, the countrywide average sits at a score of 3.24/5.

The provincial average scores (out of 5) given in the report are:

Provincial	Service Delivery	Admin & Governance	Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation	Leadership & Management	Overall 2024 GPI Score
Eastern Cape	3.46	3.01	3.17	3.22	3.23
Free State	3.17	2.32	2.92	2.41	2.79
Gauteng	3.97	2.92	3.12	2.53	3.36
KwaZulu-Natal	3.57	3.44	3.42	3.60	3.50
Limpopo	3.44	3.08	3.50	3.53	3.33
Mpumalanga	3.31	2.67	2.82	3.05	2.97
Northern Cape	3.20	2.44	2.67	2.28	2.78
North West	3.09	2.11	2.60	2.02	2.59
Western Cape	4.03	4.06	4.34	4.22	4.11

Citizen satisfaction levels with municipalities are notably low, with the countrywide average sitting at 30%.

The Western Cape had the highest level of satisfied respondents, at 43%. This is 9% higher than the joint second, Gauteng and Mpumalanga, at 34%. The lowest score is in the North West, at a 19% satisfaction rate.

Metropolitans

The country's eight metropolitan municipalities “govern areas inhabited by 40% of South Africa's population, highlighting their importance” within the system of local government, said GGA.

Since the 2021 local government elections, many metropolitan municipalities, characterised by their hung councils, have garnered significant media attention due to political instability.

This instability in metropolitans, “especially... within the economically dominant Gauteng province where no single party commands a majority,” has been reflected in the GPI scores.

The report isolated Tshwane and Johannesburg as examples, saying that both metros “performed in a manner that belies their major city status.”

According to the GPI rankings, the metros' performances are:

Ranking	Metro	Type	Top GPI	Bottom GPI
1	City of Cape Town	Majority party council	Service Delivery	Economic Development
2	Ekurhuleni	Hung council	Leadership & Management	Economic Development
3	eThekweni	Hung council	Economic Development	Administration & Governance
4	Nelson Mandela Bay	Hung council	Service Delivery	Leadership & Management
5	City of Johannesburg	Hung council	Service Delivery	Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation
6	Buffalo City	Majority party council	Service Delivery	Leadership & Management
7	City of Tshwane	Hung council	Service Delivery	Leadership & Management
8	Mangaung	Majority party council	Economic Development	Leadership & Management

Mangaung, Tshwane, Buffalo City, Johannesburg and Nelson Mandela Bay all scored GPI rankings below the metropolitan average.

Tshwane received an alarming 1/5 for leadership.

While the GPI ranks some major metros highly for stable governance and leadership in 2021/22, it should be noted that many of these have proven to be less stable in subsequent years.

For example, while Ekurhuleni scored 5/5 for its leadership in the ranking, the metro's governance structure fell apart in 2023 when the DA-led coalition was ousted. Currently, the metro faces more chaotic shifts, with the current mayor (AIC) and speaker (EFF) facing a motion of no confidence.

The local and district municipalities will be looked at in terms of their overall rankings rather than the GPI score.

Local municipalities

There are 205 local municipalities (LM), divided into:

- 19 Secondary City Local Municipalities;
- 26 Large Town Local Municipalities;
- 99 Small Town Local Municipalities;
- 61 Mostly Rural Local Municipalities.

Looking at the 19 Secondary City Local Municipalities, the rankings are:

Ranking	District Municipality	Province
1	Drakenstein LM	Western Cape
2	Stellenbosch LM	Western Cape
3	uMhlathuze LM	KwaZulu-Natal
4	Steve Tshwete LM	Mpumalanga
5	George LM	Western Cape
15	Govan Mbeki LM	Mpumalanga
16	Msunduzi LM	KwaZulu-Natal
17	Emfuleni LM	Gauteng
18	Matjhabeng LM	Free State
19	Madibeng LM	North West

Looking at the 26 Large Town Local Municipalities, the rankings are:

1	Saldanha Bay LM	Western Cape
2	Breede Valley LM	Western Cape
3	Overstrand LM	Western Cape
4	Midvaal LM	Gauteng
5	Mossel Bay LM	Western Cape
22	Emakhazeni LM	Mpumalanga
23	Enoch Mgijima LM	Eastern Cape
24	Dihlabeng LM	Free State
25	Makana LM	Eastern Cape
26	Mahikeng LM	North West

Looking at the 99 Small Town Local Municipalities, municipalities in the Western Cape took up a lion’s share of the top spots, while municipalities in the Northern Cape and North West made up much of the lower rankings.

The rankings are:

Ranking	District Municipality	Province
1	Swartland LM	Western Cape
2	Bergriver LM	Western Cape
3	Hessequa LM	Western Cape
4	Witzenberg LM	Western Cape
5	Cape Agulhas LM	Western Cape
95	Kamiesberg LM	Northern Cape
96	Naledi LM	North West
97	Maquassi Hills LM	North West
98	Siyathemba LM	Northern Cape
99	!Kheis LM	Northern Cape

Of the 61 Mostly Rural Municipalities, the lowest performing ones were seen in the North West, Northern Cape and Mpumalanga while Limpopo, the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal recorded some of the best.

The rankings show:

Ranking	District Municipality	Province
1	Blouberg LM	Limpopo
2	Winnie Madikizela-Mandela LM	Eastern Cape
3	Elundini LM	Eastern Cape
4	Okhahlamba LM	KwaZulu-Natal
5	Mnquma LM	Eastern Cape
57	Dr. JS Moroka LM	Mpumalanga
58	Kagisano-Molopo LM	North West
59	Moretele LM	North West
60	Ratlou LM	North West
61	Joe Morolong LM	Northern Cape

District municipalities

Looking at the 44 district municipalities, these rankings are divided into 23 ‘Non-Water Services Authority (WSA) Districts’ as well as 21 ‘Water Services Authority Districts’. Simply, the former do not have water supply and sanitation responsibilities, with their role largely limited “to planning, regulation and development facilitation, with questionable value for money,” said the report. Non-WSA districts typically score higher (on average 0.91 GPI points) than municipalities with WSAs. The 21 WSAs lie in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and the North West, “servicing approximately 20 million South Africans.”

Looking at the 23 non-WSAs, the rankings are:

Ranking	District Municipality	Province
1	Cape Winelands DM	Western Cape
2	West Coast DM	Western Cape
3	Garden Route DM	Western Cape
4	Overberg DM	Western Cape
5	Frances Baard DM	Northern Cape
19	Fezile Dabi DM	Free State
20	Thabo Mofutsanyana DM	Free State
21	Xhariep DM	Free State
22	Bojanala Platinum DM	North West
23	Sedibeng DM	Gauteng

The rankings of the 21 WSAs are:

Ranking	District Municipality	Province
Ranking	District Municipality	Province
1	Joe Gqabi DM	Eastern Cape
2	uMgungundlovu DM	KwaZulu-Natal
3	Capricorn DM	Limpopo
5	iLembe DM	KwaZulu-Natal

17	uMzinyathi DM	KwaZulu-Natal
18	Mopani DM	Limpopo
19	Amathole DM	Eastern Cape
20	Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati DM	North West
21	Ngaka Modiri Molema DM	North West

Good Governance Africa (GGA) has released the 2024 Governance Performance Index (GPI), offering a comprehensive overview of local governance across South Africa's 257 municipalities. The index assesses each municipality based on publicly available data from 2021 to 2023, analyzing them in categories such as Administration & Governance, Leadership & Management, Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation, and Service Delivery, the latter receiving the most emphasis. The metropolitan municipalities also faced scrutiny under the Economic Development category.

The study arrives amid significant changes within South Africa's local government system post the 2021 local government elections, which led to a record number of hung councils and rising political instability. The instability has prompted national departments to seek amendments to governing legislation, according to the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), which cites political unrest as a

major impediment to administrative efficiency and service delivery. Presently, 32 municipalities are under administration, with 66 identified as 'dysfunctional.'

The report reveals varied performance across provinces:

Eastern Cape shows mixed results with an overall GPI score of 3.23.

Gauteng scores moderately at 3.36 but struggles with political stability.

Western Cape leads with a score of 4.11 and the highest citizen satisfaction rate at 43%.

North West lags behind with the lowest citizen satisfaction at 19% and an overall GPI score of 2.59.

Metropolitan areas, housing 40% of the country's population, are particularly spotlighted. Cities like Johannesburg and Tshwane have been flagged for underperfor-

mance in key governance areas, reflecting the challenges of political instability.

In-depth examination of local municipalities reveals stark contrasts:

The Western Cape dominates top rankings in secondary cities and small town categories.

The North West and Northern Cape often appear in lower rankings, especially among mostly rural municipalities.

The analysis extends to the 44 district municipalities, including those without water service authority (WSA) who generally outscore those with WSA responsibilities.

This extensive evaluation by GGA aims to spur improvements in governance and service delivery across South Africa's diverse municipalities, highlighting the urgent need for effective local government systems as envisioned by the Constitution.



Salga Raises Alarm Over Mounting Debts Threatening Municipal Stability



The South African Local Government Association (Salga) has expressed grave concerns regarding the financial health of municipalities, which are grappling with unprecedented levels of debt from both government departments and consumers.

During a recent press briefing, Salga disclosed that debts owed by government entities to municipalities have surged to an all-time high of R3 billion.

This troubling escalation underscores the growing fiscal pressures that are undermining the operational capabilities of local governments.

Thami Ntuli, the KwaZulu-Natal chairperson for Salga, elaborated on the challenges faced by municipalities. He highlighted that due to the current economic

downturn, municipalities are struggling to collect payments for services rendered.

This has resulted in a dire financial situation where municipalities are accruing substantial high-interest debt to manage their cash flow shortages.

"The financial framework that municipalities operate within is burdened with record levels of debt. Residents, government departments, and businesses are falling behind on payments for essential services like water and municipal rates, which are particularly difficult to collect," Ntuli explained.

He added, "With homeowners prioritizing mortgage repayments, there's often not enough left for municipal rates and taxes. The recent interest rate hikes have only worsened the situation, further straining the ability of municipalities to

deliver services and pay their suppliers."

Ntuli also emphasized the critical timing of these financial difficulties. The confluence of high interest rates and the necessity to borrow funds to bridge payment shortfalls from various stakeholders is placing additional strain on municipalities.

"Government and business delays in settling their dues for utilities and other municipal services have forced many municipalities to resort to commercial bank loans to keep essential projects running," Ntuli stated.

This financial strain is occurring amidst broader issues of managing wage increases and maintaining service delivery, signaling a systemic problem that could affect the stability of local governance if not addressed promptly.

The Imperative of Moral Leadership in the Modern Era



In today's rapidly evolving world, where artificial intelligence challenges our unique human capacities, the need for moral leadership has never been more pressing. Dov Seidman, founder and chairman of The HOW Institute for Society, succinctly captures this sentiment by redefining the role of business in society. "The business of business is society," he asserts. It's about community and how we engage with the myriad challenges that come our way, guided by thoughtful principles and a deep sense of responsibility.

Moral leadership is not just a professional requirement but a societal expectation. Employees, customers, and broader stakeholders now demand leaders who will stand up for what is right, mirroring the conviction we once admired in leaders like Nelson Mandela. Mandela's legacy, characterized by unyielding dedication to justice and equality, exemplifies the caliber of leadership that inspires true change. South Africa,

with its rich history of transformative leaders, stands at a crossroads today, requiring leaders who not only echo Mandela's values but also embrace the complexities of the modern world.

During a revealing conversation in the "The New World of Work" video series, hosted by HBR editor-in-chief Adi Ignatius, Seidman discussed the critical human traits that leaders must cultivate:

- 1. Guidance by Principles:** Leaders must let their core values guide their decisions and actions, ensuring that every choice reflects their deepest commitments to their communities and stakeholders.
- 2. The Power of Reflection:** In our fast-paced world, taking a moment to pause and reflect is vital. It allows leaders to reconnect with their mission, rethink strategies, and reimagine their goals with clarity and purpose.
- 3. Valuing Human Traits:** As AI's capabilities expand, the uniquely human quali-

ties of moral judgment and empathy become crucial. These traits are what will define successful and ethical leadership.

Seidman's dialogue with leaders like Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella and former PepsiCo CEO Indra Nooyi in previous sessions further underscores this point. These conversations, available to HBR subscribers, delve into how companies can thrive by fostering a culture of principled leadership and sustained ethical inquiry.

In conclusion, as South Africa looks to its future, it is imperative that it cultivates leaders who not only possess the intellectual acumen to navigate new technological landscapes but also the moral foresight to foster societies that reflect the enduring values of past heroes like Nelson Mandela. Such leaders will not only excel in their respective fields but will also drive the kind of profound societal change that is desperately needed.





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THE GAUTENG PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT MAKES GOOD STRIDES IN ITS COMMITMENT TO

ADDRESSING FOOD INSECURITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL DETERIORATION

At a global level, food security and environmental protection forms part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Locally, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa explicitly guarantees the right to adequate food. Equally, the Constitution enshrines the right for everyone to an environment which is not harmful to their health or well-being. These two key areas are also some of the strategic focus areas of the National Development Plan (NDP) which is implemented through the Growing Gauteng Together (GGT2030) plan, underpinned by the Transformation, Modernisation and Reindustrialization programme.

It is within this context that the Gauteng Provincial Government (GPG) has prioritised both food security and environmental sustainability for implementation by the Gauteng Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment (GDARDE) in the term of the 6th Administration.

Whilst South Africa is food secured at national level, the country is still food insecure at household level as not all households have access to adequate food. According to the study conducted by the GCRO, about 18% of the Gauteng population are faced with food insecurity and 7.3% face severe inadequate access to food.



MEC Hlophe transplanting seedlings in a school food garden during the school reopening programme

Further, the study indicates that households headed by Black Africans and Coloured Africans were less likely to have adequate access to food compared to households that are headed by Indians/Asians/Whites. To address this situation, GDARDE embarked on food gardens and urban farms to fundamentally maximise food security in TISH (Townships, Informal Settlements and Hostels) areas, rural nodes, and cities of the province.

A total of 32 383 subsistence farmers were supported since 2019. A total of 21209 inclusive of school, homestead, and food gardens as well as urban farms were established in TISH areas. Other food gardens and urban farms were established outside of TISH areas such as rural areas and cities across the across all the five development corridors of the province including City of Tshwane, City of Johannesburg, City of Ekurhuleni, Sedibeng, and West Rand.

Support provided included production inputs, on farm infrastructure, training, extension, and advisory services. Other than other households, this programme has also benefitted 36 hostels, 60 homeless centres, and 10 963 subsistence women producers. In the quest to systematically transform the agri-food value chains, the Gauteng Provincial Government (GPG), has at the beginning of the term of the 6th Administration, committed to support Black smallholder farmers who remain excluded from market opportunities presented by the sector. It is within this context that the Commercialisation Programme was initiated to ensure that Black smallholder farmers participate meaningfully in the agrifood value chain and contribute to the economy of the province. During this term of the 6th administration, GDARDE was able to support 17 farmers towards Commercialisation in accordance with the prioritised commodities (4 piggery farmers, 6 poultry farmers, 3 grains farmers, 3 horticulture farmers and 1 beef farmer). Most of these beneficiaries are female farmers.

A total of nine (9) existing Agri-parks have been upgraded through the provision of tunnels, road infrastructure, fencing, tunnel repairs, solar panels installation and generators. Gauteng Agri-park programme aims to develop smallholder farmers and it is also intended to transform the sector.

Urban Farming



TREE PLANTING

During the term of the 6th Administration several strategic investments on infrastructure projects were made. GDARDE invested R14m for establishment of egg aggregation pack station in Mogale City for a Co-Op of farmers in collaboration with South African Poultry Association (SAPA).

The project is expected to start operating in April 2024. The Department had further invested in a poultry meat cutting facility at Tshwane Fresh Produce Market, the facility was established at a cost of R5m in collaboration with SAPA. The Department has also invested in meat deboning facility as well expanding abattoirs and the roll-out of two mobile abattoirs at the cost of R22m. This is a critical intervention that is enabling smallholder participation in the red meat value chain. Another R22m has been invested to commercialise two Medical Cannabis Enterprises.

It is worth noting that the Department has furthermore assisted the Vaal University of Technology (VUT) to procure equipment

and set-up an accredited laboratory for medical cannabis and hemp. A total of R15m was allotted for the high-tech analytical machinery as well as associated equipment. The process of accreditation of the laboratory is underway.

South Africa's environmental quality is deteriorating leading to increased adverse impacts on society and increasing economic costs as evidenced by amongst others, increasing greenhouse gas emissions, poor waste management, loss of biodiversity and failure to drive an agenda on renewables.

The GDARDE spearheaded and coordinated provincial climate action with the main outcome for the term being development of Gauteng City Region Overarching Climate Change Response Strategy and Plan in 2020 which was approved by EXCO. The province working with CSIR and National Cleaner Production Centre has more than 402 companies participating in the Gauteng Industrial Symbiosis Programme that has industry reducing emissions from their operations.

Other concerted efforts to address the negative impacts of Climate Change include the planting of trees across the province. Among the myriad benefits that trees offer, their other key function linked to climate change is the sequestration carbon emissions. Through the Gauteng 1Million Trees Programme, implemented in collaboration with the Nelson Mandela Foundation and Green Development Foundation, a total of 316 006 trees have been planted in Gauteng. Of the said total number of trees, 61672 were planted in TISH areas.

In terms of the waste economy, the Department are on a drive to reduce waste going to landfills by 25% in 2024. Currently only 11% is being diverted from landfill sites. Gauteng is rapidly running out of landfill airspace and GDARDE through Municipalities in collaboration with private sector, is in the process of identifying landfill sites to be transformed into parks with more tree planting space.

To accelerate performance on this area, we are working with Pro Alliance Organisation, an alliance of seven organisations that are participating in the extended producer responsibility programme of the country. In the term under review, 302 buy-back centres were supported with recycling equipment which has ensured sustained growth of the waste enterprises that have been supported by GDARDE. Additionally, the Department has also formalized a total of 196 Cooperatives aimed at growing participation of waste enterprises in the waste economy to create green jobs as well as improving the environment.

Furthermore, the Department provides continuous training programmes which benefitted 212 waste enterprises. The department is also supporting township waste enterprises on the roll-out of the waste ATMs (reverse vending machines), targeting youth participation in recycling.

To avoid littering and illegal dumping as well as maintaining cleanliness, waste receptacles totaling 118 900 were procured and distributed in TISH areas. Under the elevated priority, environmental sustainability, 3883 full-time equivalent jobs and 15 057 job opportunities have been created since 2019. Of the 15057 job opportunities created, 6000 were for the Green Army and Supervisors who were employed specifically under the Bontle ke Botho programme to clean and green the TISH areas.

While the GDARDE has progressed well in implementing its mandate for the term of the sixth administration, it is acknowledged that concerted efforts to maximise food security, transforming the agricultural sector and protecting the environment are continuous. Therefore, more hands will be needed for the province to make even a bigger dent on each of these focus areas. The war on reducing food security and environmental protection continues.



Some of the Green Army members cleaning in one of the townships

Three Decades of Democracy: Uncertainty and Calls for Reform Dominate South Africa's 2024 Elections

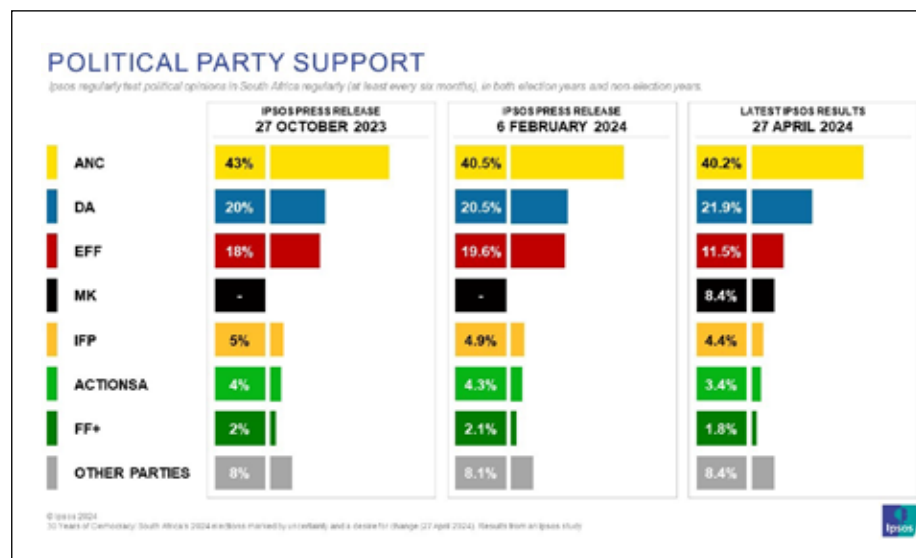
30 Years of Democracy: South Africa's 2024 elections marked by uncertainty and a desire for change

As South Africa gears up for the upcoming 2024 national and provincial elections scheduled for 29 May, a new study sheds light on the sentiments of the electorate, revealing widespread discontent and a yearning for change reminiscent of the mood during the transformative 1994 elections.

A pivotal report from the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) has unveiled that voters this year will encounter some changes at the polls, including the introduction of three separate ballot papers and, notably, the allowance for independent candidates to participate for the first time. These changes signify a major shift in the electoral process, potentially affecting the political landscape significantly.

The Ipsos survey, conducted face-to-face across all nine provinces of South Africa in March and April of this year, presents a detailed picture of the electorate's mood. A national sample of 2,545 registered voters highlights a significant dissatisfaction with the current direction of the country, with only 23% believing that the nation is moving in the right direction and a stark 66% disagreeing vehemently.

Further findings from the survey indicate that a considerable 35% of the electorate feels that no political party adequately represents their views, pointing towards a fragmented and uncertain political climate. This sentiment is likely to influence the dynamics of the upcoming elections, making the outcome less predictable.



Political dynamics are notably shifting, as indicated by the recent establishment of the uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK) party in December 2023, which has already begun to realign voter allegiances. The ANC, which has been a dominant force in South African politics, is currently struggling to maintain its stronghold, with only 38% of the electorate confident in its ability to fulfill election promises.

Emerging parties and shifting loyalties underscore a broader trend of political transformation. The EFF, previously gaining momentum, has seen some of its base shift to MK, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal. Meanwhile, the Democratic Alliance (DA) continues to secure about a fifth of the electorate's support.

With key provinces like Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal holding substantial portions of the electorate, the focus is also on demographic factors such as gender, with women making up over 55% of registered voters. This demographic is likely to play a crucial role in deciding the outcome.

As the elections approach, the findings from this study emphasize the volatility and change defining the current political environment in South Africa. The report serves as a critical insight into voter attitudes and may influence how political parties strategize in the crucial weeks leading up to the elections. However, with uncertainty high and many voters still undecided, the final outcomes remain open, highlighting the evolving nature of South Africa's democratic landscape.



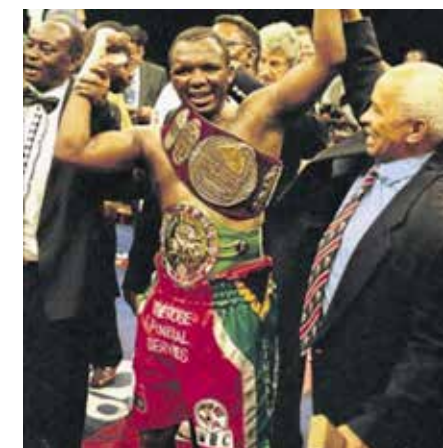
Dingaane "Rose of Soweto" Thobela: Boxing Legend Passes Away at 57

Former two-division world champion leaves behind a legacy of resilience and unity in South African sport.

In memory of the illustrious Dingaane "Rose of Soweto" Thobela, who has gracefully departed this world at the age of 57, we pay homage to a legend whose spirit forever resides in the hearts of South Africans.

Hailing from the vibrant streets of Chiawelo, Soweto, Dingaane Bongane Thobela emerged not just as a boxer but as a symbol of resilience and triumph. Fondly known as the "Rose of Soweto," he captivated the nation with his prowess in the ring and his unwavering spirit outside of it.

Thobela's journey to greatness was marked by remarkable achievements. With the guidance of his esteemed trainer, Norman Hlabane, he clinched two world titles in the lightweight divisions, etching his name in boxing history. However, it was his crowning moment in September 2000 that solidified his legacy. In a gripping battle, he secured the WBC super middleweight belt, dazzling fans with a 12th-round stoppage



victory over Glen Catley at Carnival City in Brakpan, with Elias Tshabalala standing proudly in his corner.

Beyond his remarkable achievements within the ring, Thobela's impact transcended boundaries. His victories brought communities together, transcending color lines and

uniting South Africans in celebration. The streets erupted in joyous revelry whenever the "Rose" emerged triumphant, a testament to his widespread admiration and influence.

In his personal life, Thobela cherished his family, though separated from his common law wife Sandra, he shared a deep bond with his two children, Ntombi and Dingaane Thobela Junior. His legacy extends beyond the ring, touching the lives of those closest to him.

As we bid farewell to a sporting icon, let us remember Dingaane "Rose of Soweto" Thobela not for his titles alone, but for the indomitable spirit and unwavering determination that made him a true champion. May his legacy continue to inspire generations to come.

In the same breath, we mourn the loss of Joseph Makaringe, another titan of the ring whose contributions to South African boxing will never be forgotten. Their memories will forever live on in the annals of our nation's sporting history.

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