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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Persons with disabilities deserve dignity and equality

In South Africa's 28 years of democracy, the rights of persons with disabilities (PWD) have been significantly advanced.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 and the Bill of Rights give equal protection to everyone and prevent discrimination based on disability and other factors, such as race, gender and age.

Post-1994, the *White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy* was released in 1997, the Employment Equity Act, 55 was passed in 1998 to protect PWD from unfair discrimination in the workplace, South Africa ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2007 – which means the country is bound to protect and promote the rights of PWD, the *White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* was approved by Cabinet in 2015 and the Presidential Working Group on Disability was launched in 2016.

Much still needs to be done, however. The reality is that PWD are at the lower end of

the ladder when it comes to equality and human rights. From inaccessible buildings and uneven sidewalks to stigmatisation and transport and communication challenges, PWD suffer a number of injustices.

PWD do not want to be treated differently. Rather, they want society to put in place infrastructure and mechanisms that allow them to operate without limitations. They want to be seen and heard, not pitied or overlooked.

National Disability Rights Awareness Month, which is celebrated annually between 3 November and 3 December (the International Day of Persons with Disabilities), challenges every South African to see past PWD's disabilities and look fully at the person, not the condition. It allows the nation to measure progress made in rooting disability inclusion in all spheres of society.

Census 2011 showed that the disability prevalence rate was 7.5% of the population. In addition, it showed that there was

low labour market absorption of PWD. A follow-up study by Statistics South Africa in 2014 found that households headed by PWD had less access to basic services than households headed by persons without disabilities.

In the past months, South Africa has edged closer to meeting its CRPD obligations.

The Employment Equity Amendment Bill, 2020, has been finalised and should come into effect in 2023. The Bill amends the classification of PWD in line with international standards.

Two frameworks have been gazetted on universal access and design, and reasonable accommodation. The National Strategic Framework on Universal Design and Access deals with making the built environment and government services more accessible to PWD. The interlinked National Strategic Framework on Reasonable Accommodation for PWD deals with the modifications, adjustments, assistive devices and technology needed to ensure



Phumla Williams,
GCIS Director-General.

the rights of PWD.

In May 2022, the National Strategic Framework on Disability Rights Awareness-Raising Campaigns for Persons with Disabilities was approved by Cabinet. It gives effect to the *White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.

Also in May, Cabinet approved the Constitutional 18th Amendment Bill for public comment. Once approved, the Bill will make sign language South Africa's 12th official language.

Sadly, the 2% target for the representation of PWD in the Public Sector has not been met. Instead, it hovers at around only 1%.

If we want all sectors of society to commit to changing the status quo for PWD, we must lead from the front. Let us work to reach the 2% employment target and do whatever else we can to ensure PWD are treated with fairness and dignity.

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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



New council to spearhead the national GBVF response



Minister in the Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane.

Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane explains government's plan to tackle the violence that is being perpetuated against women, children and vulnerable people in South Africa.

Minister in the Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, has published the gazetted National Council on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (NCGBVF) Bill.

In an explanatory note, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane explained that publishing the Bill is a step in the right direction as it will aid the department in establishing a multi-sectoral, independent national council that will be responsible for coordinating and implementing the National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) in the

country.

"The National Council on GBVF, once established, will be the custodian of the National Strategic Plan on GBVF and will be responsible for driving its implementation. The council will coordinate our efforts and bring together government and civil society to combine resources in our response to GBVF. However, the council is not a magic bullet that will immediately end GBVF. It does not shift the responsibility that every one of us has to ensure a safer society for women and children," she explained.

She added that through the

council, the department plans to create a society that is safe for all, with no discrimination, and full acceptance of people in all their differences. The NCGBVF Bill is aimed at building a socially cohesive society, addressing patriarchal norms that perpetuate GBVF, seeking justice and providing the healing and other support mechanisms that GBV survivors require.

National Council on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Bill

The Bill is a result of declarations made at the Presidential

Summit against GBVF in November 2018.

The first of its kind, the summit hosted more than 1 000 women of different nationalities, ages, races, sexual orientations, languages, social origins, religions, beliefs and cultures. They were given a chance to share their encounters with power-based crimes and share ideas on how GBVF can be curbed.

"The Presidential Summit on GBVF 2, held on 1 to 2 November, called for greater accountability, acceleration of programmes and interventions and amplification or scaling up of best practices

that are making an impact in society. Activism is key to this as it takes the collective efforts of government and civil society to respond effectively to GBVF," said the Minister.

The NCGBVF Bill comes at a time when the world is about to embark on the 16 Days of Activism against GBV campaign – 25 November to 10 December.

"Our theme for 16 Days this year speaks to the importance of the legislature in our country: Socio-economic Rights and Empowerment to build Women's Resilience against GBVF: Connect, Collaborate, Contract! "

Root causes

GBVF is an ongoing crisis in South Africa. According to the quarter one crime statistics (2022/2023), presented by Police Minister Bheki Cele in August 2022, violent crimes committed against women and children were recorded as alarmingly high.

The stats show that 855 women and 243 children were killed in South Africa between April and June 2022. Over 11 000 grievous bodily harm cases, with female victims, were opened with the police; 1 670 of these cases involved children.

Minister Nkoana-Mashabane noted that several root causes play a role in the pervasiveness of GBVF in society.



"Strict reinforcement of gender roles and hierarchy, economic exclusion of women, socio-economic inequality, cultural and religious norms

"To truly tackle the GBVF pandemic, we must be intentional about addressing the causes of violence, systematic or cultural."

that reinforce patriarchal attitudes, and associating masculinity with control of women – all these factors become drivers in sustaining a culture of violence, which ultimately becomes the norm."

She added that a lack of socio-economic development was also a contributing fac-

tor. "Our patriarchal society deepens the inequalities that result in GBVF. The lack of economic empowerment of women is another root cause for the scourge of such violence, hence we need to hold hands and work together to overcome these challenges. All these factors become drivers in sustaining a culture of violence, which ultimately becomes the norm. To truly tackle the GBVF pandemic, we must be intentional about addressing the causes of violence, systematic or cultural."

Women empowerment

According to the Minister, the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD) has adopted a programmatic approach to responding to women's economic empowerment by ensuring the develop-

ment of programmes that empower women of all ages. The National Youth Development Agency also ensures young women entrepreneurs benefit from empowerment programmes.

"At the same time, we have sector value chain engagements, such as our Eastern Seaboard Engagement, which brought together women-owned businesses, the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and development partners who will be investing billions in the Eastern Seaboard [KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape] to develop ports, business hubs and such."

In a statement, the DWYPD said that a commitment has been made to ensure the inclusion of women, youth and persons with disabilities in the development.

The Minister added that the department also drives the Women's Economic Assembly, which aims to facilitate the participation of women-owned businesses in core areas of the economy.

"We also need greater accountability and responsibility from all citizens. GBVF is not a pandemic or an issue impacting some women in unknown areas. It impacts all of us and it will take everyone working together to effectively respond to GBVF," she said.



Multi-skilled Dlamini dreams of a society free of toxic masculinity

Dr Judy Dlamini is bringing her vast experience in leadership, integrity, accountability and tenacity to the fight against gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF).

Dlamini (63), a medical and academic doctor who wears many hats as a businesswoman, author and Chancellor of the University of Witwatersrand, is the chairperson of the Gender-Based Violence Response Fund (GBVF).

The fund was launched by President Cyril Ramaphosa in February 2021, to support

the implementation of the national strategic plan to end GBVF. Various private companies pledged donations that amounted to over R128 million to the fund and its establishment was supported by the International Women's Forum of South Africa.

At the helm of the fund, Dlamini is entrusted to ensure accountability of the funds and to deliver on its mandates. She works with five board members from various sectors who volunteer their skills and expertise.

Dlamini believes that she was chosen to lead based on her long track record in leadership and her passion for eradicating toxic masculinity and patrilocal norms. With November and December featuring the 16 Days of Activism against GBV campaign (25 November to 10 December), Dlamini says that until the scourge is eradicated, it will be a 365-day campaign.

"In life, you will always find someone who is willing and able. I have led before; I also have a clear understanding of what it is to live in a country where you do not feel safe. So I would like to believe that motivated my appointment," she says.

Dlamini has served in different sectors of the economy, most notably as the founder and executive chairperson of the Mbekani Group, which has been in business for more than 25 years. She strongly advocates for gender equity.

As a result, she founded the Female Academic Leaders Fellowship to develop a pipeline of black female leaders in academia. She is also a director of the South African Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) Fund, a partnership between the government,

development finance institutions and the private sector to grow an inclusive economy through supporting SMEs.

In her 2019 book, titled *Equal but Different*, which is based on her doctoral thesis, Dlamini explores the intersection of race, gender and social class in the career progression of women. The book features stories from women across the globe who share their stories of how gender equality helped them to progress.

Fund improves lives

This understanding of how inequality affects women stands her in good stead as chairperson of the GBVF Response Fund. Dlamini is optimistic that the fund will make a meaningful impact across social classes where GBVF is prevalent.

To achieve a positive outcome, she refers to the six pillars that are part of the National Strategic Plan on GBVF. Those include accountability, coordination and leadership, prevention and rebuilding social cohesion, justice, safety and protection.

She says her responsibility is to ensure the representation of all key role players in the fight against GBVF, which she refers to as another pandemic.

She believes that given the calibre of her team members, she will be able to safeguard the fund and continue to deliver its mandate. In praising her team, she says: "In leadership, you must have the right people in place to execute the plan."

Dlamini is pleased with the fund's progress, but notes that the 'scourge is deep and has been entrenched for decades.' "We need to galvanise support from all sectors," she says.

The fund has already disbursed R36 million, supporting 108 community-based organisations that focus on GBV across the country. Dlamini explains that organisations were called to submit their proposals and preference was given to those that address the range of challenges faced by victims and survivors. She says they were impressed by the outcomes achieved by some of the organisations.

Dlamini says they have appointed Tshikululu Social Investment, an experienced fund management company, to ensure the fund makes a real difference to South Africans affected by GBVF. Intermediaries have also been employed to support four informal organisations that could not handle large finances, but had the will to assist victims.

She says the fund works with academics who assist with scientific facts and analyse

all statistics provided by the South African Police Service (SAPS), because she is keen to understand the reality on the ground. "We have to be sure of the statistics. Academics assist

"We have to be sure of the statistics. Academics assist us with that because they are on the ground. We need to understand the terrain and get as close to the incidents as possible."

us with that because they are on the ground. We need to understand the terrain and get as close to the incidents as possible.

"There are closed places where incidents are not reported, but they are happening. Working with academics has helped us to unpack that. We have also hosted *izimbizo* with non-governmental organisations to get a better understanding of the situation," she says.

More support needed

While Dlamini is upbeat about the fund's impact, she cites several challenges and calls for cooperation between government and the private

sector.

She says the fund has engaged with Ministers on issues such as the backlog in DNA analysis, which hampers investigations and court cases. Her proposal is for the SAPS to work with universities that have experts in DNA analysis to resolve some of the cases.

She challenges the private sector and philanthropists to increase their efforts in the fight against GBVF, as they did with COVID-19.

The majority of stock exchange-listed companies put little effort into ending GBVF, says Dlamini. She points out that insufficient funds have been raised and pleads with companies to continue to donate. While several companies have made pledges, the fund is unable to budget for its programmes until the money is deposited into its account. "Some companies are pledging with cash in kind, while some are not immediate donations. It is difficult to budget based on that," she says.

Dlamini acknowledges the bad reputation of fraud and corruption associated with public organisations meant to help vulnerable people. She draws on her integrity and governance skills to assure the country that all the monies will be accounted for. She says they have set up a risk and audit committee and there is a long chain of



accountability.

"I understand the lack of trust in public organisations; as a board, we are fully aware of that. I am accountable for everything I do and the people I lead. Also, I believe in integrity, I always tell young leaders to make it a norm to do well, even when they are under no supervision. I try to be inclusive and give other people an opportunity to raise their points, even when the final decision lies with me. I take advice from the majority, even if our views differ, and take full accountability for it," she says.

Dlamini believes in kindness and respect, which she emphasises must be restored in society. She says if people are kind and respectful to each other, GBVF would be non-existent.

As the chairperson of the GBVF Response Fund, she hopes to see justice being served for women; children; sex workers and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning society. Her wish is for patriarchal norms and toxic masculinity not to have a place in South Africa.

Up and away: Drones set to shape the future

When Shado Mashegoane (28), a simulator support officer at the Air Traffic and Navigation Services (ATNS) Aviation Training Academy, attended the ATNS AVI Afrique Innovation Summit in 2019, little did she realise that a whole new career interest awaited her.

The summit introduced her to drone technology and inspired her to become an enthusiastic drone aviation professional. Her interest in the subject resulted in her pursuing a remote pilot licence (RPL) – the

first step towards building background-level proficiency in remotely piloted aircraft systems (RPAS) operations, a journey she describes as ‘exciting and uncertain.’

“The first thing I did was to network with professionals who were already in the industry. From there, I was determined to gain the appropriate knowledge and experience to become a drone aviation professional,” says Mashegoane.

During her training, she acquired a good understanding of the drone sector.

“Young people have an

excellent opportunity to become part of this amazing industry as government is collaborating with business entities to fund RPLs for youth,” she says.

Drone technology education

Mashegoane feels that teaching drone technology, coding and design processes in schools will encourage young people to be innovative and acquire entrepreneurial skills.

“Although Africa has a young population, we are faced with the sad reality of youth who are unable to find

employment and/or pursue further education and training. Drone education technology can empower young people and create pathways towards solving some of the socio-economic challenges of our generation. The future has arrived, and drone aviation is such a transformative resource. It can help improve accessibility to career opportunities in the aerospace industry and beyond,” she believes.

While she practises drone piloting in her spare time, Mashegoane says obtaining the licence has been an

excellent career investment for her as a simulator support officer.

"Simulator training offers limited exposure to aviation safety and the human-factor aspects of flying aircraft. Through flying drones, I have learnt to operate remotely piloted aircraft in a manner that does not pose a danger to other aircraft. I have also noticed how important it is for an aircraft to be operated safely within all limitations.

"Secondly, as a drone pilot, one must engage with technical information to safely operate, maintain and repair drones for flight. For this reason, each flight is crucial. I have gained enhanced technical knowledge about flight planning and processing," she says.

Career insights

Mashegoane, whose wish is to become a drone instructor, explains that drone pilots can work in various industries,

such as agriculture, security, search and rescue, construction, mining, marketing and sales, journalism and film-making.

"I am focused on obtaining an RPAS Instructor Rating. I also wish to improve youth access to drone-service training. There are currently three categories of drone-related jobs: licensed drone pilot, drone engineer and industry business," says Mashegoane.

She explains that drone pilots work in both traditional and emerging industries and believes that drones can contribute to economic development as they can be used for monitoring, inspection or data collection, photography, recreation and logistics.

As a simulator support officer, Mashegoane's job involves giving air traffic controllers (ATC) training and development opportunities.

"To provide the most realistic training experience pos-



sible, a few of us take on the role of the 'pilot' on the other end of the controllers' headsets. In the simulator, as a pilot would, we converse with ATC trainees, request clearances from air traffic control and translate their directions into orders that we input into the simulator, which in turn converts instructions from ATC trainees into commands that effect the movement of aircraft as seen on the simulator screen," explains Mashegoane.

Career plans

Mashegoane, who grew up in Sebokeng, Gauteng, says she wants to ultimately become a RPAS instructional designer.

"As the industry continues to gain more momentum, the ability to provide expertise in such a niche industry will be essential towards maintaining sustainable curricula in our institutions of learning," she adds.

She urges government to ensure that education equips the youth for the increasingly changing world of employment.

"Our education system needs to be resourced and skilled to align the youth with rapidly emerging employment trends by continuously reviewing and adapting our curricula. There should be greater investment and increased channels for access to support for young people's transition from education to employment or self-employment," concludes Mashegoane.

The young pilot holds various qualifications, including a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of the Witwatersrand, a Bachelor of Commerce (Honours) in Industrial and Organisational Psychology from UNISA, and a multi-rotor remote pilot licence.





Research, development and innovation key to food security

Investment in research, development and innovation is essential for South Africa's economic recovery.

According to the new President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Agricultural Research Council (ARC), Dr Litha Magingxa, targeted investments help enable the execution of policies formulated to address the social distress brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns.

"The ARC makes a significant contribution through initiatives aimed at improved food and nutrition security in the country, including the recently signed Agriculture and Agro-processing Master Plan, which will unlock growth and create efficiencies in the sector to support economic recovery,"

he says.

As the country's premier agricultural research organisation, the ARC's role touches on some of the critical areas of the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, such as strengthening agriculture and food security and green industrialisation.

Magingxa says that green industrialisation guarantees the security of energy, food, water and electricity supply.

"The ARC works closely with industry partners to develop technologies that improve yields and contribute to plant and animal health protection," he says.

He adds that the national collections, such as insects, nematodes and fungi, in the ARC's custody are used for research into creating crops that

are more risk resistant.

"This [research] has positioned us well to contribute to the management of some significant pests and diseases, such as fall armyworm, and we continue to develop more technologies based on new scientific discoveries."

Strong roots

Magingxa was appointed as president and CEO in April 2022, for a five-year term, and is well suited to the position.

He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of Fort Hare; a Master of Science from the former Wageningen Agricultural University in the Netherlands and a PhD

(Agricultural Economics) from the University of the Free State.

Magingxa was a Doctoral Research Fellow at the International Water Management Institute and boasts a wealth of experience in leadership from both the private and public sectors. Between 2009 and 2014, he served as Senior Manager for Strategy and Planning at the Land Bank. He also worked as a Group Executive for Agri-Economics and Capacity Development at the ARC between 2014 and 2018, and as Executive Manager for Agri-Economics and Advisory at the Land and Agricultural Development Bank between 2018 and March this year, before ascending to his current position.



Onwards and upwards

"My responsibility is to provide oversight and formulate an overall strategy and policy for a high-performing, professional and transformational organisation to drive its mission and achieve the organisational objectives within the respective fields of expertise," he says.

"I am tasked with the redirection, revisioning and repositioning of the ARC, working with the council and management team.

"I am very fortunate as the ARC has just been presented with its latest institutional review report. The process is conducted every five years to assess the effectiveness of the organisation," he adds.

The report makes recommendations about the quality of science, process efficiency and governance issues, among others. It informs the path for the organisation for the next five years and beyond, while also identifying other areas for improvement.

"We have started a process of

prioritising the recommendations from the report and integrating some of them into our processes. In the short term, we are focusing on launching several process efficiency initiatives. We are also introducing improvements in our research environment that will position us well in the medium to long term, to support the sector and to harness some emerging global opportunities," he explains.

During the 2022/23 financial year, the ARC focused on a hard turnaround in a few areas, including the improvement of its audit outcomes. "We are making significant investments in technology, as well as process and governance improvements that will assist us in this endeavour."

He says the ARC is looking at how to improve efficiencies in general and reposition itself to participate in addressing identified global challenges, such as climate change, while also focusing on an improved turnaround in technology transfer methodologies.



"We have recently approved a commercialisation strategy, which allows us more agility in working with market partners. Implementation modalities are being finalised. We will also be setting up a framework for the implementation of the initiatives identified in the institutional review [report]," he says.

One of the long-term challenges that Magingxa seeks to address is revenue pressure. He says the organisation is looking at how to dedicate capacity and focus to the area of resource mobilisation. He envisages that the commercialisation strategy will assist the ARC to realise better value from its intellectual property and its vast physical infrastructure.

Regardless of the challenges, Magingxa is proud of the ARC team, which he says comprises experts in their respective fields. This positions it well in becoming a valuable partner in knowledge generation partnerships.

Growing SA's skills

Magingxa says the empowerment of youth, women and persons with disabilities is one

of the ARC's focus areas. The organisation's flagship professional development programme has about 200 students enrolled for advanced scientific training through master's and PhD programmes. In addition, the Bioinformatics and Statistical Genomics Training Programme targets students and young scientists.

Furthermore, Magingxa says the organisation collaborates with provincial departments of agriculture to extend access to farmer training initiatives to target designated groups.

"We constantly monitor the inclusiveness of our programmes to ensure access by designated groups. This approach also informs how we create development opportunities for staff from diverse groups," he says.

Magingxa has spent time in the past months visiting various ARC campuses to directly interact with employees, and he believes that even in the face of challenges, the potential to make significant leaps remains.

"I believe that we need to do everything in our power to unleash this potential," he says.





Together we can ensure state capture never happens again

Over the coming days and weeks, from hashtags to homes to the halls of Parliament, South Africans from all walks of life will be debating government's response to the findings and recommendations of the State Capture Commission.

I considered it a signifi-

cant duty on Saturday, 22 October 2022, to submit to Parliament government's response to the findings and recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry into State Capture.

I made this submission nearly six years to the month after former Public Protector Adv Thuli Madon-

sela released her 'State of Capture' report, in which she investigated complaints of alleged unethical conduct by several state functionaries, and private individuals and companies.

The Public Protector's report gave rise to the establishment of the judicial commission of inquiry chaired

by the then Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo.

During four years of public hearings, our nation was saddened, outraged and left in disbelief by testimony of how a criminal network in government, public institutions and private companies had raided state coffers and vandalised institutions of our



democracy.

Amid the depressing testimony, people's anger at the events that had unfolded and citizens' demands for consequences, retribution and restoration was a clear signal that South Africans are prepared to fight to preserve their values.

Upon closer consideration, the process of uncovering crimes against our democracy gave us more reason for hope than despair.

The reactions of the overwhelming majority of South Africans highlighted the nation's disdain for corruption and our determination that corruption and unethical corporate or public management will not be allowed to define us as a nation.

The country has drawn strength from the courage with which whistle-blowers came forward to tell their stories and bring perpetrators of state capture to justice.

This process also revealed that in spite of sustained assaults by the architects and practitioners of state capture on key national institutions, we could depend on our criminal justice system to catch up with those who thought themselves untouchable.

Almost daily now, we read reports of people being arrested and appearing in court on charges related to state capture. We read about misappropriated assets being frozen and property being seized.

The scenes that are unfold-

ing in our courts today are because investigators and prosecutors are living up their professional obligations and the expectations of the nation they serve.

In compliance with an order of the judiciary, the executive branch of the State has now submitted a response plan to the legislature, as further evidence of the good and growing health of our democratic dispensation.

While we prosecute state capture suspects and recover stolen funds, what is required on the part of all South Africans is our conscious, daily examination of our own values, beliefs and behaviours and the motives and actions of others.

The recently established

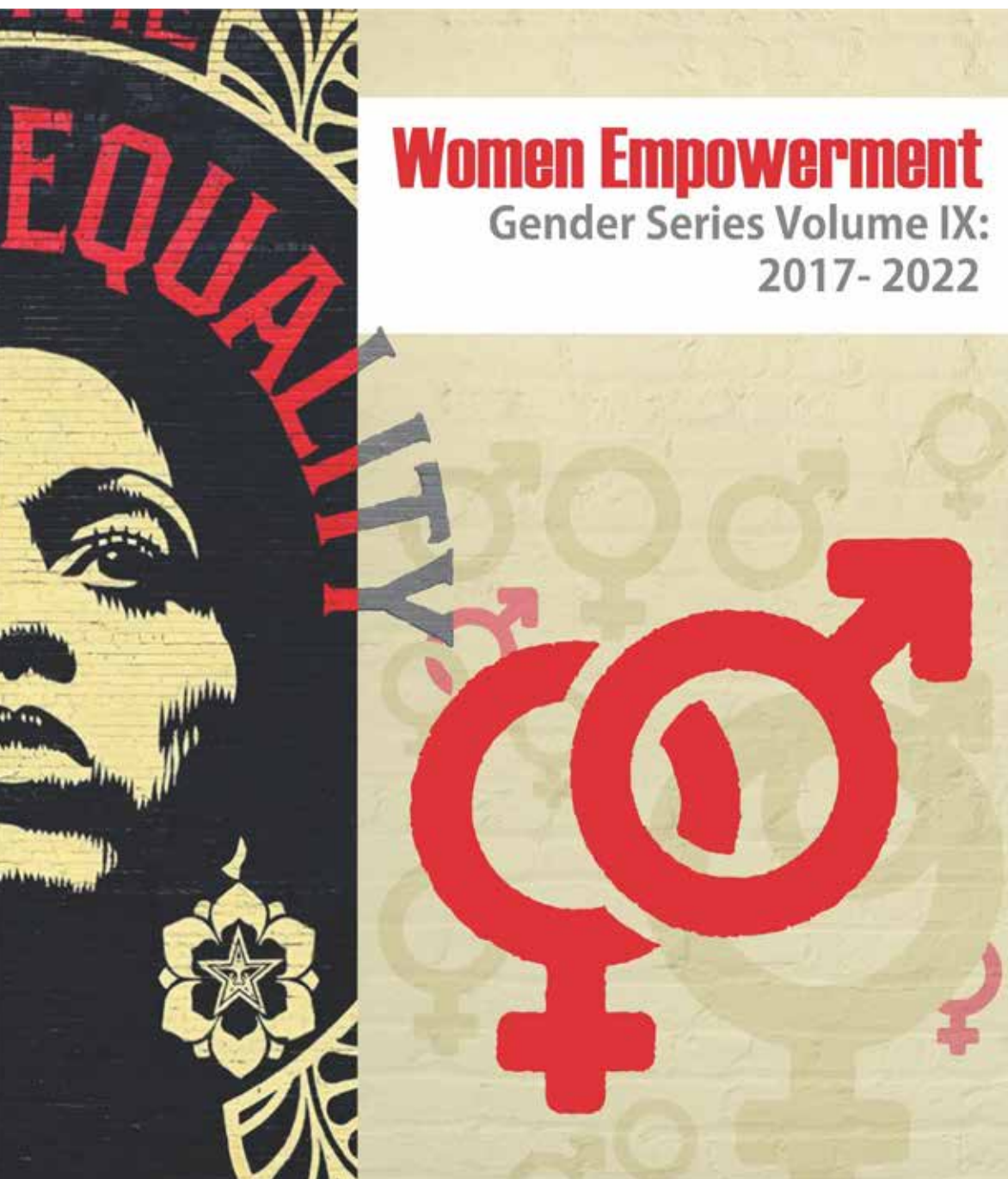
National Anti-Corruption Advisory Council will play an important part in mobilising all sectors of our society towards the attainment of a country defined by integrity, honesty and accountability.

Following the submission of our response to the State Capture Commission, government is poised to work with social partners and communities on this great undertaking, which will be passed on from generation to generation into our future.

This moment of renewal is upon us and urges us to restate the vision of our National Development Plan of "a South Africa that has zero tolerance for corruption, in which an empowered citizenry has the confidence and knowledge to hold public and private officials to account and in which leaders hold themselves to high ethical standards, and act with integrity".

We have made great progress in the fight against state capture, all due to the efforts of the people of South Africa. The path ahead will be challenging, but if we work together in implementing the recommendations of the State Capture Commission, we will succeed in building the society and the State that we want.

Men still dominate the majority senior and middle management roles in the public sector: report



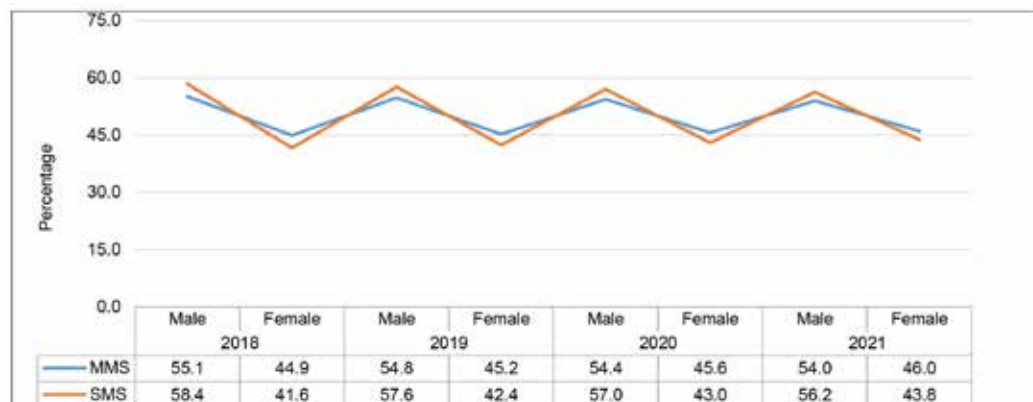
Statistic South Africa's recent report on women empowerment indicates a steady increase in women's share in the working-age population over the last five years.

According to the *Gender Series Volume IX: Women Empowerment, 2017 – 2022* [released in October 2022], despite more females in the labour force, males have higher employment rates than females. The gender gap of 0.778 in monthly median earnings between male and female indicate inequality. Parity in earnings was only reached with tertiary education. Furthermore, women continued to be more likely than men to be unemployed.

According to the report, in the public sector, males hold the majority of senior management posts and middle management positions. Females who were younger (≤ 35 years old) than their male counterparts were more likely to have middle management positions.

Cabinet reached parity in

Trend analysis of female share in senior and middle management positions in the public sector by sex, 2018 to 2021



Source: DPSA, 2018–2021.

2019 for the first time since the beginning of democracy, and Parliament also observed an increased representation of women.

Informal sector

In 2022, three out of four females (76.7% in 2017 and 77.5% in 2022) were operating businesses in the informal sector, and no major increases were observed during this period. The presence of males in the informal sector experienced a 5.3 percentage point increase over this period. The difference between male- and female-run businesses operating in the formal sector was 10.9 percentage points in 2017; a decline was observed for both sexes in 2022.

Additionally, gender

differences in the formal sector decreased from a parity of 0.67 in 2017 to 0.76 in 2022, pointing toward a narrowing gap in the sector. The report further shows that over the period, there have been a growing proportion of own-account workers among male and female business owners.

Females were more likely to be own-account workers than males. While the proportion of male own-account workers increased between 2017 and 2022 by 7.6 percentage points, that of females remained relatively the same.

Unemployment

Overall unemployment rates increased by 6.8 percentage points, from 27.7% in 2017 to 34.5% in 2022. Males and

females between the ages of 25 and 34 years accounted for the most unemployed when compared to other age groups.

The presence of minor children indirectly contributes to unemployment, particularly among women. When exploring this effect, unemployment rates in 2017 and 2022 were highest among males and females who lived with five or more children in the household at 43.6% and 55.5% respectively. The report also indicates that the economic inactivity rate was higher among females than males in all categories. This was true for both years of reporting.

Between 2017 and 2018, the



majority of females indicated grants (62.7% and 61.3% respectively) as their main sources of income, followed by remittances (60.7% and 53.8% respectively), while males indicated income from a business (71.6% and 75.8% respectively), followed by salaries/wages/commission (66.4% and 66.0% respectively) as their main sources of income.

The number of social grants recipients increased by 4.8 percentage points for both males and females between 2017 and 2021. However, males recorded the highest increase of grant recipients of 5.6 percentage points while females recorded an increase of 4.2 percentage points. For both periods, individuals living in the Eastern Cape (41.8% and 47.8% in 2017 and 2021 respectively) were the ones most likely to receive grants, followed by Limpopo (40.1% and 46.4% in 2017 and 2021 respectively).

For the full report, visit https://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=1854&PPN=Report-03-10-26&SCH=73312



SARS commits to achieving higher revenue estimate

The South African Revenue Service (SARS) has welcomed Finance Minister Enoch Godongwana emphasis on ensuring that government finances are spent in an equitable, efficient and flexible manner to support South Africa's development objectives.

This comes after the Minister tabled the Medium Term Budget Policy Statement on 26 October 2022, in Cape Town. The Minister's policy message focused on strengthening South Africa's fiscal integrity over the medium term through managing the country's finances with prudence.

In a statement, SARS said its work is central in that efficient tax revenue collections contribute to the fiscal space re-

quired to attend to important social and investment spending priorities, whilst keeping an eye on debt service costs.

Revised revenue estimate

The Minister increased the revenue collection estimate that SARS must collect to R1 682 billion from R1 598 billion. SARS provides about 90% of all government revenue, which makes this increase in the revenue to be collected by SARS very significant.

"As SARS, we accept the challenge of the revised higher revenue estimate. While the revised revenue estimate is steep, we are committed to act according to what is permissible by law to meet

this challenge.

"The rebuilding of SARS is evident in improved revenue collection. We are laying a firm foundation for this new environment, which is the synthesis of data-driven insights, enabling information and technology infrastructure and employing skilled staff, which are all indispensable for the success of this modernisation journey. We are equally committed to counter criminal and illicit activities," SARS Commissioner Edward Kieswetter said.

Gross tax revenues are expected to exceed the estimates presented at the time of the 2022 Budget by R83.5 billion in 2022/23, of which corporate income tax is expected to account for R62.8

billion.

SARS said stronger personal income tax collections are expected to bring in an additional R8.2 billion relative to the 2022 Budget Review projections.

South Africa's gross domestic product is expected to grow by 1.9% in 2022 from 4.9% in 2021. Revenue collections, as at 30 September 2022, amounted to R784.8 billion, yielding growth of R64.7 billion (9.0%) against prior year collections of R751.0 billion.

"All collections against the previous year showed an upward trend except for the fuel levy, which recorded a contraction of R9.1 billion (-20.9%). The year-to-date growth was partially offset by the total

refunds paid out, which were R32.5 billion (20.9%) higher than the previous year, with value-added tax refunds R26.2 billion (21.0%) higher in the first half of the year.

“During the Budget Speech presentation in February 2022, tax revenues were expected to grow by 3.3% (R1.547 billion to R1.598 billion). SARS is continuing to improve the efficiency in tax revenue administration through targeted strategic compliance and enforcement interventions to achieve higher taxpayer compliance ratios.”

Kieswetter said while the performance of the economy is important for revenue collection, “SARS initiatives have counterbalanced the negative impact of the local and global economy”.

“SARS compliance efforts have contributed 12% to the net revenues collected. This is in line with our revenue management philosophy, which has seen our efforts result in an additional R92.5 billion that has been added to the total revenue of R784 billion collected to date.

“Included in the compliance efforts are areas that relate to debt cash collections, curbing impermissible and fraudulent refunds claims, voluntary disclosure management, countering syndicated tax and customs crimes as well as

valuation fraud and customs seizures.”

To illustrate the point, the Commissioner said that SARS's administrative efforts undertaken in the current financial year to drive compliance revenue include:

- 831 797 debt cases and 186 691 final demands being issued and successfully pursued, resulting in R35.2 billion being collected.

“SARS initiatives have counterbalanced the negative impact of the local and global economy.”

- SARS prevented R28 billion of impermissible and fraudulent refund claims from being processed.
- The setting up specialised teams that assessed the accuracy of provisional tax payments, resulting in R8.4 billion being collected.
- Over 2 675 customs interventions resulting in R1.2 billion being collected.
- SARS's work in the areas of syndicated tax and customs crimes is gaining traction, resulting in R1.9 billion being collected.
- One preservation order was obtained for the value of

R150 million.

- The estimated value of assets under preservation orders is about R2.9 billion.
- The liquidation and sequestration of assets to the value of about R2.3 billion has been carried out.
- SARS also conducted 478 Illicit trade interventions, resulting in 403 detentions and 252 seizures.

Improving services

Kieswetter said SARS will continue to improve its service to taxpayers and traders by providing clarity and certainty to enable them to meet their legal obligations, and by making it hard and costly for taxpayers and traders who wilfully remain non-compliant.

Customs valuation fraud, excise under-declaration, syndicated tax crimes, including illicit activities and interventions linked to cases relating to state capture will remain major areas of focus.

SARS encouraged taxpayers to use the Voluntary Disclosure Programme to regularise their tax affairs. However, taxpayers must voluntarily disclose any irregularities to SARS, as the programme will not be available once SARS discovers on its own such non-compliance.

In this regard, the revenue authority will be communicating more details on how to access this programme. SARS is on course to further improve its revenue performance in alignment with its vision 2020 – 2025 and the Strategic Intent of Voluntary Compliance.

“In view of the above opportunities, and the increased trust that taxpayers and traders have in SARS, we believe that our work and increased focus on our mandate objectives will ensure the attainment of the revenue projections as communicated by the Minister,” said Kieswetter.

– SAnews.gov.za



DHA focused on improving service delivery



A recent survey on services offered by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) has revealed that its service centres are generally accessible to most citizens.

The study, which was commissioned by the Government Communication and Information System Research unit on behalf of the DHA, was aimed at gauging the extent to which the department delivers on its objective of providing secure, efficient, effective and accessible services to all citizens and

foreign nationals.

A similar survey was conducted in 2018 but it excluded some immigration services.

The objectives of the survey dictated a hybrid research approach encompassing primary and secondary research techniques. The survey had a national scope, targeting individual citizens who have been exposed to DHA services within the past year. Eligible respondents were drawn using statistically random techniques from all provinces.

The data was obtained via in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, social media monitoring, case studies, online chat groups, real-time interviews and mystery shopping (incognito visit as a 'customer' to judge service delivery).

Similar to the 2018 findings, about 81% of the participants said that they used DHA offices which are closer to where they live or work.

About 58% of the respondents said the closest DHA office to them is not located

within their community and they have to use public transport to get there. This was followed by private car (23%) and walking (12%). The use of public transport was prevalent for civic services, while private car usage was common for immigration services.

Sixty-four percent of the participants associated the DHA with applications for critical identification documents, such as identity documents (IDs), passports, and birth and death certificates. The most positive perception about the DHA was that despite delays, the department would ultimately deliver the documents applied for if needs are met. The department was also strongly associated with facilitating travel in and out of the country.

Most customers agreed that the DHA has also made good strides in speeding up the process of document collection, especially for smart IDs and passports.

Slow service

The negative narrative about the DHA's service delivery tended to be amplified by the time it took for customers to access services. Most respondents bemoaned slow service.

This perception was worsened by queues that are not well managed, frequent system

breakdowns, lack of proactive communication about delays, and alleged corrupt practices by some officials.

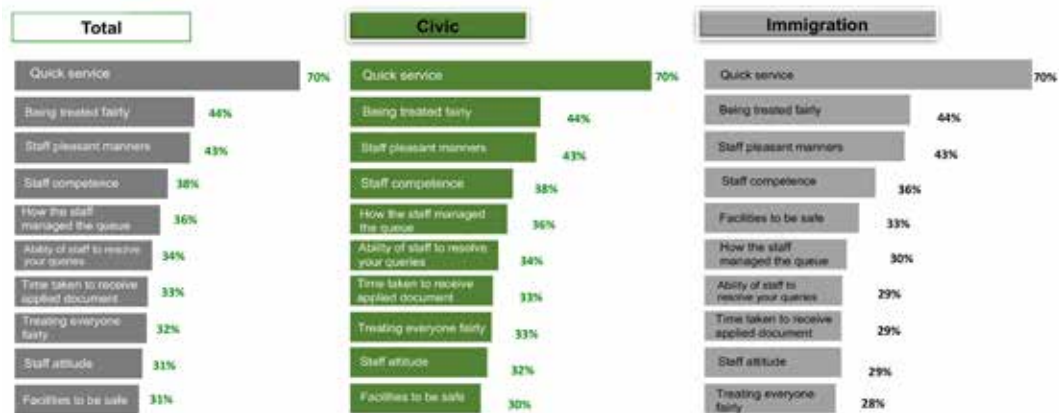
Other problems mentioned included a lack of effective support infrastructure, including toilets and chairs, as well as a lack of proper internal and external signage.

Excellent customer service cues

It was not all gloom, however, as customers identified some excellent customer service cues. One out of three participants expected improvements in turnaround times, non-discrimination, safe office facilities and caring staff as part of excellent customer service.

The narrative from the DHA's social media platforms also revealed that system reliability, informing customers of what is happening when the system goes offline, user-friendly online platforms and the use of alternative channel partners

Perceptions of what excellent customer service entails - live capture



Quick service, appropriate staff conduct and safe facilities emerged as key customer service expectations.



like banks are signs of excellent service.

Participants were also asked what they perceived as excellent customer cues. The top three most mentioned cues were speed of service at 70%, followed by fair customer treatment (44%) and staff pleasantness (43%). Other mentioned cues include staff competence/helpfulness (38%), queue management (36%) and satisfac-

tory query resolution (34%).

The overall Customer Satisfaction Score (CSS) for the DHA was 83%, with immigration services (84%) scoring slightly higher than civic services (82%). Analysis of the CSS showed that harbour services had the highest ratings (92%), closely followed by airport services (91%). The lowest CSS was for refugee centres (73%).

Recommendations

Ongoing customer service delivery efforts are needed to ensure that the DHA maintains its product delivery reputation and pricing structure, which was endorsed by 94% of the respondents as affordable.

Product packaging processes also need to be sustained as there were no concerns expressed regarding the quality of documents provided by the DHA.

Areas of potential improvement include staff skills development, entrenching a 'customer is king' culture, system reliability, effective online platforms, queue management automation, promotion of DHA initiatives and proactive customer engagement across platforms.

Other recommendations included improving road signage to DHA offices so that the public can find them easily, properly supporting and communicating the use of banking and online platforms to decongest service offices, adopting the same system that banks use to minimise continuous system breakdowns and generating more awareness around the documents that customers need to take with them to DHA offices to prevent a situation of having to go back again.



National Biosecurity Hub combats crop and animal diseases

New biosecurity hub is expected to empower South Africa's decision-making during times of animal and plant disease outbreaks.



The departments of Science and Innovation (DSI) and Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) have collaborated to launch the National Biosecurity Hub.

Housed at the University of Pretoria's (UP) Future Africa campus, the hub has been developed to act as an early warning system for animal dis-

eases, such as foot and mouth, and contribute to sustainable agricultural production and the safe trade of agricultural products, services and processes in South Africa.

Speaking at the official launch, DSI Director-General (DG) Phil Mjwara, who spoke on behalf of Higher Education, Science and Innovation Minister Blade Nzimande, explained

that the hub is the result of the DSI's Agricultural Bioeconomy Innovation Partnership Programme (ABIPP).

The ABIPP facilitates, coordinates and funds multi-stakeholder agriculture bioeconomy initiatives and is administered by the department's Technology Innovation Agency (TIA). At present, the programme has a R4 million budget and a

commitment of R5 million from the DALRRD for biosecurity for three years.

Background

Mjwara explained that in November 2020, both the DSI and the DALRRD agreed on an approach for the alignment of the Agriculture and Agro-processing Masterplan and the Science Technology and Innovation (STI) Decadal Plan (2021 – 2030). "The mechanism of the alignment was a two-tier governance process for monitoring the bilateral relations between the two departments through a steering committee chaired by the DGs. Subsequently, a technical task team was established and given formal terms of reference. The team assisted both departments with consultation on the masterplan process, as well as input and alignment with the agricultural priorities of the STI Decadal Plan."

He noted that at a bilateral meeting held on 27 July 2022, the DSI and DALRRD DGs



agreed to co-launch and co-chair the National Biosecurity Hub. “Technology and innovation must support and enhance the strategic priorities of other government departments. The hub will provide government with a platform to facilitate engagements on sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) matters, allowing quicker responses and ensuring that appropriate measures are taken in good time.”

Mjwara said that the hub will also dedicate relevant expertise to initiatives that support plant and animal health, and food safety.

“We are extremely grateful for this partnership. It is something we can solidly celebrate as it will play an inestimable role in building resilience in our country’s economy, instilling confidence in our trading partners about our biosecurity strategies and standards, and meeting all our trading partners’ related compliance regulations. This will help to increase our market access, economic growth and

job creation along the value chain.”

Global context

Prof Sunil Maharaj, Acting Vice-chancellor for Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Education at UP said the hub will provide research and information services to both the public and private sectors. “This will aid in building confidence in South Africa’s biosecurity, as it will help mitigate all risks related to agricultural imports and exports, such as foot and mouth disease.”

Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development Minister Thoko Didiza also spoke at the launch. She noted that while government is responsible for setting and maintaining the biosecurity-related regulatory framework, the scientific community, private sector and producers have a role to play in creating a holistic biosecurity system.

“It is important to prevent or limit the spread and introduction of quarantine pests and

diseases to prevent their potentially destructive impact on sustainable production or risks to the territories of trading parties. In recent times, however, disputes around the scientific justification of SPS measures have become a key feature of international trade and South Africa has not escaped this disturbing trend, despite the existence of an international framework that ensures fair and consistent trade,” she said.

She added that the country is consolidating its biosecurity efforts domestically and aims to position itself to play a leading role in the management of agricultural pests and diseases at sub-regional and regional levels. “This is particularly important as pests and diseases have no respect for geographical borders,” noted the Minister.

Present projects

According to Dr Maneshree Jugmohan-Naidu, Director for

Biotechnology at the DSI, some projects are already underway at the hub. “The Centre for Food Safety is an applied food science consortium, comprising Stellenbosch University and the food industry. The centre conducts research on safety throughout the food value chain. An example is *Listeria* (specifically the ST6 organism), which caused a huge outbreak of listeriosis in South Africa [in 2017 and 2018].”

Other projects include the Livestock Identification and Traceability System, which is an innovative biometric system for livestock. “Industry endorsed the business plan developed with all role players by TIA. The DALRRD is rolling out a pilot project with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. Once complete, it will also support the preparedness for pandemics and ensure resilient and safe food supply chains,” she said.



Know more about diabetes



Diabetes is the number one killer of women in South Africa.

This is according to Bridget McNulty, one of South Africa's most trusted diabetes voices, who obtained the information from Statistics South Africa.

"This is horrific, as diabetes should not be a lethal condition," she says.

McNulty co-founded Sweet Life, SA Diabetes Advocacy and the Diabetes Alliance. She is also a member of the International Diabetes Federation's Blue Circle Voices and a published author.

Diabetes occurs when the body produces too little or no insulin, or is unable to use

insulin properly, says McNulty. "There are three types of diabetes – Types 1 and 2, and gestational diabetes."

Type 1 is an autoimmune condition in which the body

destroys the cells in the pancreas that produce insulin. "It is not caused by eating the wrong food, eating too much sugar or being overweight,"

says McNulty.

Type 2, which accounts for 90% of cases, is usually caused by a lack of insulin and insulin resistance. "It is hereditary and is often called

a lifestyle disease because it can be caused by being overweight or obese, eating the wrong foods and not exercising," McNulty explains.

"Many people experience no symptoms or only one or two symptoms, which are not alarming enough to make them go to a doctor."

Gestational diabetes, which is diagnosed during pregnancy, usually goes away after the child is born.

According to Diabetes South Africa National Manager Margot McCumisky, Type 1 diabetes cannot be prevented and there is no cure. "If not treated, it will result in death," she says.

McNulty says untreated Type 2 diabetes can result in long-term complications, such as blindness, amputation, heart disease and kidney failure. "These are preventable if the diabetes is diagnosed early enough, good treatment is given and lifestyle changes are made."

Warning signs

According to McCumisky, warning signs of diabetes include being very thirsty, urinating frequently, weight loss for no apparent reason, slow healing of wounds, repeated infections and blurred vision.

"Many people experience no symptoms or only one or two symptoms, which are not alarming enough to make them go to a doctor. If one has a genetic risk factor, for example, if someone in their family has been diagnosed

with diabetes, they should be screened at least once per year," she says.

Testing involves an initial finger prick test to assess blood glucose levels. This can be done at any pharmacy or clinic and takes less than five minutes. If levels are abnormally high, you should go to a doctor who will send you for further tests, says McCumisky.

The most common treatment for Type 2 diabetes is tablets (metformin), followed by insulin injections in later years; while the treatment for Type 1 is insulin immediately, says McNulty.

"Type 1 diabetes cannot be reversed, but Type 2 can be reversed if it is diagnosed early enough," she adds.

Tips to prevent diabetes

To live a healthier life and help prevent diabetes, McCumisky says you should try to lose weight if you are overweight; start a regular exercise routine, even if it's just short walks every day; change to healthier eating habits; and reduce carbohydrates to no more than a quarter of your plate.

"Making lifestyle changes can seem overwhelming, so set yourself small, reachable goals and keep working at them until you achieve success. Then choose another goal and keep working at it.



Don't beat yourself up if you slip now and again, just get back to it and keep going. Rome wasn't built in a day," she adds.

Show your support, wear blue

The World Diabetes Day (14 November) theme for the next two years is; "Diabetes Education and Support" which forms a crucial part of treatment for those diagnosed with diabetes, says McCumisky.

"Living with diabetes every day and trying to manage your blood glucose levels is not easy. It is important to receive education and support to assist you along your journey. You can support your colleagues with diabetes by

educating yourself about the disease and asking questions so that you can understand how to help them," she adds.

McNulty says one of the most important things you can do is to understand how diabetes affects their life.

"Every person is different and support looks different for everyone. But if you ask: 'How does diabetes affect you?' and then listen, you will know how to support them. It might be by always having a sugary snack in your desk

drawer, in case they need it for low blood sugar; listening while they vent; or suggesting healthy options for work lunches."

"With the right support, diabetes is a manageable condition. Without the right support – and if people feel stigmatised – it can become very difficult to manage. One way to visibly show support is to sign up for the Wear Blue for Diabetes campaign on World Diabetes Day," says McNulty.

You can sign up at <https://sweetlife.org.za/wear-blue-for-diabetes>

For more information about diabetes, visit www.sweetlife.co.za or www.diabetessa.org.za or send a WhatsApp to Diabetes South Africa's helpline: 081 578 6636.



Work underway to establish fund to support women entrepreneurs

President Cyril Ramaphosa says work is underway to establish a gender collaborative fund to support women entrepreneurs to scale their businesses..

Speaking at the second Women Economic Assembly (WECONA), which was held under the theme; "Unlocking gender-responsive value

chains for a resilient economy," the President revealed that the automotive sector has also come on board.

He said that the Automotive Industry Transformation Fund has committed to spending 30% of the overall budget to advancing gender transformation in the industry, amounting to a total of around R1.6 billion

over five years.

Meanwhile, eight of the 13 transformation businesses supported by the fund in 2022 have been women-owned.

"The automotive sector has highlighted its commitment towards the meaningful capacity building to establish a pipeline of women leaders and owners, including a dealership

development programme."

At the Gender Lens Investment Summit held in July 2022, the Industrial Development Corporation committed R9 billion towards gender lens investing, while the Public Investment Corporation committed R12.5 billion.

"As the term implies, gender lens investing is an approach

that considers gender-based factors across the investment process to advance gender equality and better inform investment decisions."

He also highlighted the agriculture sector as a valued partner, committing to establishing a localised manufacturing infrastructure that will support women-owned businesses and build capacity and skills through training programmes.

"We are committed to using the policy and legislative tools at our disposal, such as employment equity legislation and laws that outlaw discrimination, to improve women's representation in executive leadership and address the gender pay gap."

Poverty

The President told delegates that the assembly was taking place as the country implements the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan to grow the economy, support livelihoods, create jobs and

recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"And while the pandemic may be in abeyance, unemployment is not," he stressed.

He said the pandemic's devastating impact on lives, jobs and livelihoods lost will continue to be felt for some time to come, while women continue to bear the brunt.

"We know that more women are unemployed than men."

According to the President, in the second quarter of 2022, 47% of South African women aged between 15 and 64 years were recorded as economically inactive.

"This means that almost half of the working-age women in South Africa are out of the labour force compared to 36% of their male counterparts," he said, adding that poverty is higher among women.

He called on WECONA to produce outcomes that uplift, empower and expand women's access to all levers of the economy.



Procurement

Meanwhile, he said the Black Economic Empowerment Act, 2003 (Act 53 of 2003) cannot be separated from women's economic empowerment.

"We cannot transform racial patterns of ownership of the economy without changing gendered ownership patterns and control. This is what the Women Economic Assembly is all about, to change this."

The President acknowledged that, in some areas, the country has gone backwards, especially on issues like black management control, skills development, and giving opportunities to black women by broadening procurement.

"For this reason, as government, we introduced the target of 40% of public sector procurement for women-owned businesses."

He encouraged all sectors of the economy to commit to

procuring more from women-owned businesses.

"Indeed, building gender-responsive value chains is critical to a resilient economy because no economy can grow or thrive so long as half the population is excluded from it."

For sustainability, government has set and implemented targets for gender transformation and the procurement of goods and services.

Government has since trained nearly 6 000 out of the 10 000 targeted women-owned businesses in essential business skills to qualify in the tender process.

The President launched the inaugural WECONA in October 2021 from one of the pillars of the National Strategic Plan on gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF), which advocates the economic empowerment of women to end GBVF in South Africa. – SAnews.gov.za





Economic recovery plan makes progress

October 2022 marked two years since the country instated the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP) – a plan that puts the focus on programmes being implemented by government and social partners to stimulate equitable and inclusive growth.

President Cyril Ramaphosa announced details of the plan,

which aims to steer the country back to desirable growth levels in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, at a hybrid joint sitting of the Houses of Parliament.

The ERRP was developed, in the short term, to preserve lives through supporting livelihoods, distressed firms and financial systems, and healthcare.

In the long term, the ERRP focuses on economic recovery and reconstruction to be implemented by government and social partners to stimulate equitable and inclusive growth.

Recently, government, through the Economic Sectors, Investment, Employment and Infrastructure Development Cluster gave a progress report on interventions contained in

the plan.

While the world continues its recovery from the pandemic, South Africa has experienced economic stagnation, which has put a strain on moves to tackle the historical structural economic challenges of inequality, unemployment and poverty. COVID-19 has exacerbated the country's social and economic situation.

Owing to the fact that the world does not stand still, the update was given at a time when the Russia/Ukraine conflict (and subsequent sanctions) have renewed the surge in global inflation, weighing on global demand.

Higher inflation is eroding purchasing power, leading to higher interest rates, discouraging and delaying investment and hiring. In addition, fuel prices have increased dramatically, mainly on the back of increasing oil prices due to a resurgence in global demand and the Russian conflict with Ukraine, among others.

The report focused on eight pillars implemented by various government departments. While the plan is a collaborative initiative from government and social partners, the update did not include the inputs of social partners.

Under the pillar of Macro-Economic Interventions, progress made included the raising of the licensing threshold for embedded generation. In June 2021, government raised the licensing threshold for new embedded generation projects from 1 megawatt (MW) to 100 MW, thus removing the licensing requirement for generation projects up to 100 MW that are connected to the



electricity grid. Subsequently, amendments to the country's Schedule 2 of the Electricity Regulation Act, 2006 (Act 4 of 2006), which would enable the change, were published by the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy in August 2021.

Other achievements made include the restructuring of Eskom into separate entities for generation, transmission and distribution. Government also concluded the country's first high-demand spectrum auction in April 2022. In addition, work continues on the review of the policy framework and processes for work visas, which had experienced some delays in implementation.

"Much progress has been made but we do believe that a lot of work needs to be done," said the cluster.

Energy security

The report noted that Eskom plant performance has continued to deteriorate, implying increased risk of frequent and higher stages of load shedding. The other challenges experienced include the sabotage, theft and vandalism of energy infrastructure as well as additional capacity procurement delays due to permitting/regulatory approval and procurements process and environmental authorisations.

However, there were some positive steps taken. This includes the announcement of preferred bidders for Bid Window 5 of the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (REIPPPP). The programme is aimed at bringing additional MW onto

the country's electricity system through private sector investment in wind, biomass and small hydro, among others. In Bid Window 5, a total of 25 preferred bidders, with a generation capacity of 2 583 MW, were announced, with the projects' commercial closure set for 2025.

In September 2022, government announced that it has increased the wind energy allocation for the REIPPPP Bid Window 6 from 2 600 MW to 3 200 MW. The procurement allocations now stand at 3 200 MW for wind energy and 1 000 MW sought from solar energy suppliers. This was due to the urgent need for increased capacity in the electricity system as the country has been experiencing bouts of load shedding.

Employment

The update also showed that with an investment of R23.5 billion, government was able to cushion unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was done through the Presidential Employment Stimulus (PES).

The programme has to date benefitted 960 972 people, 84% of which are youth and 58% female.

A total of 726 638 (83% of the target) jobs were created, 235 92 (75% of target) livelihoods supported, and 40 526 (67% of the target) jobs retained. Using direct public investment, the PES supports job creation, job protection and livelihood support programmes, as part of a wider economic recovery progress.

Industrialisation and growth

Among the interventions named by government is the renewed support to grow South African businesses through industrialisation, localisation and export promotion, thus helping businesses to thrive and expand.

To date, nine sector masterplans have been completed and are under full implementation, while two others have been completed and are awaiting approval. In addition, eight masterplans are being developed in consultation with various stakeholders.

The report also noted that approximately R80 billion has been invested in six of the masterplans.

In addition, as of 2022, R546.1 million was disbursed to support 58 small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs), creating 3 211 jobs. In addition, R423.4 million was disbursed to 56 SMMEs.

Green economy and food security

Support for SMMEs and cooperatives in the green economy saw the creation of 13 034 work opportunities in the natural resources management portfolio, including Working for Water; Working for Wetlands; Working on Fire, Forestry and Working for the Coast. It also includes environmental protection and biodiversity infrastructure projects.

The report found that the

number of people employed in the agricultural sector increased by 6.6% in the first quarter of 2022.

Tourism

Achievements were also realised in the tourism sector – one of the eight areas covered in the ERRP.

The report noted a substantial increase in international tourist arrivals in the first quarter of 2022 compared to the first quarter of 2021.

“Total tourism international arrivals increased by 162% in first quarter of 2022, compared to the first quarter of 2021,” noted the report. In the two years of its existence, the plan is changing the country's landscape.

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Start with one dose J & J	1 dose J&J	60 days	1st booster J&J or Pfizer	90 days	2nd booster J&J or Pfizer	120 days	3rd booster Pfizer
	1st dose	Interval	2nd dose	Interval	Booster 1	Interval	Booster 2
Start with two doses Pfizer	1st dose Pfizer	21 days	2nd dose Pfizer	90 days	1st booster J&J or Pfizer	120 days	2nd booster Pfizer

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Government responds to citizens' concerns

With the Presidential Imbizo having passed through five provinces already, government is paying attention and taking steps to address concerns raised by citizens.

The *izimbizo* provide a platform for the President to engage with communities on their experiences of daily life and service delivery by government. To date, President

Cyril Ramaphosa has visited five provinces – North West, the Free State, Mpumalanga, Gauteng and the Northern Cape, where he interacted with residents.

This follows the commitment he made to engage with communities throughout the country in his 2022 State of the Nation Address.

The platform builds on the District Development Model

(DDM), which calls for greater cooperation between citizens and public representatives.

The DDM embodies an approach by which the three spheres of government and state entities work in unison in an impact-oriented way, and where there is higher performance and accountability for coherent service delivery and development outcomes.

At the inaugural Imbizo in

March 2022, the President spent some time with young innovators at the Mafikeng Digital Innovation Hub, where they shared their inventive ideas with hopes that one day, with the help of government, they will come to fruition. The hub was established in 2020, following the call by the President to expand township digital hubs which would incubate new businesses.

At the second part of the Imbizo held at Mmabatho Stadium in North West, President Ramaphosa said that government would place more focus on service delivery.

The inaccessibility of roads in some villages was among the sore points raised by com-



munities. Since the President's visit, some progress has been made, with 48 km of gravel road having been bladed from Swartkopfontein to Lekgopung.

Substance abuse was another issue that was raised at the Imbizo and this has been responded to with weekly awareness campaigns held at schools, churches and communities. The campaigns focus on gender-based violence and femicide, bullying and the prevention of priority crimes. In addition, the North West Education Department has conducted over 20 awareness programmes to address substance abuse and drug peddling by learners.

Residents also wanted to see upgrades of the Mmabatho Stadium, of which work to renovate the VIP centre, ablution blocks in the main stadium and change rooms is underway.

Another Imbizo was held at the Mangaung Metro in the Free State. Like in the North

West, drug abuse was flagged as an area of concern and, to date, substance abuse awareness campaigns have been carried out in addition to a door-to-door awareness campaign on substance abuse carried out at Riverside.

Unemployment was also another bugbear expressed by residents of Wepener. The community also expressed concern at inaccessible small scale mining opportunities to which the provincial Department of Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs will assist interested small scale mining applicants.

Concern was also raised around livestock theft in Thaba Nchu and Botshabelo. To respond to this, 300 tracking devices were installed on different farms and commonages around the areas. In addition, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has acquired two security drones

for livestock surveillance. The communities also received bulls for livestock improvement.

Infrastructure

Likewise as in the other provinces, residents in Mpumalanga expressed concern over the status of roads. To address this, tarred roads in Mkhuhlu, Thulamahashe, Dwarsloop and Shatale will be rehabilitated to the tune of R50 million in the 2022/23 financial year.

Added to that, R10 million has been set aside to construct culverts that link villagers with amenities. A request for a footbridge near Ekuphumuleni Primary School was also made, with the promise that this would be constructed in this financial year.

Residents also raised concern with a lack of electricity in Klipfontein, Ward 21 to which a letter to Eskom requesting the electrification of the area has been made.

Improving the lives of residents

The fourth instalment of the Presidential Imbizo was held

in August at the Sharpeville Cricket Grounds in Gauteng.

Housing, sewerage, poor service delivery and unemployment were highlighted by residents as some of the key areas that government should urgently address to improve their lives.

Responding to questions and challenges raised by the residents, President Ramaphosa said although the district and the country as a whole faces challenges, government is determined to resolve these.

During the fifth Imbizo held in Upington, Northern Cape in October, the President reaffirmed government's commitment to leave no one behind in delivering basic services. He assured residents that all three spheres of government are dealing with service delivery challenges and issues they face.

Throughout the course of the five *izimbizo* held to date, the President has listened to the complaints and concerns raised by residents and while it will take some time to address all the concerns raised, action is being taken. – SAnews.gov.za



Farmers' market ready

The sun is out, and we have lots to do this summer. Farmers' markets are a good weekend morning past time to grab brunch or stock up on some fresh produce for the week ahead. We want to be out and about enjoying the summer days and we like to do it whilst looking good. We have put together a nice cost-effective outfit for a day out in the sun.



1



2



3

1. Woolworths Print Tiered Puff Sleeve Maxi Dress: R899.

2. Ginger Mary Green lace Up Sandal: R440.

3. CHPO Sarah Sunglasses – Black: R219 available at www.superbalist.com

4. Mr Price Fedora Hat– Oatmeal: R99.99.

5. Superbalist Aurora Crossbody Bag – Black: R399 available at www.superbalist.com

* Prices correct at the time of publishing.



4



5



- 6. Oakridge Navy Golfer: **R119.99** available at Mr Price.
- 7. Woolworths Colour Block Slim Fit Mid Length Swim Shorts: **R299**.
- 8. Adidas Gazelles Super Pop/Shadow Red/White: **R1 599** available at www.adidas.co.za
- 9. Superbalist Seth Round Glasses Black: **R199** available at www.superbalist.com
- 10. Mr Price Baseball Cap – Navy: **R69.99**.

** Prices correct at the time of publishing.*



Light and breezy summer fare

It's finally Summer – which means the weather calls for light, easy meals that are fulfilling and refreshing. Bring on the delicious salads and summer ingredients because it's about to get yummy. We have gathered some of the easiest recipes from chef **Christine Capendale** for a menu she designed for the Disney show *Cookabout*. Bon Appetite!

Chicken, Apple, Grape and Walnut Salad with Yoghurt Dressing

Ingredients:

- 2 free range chicken breast fillets.
- 15 ml olive oil.
- 100 g seedless green and black grapes (mixed and halved).
- 30 ml thinly sliced celery.
- 20 g chopped walnuts.
- 1 green apple (peeled, cored and cubed).
- 60 ml low-fat greek yoghurt.
- 20 ml reduced fat sour cream.
- 5 ml lime juice.
- 1 ml lime zest.
- 5 ml chopped chives.
- salt and pepper for seasoning.
- extra chives, grapes and lime wedges for garnish.

*Serves two

Method:

- Place the chicken fillets between two plastic bags and use a meat mallet to flatten slightly.
- Brush the fillets with 5ml of the olive oil and season with salt and pepper.
- Heat a griddle pan on high heat and grill the chicken fillets for about 3 minutes on each side until cooked and golden brown.
- Remove from the heat and keep to the side to cool. Heat a frying pan on medium heat. Add walnuts and roast it until crisp and golden brown – this will only take a few minutes.
- Be careful not to burn the nuts. Remove from pan and cool.
- Mix the following ingredients together to make your salad dressing: Greek yo-

ghurt, sour cream, lime juice and zest, chopped chives and the rest of the olive oil. Mix well.

- Cut the chicken fillets into strips and mix with the grapes, celery, walnuts and the apple.
- Stir the yoghurt dressing through the salad and dish up into two plates.
- Garnish with extra chives, grapes and lime wedges.
- This salad is delicious once ice-cold, a few hours after you've made it, so feel free to refrigerate once cooled.

Olive Tapenade Crunch Lamb CUTLETS – Served with Olive, fig and Baby Mozzarella Salad

Ingredients:

- 4 trimmed lamb cutlets (chops).
- 15 ml olive tapenade.



- 50 ml flour.
- 2 eggs (beaten).
- 150 ml breadcrumbs.
- 15 g finely grated parmesan cheese.
- salt and pepper for seasoning only.
- 20 ml olive oil.
- 120 g baby figs (halved).
- 20 g baby salad leaves.
- 60 g kalamata olives.
- 90 g bocconcini cheese (baby mozzarella).
- ½ avocado (peeled and sliced).
- 7.5 ml reduced balsamic vinegar.

*Serves two

Method:

- Spread the olive tapenade evenly over the lamb cutlets.
- Mix together the breadcrumbs & grated parmesan cheese and place on a plate.
- Coat the lamb cutlets with flour, shake off excess flour and then dip into the egg mixture.
- Coat the lamb cutlets with the breadcrumb mixture.
- Heat 15 ml of the olive oil in a frying pan on medium heat and cook the lamb cutlets about 5 minutes on each side. Drain on paper towel.
- While the lamb cutlets cook

- make the salad by combining the figs, salad leaves, olives, avocado slices and the bocconcini cheese.
- Drizzle 5 ml olive oil and reduced balsamic vinegar over the salad.

Yankee Barbecue Beef Burger with Tomato Pesto Relish and Gherkins

Ingredients:

- 2 small whole wheat burger buns, cut in half and lightly toasted.
- 20 ml breadcrumbs.
- 30 ml water.
- 200 g extra lean beef mince.
- 1 ml chopped chili.
- 10 ml Worcester sauce.
- 1.25 ml salt.
- 1.25 ml barbecue seasoning.
- freshly ground black pepper.
- 1 small clove garlic (crushed).
- 10 ml chopped parsley.
- 40 ml beaten egg.
- 20 ml olive oil.
- 30 ml finely chopped tomato.
- 30 ml tomato pesto*.
- Pinch smoked chili flakes.
- 15 ml tomato sauce.
- 50 ml cooked, caramelized onion.
- 2 slices tomato.
- sliced gherkin.

- baby lettuce.
- *Tomato Pesto (can use store-bought or make your own)
- 150 g drained sundried tomatoes (store-bought will be fine).
- 4 garlic cloves, crushed.
- chilli to taste (you can use chilli flakes or freshly chopped chillies).
- 10 ml brown sugar.
- 70 ml olive oil.
- salt and black pepper to taste.

*Serves two

Method:

- Mix the breadcrumbs and 30 ml water together in a small bowl.
- Mix the beef mince, chopped chili, Worcester sauce, salt, barbecue seasoning, black pepper, garlic, parsley, beaten egg and the breadcrumb and water mixture together. Mix well.
- Make the pesto by combine all the ingredients and use a stick blender to make the pesto. Season to taste. Keep aside.
- Divide the beef into two portions and shape into patties of about 1.5 cm thick – using a little water on your hands.
- Heat olive oil in a frying pan

on medium heat and cook the patties on both sides until cooked and browned.

- Mix the chopped tomato, pesto, smoked chili flakes and the tomato sauce to make a quick relish.
- Spread the relish on the bottom halves of the hamburger buns, top with caramelized onion, gherkins, tomato slices, baby salad leaves and lastly the patties.
- Add the top halves of the burger buns and secure with a skewer.





The cosy Christmas markets of Edinburgh

When thinking of Christmas markets, complete with wonderfully decorated stalls, hot chocolate and glühwein to keep you warm against the cold, and beautiful trinkets for gift shopping, it's destinations like Germany and France that normally spring to mind. However, the historical city of Edinburgh in Scotland is proving to be a wonderful destination to get into the Christmas spirit. Sam Bradley, who visited the last Christmas markets in December 2021, explores further.

Once in Edinburgh it won't take long to feel festive: every street seems to be adorned with historic stone buildings, ancient cobbled streets and an abundance of delightfully warm and cosy pubs and restaurants. The early sunsets and cold temperatures only add to the atmosphere, and

there's also a decent chance of snowfall adding to the sense of magic. And it certainly doesn't hurt that the city goes all out to get into the festive spirit, with an abundance of artfully decorated Christmas trees.

Attractions

The Edinburgh Christmas market is on East Princes Street Gardens, right in the heart of the city and is overlooked by the magnificent castle. There's lots to keep everyone entertained, from shopping for quirky gifts such as wind spinners, Christmas tree decorations and historic maps, to enjoying a mulled wine, or a Big Wheel ride for those feeling brave. The children will love Santa Land, bumper cars, the Christmas tree maze, a reindeer carousel and Santa's grotto, and there's also an ice rink nearby on George Street.

Ancient city

It's impossible to visit Edinburgh and not soak in the history of the city. From ancient stone buildings and narrow alleyways, to cemeteries which were targeted by graverobbers in the 1800s, reminders of the past are never far away. The Royal Mile is bordered by Edinburgh Castle on one end and The Palace of Holyroodhouse

on the other, both well worth a tour. While Holyroodhouse is the official royal residence in Edinburgh (guests can visit the State apartments), for me the most memorable part of the tour was visiting the chambers of Mary Queen of Scots, especially the room where her secretary was gruesomely murdered by a group of power-hungry Scottish lords. For



those planning a tour of Edinburgh Castle, it may be worth combining it with the *Castle of Light: Hidden Treasures* show which runs every evening in December.

Land of whiskey

Scotland is also known as the land of whisky, so those interested in a wee dram and a tour don't have to look far. The Johnnie Walker experience on Princes Street provides an interactive way to learn about the country's national drink, including shows, demos and, excitingly, the chance to make your own drinks at the end. Holyrood Distillery is another option that provides a fascinating tour of their whisky and gin making distillery, led by passionate guides and interspersed with generous tastings throughout the tour.

There are many historic restaurants in Edinburgh, allowing visitors to fill those rumbling stomachs and take a step into the past at the same time. One of those is The Sheep Heid Inn, established in 1360 – Scotland's oldest surviving public house. The menu is exciting and the food

is substantial and satisfying, and while you eat you can roll a few balls in the beautifully restored Victorian-era ten-pin bowling alley (although you'll need to manually restack the pins yourself). Over on The New Town side, the afternoon tea at The Register Club (on the fourth floor of Cheval the Edinburgh Grand) is a treat not to be missed – be sure to try some of the delicious cocktails. If you happen to indulge in a few too many and need to stay a little longer, there are 50 stylish apartments right there to choose from.

Accommodation

All that eating, exploring and shopping can be tiring on the feet, so choosing an accommodation option close to the city centre is a wise idea. The 74 self-catering apartments of the Cheval Old Town Chambers are ideally located right on the Royal Mile and come with decadent rooms and a lovely kitchen, while on the ground floor there is a roaring fireplace and cute Christmas decorations in a cosy reception area. There is also the delightful Luckenbooths restaurant as



an alternative dining option to the self-catering facilities. Further down the Royal Mile, the Cheval Abbey Strand apartments at Holyrood, renovated from a historic 15th century building, also contains nine beautiful apartments of various sizes and layouts.

Best of all is that once Christ-

mas has gone, there is still something to look forward to: Hogmanay (New Year's Eve) is an important occasion in Scotland. It involves a three-day party, including torchlight processions, outdoor street concerts and parties, providing the perfect excuse to extend your stay.

Need to know:

This year, the Christmas markets are scheduled for **19 November 2022 to 3 January 2023.**



Howto

Report Crime Tip-Offs

1

Download MySAPS or
Dial *134*10111#
and follow prompts

2

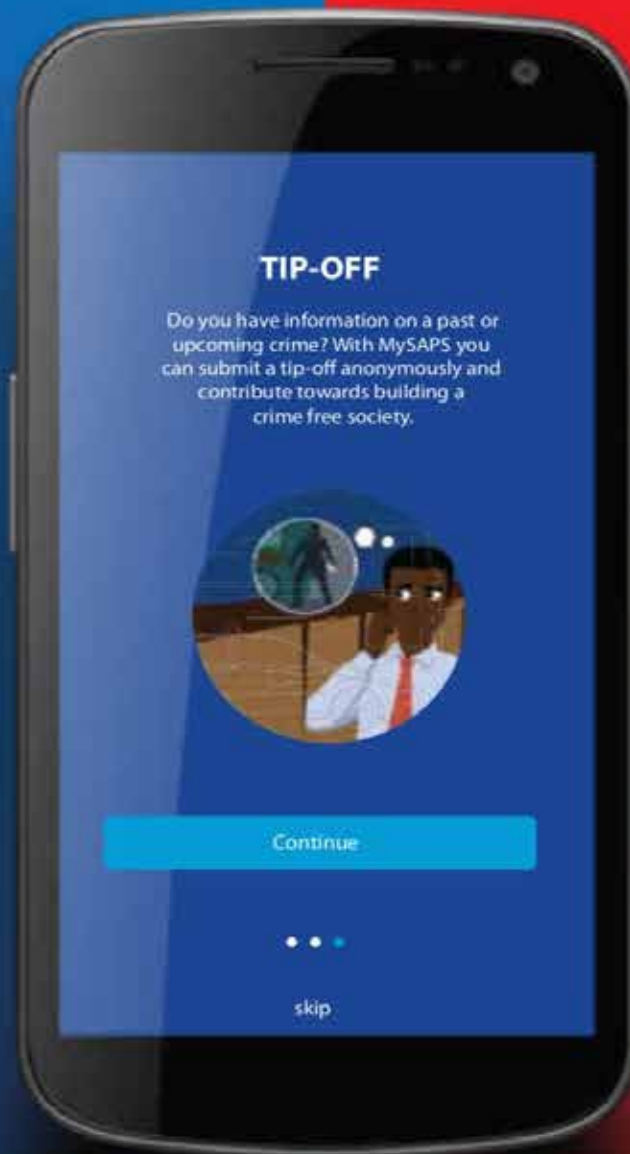
Select the Submit Tip-Off icon

3

Select the type of incident
you're reporting

4

SAPS will contact you ASAP
with further details



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