


ENHANCING AND OPTIMISING SERVICE DELIVERY AT LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

BACK *to* BASICS

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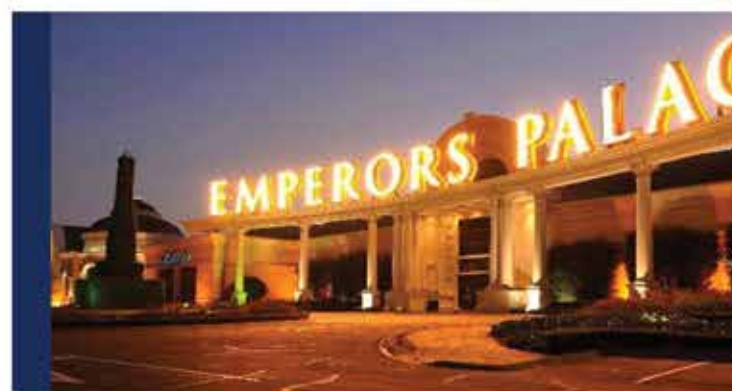
A portrait of Gaoage Oageng Molapisi, a Black man with a bald head, wearing black-rimmed glasses, a white shirt, a blue patterned tie, and a blue suit jacket. He is smiling slightly. The background is a solid brown color.

“The work we undertake this period must lay a solid foundation for a revitalized system for local government” - North West COGHSTA MEC - Gaoage Oageng Molapisi

2025

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A Budget for the People: Strengthening Service Delivery and Human Dignity in Every Community

Strategic Reflections & Budget 2025/2026: MEC Molapisi charts the path rebuilding trust, restoring accountability and repositioning local governance for a capable state

The 70th anniversary of the Freedom Charter presents a moment of profound historical reflection—an urgent call to renew South Africa’s commitment to justice, equality and human dignity. In delivering the 2025/2026 Budget Speech, MEC Gaoage Oageng Molapisi invoked this legacy not as rhetoric, but as a rallying point for decisive, people-centred governance. Paying tribute to the brave men and women who laid the foundations of democracy, he reaffirmed that the Constitution’s promise of a better life for all must now find full expression in ethical leadership, capable institutions, and tangible service delivery outcomes. He also extended heartfelt congratulations to Kgosi Thabo Seatlholo on his appointment to the

President’s Eminent Persons Group—a recognition of the vital role of traditional leadership in fostering national dialogue and social cohesion.

This article chronicles more than just a provincial budget speech—it tells the story of a province in transition. Under MEC Molapisi’s stewardship, the North West is moving from intent to

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Mazista Bulk Water Supply project which was built through Water Infrastructure Grant - WISG to benefit over 100 households

implementation, from broken trust to institutional renewal. The narrative unfolds across critical themes: unblocking stalled housing developments, restoring access to clean water through Operation Bulela Metsi, fixing broken municipalities, enforcing consequence management, empowering traditional leaders and formalising the informal economy. It highlights a strategic pivot—from episodic interventions to systemic reforms backed by a modernised departmental structure, new partnerships, and bold policy instruments.

At its core, this article captures a vision of governance that is not only responsive, but transformative. It invites readers into the heart of a province where leadership is reclaiming credibility, service delivery is regaining momentum, and communities are being placed at the centre of development. Through a blend of accountability, cultural respect and inclusive growth, MEC Molapisi is not merely presenting figures—he is charting a path to dignity, equity and a revitalised social contract for the people of the North West.

Renewing the Social Contract: Institutional trust, cultural relevance, and the future of Local Governance

In reaffirming his department’s commitment to renewing the social contract through trust, accountability, and shared responsibility, MEC Molapisi argued that meaningful governance reform must begin with a capable and responsive institution. He highlighted the approval of a modern, fit-for-purpose organisational



MEC Molapisi leading the launch of Clean Cities Campaign in Kgetlengrivier Local Municipality

structure by the Minister of Public Service and Administration—a milestone that replaces the interim framework in place since 2019 and better aligns with local and cultural priorities. He further argued that repositioning the Community Development Workers Programme under the Chief Directorate: Development and Planning and establishing a new division to manage indigenous knowledge systems and initiation schools, demonstrates the department’s responsiveness to grassroots needs and cultural preservation. Progress in recruitment, with 13 of 27 posts filled and others underway, alongside the placement of 44 engi-

neering graduates through a merSETA partnership, underscores a commitment to skills development and service acceleration. He emphasised that competency-based recruitment, institutional ethics and professional partnerships are central to building a capable state. While the department has maintained seven consecutive unqualified audit opinions, MEC Molapisi was unequivocal in asserting that the ultimate goal is a clean audit in 2025/26—one underpinned by strengthened internal controls, rigorous performance management systems, and decisive post-audit action planning. However, as laudable as a clean audit may be for restoring public confidence, it cannot become a hollow victory. If not coupled with demonstrable improvements in service delivery—particularly in completing stalled housing projects and responding to grassroots frustrations it risks becoming an accounting accolade devoid of developmental substance. For Molapisi, financial integrity must translate into tangible outcomes not just clean books. The real audit, he suggests, lies in the lived experiences of communities.

As he reflected on Programme Two: Local Governance, MEC Molapisi underscored the department’s ongoing efforts to strengthen the functionality and integrity of municipalities across the province. He highlighted the completion of the first province-wide Mu-



Municipal workers cleaning roads and doing road markings.



Municipal workers clearing the dumping sites as part of the Clean Cities Campaign in Kgetlengrivier Local Municipality

municipal Roadshow Programme—conducted in partnership with Provincial Treasury and SALGA—using the Municipal Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT) to evaluate six critical governance pillars. A key outcome was the completion of skills audits in 22 municipalities, revealing concerning mismatches between qualifications, experience, and job roles. In response, municipalities have been urged to urgently develop implementation plans to close identified skills gaps, while the department explores targeted support mechanisms to bolster institutional capacity. The roadshows also brought to light the persistent challenge of ageing water and sanitation infrastructure, prompting a renewed call for municipalities to optimise the use of national grants to accelerate service delivery improvements.

MEC Molapisi also addressed the persistent issue of non-compliance with the Municipal Systems Act in the appointment of senior managers. Despite annual capacity-building workshops, some municipalities continue to make irregular appointments. In a decisive response, the department has initiated court proceedings under Section 54A(8) to nullify unlawful appointments in municipalities such as JB Marks and Ditsobotla and is seeking personal cost orders against councillors involved in these decisions. Molapisi further reiter-

ated the constitutional principle that local government is a distinct and autonomous sphere, as outlined in Sections 40 and 41 of the Constitution. He emphasised that while national and provincial governments play a supportive and oversight role, they cannot impose decisions that encroach on the integrity of local councils—highlighting the importance of cooperative governance in achieving sustainable, accountable service delivery.

Fixing Local Finances and Fighting Maladministration

MEC Molapisi raised alarm over the escalating debt crisis crippling municipalities, calling it unsustainable and a direct threat to service delivery and institutional viability. As of June 2025, municipalities owe Eskom R9.3 billion and Magalies Water over R2.3 billion, while outstanding municipal debt—largely from households, government and businesses—has ballooned to R37.1 billion across 17 municipalities. Only Ramotshere Moiloa Local Municipality has fully complied with National Treasury's debt relief programme, setting an example for others. Premier Mokgosi has facilitated payment agreements with Magalies Water for three struggling municipalities and committed to monitoring compliance. Molapisi also called for stronger financial oversight, as many municipalities continue to fail basic audit outcomes

due to weak internal controls, over-reliance on consultants, and a lack of consequence management. A targeted support plan, in partnership with Provincial Treasury and SALGA, will strengthen oversight committees and internal audit units, while financial literacy training for councillors—through a new partnership with North West University will empower local leaders to interpret financial statements and performance data more effectively.

At the heart of restoring public trust is ethical, accountable leadership—an imperative that MEC Molapisi is actively driving. He announced a series of investigations initiated under Section 106 of the Municipal Systems Act into allegations of maladministration, corruption, and fraud in Greater Taung, Matlosana, and Madibeng Local Municipalities. In Greater Taung, council instability prompted early intervention; investigations are now complete, and remedial actions have been implemented. In Matlosana, a governance audit has unearthed irregularities, with findings soon to be tabled before the council. A fresh probe has commenced in Madibeng—backed by full council support—and is expected to conclude within three months.

These actions are not isolated. They form part of a broader strategy to rebuild institutional integrity and enforce conse-

quence management—often the missing link in local governance reform. In parallel, the Provincial Executive Council has invoked Section 139(1)(a) of the Constitution in Mamusa and Kagisano-Molopo Municipalities, issuing directives and requiring monthly compliance reports. By directly confronting the adverse impact of failed accountability systems, Molapisi is challenging what has become a defining feature of local governance: the absence of consequences management. His approach signals a bold political and administrative will to address long-standing concerns raised by the Auditor-General and to re-anchor municipalities in the principles of legality, transparency and service to the people.

Advancing equitable access through “Operation Bulela Metsi”

The Department's implementation of Operation Bulela Metsi has emerged as a practical demonstration of responsive governance and strategic intergovernmental collaboration. Since its inception, the initiative has made measurable strides in improving access to clean water and sanitation across all ten Water Services Authorities (WSAs) in the province. Key infrastructure milestones such as the completion of the Moretele Bulk Water Supply pipeline, Greater Taung Bulk Water Supply Scheme, and the Lichtenburg Borehole Augmentation project reflect the tangible progress being made toward addressing historic service delivery backlogs. By leveraging on the Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant (RBIG) and Water Service Infrastructure Grants (WSIG), the Department has not only delivered on critical infrastructure in a phased and sustainable manner but also enhanced community confidence in the state's ability to meet its constitutional obligations. With the official handover of a R139 million Moretele South Reservoir Project by the Deputy President Paul Mashatile and the Minister of Water and Sanitation Penny Madojina in August 2025, the Department affirms its commitment to ensuring that no community is left behind in accessing this basic human right.



Patching of potholes at Mabele-A-Pudi village in the Moses Kotane Local Municipality as part of the Accelerated Service Delivery Programme - Thuntsha Lerole

Building Municipal capability for sustainable Service Delivery

The gains recorded under Programme 3 underscore a shift from episodic interventions to systemic capacity building in the water and sanitation sector. While the successful roll-out of infrastructure projects in areas such as Tlhabane, Klipgat, Manamakgotheng, Derby, Ip-elegeng, and Setlopo is commendable, the persistence of communities without reliable water access signals a deeper governance challenge. The Department's announcement to evaluate all WSAs for their ability to discharge their water service mandate marks a turning point in the province's developmental agenda. This decisive action—to either strengthen institutional capacity or revoke water provision rights where performance is lacking—is a bold but necessary step toward accountability and service reliability. Going forward, Programme 3 will not only remain an instrument for infrastructure delivery, but a critical lever for restructuring local government performance in alignment with the constitutional promise of dignity and equality.

In a concerted effort to address infrastructure backlogs and drive service delivery in poor communities, the Department ensured that 22 municipalities received Municipal Infrastructure Grants (MIG), achieving an overall expenditure rate of 98% in the 2024/25 financial year—reflecting a 1% improvement from the previous year. Notably, 11 municipalities achieved full (100%) expenditure, demonstrating effective planning and ex-

ecution. However, persistent underperformance in municipalities such as Ditsobotla, Kgetlengrivier, Mamusa, and Lekwa Teemane, as well as suboptimal spending in Rustenburg, Moses Kotane, and the City of Matlosana, underscores the need for targeted interventions. To this end, the Department convened a MIG Implementation Readiness Workshop (18–20 June 2025), which diagnosed critical challenges including the misuse of conditional grants and delayed procurement processes. In response, a joint initiative with the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent (MISA) is being implemented to intensify monitoring, supervision, and hands-on technical support to municipalities—ensuring that infrastructure grants are utilised purposefully, efficiently, and with measurable impact on community well-being. The MEC expressed concern over the persistent misuse of funds and delayed implementation timelines in certain municipalities, emphasising that such inefficiencies compromise service delivery and undermine the principles of accountability, equity, and developmental local government.

Protecting lives, formalising trade: Spaza Shop Regulation Gains Momentum

In a decisive step to protect communities from the growing threat of food-borne illnesses—some of which have tragically resulted in the loss of children's lives—the MEC recorded progress following the gazetting of the Standard Draft By-Law by the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Velenkosi-



Executive Committee Members of the North West House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders during the official opening of the House this year

ni Hlabisa to regulate the registration and operation of spaza shops and food outlets. The by-law serves as a critical tool for ensuring that all food retail operations meet minimum health and safety standards. To date, significant strides have been made across the province, with a total of 16,802 spaza shops and food outlets formally registered. This includes 2,895 in Ngaka Modiri Molema, 924 in Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati, 1,954 in Dr Kenneth Kaunda, and an impressive 11,029 in Bojanala Platinum. The MEC commended these efforts and urged all municipalities to intensify the enforcement of the by-law to safeguard public health. Furthermore, communities are encouraged to embrace compliance, as registered operators stand to benefit from government's economic empowerment initiatives and funding opportunities aimed at formalising the informal economy.

Empowering Traditional Leadership: Strengthening capacity, resolving disputes and protecting culture

The MEC for Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs reaffirmed a strong commitment to strengthening traditional institutional management through tangible support to Traditional Leaders. "In the past financial year alone, we handed over 10 vehicles valued at R7.6 million, building

on the 17 vehicles worth R11.7 million delivered in 2023/24," the MEC stated. "For this financial year, we have set aside a further R7.3 million to expand this fleet, demonstrating our unwavering dedication to enhancing the dignity, mobility, and operational capacity of our Traditional Leaders across the province." The MEC further explained that, in partnership with the Department of Public Works and Roads, steps are underway to improve traditional council offices, while the national Department of Traditional Affairs is finalising a comprehensive Handbook to guide support for Traditional Leaders, including coronations and funerals.

Addressing traditional leadership disputes, the MEC noted that six investigative committees were appointed last year, with three—Banogeng, Bakubung ba ga Ratheo, and Bakwena ba Modimosana ba Mmatau—having completed their investigations, and findings are now being communicated. "The remaining committees for Bahurutshe ba ga Moiloa, Bahurutshe boo Manyana, and Bakwena ba Mogopa are on track to conclude by October 2025," the MEC assured. Additional success disputes of Bogosana involving Barolong ba ga Mariba, Boora Tshidi, and Barolong ba ga Phoi, are also receiving focused attention.

The MEC proudly announced the com-

mencement of digitising traditional leadership records, with a POPIA-compliant database set for completion by September 2025. "This will serve as a vital information hub to support governance and accountability," he said. The reconstitution of Traditional Councils in line with legislation will be finalised by the end of the 2025/26 financial year. Commending the Provincial Initiation Coordinating Committee (PICC), chaired by Kgosi Gasebone, the MEC highlighted their success in shutting down over 18 illegal initiation schools and rescuing over 100 vulnerable initiates during the 2025 winter season. He issued a stern warning to unlawful initiation school operators: "We will deploy all resources at our disposal to protect our youth and preserve the integrity of our cultural practices."

The Road to 2026: Strengthening Local Democracy, One reform at a Time

As the 2026 Local Government Elections approach, MEC Molapisi stands at the forefront of a pivotal transformation in local governance. Under his stewardship, the North West is not merely preparing electorally—it is architecting a future defined by capable, accountable, and citizen-driven municipalities. By championing the review of the White Paper on Local Government and driving widespread public consulta-



Lefatlheng Recreational park in Moretele includes two swimming pools, playgrounds, braai area, lapa, ablution facilities and a trampoline



The Breaking New Ground - BNG house that are being build for beneficiaries across the province

tions, the MEC is shaping a legacy of reform grounded in dignity, service, and developmental impact. His bold and consultative leadership ensures that the voices of communities echo through policy and practice—laying a resilient foundation for the next generation of local democracy.

Unlocking Stalled Progress: Rebuilding trust and momentum in Human Settlements Delivery in the North West

MEC Molapisi asserted that the Department's strategic focus on unblocking stalled housing projects reflects an urgent response to the frustrations faced by many beneficiaries and a clear commitment to restoring momentum in housing delivery. He emphasized that dedicating 80% of the budget to completing existing developments before initiating new ones will maximize impact, ensure efficient use of resources, and rebuild public confidence. The MEC called on all stakeholders—including municipalities, developers, and communities—to collaborate actively in unlocking opportunities and building sustainable human settlements that uphold the constitutional right to adequate housing and reflect the dignity of the people of the North West.

He reported on the department's progress and challenges during the 2024/2025 financial year under Programme 1: Administration. Due to budget constraints, only thirteen of the planned thirty-four

management and professional posts were advertised, with nine filled; recruitment for the remaining positions is underway. The draft organisational structure is nearing approval, reflecting efforts to strengthen capacity within a tight fiscal environment.

On disciplinary matters, the department handled two cases of misconduct, concluding one within the required ninety-day period while the other remains ongoing, demonstrating a focus on accountability. Skills development initiatives included reskilling housing inspectors and supporting candidate construction managers to obtain professional qualifications through the South African Council of Construction Project Managers, with a mentorship programme established to build capacity in human settlements development.

Regarding supply chain management, the department received 4,362 invoices totaling R1.9 billion, paying 2,309 invoices worth R899 million within 30 days, while 2,053 invoices valued at R1 billion were paid late. Efforts continue to improve payment performance to minimize the negative impact of delayed contractor payments. The Department acknowledged slow progress in empowering women, youth, and people with disabilities due to systemic challenges. In 2024/25, infrastructure spending was 23.9% for women and 43.2% for youth and other groups. For

2025/26, 40% of the estimated R622 million budget is allocated to empowerment programmes, signalling a stronger commitment to inclusive development.

Strategic Land Acquisition and Municipal Empowerment: Driving sustainable Housing delivery in North West

MEC Molapisi emphasized the department's strategic focus on acquiring well-located land parcels through the Housing Development Agency (HDA) to formalize informal settlements across the province. Despite challenges such as insufficient bulk infrastructure, lengthy negotiations, and environmental constraints, the department prioritizes land with existing bulk infrastructure, conducts feasibility studies before acquisition, and considers land expropriation where necessary to expedite sustainable housing delivery. Strengthening local government capacity remains a priority, with JB Marks and Rustenburg municipalities accredited last year to take on increased housing responsibilities. Rustenburg is now managing housing project planning and management at Level 2, supported by a R4 million capacity-building allocation, while JB Marks handles beneficiary administration at Level 1. Preparations are underway with the City of Matlosana, Mahikeng, Greater Taung, and Naledi municipalities for accreditation, pending national assessment for enhanced housing delivery roles.



MEC Molapisi handing over a newly built house to Constane Gciva of Kanana Ext 3 in Matlosana Local Municipality. She has spent many years staying in a shack with her children.

Giving People Ownership: Title Deeds, Jobs and Housing that transforms lives

MEC Molapisi reaffirmed the centrality of homeownership in restoring dignity and economic stability through the Title Deeds Restoration Programme. With 6,313 title deeds registered in the previous financial year, she called on municipalities to intensify door-to-door campaigns and integrate delivery with the Thuntsha Lerole Accelerated Service Programme. The target for 2025/26 is 6,718 title deeds, contributing to the national goal of 80,000 by 2029. Regarding First Home Finance, the MEC acknowledged limited uptake—only 44 of the 70 intended beneficiaries were reached due to eligibility constraints like income thresholds and debt levels. To improve access, a targeted marketing drive and municipal housing official training will be intensified.

In monitoring service delivery, the MEC did not shy away from confronting underperformance. Poor contractor performance resulted in four project surrenders, two contract terminations, and sixteen notices of intention to terminate. To boost internal capacity, a Professional Resource Team (PRT) was deployed across regions, supporting project claims validation and technical assessments, thereby reducing payment errors and delays. The Rental Housing Tribunal, with a newly appointed team

of mostly women, has resolved over 300 landlord-tenant disputes since December 2024. Meanwhile, the MEC celebrated the opening of a new Community Schemes Ombud Service (CSOS) satellite office in Rustenburg to enhance local access to community scheme support services.

The MEC also announced the appointment of an interim board for the North West Housing Corporation (NWHC) to drive governance reform, oversee performance plan reviews, and align operations with the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA). In advancing the Smart and Mega Cities programme—endorsed by the Provincial Executive Council—Molapisi emphasised integrated development and job creation. Key infrastructure projects are underway in JB Marks, Matlosana, Moses Kotane, Rustenburg, Mahikeng, and Madibeng, collectively expected to generate tens of thousands of jobs. The Matlosana Smart City is fully planned, while the Moses Kotane development includes South Africa's first international horse racing track.

To fund future developments, the MEC confirmed that auctions of unused NWHC properties in cross-border areas are in progress. Additionally, the appointment of a permanent NWHC board is underway. Donations of Community Residential Units (CRUs) to municipalities, such as Bothibelelo Flats and

Itsoseng Flats, signal a new era of decentralised housing oversight. The Tlhabane Female Hostel will also be handed over to its female beneficiaries. Clarifying speculation around the Morula Hotel, the MEC confirmed that it remains NWHC property, with legal proceedings initiated against defaulting tenants. Throughout, Molapisi's approach is marked by bold leadership, institutional strengthening, and a clear resolve to make housing a vehicle for transformation and dignity in the North West.

Drawing on the profound legacy of the Freedom Charter and the constitutional promise of dignity, MEC Molapisi's leadership unmistakably charts a bold and accountable path toward transforming local governance and human settlements in the North West. His unwavering commitment to rebuilding trust through responsive institutions, ethical leadership, and inclusive service delivery reflects a decisive break from past inefficiencies, as evidenced by strides in skills development, infrastructure delivery, and proactive legal action against maladministration. By prioritizing the completion of stalled housing projects, empowering traditional leadership, and strengthening municipal financial oversight, MEC Molapisi embodies the renewed social contract South Africa needs—one rooted in collaboration, cultural respect, and sustainable progress that leaves no community behind.

Leading South Africa into the Fourth Industrial Revolution



In a bold move to advance skills and innovation in South Africa's Eastern Cape, the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA) has joined forces with Walter Sisulu University (WSU). Together, they're paving the way for a brighter future with a project aimed at equipping the region's workforce with skills crucial for the rapidly evolving manufacturing and engineering sectors.

Central to this partnership is the shared vision of empowering students, staff and graduates through specialised support and training programmes tailored to the specific demands of the Eastern Cape's industrial landscape. By mentoring WSU staff for professional accreditation, enhancing learner support for Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) programmes and providing hands-on industry experience, this initiative is redefining the higher education sector's impact on regional economic growth. "As merSETA, we recognise that the future of manufacturing and engineering hinges on not just technical skills, but also adaptability, creativity and a forward-thinking approach," says Naphtaly Mokgotsane, the merSETA Acting CEO. "Our direction with initiatives like these is to ensure that future professionals are ready to tackle the technological advances, sustainability challenges and evolving skills demands shaping tomorrow's industries."

In today's dynamic job market, Mokgotsane believes specialised training programmes are key to unlocking opportunity for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and unemployed graduates. These tailored programmes in essential fields, such as engineering and IT, equip participants with the competencies they need to thrive in an ever-evolving workforce. "Specialised training programmes aren't just pathways to skill acquisition; they are bridges to opportunity, empowering SMEs and graduates to excel," explains Mokgotsane.

This approach is coupled with strategic placement of WSU engineering lecturers in leading industry environments, enriching their practical expertise and, ultimately, enhancing the

mentorship students receive. It's a cycle of knowledge that strengthens education quality and deepens the university-industry bond.

Among the project's achievements is the development of advanced qualifications and postgraduate supervision skills for WSU's engineering lecturers. Driven by a commitment to building research capacity, the initiative introduced cutting-edge tools like Virtual Reality (VR) interfaces and simulation software, opening doors to immersive learning experiences that prepare students for the future.

"Research capacity building is the cornerstone of innovation, sparking curiosity and driving forward the frontiers of knowledge. By investing in VR and simulation software, we're not just embracing technology, but creating immersive learning opportunities that position WSU at the forefront of educational advancement," Mokgotsane states.

These efforts have laid a solid foundation for academic excellence, empowering WSU's staff and enhancing the university's capabilities to produce graduates equipped with contemporary skills and insights needed for the modern workplace.

Reflecting on the initiative's impact, Mzolisi Payi, WSU's Director for Community Engagement and Internalisation, notes: "The merSETA/WSU project has left an indelible mark on skills development and academic excellence at WSU. Its achievements in staff qualification, research capacity building and engineering education quality are a testament to its transformative impact."

The partnership between merSETA and WSU stands as a shining example of what can be achieved when education and industry work hand-in-hand. As they continue this journey, the merSETA and WSU remain steadfast in their commitment to furthering excellence in skills development and academic innovation, empowering the Eastern Cape's workforce and supporting the region's industrial growth.

Revenue enhancement programme implemented by JB Marks Local Municipality

Electrification of Informal Settlements

The JB Marks Local Municipality continues to proactively engage with the Department of Electricity and Energy (DEE) through the consistent submission of funding applications for the electrification of newly proclaimed settlements.

These applications are subject to DEE's review process, and funding allocations are determined based on the availability of resources.

As per the DEE's current guidelines, the cost of a single electricity connection is R18,000. The total value of the approved electrification project currently stands at R5,490,000.00.

It is important to emphasize that this project was neither influenced by nor a reaction to any protest action. Rather, it forms part of the Municipality's long-term strategic infrastructure development plan.

The initiative is fully funded by the Department of Electricity and Energy, reflecting a collaborative effort to improve service delivery and support sustainable community development.

Project Progress and Implementation Status

The Municipality has made significant strides in the implementation of electrification projects across various areas. The status updates are as follows:

- **Tshing Ext 10:** Electrification com-



A Team of JB Marks Local Municipality Electricians connecting electricity in the informal settlements

- plete – 1,378 connections
- **Tshing Ext 9:** Electrification complete – 136 connections
- **Boikhutso:** Electrification complete – 85 connections
- **Ikageng Ext 7:** Electrification complete – 72 connections
- **Ikageng Ext 3:** Electrification complete – 72 connections
- **Klipdrift:** Electrification completed (114 connections); awaiting Eskom for energization
- **Promosa Ext 2:** 106 of 305 connections completed; remainder scheduled for completion by next week
- **Ikageng Ext 7 Sports Ground:** 49 of 59 connections completed; remain-
- ing 10 to be finalized next week
- **Ext 7 Snake Park:** Nearing completion – 159 total connections; final connections pending arrival of ready boards and Airdac cable
- **Boikhutsong:** Electrification underway – 95 connections; expected to be completed imminently
- **Ext 11 TPA:** Electrification in progress – 35 connections; finalization scheduled for next week pending delivery of Airdac cable
- **Ikageng Ext 6 (Mogolodi and Sarafina Road):** Electrification of 138 connections scheduled to commence during the week starting 11 August 2025

Progress Registered on Profiling of Informal Settlements within the Jurisdiction of JB Marks Local Municipality

No.	Informal Settlements that have been Profiled Already	Total Households (Profiled)
1	Ikageng Ext 9 Stands	383
2	Ikageng Ext 9 A	127
3	Ikageng Ext 9 B	118
4	Ikageng Ext 9 C	131
5	Ikageng Ext D	142
6	Ward 4 Informal Settlement	60
7	Ward 16 E Informal Settlement	420
8	Promosa Ext 4	728
9	Ikageng Ext 12 Sonderwater (Hashtag)	1219
10	Ikageng Ext 12 Sonderwater (B)	487
11	Ikageng Ext 12 Sonderwater (C)	362
12	Ikageng Ext 12 Sonderwater (E)	411
13	Mooiassie Informal Settlement	375
14	Promosa A (Ward 17)	281
15	Promosa B & C (Ward 17)	90
16	Ikageng Ext 13 (Zakhele)	2035
17	Freedom Square (Ward 19)	1432
18	ZZ Informal Settlement	303
19	Promosa Hillside	212
20	Promosa Hillside Portion 2	134
21	Klipdrift Informal Settlement	114

No.	Informal Settlements to be Profiled	Households (to be Profiled)
1	Ikageng Ext 6 Erf 9813	Profiling to be conducted soon
2	Ikageng Ext 7 Erf 12552	Profiling to be conducted soon
3	Marikana Informal Settlement	Profiling to be conducted soon
4	Serope Informal Settlement	Profiling to be conducted soon
5	Ramekwa Informal Settlement	Profiling to be conducted soon
6	Rockville Informal Settlement	Profiling to be conducted soon
7	Wrong Turn Ext 7	Profiling to be conducted soon
8	Sokweba Informal Settlement	Profiling to be conducted soon
9	Promosa Ext 5 Informal Settlement	Profiling to be conducted soon
10	Promosa (Ext 3) Informal Settlement	Profiling to be conducted soon

Installation of Pre-paid Split Meters in Ventersdorp and Revenue Generation

The JB Marks Local Municipality, through its Electrical Section, has commenced the installation of pre-paid split electricity meters in Ventersdorp. This initiative forms part of a broader Revenue Enhancement Programme aimed at improving billing accuracy, reducing electricity theft, and enhancing overall revenue collection.

A total of 3,150 split meters were procured by the Municipality, with deliveries received and installation activities already underway. On Saturday, 8 March 2025, Members of the Mayoral Executive Committee officially launched the Revenue Enhancement Programme in Ventersdorp, following a resolution passed by the Municipal Council.

Phase One: Meter Audits and Enforcement

The initial phase of the programme focused on conducting meter audits, particularly targeting businesses and councillors' properties in the Ventersdorp region. During the audit, a total of 213 meters were inspected. Of these, 29 meters were found to have been tampered with or by-passed.

As part of enforcement measures, power supply to these properties was disconnected, and a penalty fee of R19,977.10 was levied for each by-passed meter. Restoration of electricity supply was made contingent upon full payment of the fine. Some residents and business owners have complied and have since been reconnected, while others remain disconnected due to non-payment. In addition, 155 pre-paid meters were installed during this phase to replace faulty units and those found to have been bypassed.

Phase Two: Residential Installations and Infrastructure Upgrades

Preparations for the second phase of the programme are currently in progress. The Department had placed orders for:

- 500 Pole Top Boxes
- 500 Ready Boards
- 50 Smart Maximum Demand Meters

Pole top boxes have already been delivered, and the Department is now awaiting the arrival of the ready boards to proceed further.

The next phase will focus on installing meters for residential customers, espe-

cially where current installations consist of combined (non-split) pre-paid meters placed inside homes.

These types of installations pose challenges in monitoring and preventing tampering, as the meters are easily accessible. To address this, the Municipality will deploy six-way pole top boxes, which allow for the installation of up to six split meters per box mounted on electricity poles.

This infrastructure upgrade enhances security and reduces the likelihood of tampering. Customers will then be equipped with ready boards that allow safe connection of appliances and include earth leakage protection for improved safety.

In some cases, where households already have compliant internal distribution boards (DB boxes), the installation of additional ready boards may not be necessary. As a result, installations for selected residential customers have already begun on a gradual basis.

The introduction of split pre-paid meters in Ventersdorp marks a significant step forward in the Municipality's commitment to revenue protection, service delivery improvement, and infrastructure modernization.

The JB Marks Local Municipality remains committed to ensuring fair billing practices, reducing non-technical losses, and delivering a more sustainable and efficient electrical service to its communities.



Electrification of informal settlements in progress by JB Marks Local Municipality

Unpacking the final stages of Municipal Boundaries and Wards

“Greater stability is needed in local government given the dire situation of most municipalities.” — Dr Mohale, Acting Chairperson, MDB

Given the country’s local government landscape, boundary changes are more than just administrative lines on a map—they shape how services are delivered, how communities are governed, and how resources are shared.

The Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB) completed its boundary change process in 2023. However, 13 cases affecting 18 municipalities were deferred for further review.

Now, after months of intensive stakeholder engagement and extensive research, the Board has announced a decisive stance:

No municipal boundaries will be re-determined at this stage.

WHY THE DECISION?

The MDB’s position stems from the urgent need to stabilise local government. The sector is grappling with widespread distress, poor performance, and resource shortages. In this context, stability and functional municipalities is the foundation for progress.

Key Reasons Behind the Decision

Lessons from the past – Major boundary changes in recent years have failed to deliver the expected improvements in governance and administration.

Service delivery misconceptions – Many demarcation applications were based on poor service delivery, but evidence shows boundary changes alone rarely solve these problems—especially when all municipalities involved are equally constrained.

Avoiding destabilisation – Frequent, large-scale changes disrupt planning, budgeting, and service delivery.

Poor transitional processes – Past boundary changes often lacked proper support, worsening governance challenges.

Economic and social risks – In today’s socio-economic climate, some boundary changes could further weaken already distressed municipalities.

“We wish to reassure members of the public—particularly those affected by this decision—that these matters received thorough and impartial consideration in full compliance with legislative provisions, especially the demarcation criteria in the Local Government: Municipal Demarcation Act, 1998 (MDA),” said Dr Mohale (Acting Chairperson).

He called on government to develop mechanisms that promote integration, development, and equitable resource distribution—while urging municipalities to strengthen their service delivery efforts.



Dr. Matheakueni Mohale, Acting Chairperson of the Municipal Demarcation Board

WHAT’S NEXT: WARD DELIMITATION

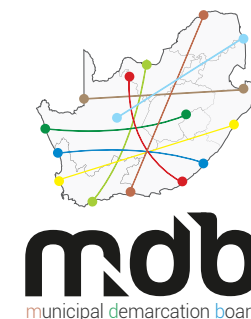
The MDB will proceed with ward delimitation for the affected municipalities. This process begins in September 2025 with public consultations—offering communities the chance to shape the configuration of their wards.

FAST FACTS

- **Cases considered:** 13 (affecting 18 municipalities)
- **Decision:** No boundary changes in the current cycle
- **Reason:** Promote stability & address governance challenges
- **Next step:** Ward delimitation process starting September 2025
- **Legal framework:** Sections 24 & 25 of the Municipal Demarcation Act, 1998.



Ward Delimitation Legal Process



In terms of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998 as amended (MSA)



1 IEC provides the municipal segment of the national common Voters’ Roll Electoral Act 73 of 1998.



2 Minister of CoGTA determines the formulae for determining the number of councillors of Metros, Districts and Local Municipalities in terms of section 20(1) and (2) of the MSA.



3 MEC determines the number of councillors for all municipalities in their respective provinces in terms of section 20(3), (4) and (5) of the MSA.



4 Municipal Demarcation Board determines the number of wards for municipalities and delimit wards for local government elections in terms of schedule 1 of the MSA.



5 Municipal Demarcation Board publishes wards in provincial gazettes and invites any person aggrieved by a delimitation to submit objections within 14 days of publication.



6 Municipal Demarcation Board considers written objections received and either, confirm or vary its delimitation. The final decision is published in provincial Gazettes.



7 The MDB submits the final ward boundaries to the IEC to prepare for local government elections.

District Development Model: The Guide to an Inclusive Economy

The District Development Model has been viewed as the blueprint for the panacea to local government dysfunction, the structure of local government is an important area of focus. Largely, district and local municipalities which were carved out of the need for post-apartheid transformational spatial development, struggle to achieve the delivery of planning goals. In 2019, the South African government introduced the District Development Model (DDM), an innovative platform that will tackle poor coordination of service delivery in the local sphere. Upon its pronouncement, the District Development Model, more commonly known as DDM was regarded as one of the many policy imperatives embarked upon without meaningful inclusion and inclusivity of all communities.

The District Development Model was initiated by President Cyril Ramaphosa in his Budget Speech in 2019. Subsequently, the District Development Model was discussed and adopted by Cabinet, the 2019 Presidential Coordinating Council (PCC), the March 2020 extended PCC and various MINMECs. The President further said that building an efficient, capable and ethical state free from corruption was among his foremost priorities. Only a capable, efficient, ethical, and development-oriented state can deliver on the commitment to improve the lives of the people of this country.

Since its inception, government has been rolling out the District Development Model (DDM) to improve service delivery at municipalities across the country. The DDM is designed to address problems with service delivery



Dr Darion Barclay: Head of Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs

by allowing all spheres of government, from local municipalities to national government, to work together in a more effective and coordinated way. This will help municipalities to better plan, budget and implement projects and programmes. It will also ensure that the work of municipalities is managed and monitored to keep it on track. Therefore, the model is a practical Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) mechanism to enable all three spheres of government to work together, with communities and stakeholders, to plan, budget and implement in unison.

In short, the objectives of the DDM are as to:

- Coordinate a government response to challenges of poverty, unemploy-

ment and inequality particularly amongst women, youth and people living with disabilities.

- Ensure inclusivity by gender budgeting based on the needs and aspirations of our people and communities at local level.
- Narrow the distance between people and government by strengthening the coordination role and capacities at the District and City levels.
- Foster a practical intergovernmental relations mechanism to plan, budget and implement jointly in order to provide a coherent government for the people in the Republic; (solve silo's, duplication and fragmentation) maximise impact and align plans and resources at our disposal through the development of "One

- District, One Plan and One Budget".
- Build government capacity to support municipalities.
- Strengthen monitoring and evaluation at district and local levels.
- Implement a balanced approach towards development between urban and rural areas.
- Exercise oversight over budgets and projects in an accountable and transparent manner.

The intention of the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, 2005, (Act 13 of 2005) was to ensure both horizontal and vertical intergovernmental forums at national, provincial and local level. Such forums to function and operate as a multidisciplinary structure for cross functional planning, delivery and monitoring and evaluation of government programmes.

Poor intergovernmental coordination, the lack of local, provincial and national synergy over priority programmes necessitated the need for a District Development Model. In order for the State to function and perform optimally and effectively, every organ of State has to perform its core functions well and work harmoniously with other organs of State and with civil society.

The "pattern of operating in silos" is a challenge which has led "to lack of coherence in planning and implementation and has made monitoring and oversight of government's programme difficult." T

he consequence has been non optimal delivery of services and diminished development impact on the triple challenges of poverty, inequality and employment, hence the President in the State of Nation Address (SONA) called for the rolling out of "a new integrated district-based approach to addressing our service delivery challenges [and] localise[d] procurement and job creation, that promotes and supports local businesses, and that involves communities..."

The given emphasis to the District Development Model as a unique form of social compacting that involves all key players in every district and metro space to unlock development and economic opportunities, highlighting that "It builds the capacity of the state where it has been most broken."

The DDM calls for collaborative planning at district and metropolitan level together by all of government, on the basis of a detailed, technically driven consultative process within government and with communities and stakeholders; resulting in a single strategically focussed One Plan for each of the 44 districts and 8 metropolitan geographic spaces in the country.

The Model is very firmly based on analysis of previous and current initiatives to improve developmental Local Government and Cooperative Governance, wherein developmental change is shaped and owned at a local level in partnership with communities, citizens and social actors.

The community and stakeholder engagements towards the development of the Integrated Development Plan of a municipality should fully embed the principles of the DDM.

The successful functioning of Local Government is critical in this regard but insufficient on its own without more cohesive governance and overall government coordination and functioning. The Model is aimed at enhancing state capacity, institutional powers and functions which includes the ability to work in a cooperative manner so that there is greater cohesion and positive development impact.

The DDM model, whilst it largely provides an integrated collaborative all-inclusive government approach, some improvement across the three spheres of government has been realized but an all-inclusive approach to planning, budgeting and priority setting is largely

missing. It must be stated that the roll out of DDM in selected regions as pilots was criticized due to the demographics being different from region to region.

The model was built on lessons from previous and current initiative which include Project Consolidate, the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme (ISRDP), the Urban Renewal Programme (URP), District level Planning and Implementation Management Support Centres, the Local Government Turnaround Strategy (LGTAS), and Back to Basics. All of which sought and seek to improve the quality of life for all through impactful delivery.

The model reflects on recent reforms and progress in areas such as the National Treasury budgeting processes, specially Built Environment Performance Plans (BEPPS) processes and alignment with Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF), all of which are facilitating for better spatial targeting and alignment of government investment spending with development priorities.

In Gauteng, for instance the approved Gauteng Spatial Development Framework aims to foster collaboration and spatial allocation of resources in areas where the need for services is the highest.

SALGA in its publication issued in March 2021 on lessons learnt from the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality, OR Tambo and Waterberg District Municipalities outlined the following challenges:

- DDM Roadmap is understood by few role players;
- The participation of sector departments (both national and provincial) is very
- inconsistent, leading to information gap;
- Excessive planning at baseline is not easy to coordinate; and
- Role ambiguity at local level.

The DDM rests on the development of a 'One Plan' for each identified district and metro. This long-term plan of action is developed in collaboration with key stakeholders, communities and the private sector. It sets out the service delivery challenges and opportunities for growth and development in each area.

With this context at the forefront of the delivery machinery of government, a capable, ethical and developmental state with the capacity to deliver will be a key stumbling block towards its successful implementation. In addition to the uneven capacity across various levels of the municipalities, it requires a fundamental shift at both political and administrative level to mirror the developmental aspirations of DDM.

Some of the criticism levelled against the DDM is mainly about the lack of transparency, the need for a simplified messaging, the need for a pragmatic approach, focusing on practical application and addressing real-world challenges, and clear role clarification and strategic alignment. From a more strategic perspective, DDM must be seen to:

- Put the needs and inputs of the community at the centre of decision making.
- Drive a shift in mindset and active participation from all stakeholders. The lack of a robust change management process hinders the model's acceptance.
- Enhance and elevate stronger cooperative governance amongst the three spheres of government.
- Address political and process roadblocks, like intergovernmental relations (IGR), strengthening collaboration between key departments like COGTA, Treasury, and the Premier's office is vital for a successful DDM rollout.
- Address poor coordination that hinders basic service delivery.
- Ensure a robust legal framework that aims to standardize legal mandates and direct uniform implementation.

The Portfolio Committee on Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) was briefed by the national Department of Cooperative Governance on 03 June 2025 on the implementation and evaluation of the DDM, with many noting the lack of clarity and insufficient progress in the six years since its formal announcement by the President in 2019.

While welcoming the DDM's intended aim of integrated and collaborative service delivery, the committee raised concerns that despite being framed as a national model, the DDM remains unevenly implemented, with only pilot sites receiving detailed attention.

Committee Chairperson Dr Zweli Mkhize highlighted the existing confusion over the use of the term "pilot" and what differentiates these sites from other municipalities already engaging with the DDM framework. "If the DDM is a national model, we need clarity on what differentiates a pilot site from a fully implemented site," he said.

"We must be able to track progress meaningfully across all districts and metros and not only a select few." It was noted that 53% of stakeholders surveyed within pilot sites do not fully understand the DDM, with many viewing it as an additional structure rather than a reform of existing systems.

The committee pointed out that the DDM only achieved half of its milestones, signalling that the pilots have struggled with change management and developing partnerships, which impacts on the viability of scaling the model to all 257 municipalities.

The challenges, potential overlap in boundaries and uneven implementation was reaffirmed by Apiwe Matshaya in her 2023 study on the Potential of the District Development Model to address social and economic challenges in the OR Tambo District Municipality. The study finds that the utilisation of the

DDM serves as an intervention strategy to facilitate the successful completion of projects and attainment of policy objectives by government agencies.

The study also identified systemic and structural challenges that hinder the effective execution of the policy throughout the governmental apparatus. Enhancement of stakeholder involvement is imperative to ensure 2 institutional cognizance and acceptance of the DDM.

The involvement of the public via intergovernmental relations structures and oversight systems was deemed to be of utmost importance. The research revealed that the misplacement of the DDM within municipalities acted as an obstacle to the integration of Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP). The successful implementation of the DDM, being an operational plan, necessitates the application of pragmatism.

In summary, while the District Development Model offers a promising approach to integrated service delivery in South Africa, its effectiveness is hampered by implementation challenges, including uneven rollout, lack of clarity, and coordination issues.

Addressing these concerns through improved communication, stronger cooperative governance, and strategic alignment is crucial for the DDM's success.

There is a critical need to align planning cycles and planning reforms as the financial year end for national and provincial government differs with that of local government.

In conclusion, the research findings indicate that the adherence and execution of DDM necessitate more robust legal mandates and the possible obstacles that may arise during its national implementation or the implementation of analogous governmental innovations or policies.

EMPOWER ACCOUNTTECHS AND ADMINISTRATION

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RECRUITMENT AND ONBOARDING

- Job description creation
- Advertising job openings
- Screening and shortlisting candidates
- Conducting background checks
- Onboarding new employees

EMPLOYEE RECORDS MANAGEMENT

- Maintaining employee files and records
- Tracking leave balances and attendance
- Updating employee information

PAYROLL ADMINISTRATION

- Processing employee salaries and benefits
- Managing payroll tax calculations and submissions
- Generating payslips

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

- Assisting with performance appraisal processes
- Creating and tracking key performance indicators (KPIs)
- Employee development planning

HR COMPLIANCE AND POLICIES

- Drafting and updating HR policies and procedures
- Ensuring compliance with labor laws and regulations
- Assisting with workplace audits and reporting

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- Identifying employee training needs
- Coordinating training programs and workshops
- Tracking training progress and outcomes

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

- Managing employee grievances and disputes
- Facilitating conflict resolution and mediation
- Promoting employee engagement and satisfaction

EXIT MANAGEMENT

- Coordinating employee offboarding processes
- Conducting exit interviews
- Ensuring compliance with termination procedures

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- Acting as interim HR support during staff transitions or high-demand periods
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Midvaal engages with businesses in ongoing economic revitalisation drive

As part of the economic revitalisation strategy, Midvaal Local Municipality engaged with businesses operating in the Meyerton Central Business District (CBD). The engagement was intended to strengthen relations with business owners operating in the CBD and to urge them to invest in the local value chain by buying and hiring locally. The discussion also focused on innovative ways to improve service delivery and safety, uplift the town's appearance, and reduce red tape to make it easier to conduct business in Midvaal. Since the opening of the Riverstone Mall, there have been

concerns regarding the sustainability of foot traffic to the CBD.

The Executive Mayor, Alderman Peter Teixeira, and Members of the Mayoral Committee held the engagement to quell any misconceptions.

The municipality continues to invest significantly in the CBD, as seen through the construction of trading stalls in the Meyerton CBD near the taxi rank.

The municipality recently completed the upgrade of the east side of Station Road and Diens Avenue from gravel to tar, along with the construction of a sidewalk with parklets and the installation of a traffic circle. This was done to allow Sicelo and the surrounding areas easier access to the CBD.

The municipality also rehabilitated Johan Le Roux to ensure ease of movement for goods and services.

Midvaal has several projects and initiatives underway in our ongoing efforts to revitalise our town.

Through these continued engagements and infrastructure investments, Midvaal reaffirms its commitment to creating a thriving, inclusive local economy.

The Municipality remains focused on building a business-friendly environment that supports growth, sustainability, and local empowerment.



Midvaal completes R18 million electrification project to over 1,200 sicelo

electrification project, bringing households

Midvaal Local Municipality has completed the electrification of over 1,200 households in Sicelo, at a cost of over R18 million.

This multi-year and phased project began in 2023 and was completed in June 2025. The project involved the construction of an 11 kV (MV) and a 420 V (LV) overhead network.

Additionally, the project included overhead house connections as well as the installation of meters and ready boards.

A total of 1,228 electricity connections were completed across four phases: 474 in Phase 1, 321 in Phase 2, 98 in Phase 3, and 335 in Phase 4.

Residents now have access to much-needed electricity, uplifting the community by ensuring a safe and reliable power supply.

Due to the established electrical infrastructure, illegal connections were removed in the area, reducing the risk of electrocution from unsafe connections. The removal of illegal connections will also benefit the municipality in its ef-

orts to reduce electricity losses and increase revenue.

The contractor spent approximately 30% of their final contract value on uplifting local Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs). This is in direct line with our efforts of uplifting local businesses and people through investing local, buying local and empowering local.

We remain committed to the Mayoral Undertakings of creating opportunities for all and providing excellent service delivery to all our communities.



The electrification project is also a testament to our commitment to improving infrastructure and ensuring access to basic services for all communities.

CIGFARO 96th Annual Conference

06–09 October 2025 | Durban ICC

Theme: *Reviewing the Fundamentals of Public Finance in a Changing World*

Background

The Chartered Institute of Government Finance, Audit and Risk Officers (CIGFARO) proudly hosts its 96th Annual Conference, building on nearly a century of advancing excellence in public sector finance, governance, and risk management.

This year's theme, *"Reviewing the Fundamentals of Public Finance in a Changing World"*, reflects the urgent need for ethical leadership, sustainable development, and strengthened accountability in the public sector. The conference takes place at a pivotal moment in South Africa's developmental journey—where resilience, reform, and innovation are essential to meeting today's complex social, economic, and institutional challenges.

Over the decades, CIGFARO has evolved alongside the country's changing socio-political landscape, remaining a trusted voice in:

- Driving reform in public finance management.
- Advocating for good governance and ethical practice.
- Supporting professionalisation of the public sector in line with national priorities.

The 2025 conference will bring together thought leaders, policymakers, practitioners, and innovators to share insights, explore solutions, and chart a course toward resilient, future-ready institutions.

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- Learn from **international & local experts**
- Gain practical tools to improve governance, service delivery & accountability

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- **Innovative Municipal Finance & Governance** – Lessons from Mbabane Municipality
- **Embedding Ethical Excellence** in government
- **Artificial Intelligence** – opportunities & safeguards for public finance
- **Professionalisation Framework** – progress & next steps
- **Climate-Resilient Disaster Management** – panel discussion
- **Breakaway Sessions & Masterclasses** on MFMA, PFMA, Audit, Risk, and Performance

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International Guests: GFOA (USA/Canada), CIPFA (UK), Sweden, Brazil, Georgia, Australia, India

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Attendance: Mayors, Municipal Managers, CFOs, MPAC Chairs, HODs, Directors, CEO's


Industry Bodies: SALGA, AGSA, SAICA, ASB, CFO Forum, National School of Government, GTAG




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Building Better Communities Through the DDM: Aligning Governance, Budgets, and Service Delivery

“One Plan, One Budget, One Approach”
“A strategic IGR-based approach aimed at improving the lives of communities.”

By: Tumelo Letlojane. Head of Public Sector Finance. TL And Associates

The District Development Model (DDM) was officially adopted by Cabinet on 21 August 2019 as a new integrated planning model to improve cooperative governance and service delivery across South Africa. Its core principle—“One District, One Budget, One Plan”—emphasizes unified and collaborative planning among all spheres of government: national, provincial, and local.

DDM aims to eliminate duplication of efforts and ensure that Integrated Development Plans (IDPs), Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plans (SD-BIPs), and infrastructure development programs are harmonized within each district or metro area. This approach is essential for building a capable, developmental, and accountable state.

Objectives and Strategic Value of DDM

- The DDM provides a strategic response to several long-standing challenges facing the local government sphere, including:
- 1. Fragmented planning and implementation
 - 2. Lack of intergovernmental coordination
 - 3. Duplication of infrastructure projects
 - 4. Misalignment of IDPs and budgets
 - 5. Weak accountability mechanisms

By fostering a district-centric approach, DDM allows for inclusive participation, especially for smaller and less-resourced local municipalities. It strengthens intergovernmental relations (IGR), ensures budget alignment, and enhances community impact through targeted and cohesive development planning.

Governance and Oversight

Key to DDM's success is the inclusion of strong oversight mechanisms, including the participation of the Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA). AGSA, as South Africa's supreme audit institution, plays a vital role in reinforcing public confidence and driving accountability and governance through performance audits.

AGSA can support the DDM through:

- 1. Integrating DDM implementation into audit methodologies
- 2. Auditing performance indicators

- 3. Ensuring proper coordination among departments and spheres of government
- 4. Recommending regulatory frameworks to monitor the success of DDM projects

Furthermore, performance agreements of senior government officials must include DDM-specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to reinforce accountability and measurable outcomes.

Practical Implementation and Progress in Provinces

North West Province: District-Level Progress

In the North West Province, all four district municipalities — Dr Kenneth Kaunda, Ngaka Modiri Molema, Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati, and Bojanala Platinum—have embraced the DDM through:

- 1. Active participation in DDM forums

Service delivery improvements reported in pilot districts include:		
District	Sector Improved	Impact
Dr. Kenneth Kaunda	Water Infrastructure	Reduced outages in Matlosana
Ngaka Modiri Molema	Road Upgrades	Improved access to rural clinics
Bojanala Platinum	Human Settlements	Integrated housing developments
Dr. RS Mompati	Waste Management	Cleaner urban environments

- 2. Alignment of local and district IDPs
- 3. Improved data-sharing on project planning
- 4. Formation of multi-stakeholder technical task teams

KwaZulu-Natal: A Model of Success

The KwaZulu-Natal Province (KZN) has emerged as a leading example of DDM implementation. Through the Sekhukhuma Kakhulu initiative, KZN adopted a strong IGR coordination strategy supported by:

- 1. Provincial DDM champions
- 2. Integrated war rooms for each district
- 3. Data-driven planning with GIS mapping
- 4. Community-led project monitoring

KZN's Harry Gwala District has successfully implemented coordinated bulk water projects, reducing backlogs by over 35%, while the eThekweni Metro has aligned social housing projects with provincial transport and health planning, leading to integrated human settlements.

Community-Level Impact of the DDM

At the heart of the District Development Model is the goal of improving the quality of life for communities through better coordinated and people-centered service delivery. By ensuring that all spheres of government plan and budget together, the DDM enables the delivery of integrated infrastructure and services—such as clean water, sanitation, roads, electricity, and healthcare—in a more efficient and equitable manner. It minimizes duplication of efforts and promotes inclusive development, especially in under-served and rural areas. Communities benefit directly from this alignment as projects are better prioritized based on local needs and realities, resulting in faster turnaround times, improved access to essential services, and greater accountability from local authorities. Through community consultations



embedded in the DDM process, citizens also have a stronger voice in influencing development priorities, fostering a sense of ownership, trust, and partnership between the state and its people.

Strategic Recommendations

- 1. To maximize the effectiveness of the DDM, the following strategic steps are critical:
- 2. Institutionalize DDM through regulations and audit standards.
- 3. Capacitate municipalities with dedicated DDM funding support.
- 4. Establish district data centers to track project delivery.
- 5. Integrate DDM KPIs into all performance agreements of municipal

managers, CFOs, and planners.

- 6. Strengthen SALGA's role in monitoring and capacity-building across municipalities.

The DDM is not merely a policy concept—it is a transformational model that brings government closer to the people. With continued support from institutions like AGSA, SALGA, and the United Nations, South Africa can build a more responsive, efficient, and accountable government.

“One District, One Plan, One Budget” is not just a slogan; it is a call to action to improve lives through collaboration, planning, and shared accountability.

Dr. Auchalie Mothupi to Spearhead Service Delivery in North West Province

By Thato Didibeng

Unsurprisingly, the North West provincial administration has decided to appoint one of the province's hardest-working public servants, Dr Auchalie Mothupi, to pioneer service delivery development in the Northern West province.

Following an ongoing outcry from local communities about the lack of service delivery in the province. Premier Lazarus Mokgosi has appointed Dr Mothupi as the acting chief director for twelve months to ensure the success of service delivery programs in the province.

Phase 5 of Thunsa Lerole is on its way for implementation intended to accelerate service delivery at local government with the involvement of all state organs.

The key in turning around the situation requires 80 % monitoring of all government programmes and projects, and bringing in intervention measures immediately to resolve the crisis.

During an interview with Back to Basics Media, Dr Mothupi confirmed his appointment and said that he regards his new responsibilities as assurance from Premier Mokgosi of his ability to uplift service delivery and contribute meaningfully to the pressing need to improve service delivery in the province.



Dr. Auchalie Mothupi, Acting Chief Director for Service Delivery Monitoring and Intervention - Office of the Premier, North West Province

Dr Mothupi is popularly known as "Mr. Fix it", a name given to him after he brought meaningful impact to both Ratlou Local and Bonjanala District Municipalities.

He firmly believes he can bring meaningful change in delivering much-needed services to all government structures across the province. Dr Mothupi says that he is now on another level and that the uniform he wears now requires even harder work.

"People in the province have for years now complained about poor services at all government structures, including at municipal level" Dr Mothupi further emphasised that the wait is now over, and that things will be done expeditiously to ensure that the people's call for improvement of streetlights, potholes and other service delivery related issues.

Dr Mothupi claims that the task force has now arrived to ensure that everyone responsible for providing service delivery programs will be held accountable for ensuring the elevation of the communities.

Dr Mothupi announced that his team will relaunch the Call Centre at Premier Mokgosi's office where community members can report challenges and the need for service delivery issues immediately.

There is no denying that the country is facing a severe lack of adequate services in multiple governance sectors.

Dr Mothupi promises that they will travel the length and breadth of the province to inspect service delivery projects and address community concerns.

"People must not call for services; services must be brought to the people", added Dr Mothupi



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MR. VUYO MLOKOTHI HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Dr. Vuyo Mlokoti is known for his work in local government and his role as the Chairperson of the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB) in South Africa. He also previously held the position of Municipal Manager at Amathole district municipality. Additionally, he has been involved in discussions and publications regarding the relevance and future of municipalities and traditional institutions.



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Free State Municipalities on the road to recovery



Mr. Saki Mokoena, Free State MEC for CoGTA and Human Settlements

Following the damning report by the Auditor General (AG) which depicted a worrisome picture of Free State Municipalities, and where no single municipality attained a clean audit, the province through the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs is committed to turning things around.

The AG's findings were that none of the municipalities improved on their previous audit performance, and of serious concern is that five municipalities that received a disclaimer opinion

in the 2023/2024 financial year showed no improvement from the previous opinion.

The root cause of the poor audit performance can be attributed to the following factors:

- Senior managers in municipalities failed to develop, manage and monitor systems of internal control including corrective actions
- Leadership failed to implement repeated recommendations and risks identified by the AGSA in previous audits
- Key officials lacking requisite skills

in the Municipalities

- Vacancies and instability in strategic positions of the municipalities
- Inadequate implementation of audit action plans
- Lack of standard operating procedures to support implementation of internal controls

Another challenge is the poor performance of municipalities in terms of expenditure on conditional grants. The situation resulted in communities being deprived of access to services and the municipalities surrendering money back to National Treasury. The



From left: Free State Premier MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae, middle: MEC for CoGTA and Human Settlements Mr. Saki Mokoena and Finance MEC Mr Ketso Toto Makume

service delivery in municipalities is a serious problem and has at sometimes had the municipalities being litigated against by some sectors of the community for their failure to perform their constitutional mandate in line with section 152 of the Constitution of the Republic.

In some instances, the Courts have directed the Department to intervene and assist the Municipalities in line with section 154 of the same Constitution. CoGTA in the province has a constitutional obligation to support the municipalities to perform their mandate and to perform their constitutional obligations.

The following are interventions by the department:

- The Department has organised a Local Government Summit, where challenges in the municipalities would be discussed and solutions engaged on
- Together with the Department of Cooperative Government Nation-

al, the Department has developed the Municipal Support Improvement Plans (MSIP) as targeted support packages to municipalities

- Provincial performance monitoring is developed as a mechanism for municipalities to have benchmarking standards with their peers.
- We support municipalities with filling strategic positions with the most competent and capable officials
- Through our Public Participation Unit, we will continue to empower the Ward Committees in the Municipalities to perform their function of bringing government close to the people
- In collaboration with SALGA, we will continue to capacitate the Councils in terms of their functions and those of their committees
- In collaboration with SALGA, and the Provincial Treasury we have established the Provincial MPAC Stakeholders forum to identify and deal with matters as they relate to Unauthorised, Irregular, Fruitless and Wasteful expenditure

- Together with Provincial Treasury and SALGA we have established Audit Forums to facilitate best practice amongst municipalities
- We will continue to assist municipalities to develop credible Financial Recovery Plans
- Where possible, and with credible control measures in place, we will assist municipalities with financial injection to assist them to perform their constitutional obligations
- Data management on revenue is currently piloted in the municipalities of Mantsopa, Kopanong, Maluti a Phofung and Mafube. This exercise is meant to assist municipalities with their management of their revenue and to account for the service that they give to the communities
- We intend to support municipalities to develop credible IDPs and Local Economic Development Plans
- We have dispatched newly graduated engineers to assist municipalities in their technical divisions



Xhariep District Municipal Manager Ms. Lenohang Moletsane, middle, Letsemeng Mayor Cllr. Bonolo Mocwaledi, right Kopanong Local Municipality Mayor Cllr. Xolani Tseletsele



The MEC for CoGTA and Human Settlements Mr. Saki Mokoena alongside Free State Premier MaQueen Letsoha Mathae, MEC for Finance Mr. Ketso Makume and Agriculture and Rural Development MEC Ms. Elzabe Rockman convened a meeting of all Executive Mayors, District Mayors, Municipal Managers, Speakers and Chief Whips to get the ball rolling and assist municipalities to respond to amongst others, concerns raised by the Parliament's Portfolio Committee.

The expectations from the municipalities was for them to develop Municipal Action Plans where they address all pertinent issues, while committing to addressing them through set timelines.

"We are expecting each municipality, to have a plan that is aligned between the political sphere and administrative, we will then factor the role of the Provincial and as well as National Government, we will take those plans

back to council and it becomes our monitoring tool.

This is the same plan that will be shared by both National and Provincial legislatures in-terms of their oversight role, all the key role players or decision makers within the municipalities. They will be judged in terms of that particular action plan then we will exert consequence management", said Mokoena.

Premier Letsoha-Mathae has stressed that there must be serious consequence management to be applied to those who fail to implement the action plans.

"We are not going to sit by and watch our institutions being run to the ground because of people with narrow and selfish interest.

The conduct by some in the leadership of these municipalities is hugely disappointing but it seems to be nor-

mal to other people. We are not going to allow this type of behaviour. Following what we went through when the committee was in the province", warned Premier Letsoha-Mathae.

MEC Mokoena has been engaging with Regulation 17 reports to ensure suitably qualified persons are appointed in senior positions in municipalities and those appointments should be in line with the law. Several municipalities that were in distress have shown improvement through the CoGTA's intervention.

These municipalities are Nala Local Municipality in Bothaville. The Municipality had political instability that led to non-functionality of Council and administration, amongst other challenges it faced included, the dualism phenomenon existed in the municipality with it having two Mayors, two speakers, two municipal managers and two chief financial officers in April 2025.

A result of suspension of office bearers and senior officials and passing of motion of no confidence in Speaker.

The Speaker removed as councillor by his political party, ordinary Council meetings not held since October 2024 and several Special Council meetings sat, some being irregular.

The Provincial Executive Council invoked Sec 139(1)(b) of the Constitution and appointed an EXCO Representative with full mandate to run the affairs of the Municipality and report to EXCO on regular basis.

The Mafube Local Municipality in towns such as Frankfort, Tweeling, Cornelia and Villiers. This municipality is stable albeit being faced with challenges of low revenue base.

The financial constraints of the municipality has resulted in the Municipality being constrained to perform its responsibilities in line with Section 152

of the Constitution that dictates upon the Municipality to provide services to the community on a sustainable basis.

There was an application to court against the municipality because of their failure to provide services. The Court ruled that the Department must intervene and assist the Municipality to perform their functions.

Low revenue collection due to erroneous billing and capacity constraint within the officials of the Municipality and perpetual negative Audit outcome – Disclaimer. However through CoGTA's intervention collaborated with the Provincial Treasury to develop a post audit action plan that would identify and recommend corrective measures to issues as would be raised by the AGSA.



Free State Premier MaQueen Letsoha- Mathae

Gauteng Department of Social Development Driving Social Impact Despite Fiscal Constraints

The Gauteng Department of Social Development has tabled its 2025/26 Budget Vote of R5.5 billion, reaffirming its mission to address poverty, inequality, and unemployment while safeguarding the dignity of vulnerable groups.

This year's priorities include youth empowerment, job creation, food security, gender-based violence (GBV) prevention, substance abuse rehabilitation, and infrastructure development.

Youth Empowerment and Skills Development

Tackling youth unemployment remains central to the Department's agenda. In the previous year, 95,072 people benefited from empowerment programmes, moving into economic participation.

This year, training will be broadened to include plumbing, bricklaying, hospitality, and food services, equipping youth with skills that meet labour market demands.

The Welfare to Work programme, which has empowered over 50,000 individuals since 2014, many of them young women dependent on child support grants, will continue to link beneficiaries to sustainable livelihoods.



MEC for Gauteng Social Development; Faith Mazibuko

War on Poverty and Food Security

The Thiba Tlala: War on Poverty Programme remains a cornerstone of poverty alleviation. In 2024/25, over 404,000 food parcels and cooked meals were provided. The province

now has 28 permanent and 5 mobile Community Nutrition Development Centres (CNDCs), offering meals five days a week. To reduce dependency, the Department is implementing exit strategies, training households in food production and linking them



Attendants at launch of online application platform



Golden Games competition to keep the Oldies fit

with the Department of Agriculture for support.

Beneficiaries also receive skills training to improve employability or start their own small enterprises.

Substance Abuse Prevention and Rehabilitation

Over 31,000 people accessed substance abuse prevention, rehabilitation, and aftercare services in 2024/25. To meet growing demand, rehabilitation capacity will be expanded.

- The Mabuto Hlatshwayo Child & Youth Care Centre in Heidelberg is being converted into a drug rehabilitation facility.
- 200 inpatient rehabilitation beds are being procured in Merafong.

The Drug Prevention Programme continues in schools and communities, while aftercare services are being strengthened to prevent relapses.

Over 150 individuals have been admitted through mass substance abuse admissions, with the next intake scheduled for September.

NPO Funding and Support

The Department reported 98% payment to compliant NPOs with signed Service Level Agreements in the first quarter. Over 50% of second-quarter payments have already been made.

A call for proposals for 2026/27 NPO funding will be issued before the end of August, alongside the launch of a new online application system to im-

prove accessibility and efficiency.

Capacity-building for officials monitoring NPOs remains a priority, with a recent workshop held on 9–10 July to strengthen oversight and improve service delivery.

Older Persons' Care

Progress is being made in providing dignified care for older residents:

- Mohlakeng Old Age Home admitted its first beneficiaries in July.
- Tembisa Old Age Home has begun assessments and screenings to ensure suitable placement.

These facilities reflect the Department's commitment to quality care for older persons.



Service delivery blitz



GBV awareness

Gender-Based Violence Response

The Department funds 94 shelters and NPOs, assisting over 44,000 women and children affected by GBV. Victims receive accredited skills training to support sustainable reintegration into society.

The GBV Command Centre is fully operational, accessible 24/7 via the toll-free number 0800 428 428, providing immediate assistance and referral services.

Children's Dignity and Support Initiatives

Through the Bana Pele Programme, dignity packs, including sanitary

products and hygiene essentials are provided to learners, with the service extended to children with albinism. Orphaned and vulnerable children also receive school uniforms to promote school attendance and self-esteem.

Township Economy and Infrastructure Development

The Department exceeded its 40% township procurement target, achieving 42.87% in spending. Infrastructure investments are boosting service delivery and job creation, including:

- The Mabopane Social Integrated

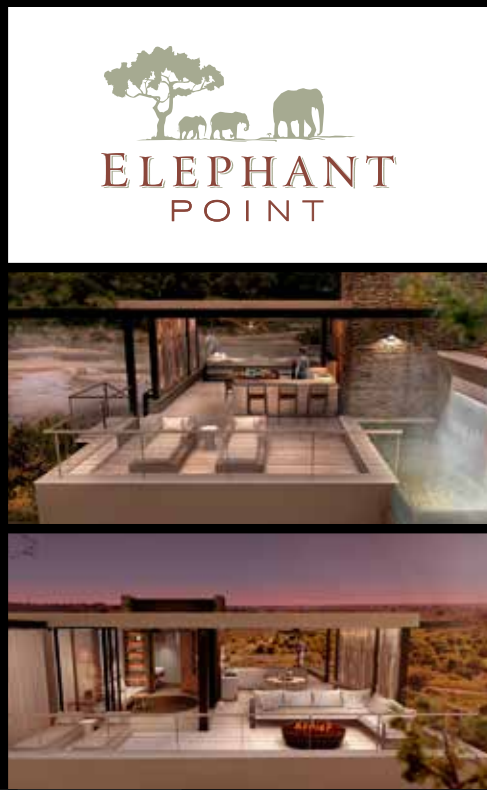


Awareness of human trafficking and empowerment to avoid it

- Centre (recently opened)
- The Bantubonke Prototype in Mid-vaal (completed)

Both facilities will provide accessible services, while stimulating local economic activity.

The Department emphasises that overcoming social ills requires collaboration across public, private, and civil society sectors. The 2025/26 Budget highlights a shared responsibility to build a Gauteng where dignity, opportunity, and support are accessible to all.



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Thuto Ramakatsa: A journey of leadership, service, and impact in Local Government

Career Background and How She Entered the Local Government Space
By Thato Didibeng

Thuto Ramakatsa's career in local government began in 2010 when she was selected to participate in a Pilot Programme with Deloitte and Touche known as the Municipal Finance Management Programme. This initiative was designed to develop young professionals in public sector finance and governance, and it was through this programme that Thuto was placed at Taung Local Municipality, where she received in-service training within the Budget and Treasury Office. This marked the beginning of a fruitful and impactful career in local government.

Following the completion of the programme, Mrs Ramakatsa was appointed as a Finance Intern at Polokwane Local Municipality in 2011, where she gained hands-on experience across all key sections within the Budget and Treasury Office, including budgeting, financial reporting, revenue management, and supply chain processes.

Since then, Thuto has committed her life to 14 years of impactful service in the local government sector, during which she has steadily grown through



Thuto Ramakatsa: Municipal Public Accounts Committee Manager, Ramotshere Moiloa Local Municipality. Chairperson: (Cigfaro) NW

various leadership roles at both municipal and provincial levels. Today, she serves as the Unit Manager for the Municipal Public Accounts Committee (MPAC) at Ramotshere Moiloa Local Municipality in Zeerust, North West.

She is the former Deputy Director for Asset Management at the Department of Sport, Arts, and Culture, the former Deputy Director at the North West Provincial Treasury, and formerly occupied the position of Assistant Director at the Northern Cape Provincial Treasury, where she was directly involved in supporting and capacitating local municipalities on financial management practices and compliance.

With over a decade of experience, Thuto also has developed a strong foundation in public finance, strategic leadership, and intergovernmental relations. Her journey reflects professional growth and a deep passion for enhancing financial accountability, good governance, and sustainable service delivery within the local government landscape.

Key Milestones and Achievements

Thuto notes that her professional journey has been one of her proudest achievements — from starting as an intern in the local government sphere to becoming a respected leader and change agent within the sector. Over the years, she has steadily worked her way up, gaining invaluable experience and contributing to the transformation and professionalisation of local government finance and governance.

In 2018, Mrs Ramakatsa ranked 3rd Best in the Northern Cape Province in the SAIPA Project Achiever Board Exam, a testament to her dedication, discipline, and passion for accounting. She went on to successfully qualify as a professional accountant, fulfilling a major career goal while also being part of a generation that contributed to the professionalisation of local government finance.

It did not just stop there, The leadership journey continued when she was elected an Executive Member and Chair-

person of the Chartered Institute of Government Finance, Audit and Risk Officers (CIGFARO) in the North-West province, where she is actively leading initiatives to strengthen financial governance, capacity building, and ethical leadership in the public sector in partnership with North West Salga and North West Provincial Treasury.

In April this year, Mrs Ramakatsa obtained her Postgraduate Degree in Management through the North-West University Business School, graduating with five distinctions — showcasing an immense commitment to academic excellence. Thuto continues to climb the ladder of excellence.

"Each of my achievements represents not just personal growth, but also my contribution toward building stronger, more accountable institutions in local government, and inspiring young professionals, particularly women, to strive for excellence in public service."

Leadership roles and the impact she is making

According to Thuto, being appointed Chairperson of the CIGFARO North-west Branch has been a pivotal milestone in her leadership journey. The role has provided her with a powerful platform to demonstrate and apply the leadership capabilities she has developed over the last decade, and she emphasises that she will continue to intentionally steer this passion into service within the local government sector.

Mrs Ramaktsa went on to reinforce her leadership, with the home of the leaders, Rhodes University, in collaboration with Duke University, by earning a certificate in leadership as part of the Women in Leadership Programme facilitated by IWFSa and Fasset.

"This role has given me an opportunity to organise strategic conferences and seminars that allow all finance profes-

sionals to come and share their best practices," said Thuto, further highlighting the importance of imparting knowledge of new reforms, policies, and how it has made a significant impact in building capacity in municipalities. It has further elevated the standards of financial management, set the tone for ethical leadership, and strengthened the professional network of government finance in the local government sector.

Challenges Faced and Overcome

"The demanding roles of a young mother, wife, and professional manager have been some of the most significant challenges and most meaningful accomplishments. Each role carries its weight, expectations, and responsibilities, and managing them simultaneously has required intentionality, resilience, and unwavering commitment."

Shedding some real experience on this month's theme, Thuto said that throughout her career, she has experienced a lot of pressure and expectation from society as a woman. Having to put on a brave face daily, she navigated those expectations by setting boundaries and advocating for balance.

"I now use my story to motivate other women and young professionals, showing them that leadership and family life are not mutually exclusive but can coexist meaningfully with the right mindset, support, and courage."

As this women's month ends, may we remember and celebrate women like Thuto Ramakatsa, whose story is nothing short of a revelation and a point of reference. For young black women who envision themselves as both educated and successful, her journey confirms that dedication makes it possible. Thuto is not merely providing services; she is actively changing and inspiring lives.

OS Holdings drives efficiency in local government through technology

In the fast-evolving landscape of technology-driven governance, OS Holdings stands out as a vital player in South Africa's public and private sectors.

Founded over a decade ago, this process-driven software development and consulting firm focuses on automating business processes for medium to large organisations.

OS Holdings' team consists of licensed professionals, including adept accountants, astute business analysts, proficient project managers, and skilled developers. Leveraging its accounting expertise, it aligns with its client's financial objectives and successfully deploy accountants to implement and provide training on relevant systems.

Basically, OS Holdings is a one-stop shop for financial, management, and cost accounting, supply chain management, distribution, manufacturing, warehouse management, human talent management, POS, custom solutions, and customer relationship management.

Its main service offering revolves around Sage Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems, optimising local government operations through solutions tailored for financial management, payroll, human resources, and business process automation.

One of the standout features of OS Holdings' services is its comprehensive Municipal Standard Chart of Accounts



Nomsa Nteleko: Chief Executive Officer

(mSCOA) solution. Founder and CEO, Nomsa Nteleko, says this offering not only caters to the specific financial management needs of municipalities but also ensures compliance with the myriad of legislative requirements facing local government officials.

"We provide a full suite of mSCOA, a solution that caters for municipal financial management and internal controls. This opportunity allowed us to develop a number of systems that

are easy to use for local government officials while ensuring compliance to legislation," Nteleko says.

"Our approach is ensuring that officials are empowered to use technology."

Among the many initiatives deployed to enhance municipal functionality are a range of innovative applications. These include a Billing and Revenue Management System, end-to-end eProcurement with CSD integration, an AI-driven Con-

tract Management system, and a Conversational Artificial Intelligence App designed for citizen engagement.

Nteleko says that by empowering municipal officials with easy-to-use technologies, OS Holdings reduces their dependency on external consultants, thereby fostering a more self-sufficient public sector.

These tools specifically address challenges outlined in the Auditor-General's annual audit reports, including effective supply-chain management and revenue collection—issues that have historically plagued municipalities.

Nteleko says OS Holdings has played a crucial role in enhancing supply-chain management. By streamlining procurement and ensuring compliance with supply-chain regulations, she says municipalities can avoid paying for services that were never rendered and can manage supplier performance with greater efficiency.

"The combination of our procurement and contract management system resolves many of the issues like fruitless and wasteful expenditure, it also streamlines procurement processes, reducing inefficiencies and ensuring compliance with supply-chain regulations," Nteleko says.

"In many instances, municipalities would pay for services not properly rendered and there has been no mechanisms to manage supplier performance. Our solution provides the repository of all municipal contracts, expiry dates, contract values etc... This helps curb the challenge of illegal contracts, manages the suppliers KPIs and expenses, enables a transparent tender management with our supplier portal. We believe technology buys officials time back from their unmanageable work and calendars."

At OS Holdings we also specialise in project management, equipping mu-

nicipalities with the tools they need to streamline operations and align with mSCOA requirements. With the new processes it's vital for municipalities to reengineer their current processes to meet new requirements. This skill is lacking in many of our municipalities. Our team provides expert guidance in reengineering workflows and establishing dedicated mSCOA committees.

"OS Holdings has navigated several challenges since its inception, including funding technology development, adapting to continuous legislative changes, and addressing the shortage of skilled professionals in South Africa's tech sector. Despite these hurdles, the company has remained resolute in simplifying mSCOA compliance and ensuring municipalities have efficient financial management systems," Nteleko says.

Key achievements include:

- Successful mSCOA implementations that have improved financial accountability in local government.
- Building strong partnerships with clients and stakeholders who align with OS Holdings' vision.
- Commitment to skills development, particularly in local government technology, to combat unemployment among South African graduates.
- Client round tables and active participation at CIGFARO, reinforcing its role as a leader in municipal financial solutions.

"The company's dedication to innovation, compliance, and empowerment continues to drive its impact in the sector," Nteleko adds.

With a strategic expansion plan, OS Holdings has made notable strides beyond its roots in Gauteng, establishing a new office in Durban to further serve municipalities and state-owned entities in KwaZulu-Natal. Nteleko says this growth strategy is centred around regional scalability, strategic partnerships, and innovative AI-driven solutions.

"A key component of this strategy is the Citizen Management Solution, developed with machine learning and conversational AI, developed by Amathuba AI. This solution enhances municipal service delivery by enabling real-time citizen engagement, automated query resolution, and data-driven decision-making," she says.

"By integrating AI, OS Holdings ensures municipalities can streamline operations, improve financial accountability, and enhance governance efficiency."

In its quest to drive compliance and governance efficiency, OS Holdings continues to refine its mSCOA-compliant ERP systems and contract management solutions, keeping pace with ever-evolving regulatory demands. This emphasis on technology innovation and talent cultivation positions OS Holdings at the forefront of the municipal solutions sector, spearheading a new era of efficient, accountable, and citizen-centric governance.

"This approach positions OS Holdings as a leader in AI-powered municipal solutions, driving efficiency, compliance, and citizen-centric governance," Nteleko says.

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Leading Without Compromise

By Thato Didibeng

Tshepiso Modisa, Manager: Finance, Mahikeng Local Municipality

One thing that has kept me going is that I do not compromise on my job." When hard work and dedication are blended, they certainly lead to success. Tshepiso Modisa is a clear example of how and why these words are true.

Through her perseverance and ability to strive through adversity, she has built a name for herself and dedicated her life to strong leadership and breaking barriers. From humble beginnings, Tshepiso continues to inspire and empower the next generation of black women, showing that dreams become reality when matched with relentless effort.

Growing up in a family of four and raised by a single mother, she decided to prioritise her education and strive for academic excellence early in her life.

Tshepiso studied commercial subjects at school, matriculated in 1991, and began her professional journey at the Sefalana Employee Benefits Organisation (SEBO) in 1992.

Despite starting her own family, Tshepiso furthered her studies part-time at the University of North West and obtained a BCOM degree in accounting.

Mrs Modisa's career is a testament to dedication, hard work, and reliability;

these principles she wears on her sleeve have led to monumental breakthroughs. In 2007, Tshepiso was hired as an accountant at the Municipality. Over the years, her commitment led to her appointment as a Manager of Finance in July 2018.

Later that year, when the municipality was placed under administration in December, she became Acting Chief Financial Officer.

During this time, with her team, Mrs Modisa worked hard to stabilise the community by committing to financial viability and effective cash flow management – a responsibility she continues to pride herself on today.



Local government finance presents significant challenges in South Africa. "Working in a Municipal environment and Finance is challenging, especially at the Local level", she notes that often Municipalities generate their revenue, and balancing legal compliance under the Constitution and the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) with political realities requires skill and experience.

Last year, under Mrs Modisa's leadership, Mahikeng Municipality earned the SALGA award for the best municipality paying subscriptions on time in the Ngaka Modiri Molema District. This achievement reflects her professional work ethic, commitment to

transparency, strong governance and financial accountability.

Apart from the focus of building a successful career, Tshepiso remains grounded according to her values of humility and lifelong learning. Even as CFO and municipal manager, she continues to learn from her mentors and colleagues intentionally. She defines her core values: "Put God first, remain open to correction, and never be bigger than the institution". These are values that went on to define and refine her leadership and decision-making.

This Woman's Month, Tshepiso Modisa's story is a testament to resilience, hard work and empowerment. She has

demonstrated how women in leadership can influence change, overcome systemic challenges and further inspire the next generation in the same breath. Tshepiso's journey embodies the sentiment "Wathint' abafazi, wathint' imbokodo"

Through perseverance, commitment and integrity, Mrs Modisa has shown us that leadership is not meant to be understood as a personal achievement. It is about uplifting others and striving to make a difference in our communities. Tshepiso Modisa's journey proves that when one leads with integrity, resilience, and purpose, they do more than break present barriers; they build bridges for others to cross.

7 BILLION LITRES SAVED: Motheo Water Leads the Charge! Saving Water, Setting the Standard.

South Africa is a water-stressed country where droughts are common, and these conditions affect nearly every aspect of our lives. Experts estimate that by 2030, South Africa will face a water supply deficit of between 30% and 40%.

Experts estimate by
2030 South Africa will experience:
30%+ water supply deficit

This can be attributed to climate change, technological advancements, shifts in economic production requirements, changes in social structures, and population growth.

While climate change continues to negatively impact our environment, the infrastructure challenges faced by municipalities are resulting in increasing instances of water shortages, water-shedding, and compromised water quality.

These challenges – combined with the fact that municipalities are highly dependent on income from water and sanitation customers – underscore the urgent need for creative solutions to ensure the sustainability of our water resources. The demand for smart, effective water solutions has never been greater.



Lettie Mashau – CEO, Motheo Construction Group

This is where Motheo Construction Group, under the leadership of the highly qualified and experienced Group CEO Lettie Mashau, has stepped up to address these pressing issues.

Through the establishment of Motheo Water, Lettie Mashau has reshaped the water-saving landscape in the Free State Province. The company has dedicated its efforts, in partnership with the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, to addressing water losses at provincial hospitals and clinics.

This water-saving initiative, which encompasses all aspects of water demand management – including leak repairs, maintenance, metering, monitoring, infrastructure upgrades, and educational campaigns – has already saved over 7 billion litres of water since the project's inception.

Motheo Water focuses on its clients' water and cost savings through a systematic, data-driven approach. Its goal is to offer practical, proven solutions that go beyond leak repairs. The company provides data, tools, information, and services that enable long-term water conservation.

Lettie Mashau is a visionary leader, driving change and innovation in South Africa's infrastructure and sustainability sectors. A significant part of her mission is helping municipalities tackle the ever-growing challenge of non-revenue water losses across the country.

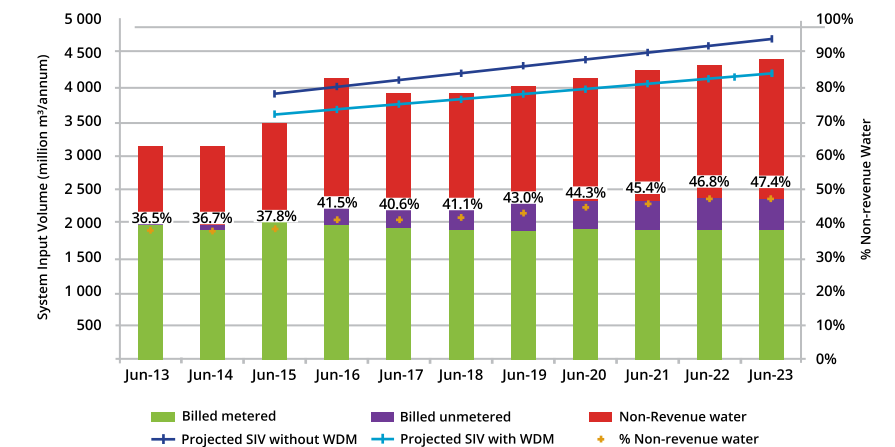
What We Do Best

- Water-saving programs tailored to each client's needs
- Real-time consumption, flow, and pressure monitoring
- Non-Revenue Water (NRW) assessments and interventions
- Data analysis to support long-term water planning

What Makes Motheo Water Different

- **Technology-focused approach:** Our tech systems give our clients a 360-degree view of their water use.
- **Measurable track record:** We do more than to promise savings, we show our clients where they are losing water and why.
- **Custom-designed solutions:** Our technology is developed in-house to meet local needs.
- **Built for South Africa:** Our technology and tools are shaped by the realities of South Africa's dynamic and often unpredictable water environment.
- **Quick to adapt:** We understand that conditions can shift rapidly. Our systems are built to respond quickly and remain effective.
- **Purpose-driven innovation:** This is a local initiative driven by insight and intention. It is for today's challenges and ready for tomorrow's demands.

National Water Balance Trends (Source: 2023 Status of water losses, non-revenue water and water use efficiency in South African Municipalities)



7 BILLION LITRES OF WATER SAVED



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Reimagining Public Value: A Critical Review of *Reimagine SOEs in Africa and Beyond* by Dr. Nimrod Mbele

By Job Mokgoro, Governance Reformer and Former
Premier of the North West Province

Abstract

In this incisive review, Job Mokgoro engages with Dr. Nimrod Mbele's *Reimagine SOEs in Africa and Beyond*, a timely and strategic intervention into the governance of State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) across the African continent. Mbele's work blends personal narrative, policy insight, and comparative analysis to offer a reform blueprint that is both technically sound and morally compelling. This review explores the book's core arguments, reform pillars and its relevance to Africa's developmental trajectory.

Introduction

Across Africa, SOEs have long oscillated between promise and peril—envisioned as instruments of national development yet often reduced to sites of inefficiency, political patronage and fiscal drain. In *Reimagine SOEs in Africa and Beyond*, Dr. Nimrod Mbele reframes this narrative. His book is not merely a critique; it is a strategic call to action, grounded in lived experience and institutional insight.

From Township to Boardroom: The Author's Lens

Mbele's formative years in Thokoza—a township marked by fragile service delivery and socio-economic hardship—shape his understanding of governance as a moral and developmental imperative. His journey from under-resourced classrooms to governance boardrooms equips him with a rare synthesis: the ability to bridge personal narrative, scholarly rigor and pragmatic reform. This fusion lends the book its authenticity and urgency.

Leadership-Centric Reform: A Shift in Governance Paradigm

Central to Mbele's thesis is a decisive shift from leader-centric to leadership-centric governance. He argues that SOE performance must be embedded in strong, accountable institutions rather than the charisma or discretion of individual leaders. His reform agenda includes:

- **Board Independence:** Safeguarding operational autonomy and insulating SOEs from political interference.
- **Merit-Based Appointments:** Professionalizing leadership and curbing patronage.



- **Performance Compacts:** Clarifying expectations and enhancing accountability.
- **State Holding Company (SHC):** Consolidating ownership and enabling strategic coherence.

Commercial Viability and Fiscal Responsibility

Mbele advocates for strategic SOEs—such as Eskom, SAA, and Transnet—to operate commercially, with profits reinvested into national priorities like education and healthcare. He warns against ideological rigidity, noting that outdated models entrench inefficiency and deepen fiscal dependency—especially in low-growth economies.

Comparative Insight and Reform Architecture

Drawing on global exemplars such as Singapore's Temasek Holdings, Sweden's Ministry of Enterprise, and South Korea's Ministry of Strategy and Finance, Mbele distils five reform pillars:

Reform Pillar	Strategic Purpose
National SHC	Shields operational decisions from political meddling.
Mandate Review	Aligns SOE functions with national development goals.
Legislative Coherence	Establishes enforceable governance norms.
Competency-Based Boards	Strengthens oversight and decision-making.
Sustainable Funding Models	Ensures financial independence and resilience.

These pillars form a governance framework that is strategic, political and institutional—designed to restore public trust, enhance capacity and reposition SOEs as engines of inclusive growth.

A Reformist's Voice for Citizens and States

Mbele's dual lens—as empathetic reformist and seasoned practitioner—ensures the book speaks to both policymakers and citizens. His emphasis on accessible, responsive and inclusive governance reinforces the principle that institutional reform must benefit historically marginalized communities while maintaining technical excellence.

Conclusion: A Blueprint for Renewal

Reimagine SOEs in Africa and Beyond is more than a diagnosis—it is a provocation. It challenges African governments to transcend patronage-driven governance and embrace institutional architectures that foster integrity, resilience, and shared prosperity. Mbele demonstrates that SOEs, when reimaged, can become strategic instruments of public value—capable of catalyzing competitiveness, restoring trust, and advancing Africa's developmental future.

This book stands as a testament to Dr. Mbele's unique blend of academic rigor, broadcast clarity, and governance acumen. It is essential reading for reformers, civic actors, and public sector leaders committed to transforming institutions into sites of dignity, delivery, and democratic renewal.



In Pictures

Executive Mayor of Bojanala Platinum District Municipality, Cllr Suzan Nthangeni, seen here hosting traditional leaders from the local house of traditional leaders in the Bojanala District. The purpose is to enhance intergovernmental relations, thus ensuring that the District Development Model (DDM) is effective and efficient in the interest of service delivery in the district.



ENHANCING AND OPTIMISING SERVICE DELIVERY AT LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

Caring Municipality: Executive Mayor of Bojanala Platinum District Municipality, Cllr Suzan Dikeledi Nthangeni, accompanied by Cllr Moleko, MMC For Social Development, seen here distributing blankets, mattresses and groceries to appreciative victims of floods during the heavy rainy season. Moretele Local Municipality was the worst hit.



Successes and Behavioural Strategy of the BXC Smart Meter Programme in Emfuleni

The BXC smart meter programme in Emfuleni has emerged as a transformative initiative, significantly improving electricity and water management while securing stakeholder support for its continued expansion and sustainable revenue generation.

Focussing on modernizing key aspects of service delivery by the Emfuleni Local Municipality (ELM), BXC has not only enhanced revenue collection but also fostered greater transparency and efficiency in core municipal resource management and consumption.

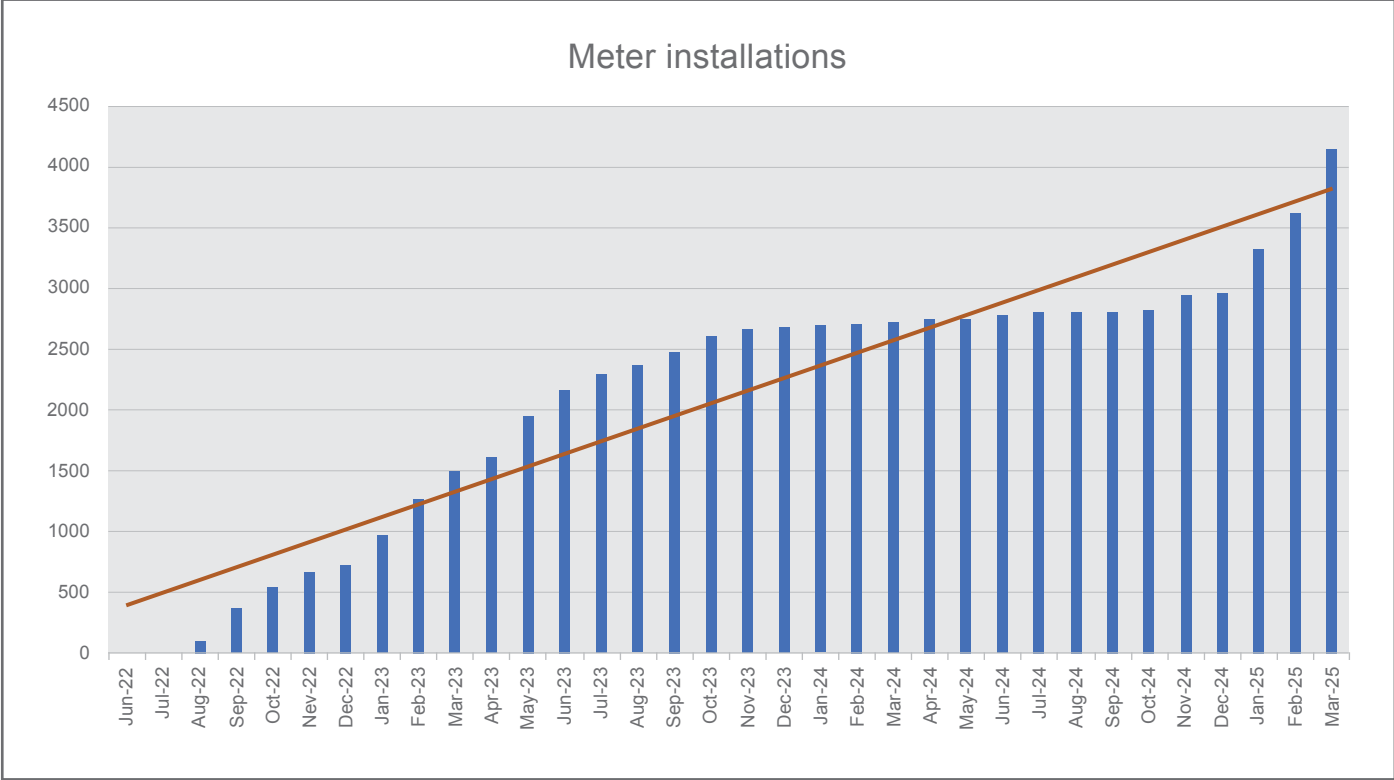
Advancements in Smart Meter Installations
BXC has made remarkable strides, and as of early 2025, the total number of

activated smart meters in the region is 4,145, with ambitious targets for expansion—another 12,000 electricity smart meters and 5,000 water smart meters. These installations provide a much-needed boost to municipal revenue generation, helping service delivery remain sustainable.

One of the key advantages of smart meters is eliminating corrupt paper-based billing systems, which have led to public resistance and further non-payment.

By transitioning to digital metering, consumers can now plan their electricity and water usage more effectively, reducing unnecessary wastage and improving overall consumption habits.

Cultivating active support from Stakeholders
A crucial aspect has been the ability to increasingly secure stakeholder buy-in. BXC and ELM have actively engaged with communities, council-



lors, and business leaders to ensure widespread support for the initiative. Public participation and media education campaigns play a vital role in addressing concerns and demonstrating the benefits of smart meters for both consumers and the municipality.

Despite initial resistance, consumers increasingly recognize the advantages of smart meters, which has enabled them to gain better control over utility expenses while ensuring fair and accurate billing. Additionally, ELM's commitment to transparency and efficiency has strengthened trust among residents and businesses, further solidifying support for the BXC initiative.

Integration with Broader Municipal Goals
The BXC programme aligns with ELM's broader financial recovery strategy and National Treasury policy. As part of its debt relief agreement with the National Treasury, ELM is required to implement smart metering to enhance revenue security and financial stability.

Furthermore, BXC has demonstrated its ability to curb illegal meter bypassing, a persistent revenue loss issue.

In 2024 alone, BXC and ELM recovered over R2.1 million from residents and businesses involved in electricity theft. The smart meters' ability to instantly detect tampering has strengthened enforcement measures, ensuring that such consumers cannot escape accountability.

Looking Ahead
With continued expansion and stakeholder engagement, the BXC smart meter programme is set to play an even greater role in ELM's. The municipality's proactive approach to digitalization and revenue security underscores its commitment to sustainable service delivery.

As installations progress, the benefits of smart metering will become even more evident, reinforcing the BXC programme's position as a model for other municipalities seeking to mod-

ernize their utility management systems and create a firm social base for revenue security.

The success of the BXC smart meter programme therefore is a testament to the power of innovation, collaboration, and integrated strategic planning.



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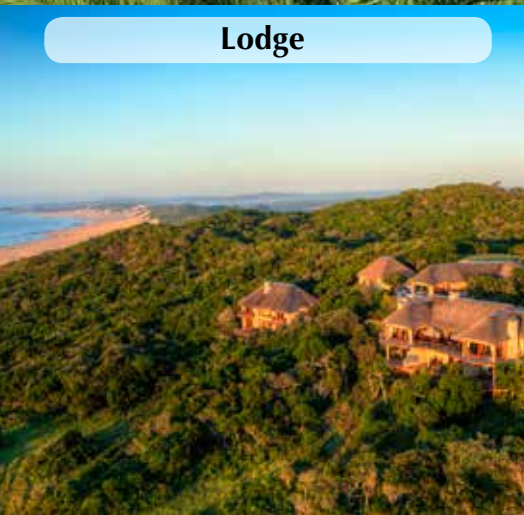


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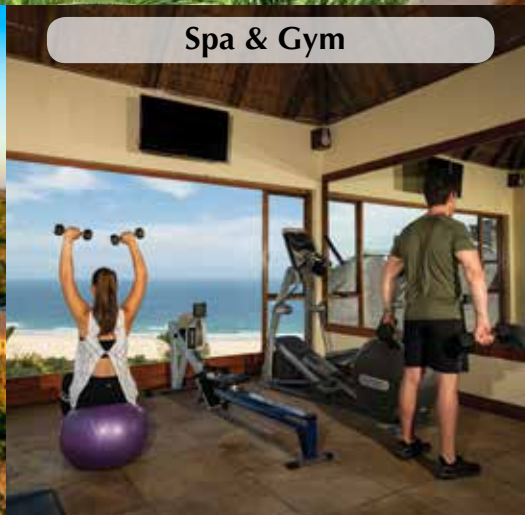
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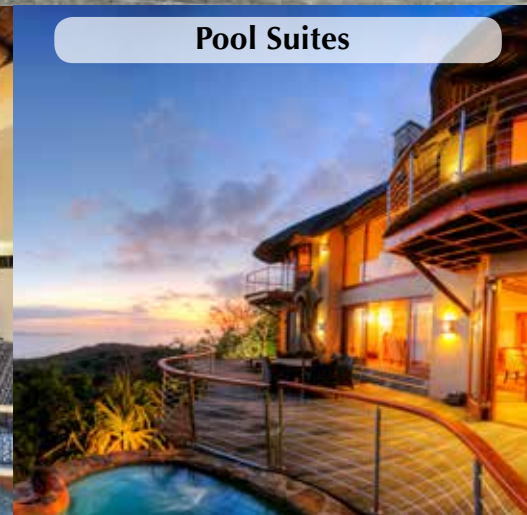
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