

PublicSector

M A N A G E R

Pretty Makukule

excellence,
dedication and
clean audits

CGE Chairperson

championing
gender quality

*Celebrating
Women's
Month*



Contents: July 2023

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Uplifting women through socio-economic empowerment

South African women have come a long way since 9 August 1956, when more than 20 000 women of all races marched to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to protest against pass laws aimed at restricting free movement.

Many rights and freedoms being enjoyed by women today were not available to their mothers, grandmothers and great-grandmothers during the apartheid era. Gender equality is now embedded in the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996* and the *Bill of Rights*. In contrast to the past when their only option was to protest against discriminatory policies, today's women have the right and responsibility to participate in the development of laws.

Despite the progress made over the past decades to achieve gender equality, South African women still face numerous challenges such as gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF), HIV and AIDS, unemployment, pay disparities and poverty.

The 2023 Women's Month is commemorated under the

theme: "Accelerating Socio-economic Opportunities for Women's Empowerment." The theme acknowledges the reality that until women achieve financial freedom and personal empowerment, they will struggle to overcome the challenges linked to their socio-economic conditions, and gender inequality will persist until patriarchy is eliminated.

Women's Month allows us

to evaluate the status quo of women in a democratic South Africa. While acknowledging the significant strides that have been made over the past years, we must also be mindful of the mammoth work that still needs to be done to achieve the total emancipation of women.

For instance, the recently released World Economic Forum's (WEF) 2023 *Global Gender Gap*

Index ranks South Africa 20th out of 146 countries. It shows that we performed well in political empowerment, ranking 13th (9th for women in Parliament and 13th for women in ministerial positions).

The WEF report ranks South Africa 81st in respect of female economic participation and opportunity and 111th out of 146 countries in respect of pay par-



ity. Only 32% of women occupy managerial positions in South Africa.

The recent Banyana Banyana protest for pay parity highlighted that even top-level sports-women receive less money than their male counterparts.

While the country's progressive workplace legislation still promote and protect the rights of women, institutional bias against their capabilities and commitment perpetuates subtle discrimination.

Statistics reveal that more girls than boys pass matric and achieve distinctions, and that about 58% of university students across all population groups are female. Yet this does not translate to workplace parity, with men still dominating the top spots and earning more than their female counterparts for the same job. The Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) occupations are expected to grow in importance and scope in the future. The STEM workforce is currently dominated by men. The Statistics South Africa's *Gender Series Volume IX: Women Empowerment, 2017–2022* indicates that male dominance of the STEM workforce may be attributed to females preferring careers in arts, hospitality and education.

The public sector has an obligation to advance gender equality. The 8-Principle Action Plan promotes women's empowerment and gender equality in the workplace, ensuring that no one is left behind. The remarkable results show that over 60% of the Public Service workforce is female and women occupy 44% of senior management positions.

As we commemorate Women's Month, let us, as decision-makers in the public sector, evaluate our commitment to the plan and implement meaningful change, not only through gender employment ratios but also closing all gender gaps. This should include education. We must promote STEM occupations amongst female learners and students.

Adequate resources must be deployed to schools to ensure a high standard of teaching and learning of STEM subjects without undermining the importance of other subjects. Parents, educators and caregivers must empower women, particularly young women, to confidently and relentlessly break gender stereotypes, especially regarding careers and economic participation.

Some of the many government initiatives that promote women's participation in economic activities include the Women Empow-

erment Fund and the National Empowerment Fund, which provide funding to black women who need to enter the world of business. The SheTradeZA Hub helps female entrepreneurs connect to local, regional and international markets.

In addition, over the past three financial years, over R1.1 billion was disbursed to fund women-owned enterprises in the manufacturing, retail and services sectors. In his State of the Nation Address in February 2023, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced that the Industrial Development Corporation had earmarked about R9 billion to invest in women-led businesses.

Over 6 000 women-owned enterprises have benefitted from training programmes to enable them to tender for public contracts, bringing government closer to its target of achieving 40% preferential procurement from women-owned businesses.

The Presidential Employment Stimulus has since 2020 provided work and employment opportunities to more than one million people and over 60% of them are women.

Regarding agriculture, 68% of the 140 000 small-scale farmers who received assistance to buy seeds, fertiliser and equipment were women.

South Africa is co-chairing the

Action Coalition on Economic Justice and Rights, which is part of the United Nations Women's Generation Equality campaign. The coalition aims to promote greater access for women to financial services, business opportunities, land and technology. Government supports the adoption of a Protocol on Women in Trade to promote the participation of women in the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Although GBVF still undermines gender equality in South Africa, the launch of the National Strategic Plan on GBVF in 2020 has resulted in extensive legal reforms being made to protect women's rights. Besides the establishment of the GBVF Response Fund, additional support has been extended to Thuthuzela and Khuseleka Care centres, which provide vital services for GBVF survivors.

Gender equity is feasible provided all sectors of society, particularly boys and men, and women as well, make a concerted effort to uphold it. All of us must become champions of change for a better life for all. Not only must we intensify our fight against GBVF, but we must also eradicate all forms of discrimination against women to ensure their full participation in all socio-economic and political activities.○

Advancing the rights of South Africans through healthcare

Maternal health – which covers the health of women during pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period – is one of the many health challenges affecting women globally. According to the World Health Organization's *Improving Maternal and Newborn Health and Survival and Reducing Stillbirth Progress Report 2023*, "an estimated 4.5 million maternal deaths, newborn deaths and stillbirths still occur globally each year – the vast majority of which are completely preventable". Sub-Saharan Africa, and Central and Southern Asia are reported to have experienced the largest numbers of these deaths. This is a significant matter that we must intensely deal with in South Africa, especially as we mark Women's Month in August.

One of the proposed actions to address the challenge is that "healthcare systems that are synergistic, efficient and integrated are necessary to support quality and respectful care for pregnant women and newborns. This requires strengthening infrastructure, health worker

capacities and competencies, commodity and device availability, and supply chains, referrals and networks of health facilities".

All these point to the right to healthcare, which government intends to strengthen and take to greater heights through the National Health Insurance (NHI) – a health financing system that is designed to pool funds to provide access to quality affordable personal health services for all South Africans based on their health needs, irrespective of their socio-economic status.

The NHI seeks to ensure that access to health services does not impose financial hardships on individuals and their families. It will also ensure that the country achieves universal health coverage in line with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

In June, the National Assembly passed the NHI Bill, paving the way for the establishment of the NHI Fund and the setting out of its powers, functions and governance structures.

The Bill will also create mechanisms for the equitable,



Nomonde Mnukwa,
Acting GCIS
Director-General.

effective and efficient use of the resources of the fund, to meet the health needs of users and preclude undesirable, unethical and unlawful practices in relation to the fund. It further seeks to address barriers to access, in line with the National Development Plan: Vision 2030, which envisages to overcome the triple challenge of poverty, unemployment and inequality.

It will result in citizens having access to medical care (public or private) closer to where they live or work without paying for those services.

Government has also come up with initiatives aimed at improving the conditions of public

facilities, including the allocation of R7.2 billion over three years to facilitate maintenance, refurbishment, upgrades, replacements of old infrastructure and building new infrastructure.

Government has put measures in place to prevent the possibility of corruption getting on the way of this system. The fund's measures involve establishing and operating a unit that focuses on preventing, detecting, investigating and correcting fraud and corruption.

As former President Nelson Mandela once remarked: "We must ensure that treatment is made available to those who need it, most especially to those who cannot afford it. Health cannot be a question of income; it is a fundamental human right". The NHI is aimed at achieving the dream of equal access to healthcare.

As the public sector, especially government communicators, let us communicate accurate information on the NHI to demystify the falsehood being published on various platforms. It is our duty to ensure an informed citizenry and push back the frontiers of fake and misleading information. **O**

For more information on how the fund will work, visit www.sanews.gov.za/features-south-africa/national-health-insurance-all-you-need-know

CHOLERA PREVENTION



USE AND DRINK SAFE WATER

Treat or sterilize the water before drinking or cooking

HOW TO TREAT OR STERILIZE WATER

- BOIL:**
- Bring water to boiling point for at least 1 minute.
 - Boiling water is an effective way of making water safe.
- TREAT:**
- Put 1 teaspoon of household bleach into 25 litres of water.
 - Put 2 drops of household bleach in 1 litre of water.
 - Wait for 30 minutes before use.
 - Always store your treated water in a clean, covered container.

WASH YOUR HANDS WITH SOAP AND WATER

Ensure proper hand hygiene

- Before, during, and after preparing food.
- Before and after eating food or feeding your children.
- After using the toilet.
- After cleaning your child's bottom.
- After taking care of someone who is sick with diarrhoea.



ALWAYS BOIL, COOK, AND PEEL WHAT YOU EAT

Cook food well and keep it covered

- Eat foods that have been thoroughly cooked and are still hot
- Peel fruits and vegetables.
- Be sure to cook seafood, especially shellfish, until it is very hot all the way through.
- Avoid raw vegetables and fruits that cannot be peeled.

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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Strengthening leadership

vital for effective service delivery

Strengthened leadership in the Public Service can go a long way in the effective provision of services, said Mali-jeng Ngqaleni, National Treasury Deputy Director-General (DDG) responsible for Intergovernmental Relations.

The Public Service oracle made the observation in July, as the curtain fell on a year-long coaching programme aimed at transforming provincial treasuries' executive leadership and management.

In 2022, National Treasury introduced a leadership coaching course for senior managers in the provincial treasuries to improve the individual and collective performance and productivity of senior management, as well as to set the correct tone by implementing sound performance management processes. The programme was conducted by professional services firm PwC.

Participants included heads of provincial treasuries and other senior managers.

The coaching intervention was aimed at strengthening individual and organisational capacity supporting the development of an enabling environment; and enhancing organisational collective capacity.

It also sought to cultivate the development and empowering of a corps of competent and committed high-performance managers; and create an environment that enables and sustains mutually beneficial stakeholder relationships.

In an interview with *Public Sector Manager* magazine, Ngqaleni noted that while government had in the past experienced "seasons of plenty", the State was unable to use the purple patch to 'truly transform the society to make it more equitable'.

"We are still the most highly

unequal society in the world," Ngqaleni lamented.

It is this cavity that the programme sought to address. Professionalising the public sector, she said, would go a long way in turning the tide.

"As government, we realise that we need to do more with less," she said, adding that government needed to optimally utilise the limited resources at its disposal.

"But we know that we are not

doing very well," she conceded. "[On] public financial management, reports show that we are not doing very well."

Innovative leadership

In addition to taking stock of prevailing challenges, there was a need to modernise procurement and financial management systems. She reiterated the need for government to be holistic in its support of





DDG Ngqaleni (centre) with officials who completed the coaching programme.

“Leadership is more than a position. It is quite key in actually enhancing organisational efficiency and ensuring that we are responsive during these disruptive times of crisis and chaos.”

treasuries to address areas of concern.

This, Ngqaleni said, includes “sharpening our leadership so that it can be the kind that can drive transformation”.

“We are leading in very uncertain times, very disruptive changes that sometimes come from the external that we have to grapple with.

“We are also challenging the organisational culture that we have in our own departments. We are leading in a compliance-driven environment, especially as treasuries. The kind of problems that we have cannot be solved by the kind of tools and protocols that we have,” she insisted.

To navigate these prevailing challenges, she argues that leaders need innovative and creative approaches.

“How do you become that in an environment that is compliance-driven? How do you learn to stretch and navigate complexities in that environment? So that is the question.

And it is a leadership question. We have got problems of silos, and silos are a problem because it means that you are not optimising on the value of the team,” she said.

Navigating leadership challenges

The DDG noted that leaders in the public sector are also faced with the challenge of employees with low morale, adding that a combination of increased austerity measures and the cancellation of performance bonuses by government were making it harder to motivate employees.

“How do we motivate them without incentives? ...We have burnout – there is a lot of indifference in the public sector. So, how do we get people to buy into the cause of transforming this country? And, that is a leadership question”.

With the coaching programme, she said, National

Treasury hopes some inroads will be made in turning the tide.

“That will help us to address these organisational culture issues so that we can get better results. This coaching intervention is meant to be a catalyst to strengthen individuals and teams,” she explains.

She added that leadership is an important aspect in ensuring that organisations transform in unison.

“Leadership is active. It happens; you exercise it, you drive things – it is the ability to get people to follow you. People cannot follow you if they have not bought into the cause that you stand for. Leadership is more than a position. It is quite key in actually enhancing organisational efficiency and ensuring that we are responsive during these disruptive times of crisis and chaos.”

The question of effective leadership in recent times

gained prominence with the realisation of how it had the ability to change lives, she said.

“It starts with self-leadership; that is the beginning of good leadership, to focus on the inside so that you become more influential on the outside,” she explained.

The DDG also emphasised the importance of leaders acknowledging diversity in the workplace, adding that it is critical to harness and embrace its “effectiveness”.

She revealed that National Treasury is embracing coaching as a key tool to unlock organisational results and address issues of individualism and a lack of collaborative leadership towards the collective achievement of organisational goals.

Ngqaleni expressed gratitude for the positive uptake of the training by provincial departments that ensured “that the programme implementation was a great success”. ○

Stickler for detail CFO

embodies
dedication

Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) chief financial officer (CFO), Pretty Makukule, has come full circle in the education sector.

The qualified chartered accountant from Bushbuckridge has gone from being a National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) beneficiary to unlocking the doors of opportunity for youths seeking to escape the clutches of poverty.

The hubbub of the Pretoria central business district looms large in the background as Makukule reminisces her journey from her modest eighth floor office on 123 Francis Baard Street – home of the DHET.

With R133 billion allocated to the DHET for the 2023/24 financial year, the 43-year-old holds the purse strings of one of



government's largest budgets. A bulk of this is allocated to the NSFAS.

Unfazed by the plummeting temperatures, the stickler for detail, draped in a warm royal blue garb, exudes passion for the mammoth task at her disposal during an interview with *Public Sector Manager* (PSM) magazine.

Dedication and commitment

Makukule's dedication to her work is beyond reproach as evidenced by the recognition she gets from her sector – two feathers that were recently added to her cap are a testament to her commitment.

In August 2023, the African Women Chartered Accountants Forum bestowed Makukule with the Public Sector CFO of the Year Award.

She is also the only female finalist in the Public Sector category for the CFO Awards to be held in November. She is among 23 nominees vying for the overall CFO of the Year Award.

"Achieving this is never easy. As a CFO you must be an enabler for service delivery, not a stumbling block. The department I am working for cannot be found wanting on compliance under my watch.

Balancing that has been the most challenging thing," she says, sternly.

Makukule was initially seconded to the DHET as an interim measure in August 2020. At the time, she was the CFO of the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI).

She recalled that when she was at the DSI, she had to transform a demotivated team that had experienced bouts of short spells by her predecessors.

"During her five-year stint, the DSI secured five successive clean audits. Prior to this, the milestone had only been achieved in two intermittent financial years".

Her hard work paid off when the department got a clean audit.

"For me, a clean audit must be a consequence of your good controls. It must also happen because the controls are solid, you have developed an enabling environment because you must be able to have a balance between a clean audit and service delivery," she illustrated.

During her five-year stint,

the DSI secured five successive clean audits. Prior to this, the milestone had only been achieved in two intermittent financial years. A culmination of this was the department being recognised as the Best Functioning National Department at the 2020 Batho Pele Awards.

"When I came in, it was evident to me that the controls were there but they were not sustainable and were not

solid. We must not do things because the auditors say that, but let us go to the bottom line – how should things be done?" she insisted.

With the department maintaining its clean audits streak since her departure, Makukule today looks back with pride on having left behind a well-oiled machine.

The astute technocrat's secondment to the DHET was initially on an interim basis.

"At the time, it felt like it would be a two-week arrangement but, before we knew it, it was 12 months," she recalled.

Despite the portfolio of the DHET being about 12 times bigger than the one from the DSI, the deeply spiritual chartered accountant was unperturbed.

"[At the DSI] I had 35 team members. Here it is 150 team members...we have 115 institutions and entities [the biggest in government]," she explained.

In 2021, she was appointed on a permanent basis.

Untangling an intricate web of issues at the DHET was not a measly task for Makukule.

"Coming in during the audit [process] really helped. As much as it hurts, we were at least able to pick up issues."

"I just had to build on what had already been built. But I am one person who believes that even the best systems in the world need to be improved. Even in the best process, I still find some opportunity to fine-tune," she said.

Accountability

Having found her feet and making a level of impact on the department in the past two years, she said she has managed to inculcate a culture of accountability in the depart-

ment's finance team.

She counts having an impact on the department's funding disparities as one of her biggest achievements to date.

"When I came in, there was this mentality that 'oh no, CETs (community education and training colleges) came from provinces; they do not have a budget - and that is it'. I said to my team: 'We can not just say there is no budget, we need to do something about it within what we have,'" she said.

The CFO also strives for equitable distribution of resources within the higher education sectors. She recalled that during the COVID-19 pandemic, CETs had no budget for personal protective equipment.

To realise this, Makukule and her team worked on reprioritising the department's budget and identified funds from the universities' infrastructure budget.

While this was a protracted process, Makukule expressed delight that the programme received the required stamp of approval.

Her efforts for the equitable distribution of funds in the sector saw Higher Education and Training Minister, Dr Blade Nzimande, in his 2023/24 Budget Vote, announcing that R1 billion had been secured for the construction of nine community college learning centres over



the next three financial years.

Makukule attributes her success to building a reliable team and empowering it to perform to the best of its abilities.

"...if I had to invest in my people, I can have more time to support the [department] at a strategic level. If my people are not empowered, it means I will be spending more time worried about debt and credit," she said.

As such, she spends about 10% of her time on reconciliations, and checks and balances while the rest of her time is dedicated to operational matters and 'following the money'.

Changing lives

A beneficiary of state-funded further education and training, Makukule values the impact the department has on the lives of

ordinary citizens.

"With education, [impact] is direct and straightforward - you can see the impact," she stated, while conceding that the sector had to contend with a raft of imperfections plaguing it.

"I see it when we allocate students [funding]... some come from humble beginnings where you see that had it not been for state funding, this person would have not have had a breakthrough in their lives," said Makukule, who is also a board member of the NSFAS.

She emphasised the importance of

public servants understanding the importance of the Batho Pele Principles.

"When I joined the public service, I was lucky to be inducted on the Batho Pele Principles. I am lucky to understand what being a public servant means. When you look at the word 'servant' in the dictionary, it is clear - it means to serve others," she added, urging public servants to perform their duties to the best of their abilities.

"After I completed my studies, I went for about a year without a job. My first job was at a bank as a teller where I worked with people with just matric. I held it with a lot of reverence because I understood that I was not entitled," she said.

While she quickly rose up the ranks, the principle of being appreciative of her delegated task has never escaped her. ○



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Preserving the environment while enhancing crops

Enhancing crop quality without causing harm to the environment is a passion job for Dr Busiswa Ndaba, who works as a researcher for the Natural Resources and Engineering unit at the Agricultural Research Council (ARC).

Born and raised in Mount Fletcher in the Eastern Cape, Ndaba's research work focuses

on nano-fertilizers which are used to sustain crops without leaching through into water waste and polluting the environment.

"Nano-fertilizer is like any other fertilizer that is used in gardens or farms to enhance crop quality, but it is different from the bulk chemical fertilizers that we have traditionally

been using because it is easily absorbed by the plant because of its minute size," explained Ndaba.

As researcher at the ARC – a premier science institution that conducts research with partners, develops human capital and fosters innovation to support and develop the agricultural sector – Ndaba is always

looking for innovative ways to sustain agriculture in South Africa.

This is because the ARC also provides advice to the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.

Her job is important because it helps to preserve the environment.

"We need to preserve the environment because it has a direct link to agriculture, and if you ruin agriculture there will be no food for anyone," she said.

Ndaba studied for a Bachelor of Science (General) and Honours in Microbiology at the University of Fort Hare. She then received a Scholarship from the Coega Development Corporation to study for a Master of Chemical Engineering Degree at the North-West University.

"I saw this as a big opportunity for me to grab. Little did I know that I will fall in love with the course, and I just decided to continue with Chemical Engineering until PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) level at the same institution. My PhD studies were funded by the National Research Foundation," she said.

Her PhD studies focused on renewable energy, looking at biofuel production technologies using microbiology and nanotechnology.

Although her studies were different from the job that she is

now doing, she fell in love with nanotechnology while doing her PhD. It inspired her to link nanotechnology to agriculture. That is how the nano-fertilizer project was born.

Ndaba joined the ARC in 2017 through the Professional Development Programme as a student and she was permanently employed in her current position in 2020.

"It has been an exciting journey and a learning curve because I learn from my colleagues, including the students that I mentor, fellow researchers, senior researchers and specialist researchers. We exchange knowledge and information among ourselves in order to achieve organisational goals," she added.

Her key responsibilities include fostering innovation and collaborations, and promoting sustainable agriculture in order to contribute to the ARC's overall mandate. Conducting research is the core of her duty, but she also has to source funds for the research that she does and write proposals so that she can contribute to generating income for the ARC.

Ndaba also mentors students, including two PhD candidates and one master's student.

"Mentoring students is one of the things that I am most

passionate about because I love to transfer skills to the next generation in collaboration with the tertiary institutions where they study," she said.

She does not mentor the students alone, but work with her senior researcher to supervise them.

Furthermore, she works with one of the senior researchers whose main focus is on biogas production, and she is a collaborator in one of the projects she works on, which is about improving biogas for small

holder farmers, and that is how they link renewable energy and agriculture.

Ndaba regards this as her first permanent job because she only worked as an assistant researcher while she was studying for her PhD.

Recognition

This woman in science's dedication to her work has been recognised both locally and internationally.

"...I received the L'Oréal-UNESCO International Award for Women in Science in 2019, and

it came with a grant fund to help us continue with the research that we do," she explained.

The 32-year-old trailblazer was one of the two post-docs who received the award in the country that year.

"It came as a surprise for me, but it just shows how much work our team has put in because this is not only a recognition for me but all team members because I do not do the work alone, I am a mentee and a mentor as well," she explained.

Ndaba was also honoured as

not where I would like to be yet. They keep me grounded and humble. These are also some of my career highlights," she said.

Women in science

Ndaba feels that many women are still scared of exploring certain careers in science, especially those that are deemed jobs for men like agricultural science. This is why she encourages young women to take up opportunities in science.

"Many women focus more on the soft sciences like microbiology and biology related careers. We need more women who are going to wear boots and go work in the farms and fields. The most important thing is to have passion for what you do and everything else will follow," she said.

She calls on women in leadership in the science sector to uplift more women and not shut doors on those below them.

She added that there is a need for more funds to be dedicated to women in science because it is difficult to compete with men who are already established and have been working in the science sector for decades.

"We need more women who are going to wear boots and go work in the farms and fields".

**For more information
about the ARC,
visit www.arc.agric.za**

Sepanya-Mogale

champions gender equality



Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) Chairperson Nthabiseng Sepanya-Mogale is on a quest to achieve a free and equal South Africa in all fundamental and material aspects.

The CGE is a Chapter 9 institution that was set up to strengthen the country's constitutional democracy by promoting and protecting gender equality.

Although government and civil society have made strides in combating gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF), Sepanya-Mogale believes that public education on gender equality issues, including GBVF and violence against LGBTQITA+ persons still needs to be focused on closely. The gains made over the years continue to be undermined and eroded with impunity. Sepanya-Mogale calls for harder punishments for gender-based crimes or any other forms of gender discrimination.

"As we continue with litigation, public education and advocacy. I believe it is also time for South Africa to go beyond that and to work with other sectors of society that continue to hold us back.

“...we must always remind ourselves never to take for granted the reality that many women in South Africa today are able to hold positions and open doors that were previously deemed inaccessible for them”.

Leaders of the traditional and religious sectors must be encouraged to tackle all social ills that happen in communities in the name of culture or religion. Crime is nobody's culture or religion, and it must be stopped,” she said.

She reminded everyone to practice their culture and religion without violating other people's rights.

“We need a concerted effort to achieve gender equality and do away with all forms of discrimination” she added.

As the chairperson of the CGE, Sepanya-Mogale is the strategic leader of the organisation and is tasked with the executive authority functions to steer the commission in the right direction.

She is also responsible for bringing together commissioners to provide leadership alongside herself and ensure that the organisation operates optimally.

“Here at the CGE, I feel at home. The CGE has the most difficult and huge mandate in the sense that it has to bring

down age-old patriarchy and usher in gender equality. There is nothing harder than that.

“Remember gender inequality is entrenched in all sectors of society's systems. In most cases it forms the main fabric of all structures,” she said.

Although she only joined the CGE in March 2023, as the Chairperson, and was the part commissioner before then, Sepanya-Mogale said she has been participating in programmes of the organisation as a gender and human rights activist since its establishment, and is among those who advocated for the establishment of the commission.

She added that joining the CGE and turning things around was a natural progression for her because activism runs in her family, as both her parents were community leaders.

Career path

Sepanya-Mogale's career started more than 30 years ago as a social worker, before she decided to pursue qualifications and a career in law.

Throughout her career, she has been a trailblazer and a leader in and outside the Public Service. These include her appointment as the Coordinator of the Wits Trauma Clinic, which she set up to offer counselling for victims of political violence in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

She also worked as the Head of the Reparations and Rehabilitation wing of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission until 1997, before being appointed the Director of People Opposing Women Abuse.

“I then decided to resign from my job and study for qualifications in law. I obtained a Bachelor of Law and Master of Law in Human Rights and Constitutional Litigation from Wits University. I also completed a Human Rights Litigation course at Oxford University in partnership with the George Washington University,” she explained.

In 2003, she joined the Public Service, working for the National Prosecution Authority and was later appointed the

founding Director of the Anti-Racism and Anti-Xenophobia unit at the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development. This was a governmental initiative in response to the World Conference against Racism conference held in 2002 in Durban.

She also worked as a municipal manager of the Randfontein Local Municipality, and Deputy Director-General at the Gauteng Department of Social Development, before joining the Johannesburg Bar of Advocates, where she completed her pupillage and practiced as an advocate until early 2023.

“I had to close my practice because I had been recommended to work at the CGE on a fulltime basis, in my current position,” she explained.

Progress on gender equality

Although there is still a lot of work to be done, Sepanya-Mogale sees significant progress as far as the gender equality struggle is concerned.

“Progress is not about a



Commission for Gender Equality
A society free from gender oppression and inequality



problem not occurring, but it is when people are able to identify it as a problem and not a norm. When it recurs appropriate responses have to be taken for example, we know that rape and women abuse is wrong, as well as the fact that the so called 'corrective rape' is nothing but rape and homophobia, and that in itself is some progress. Sadly, women [who] continue to be violated feel unsafe and vulnerable" she added.

She noted that there are a number of successes and victories that the country has achieved. "We must always remind ourselves never to

take them for granted. Today women in South Africa can hold leadership positions, raise families single-handedly, obtain certain qualifications and run specialised businesses without anybody raising eyebrows. This unfortunately happens against the backdrop of deepening poverty, inequality and related suffering," she added.

Sepanya-Mogale said gender discrimination and violence in the country is what obscures the public from seeing the vision that everyone who is fighting for equality is trying to achieve. However, she thinks that the country has moved

a bit further than it was a few years ago towards gender equality.

She is mostly proud that the struggle for gender equality is led by mainly women and LG-BTQIA+ activists. "Once you talk gender equality, the best person to lead it is the person who is actually yearning for that equality because they will understand the journey and stay at it".

Defining gender equality, Sepanya-Mogale said it does not mean that anything is being taken away from one person to give to another, but it is about recognising the privilege that some genders always had

at the expense of others and opening up spaces that they previously dominated to allow equality to occur.

She believes that the CGE could not possibly achieve its mandate without collaborations with civil society organisations, including feminist formations, faith-based entities, higher education institutions, political organisations and other Chapter 9 institutions.

This Women's Month, she encourages women to continue to push back at all the hurdles that stall and undermine gender equality.



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

NATIONAL ORDERS AWARDS CEREMONY

National Orders are the highest form of recognition that South Africa bestows on deserving citizens. The President of the Republic as the Grand Patron of the National Orders, awards these orders, which are inclusive and represent all South Africans.

The Chancery of Orders is inviting nominations of individuals deemed worthy recipients of the following National Orders:

THE ORDER OF MAPUNGUBWE

(Category: I Platinum; II Gold, III Silver, and IV Bronze)

The Order is awarded to South African citizens who have accomplished excellence and exceptional achievements to the benefit of South Africa and beyond.

THE ORDER OF BAOBAB

(Category: I Gold; II Silver and III Bronze)

The Order is awarded to South African citizens who have made exceptional and distinguished contributions in the following categories: community service, business and the economy, science, medicine and technological innovation.

THE ORDER OF LUTHULI

(Category: I Gold; II Silver and III Bronze)

The Order is awarded to South African citizens in recognition of outstanding contribution in the struggle for democracy; nation-building; building democracy and human rights; justice and peace as well as for the resolution of conflict.

THE ORDER OF IKHAMANGA

(Category: I Gold; II Silver and III Bronze)

The Order is awarded to South African citizens who have excelled in the field of arts, culture, literature, music, journalism and sport.

THE ORDER OF MENDI FOR BRAVERY

(Category: I Gold; II Silver and III Bronze)

The Order is awarded to South African citizens who have distinguished themselves by displaying extraordinary acts of bravery through which their lives were placed in great danger or who have lost their lives, including trying to save the life of another person or by saving property, in or outside the Republic of South Africa.

COMPANIONS OF O.R. TAMBO

(Category: I Gold; II Silver and III Bronze)

The Order of the Companions of O.R. Tambo is awarded to eminent foreign nationals for friendship shown to South Africa. It is therefore concerned primarily with matters of peace, cooperation, international solidarity and support and is integral to the execution of South Africa's international and multilateral relations.

NOMINATION FORM

Full name:

Citizenship:

Work/home address:

Tel:

Fax:

E-mail:

Present occupation:

Previous occupation:

Membership or organisations and societies:

I hereby declare that, to the best of my knowledge, the nominee has not been involved in any act(s) that may bring the National Orders and The Presidency into disrepute.

Orders, decorations, medals and awards already received:

Order and category for which nominated:

Particulars of proposer

Full name:

Capacity:

Tel:

Fax:

E-mail:

- 1) An introductory paragraph with summary of the nominee's achievements
- 2) A list of exceptional milestones reached by the nominee in his/her career and/or international arena
- 3) A description of the exceptional, outstanding, dedicated service or act of bravery rendered by the nominee.

The closing date for nominations: 31 August 2023.

Email: nominations@presidency.gov.za

Fax: 086 646 5373

Postal address: The Chancery of Orders, Private Bag X1000, Pretoria, 0001

Delivery address: Chancery of Orders, The Presidency, Room 225, East Wing,

Self nominations, nominations by relatives and nominations of public servants are not allowed and will be subject to automatic disqualification.

Let us maintain the momentum to end load shedding

A year has passed since we launched the Energy Action Plan to resolve the load shedding crisis, and we are now able to report significant progress in several areas.

We recently released a detailed report outlining the work done to improve the performance of Eskom's power stations, accelerate the building of new generation capacity and drive regulatory reforms to transform the electricity sector.

The winter months will soon be coming to an end. Although load shedding has continued, as was anticipated, we have managed to avert a worst case scenario by stabilising the performance of Eskom's power stations and reducing demand.

Eskom's generation fleet continues to show sustained improvement. Unplanned losses have been reduced to less than 16 000 megawatts (MW) in the last two months, down from more than 18 000 MW previously. Planned maintenance has been reduced during the winter period, with Eskom having undertaken significant maintenance



in the months preceding winter.

Looking ahead, damaged units at the Kusile and Medupi power stations are being returned to service on an expedited basis. In combination these units represent more than 3 000 MW of capacity.

The Eskom debt relief package announced by the Minister of Finance will enable necessary investment in maintenance and expansion of the transmission network.

Since the launch of the Energy Action Plan, we have worked to add as much power as possible to the grid.

Eskom has unlocked close to 400 MW from companies with extra available capacity, and a

further 600 MW is currently in the contracting process. We have sourced an additional 400 MW from Cahora Bassa in Mozambique.

We are fast-tracking the procurement of new generation capacity from renewables, gas and battery storage. Later this year, the first three projects from the emergency power programme are expected to connect to the grid. Also later this year, around 2 300 MW from the most recent bid windows of the renewable energy independent power producer programme should be in construction.

One of the most important contributions to the Energy Action Plan has been the uptake by households and businesses of rooftop solar.

It is encouraging to see that more municipalities are allowing customers to feed electricity into the grid when they have surplus electricity. This will provide yet another incentive for businesses large and small to invest in alternative energy sources.

Regulatory changes have helped to boost private investment in new generation capacity. These changes include the removal of the licensing threshold for generation facilities and the fast-tracking of project approvals and registration.

This work has enabled a massive boom in private investment in electricity generation, with a pipeline of more than 10 000 MW of new capacity that will begin to connect to the grid later this year.

To ensure that we never experience power shortages again, we are implementing fundamental reforms to create a competitive electricity market and an independent national grid operator.

To encourage everyone to get involved, we recently launched a website where all South Africans can track the work of the National Energy Crisis Committee and see how to reduce their consumption and save on energy bills.

We have maintained that load shedding will not be resolved overnight, but we are making clear progress towards reducing it and eventually bringing it to an end.

Let us maintain this momentum, and let us all play our part, wherever we can, as we lay the groundwork for an energy secure future.

First published on 31 July 2023.

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Building skills for a transformed economy and society: Engendering the brief

The Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa seeks to contribute towards eradicating the most persistent barriers to development – the triple challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment.

In this regard, Theme 2 of the the Human Resource Development Council's (HRDC) fourth summit, which was held in 2021, had as its focus building skills for a transformed economy and society. It is well-established that poverty, inequality and unemployment have a gendered dimension, yet this remains starkly absent in national policy priorities and departmental interventions. Coupled with intersectionalities such as race and class, gendered dimensions of poverty, inequality and unemployment have a devastating impact predominantly on black working-class women, their participation in the economy, and their access to and enjoyment of rights, resources and opportunities.

Women are far more vulnerable to and deeply affected by

the triple challenges, as a result of patriarchy which underpins and perpetuates their subordination and inferior social status to men. Poverty levels are higher for women than men, and poor women are further below the poverty line than men.

Globally, equality is recognised as a cornerstone to development – there is a direct correlation between gender equality and gross domestic product (GDP) per capita. Research indicates that gender parity can become a key driver of prosperity and national income growth – which is fundamental to whether and how societies thrive. It is clear that there can be no growth in the absence of equity.

Global gender gap

The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2023 calculates that the global gender gap currently stands at 31.6% – gender parity at this rate will be attained in 131 years. Alarmingly, it cites the gender gap for women's economic participation at 39.9% - noting it will take 169

years to attain gender parity in the work place.

Yet globally, 54% of working-age women take part in the formal economy, on average, as compared to 81% of men. Women make up a larger proportion of discouraged job seekers and of those outside the labour force, and, on average, women's unemployment rate is nearly 2% higher than men.

In addition, women work three times as often as men as contributing family workers in family enterprises, and are almost twice more likely to work part-time. Women's average earnings are almost half those of men, with average global earned income for women and men estimated at \$10 778 and \$19 873, respectively. On average men do 34% of the unpaid work that women do. Research shows that this imbalance starts early, with girls spending 30% more of their time on unpaid work than boys.

In South Africa, the Employment Equity Commission's (CEE) 23rd annual report indicates that despite the fact

that women comprise 51.2% of the population and 46.8% of the employed population, they constitute only 26.5% of top management positions, 37.2% of senior management positions, 48.2% of professionally qualified posts and 49.4% of those at a skilled technical level.

Slow transformation

Transformation in the private sector remains dismal, compared to the public sector. Recent analysis by PwC indicates that only seven of the JSE Top 100 companies are led by female chief executive officers (CEOs). Across all JSE-listed companies, women constitute 8% of CEOs, and 22% of chief financial officers. At executive level, women comprise a mere 15%.

White females' representation is disproportionately higher than those of African, Coloured and Indian women – making up more than the total level of representation of these groups in almost all provinces, and in all sectors, particularly the private sector, and that of education.

The gender wage gap persists: women earn 24% less than their male counterparts for performing tasks of equal value. They are also excluded from key decision-making positions.

Males still enjoy preference in employment opportunities – the

CEE indicates that more than 60% of recruitment, promotion and training at senior management level are afforded to males. At the current pace of transformation, South Africa will take two to three decades before gender parity is reached.

It is clear that there is a persistent gender gap in women's participation in the economy. Yet, women's contribution to the GDP is estimated at between 35 and 45%, not counting their contribution in terms of unpaid work. As a result of the patriarchal nature of our society, this results in the exclusion and under-representation of women in certain sectors of the economy.

Interventions

In South Africa, we have seen an increase in the representation of women in the workplace, yet 84% of this is in the services sector. We still see a gross under-representation of women in professional and technical sectors. Therefore, any strategy to build skills for a transformed economy and society needs to be gender mainstreamed to address these gendered implications and impact. What does this look like – how do we transform women's under-representation in the professional and technical skills sector? Key to this, is education.

Human resource development interventions in the education sector are beginning to take on this gendered slate of issues, and ensuring specific, targeted, resourced interventions, from basic education through to technical and vocational training, to increase women's representation in this sector.

These measures include the push to engender the education curriculum and gender-main-

the Department of Basic Education and all social partners in the foundation education sector to ensure success of these interventions. The HRDC looks to the technical and vocational colleges to conduct career expos at schools, to encourage young learners and girls in particular, to enrol at technical vocational education and training colleges in this sector.

Colleges could go further and

Women's average earnings are almost half those of men, with average global earned income for women and men estimated at \$10 778 and \$19 873, respectively.

stream teaching materials, to encourage and inspire young girls to follow any careers of their choice. This of course needs to be supplemented by career guidance and subject counselling, woefully absent in many public education institutions, to encourage young girls to choose appropriate science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)-related subjects that will open further studies and a career in the professional and technical sector.

The HRDC has partnered with

establish a gendered quota for their student intake, and the provision of bursaries for young women pursuing professional and technical studies. The institutions could contribute towards the compilation of a national database of qualified female graduates in the professional and technical sector, to counter the 'scarce skills' narrative offered when entities are challenged for their persistent failure to transform in terms of female representation.

Unless as a country, specifical-

ly the basic education sector, we develop, implement and monitor deliberately designed measures to increase the uptake of STEM subjects and career options by young women, we will fall woefully short of transforming the persistent imbalance of women in the workplace, and the professional and technical sector in particular.

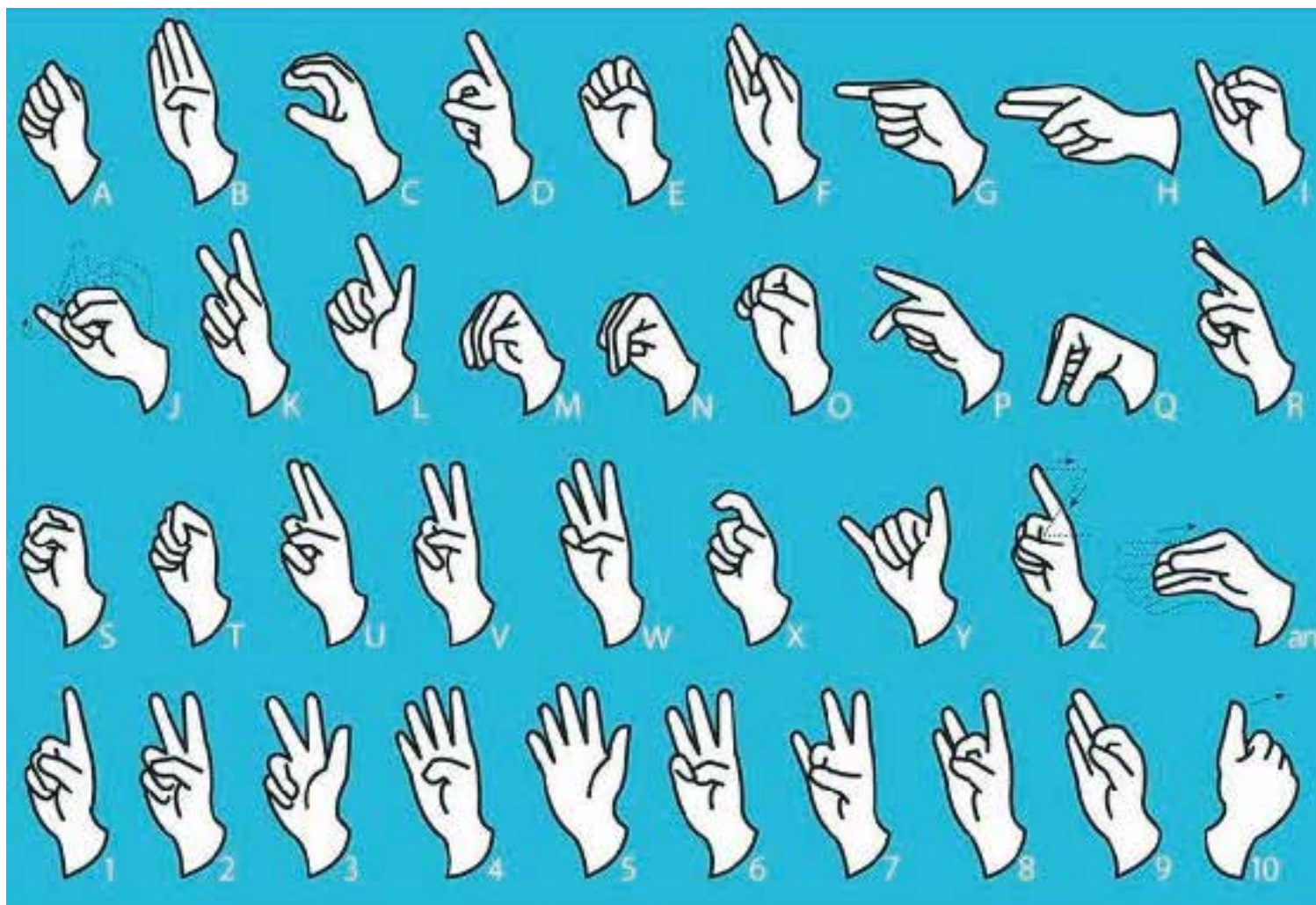
If we fail to ensure that the majority of our population is able to perform at their optimal levels, we will fail to reach our own development targets. The pursuit of equity is vital to the eradication of poverty, inequality and unemployment, and the human resource development essential for South Africa's own economic growth.

The HRDC is chaired by Deputy President Paul Mashatile and managed by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation. Its mandate is to set the national human resource development agenda, oversee the implementation of the country's human resource development strategy and advise government on all matters relating to human capital.



Sign language officially

SA's 12th official language



By making sign language the 12th official language of South Africa, government aims to advance the rights of citizens living with disabilities

by ensuring that their rights to substantive equality, dignity and social inclusion are recognised.

Addressing the signing ceremony of the South African

Sign Language Bill, President Cyril Ramaphosa said it also affirms the humanity of people who communicate with sign language.

“Having sign language recognised as an official language will address access to education, economic and other social opportunities as well as public

“Having sign language recognised as an official language will address access to education, economic and other social opportunities as well as public participation”.

participation. People with hearing impairments will be able to also access more services, public information and a host of other opportunities,” said the President.

The signing of the Bill into law follows an intensive and extensive public consultation process. A substantial number of submissions were made and considered carefully to ensure that all issues were appropriately ventilated.

Parliament unanimously voted for the Constitution Eighteenth Amendment Bill that amends Section 6 (1) of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, 1996 on 2 May 2023.

“Our Constitution enjoins on the State to take practical and positive measures to elevate the status and advance the use of the indigenous languages of the South African people. It further notes that all official languages must enjoy parity

of esteem and must be treated equitably.

“We are also giving effect to the provision of the *Bill of Rights* that prohibits unfair discrimination on grounds such as disability, culture, race and gender. South African Sign Language has served as an essential communication tool for our citizens living with disabilities, and this step will further empower the community,” the President added.

The beginning

He acknowledged that the official recognition is just the beginning, as much more work still needs to be done to support the language.

“It has to be standardised to collapse various geographical dialects into one standard official version, which is the remit of the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB). The fact that the first comprehensive electronic sign lan-

guage dictionary has already been developed demonstrates the enthusiasm to develop this language.

“The PanSALB has already convened its first workshop on lexical and grammatical standardisation and the recommendations of the report produced are currently being enacted. The next standardisation workshop will convene in the last quarter of this financial year and will again include all relevant stakeholders,” the President explained.

He said it was reassuring that even prior to the signing ceremony, processes to institutionalise sign language had already begun.

The Department of Basic Education already provides teaching and learning for deaf learners.

“Educators in schools are regularly undergoing training on sign language and we have

learners who have completed matric using sign language. Specialised schools for the deaf have to be increased in the country, factoring in geographic spread and need. They also have to be provided with qualified personnel.

“It is also crucial that there are sign language interpreters to enable access to services for people who cannot hear properly.

“For many years, lack of sign language interpreters at the courts, police stations, hospitals, clinics and many service centres or points has been compromising access to justice for victims of violence, including victims of gender-based violence and many other crimes,” the President said.

Policies with fully resourced implementation plans are required to realise the constitutional ideal of multilingualism.

– **SAnews.gov.za**

SA's chairship of BRICS to unlock opportunities for Africa



South Africa is honoured to take over the chairship of the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) group under the leadership of President Cyril Ramaphosa, said Public Service and Administration Deputy Minister, Dr Chana Pilane-Majake.

"Our focus is to build a partnership between BRICS and Africa to unlock mutually beneficial opportunities for increased trade, investment and infrastructure," she said.

The Deputy Minister said Africa, through the African Union (AU), has engineered and approved the AU Agenda 2063, with the intention of building strong institutions to enhance cross-border economic devel-

opment and good governance.

Pilane-Majake said this when she addressed the BRICS Conference on Governance and Public Administration Reform at the University of Pretoria. The event was held as one of the over 80 build-up events towards the BRICS Summit which will be hosted in South Africa from 22 to 24 August 2023.

She added that government was certain that the BRICS partnership had the ability to support South Africa and the African continent at large on the journey towards economic recovery.

"This will contribute to making Africa's economy globally competitive, reduce the cost of doing business, attract investments,

and stimulate economic growth, thus alleviating poverty and unemployment," she added.

Pilane-Majake said without capable public institutions, there is a risk of collapse of governments and other sectors of society.

"Building capable institutions requires an investment in building human capabilities to be diligent, masterful and innovative," she said.

The National School of Government remains a key institution to drive the developmental state agenda of building state capacity. This year marks 10 years since the establishment of the National School of Government. – **SAnews.gov.za**

Did you know? Did you know? Did you know? Did you know?



FIGHTING CORRUPTION IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

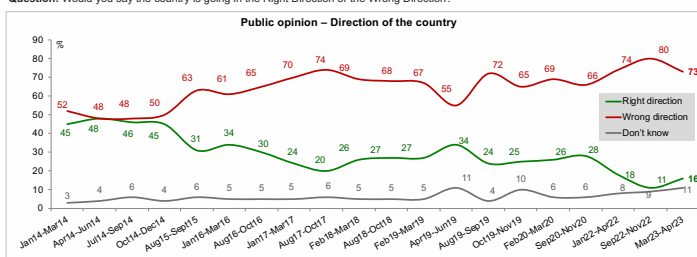
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Taking stock of the nation's mood

essential for service delivery

PUBLIC OPINION | DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY

Question: Would you say the country is going in the Right Direction or the Wrong Direction?



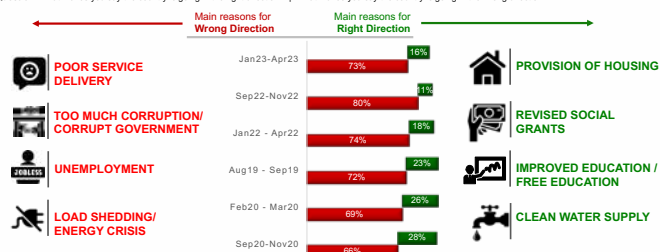
- The mood of the country as measured by the direction in which the country is heading can be influenced by a number of issues relating to government performance and the lived experiences of South Africans.
- The current findings reveal that South African citizens still have a high level of skepticism about the direction in which the country is headed. Seven (7) in 10 South Africans believe the country is going in the wrong direction.

Source: GCIS Tracker Data – Wave 16 (Mar – Apr) I2023

PUBLIC OPINION | REASONS FOR DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY

Question: If you think of the direction in which the country is going, would you say that the country is going in the right direction or going in the wrong direction?

Question: What makes you say the country is going in the right direction? | What makes you say the country is going in the wrong direction?



- Citizens attribute some of their cynicism to poor service delivery, as well as high levels of corruption, unemployment and load shedding.
- The top reasons respondents perceived the country to be headed in the right direction are due to the revision of social government grants and the provision of houses.

Source: GCIS Tracker Data – Wave 16 (Mar – Apr) I2023

A question may arise on why government should be concerned about the mood of the nation. The answer is that the mood of the nation has a severe impact on the decisions each South African makes on a daily basis.

Knowing the importance of assessing the mood of the nation at a particular point in time, the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS), through its research directorate, continuously embarks on a quantitative tracking research

commonly known as the GCIS Tracker. This is a continuous quantitative tracking study with a nationally representative sample of 3 500. The study is conducted amongst South Africans 18 years and older in all the provinces and across all segments of the population.

The latest measure of the mood of South Africans covers the period March to April 2023. The mood indicator is measured using two main variables – the views of South Africans on the direction of the country and challenges perceived to be facing the country at a specific time period.

Why does the mood of the nation matter?

Understanding the mood of the population helps government to gauge public sentiment and in order to make informed policy decisions. By measuring the mood, government can assess

how people feel about various issues, evaluate the effectiveness of current policies, and identify areas that require attention or improvement.

The mood of the population can impact economic factors such as consumer confidence, spending patterns and investment decisions. By measuring the mood, government and its policymakers can also anticipate economic trends, adjust fiscal policies, and implement measures to stimulate or stabilise the economy. In democratic societies, measuring the mood of the population is essential for ensuring representative governance.

Current mood

The majority of South Africans (73%) remains pessimistic about the direction in which the country is heading. However, there is a small proportion (16%) of South Africans who are optimistic and are of the view that the country is heading in the right direction. South Africans' pessimism is driven by challenges they are faced with on a daily basis, such as those caused by poor service delivery, unemployment, corruption and load shedding.

Although the majority is faced by these challenges, there are few positive sentiments on government's performance in the provision of houses, revision

of social government grants and improved or free education.

South Africans are of the view that the following top of mind challenges require attention; unemployment (47% of respondents) followed by electricity supply (31%) which has overtaken corruption (27%) and crime (24%). Amongst the top five mentioned challenges is also the issue of clean water supply (19%).

Recommendations

It is important as government to understand the mood and challenges that South Africans are faced with. However, it is of utmost importance to acknowledge that even though challenges are the same for all South Africans, they affect each segment of the population differently. Thus, to manage frustration, anger, sadness, fear and worry amongst South Africans, all spheres of government need to communicate what government is doing to address issues of unemployment, electricity and corruption. They should use the Government Segmentation Model to ensure that the said communication is correctly targeted and positioned.

Government should also sustain the current interventions to reduce load shedding and communicate these coherently and consistently. This will assist

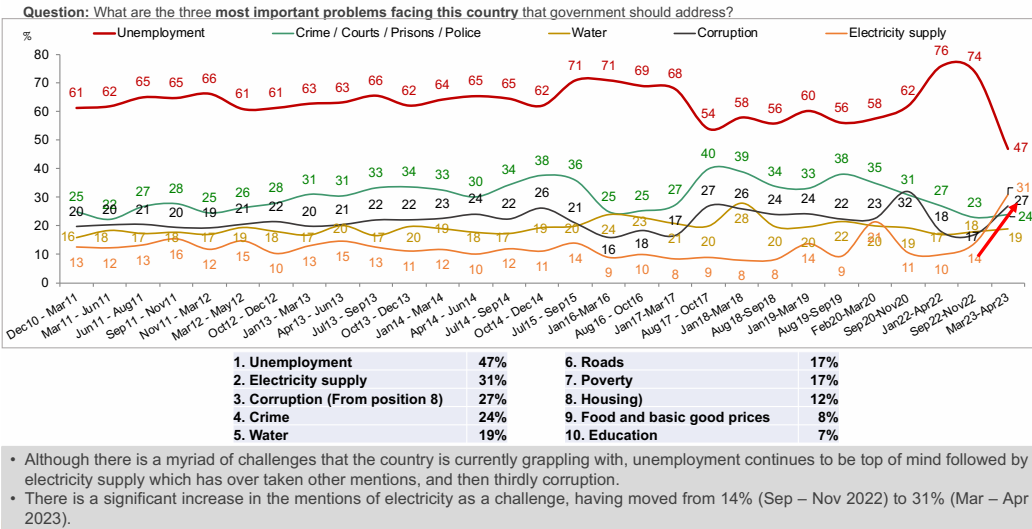
in allaying concerns and frustrations regarding load shedding.

We need to formulate communication strategies and content that highlight what government has done to improve good governance, service delivery and address corruption.

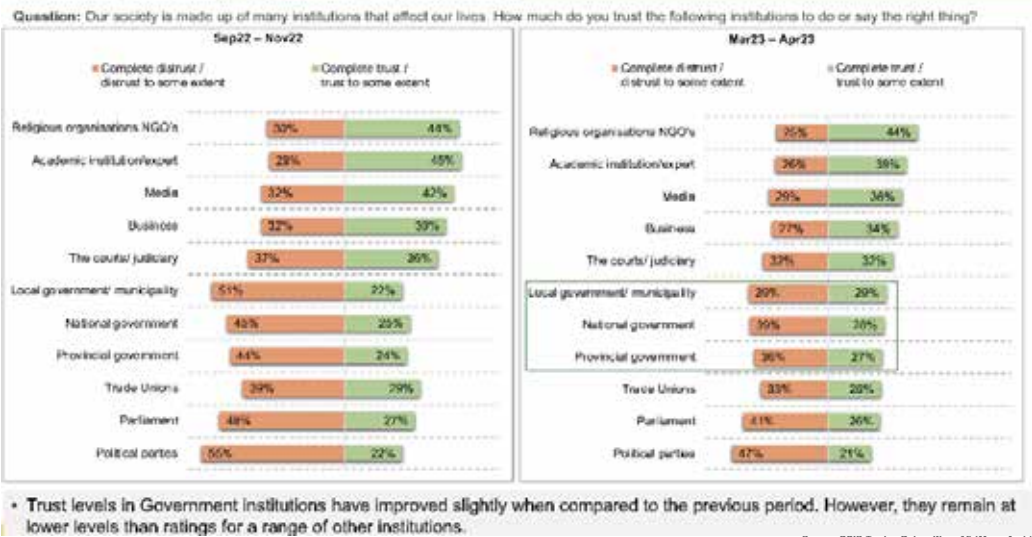
Messages must highlight achievements but also address

specific challenges to build the integrity of communications (trust must be built through honest, balanced communication that reflects government's awareness of, and empathy for people's lived experiences). This will bridge the gap between public perception and government efforts.

MAIN CHALLENGES FACING THE COUNTRY



PUBLIC OPINION | TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS



The GCIS Research
directorates conducts
public opinion research in
order to enhance effective
government communication.

For research services,
kindly contact
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012 473 0140 or
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Strengthening *lifestyle audits across the Public Service*

Training will lead to proper lifestyle audits in the public sector.

The Department of Public Service and Administration's Public Administration Ethics Integrity and Disciplinary Technical Assistance Unit (PAEIDTAU) recently conducted a pilot training on lifestyle audits procedures to fine-tune training material for investigators to conduct proper lifestyle audits in the public sector.

The training was piloted to investigators from Correctional Services, Government Communication and Information System, Home Affairs and Statistics South Africa.

When lifestyle audits became compulsory in April 2021, government depart-

ments initiated the lifestyle audit process, as outlined in the Guide to Implement *Lifestyle Audits in the Public Service* as follows:

1 The first step is a lifestyle review conducted by ethics officers during the financial disclosure pro-

cess when they evaluate the financial declarations of public service employees that are submitted via the e-Disclosure system. They are aimed at validating submitted information and assessing it for possible conflict

of interest or unexplained wealth.

2 The second step kicks in should the Ethics Officer find something untoward during the validation process, such as a conflict of interest or unexplained wealth. It is an audit

that seeks to establish the facts of a situation. The process uses legally sound methods to corroborate information independently by collecting evidence on a suspicious case. It involves identifying undeclared sources of income, such as remunerative work outside the Public Service and receipt of gifts. Or to determine whether a person lives beyond their means by identifying debt, assets, income, criminal records, trusts, hidden assets and undeclared income.

3 The third step is lifestyle audit or objective evaluation that begins when a case grows complicated. It involves an auditing process to find assets that may explain the employee's riches or reveal illegal gains. Audit sampling and audit standards determine the auditor's opinion.

To assist with the rollout of lifestyle audits in national and provincial departments, the PAEIDTAU developed a specialist course for ethics officers to review financial disclosures. This course was designed with the help of the World Bank, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and the Strengthening Ethics and Integrity Project.

Uptake of lifestyle audits

Towards the end of March 2023, 89 out of 103 provincial departments were conducting lifestyle audits, up from 47 in January 2022 and 36 out of 44 national departments reported completing lifestyle audits, up from 27.

KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape obtained a 100% compliance rate, as all their departments concluded the lifestyle audit process. Increasingly, more departments detected possible conflicts of inter-

est and unexplained wealth in 2022/23, compared to the previous financial year, when only the Western Cape referred cases for further audits.

Those that have referred cases for further audits include; Western Cape: Health and Wellness; Gauteng: Transport and Logistics; North West: Health; KwaZulu-Natal: Health; Free State: Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs; and Gauteng: Office of the Premier.

The PAEIDTAU is monitoring these audits as departments are required to report issues of misconduct emanating from criminal audits to the unit in terms of Section 15(5)(b) of the Public Administration Management Act, 2014 (Act 11 of 2014).

To strengthen the audits part of the lifestyle audit process, the unit plans to develop training material for investigators. For this reason, the pilot ses-

sion covered the preliminary analysis done during lifestyle audits to screen incidents upon receipt by the screening administrator before an audits can be conducted. Moreover, the pilot addressed the lifestyle audits workflow and related documents.

Along with the following initiatives to strengthen the implementation of lifestyle audits, the unit will roll out training to the rest of the Public Service. It will include the three initiatives to strengthen the process:

- The development of operational procedures to assist departments with lifestyle audits;
- The distribution of a questionnaire to investigators performing lifestyle audits; and
- the development of tools and forms.

These initiatives will standardise and professionalise lifestyle audits to combat public service corruption. ○



the dpsa

Department:
Public Service and Administration
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Failure to pay service providers timeously against NDP goals

The continued failure to pay service providers within 30 days is counterproductive to both the National Development Plan (NDP) and the National Growth Path (NGP).

This was said by Public Service and Administration Deputy Minister, Dr Chana Pilane-Majake, at a recent breakfast session with entrepreneurs and young women in business running small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) affiliated to the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NAFCOC).

"The closing down of SMMEs due to non-compliance to pay them within the prescribed 30-days period is also

seen as counterproductive to the NDP and the NGP which are aimed at improving economic growth and reduce poverty, in-

equality and unemployment," said the Deputy Minister.

The Deputy Minister described the session as a success, adding

that she appreciated the feedback from the entrepreneurs.

"We value the fact that service providers who are mostly referred



to as SMMEs came to listen to government's intervention to enforce the 30-days payment requirements for invoices...we hope that our engagements created hope, but not false hope because as government, we hope that our recommendations and commitments will be adhered to in order to unblock this late or non-payment to service providers," she added.

Key to those recommendations, according to the Deputy Minister, was ensuring that accounting officers should have this critical matter of paying suppliers within 30 days as part of their key performance indicators.

"We are saying chief financial officers should ensure that these payments are made within the prescribed period...what is important for us is to serve in the manner that complies with the Batho Pele Principles which are all about putting people first.

"It was very encouraging to listen to those in the business sector neither complaining nor making negative opinions about this non-compliance...we appreciate the fact that they were able to put forward ideas and solutions to resolve this challenge. As government, this is the kind of social compact that we always look forward to," she said.

As part of the way forward, the NAFCOC made a proposal of working with government to set up a central payment system that will facilitate adherence to paying suppliers within the prescribed period.

The NAFCOC President in Gauteng, Themba Ndlovu, said the late payment or no-payment of invoices has a serious adverse impact on suppliers who are often forced to borrow money to stay afloat financially.

"As [the] NAFCOC, we are excited by the commitment of the Deputy Minister to initiate the process which will see us resolving this matter. With this breakfast session, government was able to gain the confidence

of the business sector. For us as NAFCOC, it means that you are taking us seriously... we believe from here, the future looks bright.

"Our friendly reminder to those national and provincial departments that are failing to pay service providers within the prescribed time is that they must know that the country is currently in distress, so, it is either they commit to what they are employed to do, or they resign and go where they will have nothing to do with service delivery," he said.

He added that the non-compliance does not only affect members' business but also get into their personal lives as some

of them lose valuable possessions.

"This is not a joke, the non-compliance is affecting our members in a bad way...in that some of them have lost houses, vehicles, some members were divorced while others resorted to alcohol. This is a pandemic, the country cannot ignore it, but the good news is that now there is an effort to address the issue," added Ndlovu.

Both national and provincial departments are expected to implement mechanisms to ensure that payments to service providers are processed within 30 days from the date of receiving an invoice. ○



Whistle-blowers

critical to upholding accountability



Justice and Correctional Services Minister Ronald Lamola says the protection of whistle-blowers from retaliation and vengeance remains an imperative which would honour the legacy of former President Nelson Mandela.

The Minister was speaking at the Public Service Commission's symposium into the protection of whistle-blowers held in July.

"As we reflect on the profound legacy of President Mandela, we must acknowledge that his unwavering commitment to justice and equality must serve as an inspiration for us all.

"In order to uphold these values, we must prioritise protecting those who speak out against wrongdoing. Whistle-blowers play a critical role in promoting accountability and transparency and we must en-

sure that they can do so without fear of retaliation," he said.

Legislation

Currently, South Africa's whistle-blower legislation is the Protected Disclosures Act, 2000 (Act 26 of 2000). However, it only refers to employer-employee relations and does not extend protection beyond that relationship, does not require confidentiality nor does it offer legal and financial assistance to whistle-blowers.

To improve on this, the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development has released – for public comment – a document with proposed reforms for South Africa's whistle-blower regime.

According to Lamola, this document proposes several measures to enhance protections.

"According to the report, it is recommended that any provision in a contract that attempts to exclude the Protected Disclosures Act of 2000 should be prohibited. Furthermore, it should be

considered a criminal offence for an individual to seek retribution against a whistle-blower who has made a protected disclosure.

"Moreover, the State should offer protection to whistle-blowers and their immediate family members if their safety or property is at risk. Finally, whistle-blowers should be recognised as witnesses under the Witness Protection Act, 1998 (Act 112 of 1998).

Make your contribution

"We eagerly anticipate the contributions of society to create a society where morality and integrity are matched by enthusiasm for justice and not vengeance," Lamola said.

He explained that while work to strengthen whistle-blower legislation continues in the background, government is working on how it can help those speaking out right now.

"The question we currently grappling with is what happens in the interim? whilst we are reviewing the Act, whistle-blowers are being victimised now.

"We are working with the private sector players and civil society to navigate this difficult conundrum. Since as we speak now, one can only exercise a power or action empowered by law," Lamola concluded.

– SAnews.gov.za



Here is a list of household appliances and installations to reduce the impact of loadshedding:



1. Power banks

Portable chargers designed to recharge your electronic devices when you're on the move. A fully charged power bank or two in the house is essential when loadshedding occurs, or if there is a power outage in your area due to technical faults.

2. Inverter

A power inverter changes DC power from a battery into conventional AC power that you can use to operate your Wi-Fi and also, among other things, electric lights, kitchen appliances, microwaves, power tools, TVs, radios, computers, and more. It's not advisable to leave your inverter on all the time as it will quickly drain the battery even if no electronic appliance is connected to the inverter.



3. UPS and a backup battery system

A UPS (Uninterrupted Power Supply) can keep your internet and computer going while a backup battery system can power a TV, lights and security system. A UPS performs a similar function to an inverter, but its switchover is immediate compared to an inverter, which has a time delay. A UPS stores electricity while an inverter converts AC power to DC power. These devices can be more expensive than inverters.

4. Solar panels

Individuals who install rooftop solar panels qualify for a 25% rebate on the cost of new or unused solar panels – up to a maximum rebate of R15 000. Click [here](#) for more information.



5. Rechargeable light and a flashlight

Given the volatility of the electricity supply, it is advisable to keep a flashlight handy and have a few rechargeable lights to use during the evening.

6. Indoor lighting

A rechargeable LED light is worth considering. It contains a battery that charges when switched on while electricity is available. As soon as the electricity goes off the bulb automatically turns on. Another option is movable rechargeable emergency lights. Plug them into a socket to charge when electricity is available. Some are also solar-powered.



7. Outdoor lighting

Solar outdoor lamps absorb energy from the sun during the day. This energy is used at night to light up your outdoors without needing electricity. Consider some solar floodlights. They can be on throughout the night or work on motion sensors.

8. Gas stove or burner

This is a lifesaver during power outages, especially as these often fall over mealtimes. Gas plate or stoves at least allow you to cook and boil water.



9. Gas water heater

A gas source to heat water will not only allow you to bath or wash with warm water, but will also cut down on your electricity usage. This may cost you money now, but will lead to savings and a secure supply of hot water going forward.

10. A non-electric kettle

Stove-top kettles are making a strong comeback as a result of loadshedding. Usually made of stainless steel, they can be heated up on a gas stove or fire when there is no electricity. It is also a good idea to have a hot water flask to store the hot water - then you need to boil the kettle less often.



Scie-Enza:

Hands-on science

Puleng Tsie is one of the few women who chose science and technology as their study and career – in South Africa, only 13% of graduates in science, technol-

ogy, engineering and math fields are women. Tsie now manages one of the biggest and busiest science centres in South Africa – Scie-Enza located at the University of Pretoria, Hatfield Campus.

"I started as an intern at Scie-Enza centre, today I manage the centre," said Tsie, a science communication enthusiast, explaining how she received an internship with the then Department of Science and Technology in 2008 and got placed at Scie-Enza on a two-year programme.

Tsie says this is where her love for communication science engagement started.

After the internship, she worked as a project coordinator for another science centre before she moved back to Scie-Enza in 2016, to pursue a career as a science centre manager, a position she currently holds.

From 2017 to 2018, she served on

the Southern African Association of Science and Technology Centres board.

Given the broad nature of the centre's mission and vision in science communication, public engagement, knowledge brokerage, research showcasing, public attitudes to science and technology, and cross-cultural communication in science and technology, Tsie strives to make the centre a platform for science and society engagement through research, partnerships and collaborations.

"I lead strategy, operations, finance, centre programmes, exhibit design, marketing, public relations, human resources, compliance and fundraising," explained Tsie.

Her curiosity about how the world works paved the way for her field of study.

"It is ordinary questions of where the sun goes at night, why it gets dark and why the sky is blue, for instance, that led me to pursue science and technology," she said.





The young scientist holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Botany and Zoology and an Honours Degree in Geography and Environmental Sciences from the University of Pretoria.

She currently serves on the National Network of Science Centres Accreditation Committee under the Framework for the Promotion of Excellence, an initiative of the Department of Science and Innovation that aims to create an environment for science centres to function optimally and improve target audiences' access to offered services.

Science made easy

"Scie-Enza is a science interactive space where anyone, from young children to pensioners, can come and engage with science," said Tsie, adding that the space allows guests to take control of their learning without

any pressure or intimidation.

The centre, which is over 40 years old, was founded by Professor Lötze Strauss, drawing inspiration from a science interactive space he had visited in the United States.

It consecutively won Best Wow Show in 2008 and 2011 at Sasol TechnoX – one of the biggest annual career guidance and science festivals in the country. It also secured second place in the Category for Universities in 2013 at Sasol TechnoX. In 2013, the centre came out third for Best Exhibition at ScieFest Africa.

Tsie has managed to continue the centre's shining spree. Under her management, Scie-Enza was awarded for Best Exhibition: Newcomer in 2017 at ScieFest Africa. In 2021, Tsie led the centre to the finals of the National Science and Technology Awards.

The centre also offers various facilitated programmes for dif-

ferent target markets – including public, private and home schools, and clubs. In addition, the centre caters for groups that have an interest in education, such as non-governmental and community-based organisations.

Other programmes offered at the centre include planetarium shows where astronomy is covered, technology workshops that cover coding and robotics, school holiday programmes, talks, seminars and science cafes.

The centre attracts about 20 000 local and international visitors annually. Tsie believes that the quality of their programmes, being university-based and working with government to positively impact communities set them apart from other science centres.

She said one of their annual milestones is reaching out to

communities that they have not had their footprint in.

To address the issue of lack of laboratories (labs) in schools, Scie-Enza has created curriculum-support videos for primary schools to offer learners the correct scientific foundation. The videos are distributed to schools around Gauteng and are estimated to reach around 28 000 learners.

Serving the people

Tsie lives by the principles of hard work, persistence and determination. She enjoys interacting with people who visit the centre.

"It is the ability to show people that they know more, making them realise that science is not only what is done in the lab but involves other things in their daily lives."

She explained the experience as a two-way street, where she and her team learn about their guests while imparting their knowledge to visitors.

Coming from a small town of Virginia, in the Free State, Tsie grew up looking up to average passionate citizens who went beyond the call of duty in their professions. She encourages young people to never give up on their dreams when things do not seem to go their way but rather use every opportunity available to reach their goals.

Here comes Spring

To commemorate Women's Month, we highlight a few female-owned designer brands that beautifully capture the season of bloom.

1. ERRE

Designers Carina Louw and Natasha Jaume redefine power dressing by catering to the African woman's need to be fierce and audacious. Their fabrics are intentionally versatile, comfortable and adorn your boss lady moments.

Pink power sleeve jacket from <https://erre-fashion.com/>: **R7 500.**

Black twist pencil dress from <https://erre-fashion.com/>: **R1 600.**



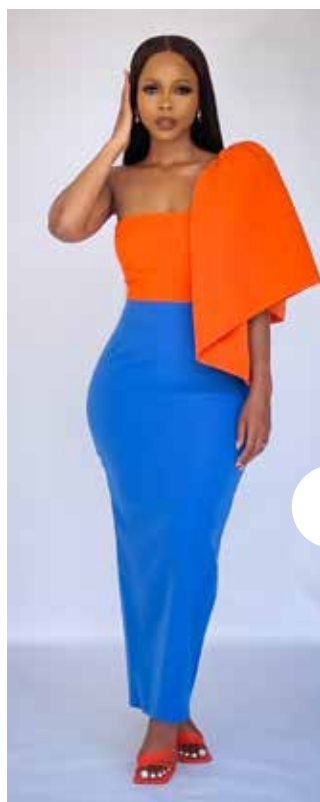
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2. Malondie

Young female entrepreneur, Londeka Buthelezi, knows how to dress ladies for every occasion. Her best pieces are perfect for serving vacation looks. Or, since wedding season will soon be upon us, pick from her a showstopper that will make you look part of the bride's entourage.

Block dress from www.malondie.co.za or Africa Rise stores (Marshalltown, Sandton City and Menlyn Mall): **R2 901.**

Melanin dress from www.malondie.co.za or at Africa Rise stores (Marshalltown, Sandton City and Menlyn Mall): **R 3 701.**



2



3. Research Unit

Utility colours and cuts are borrowed for Erin-Lee and Chad Petersen's designs. Perfect for wet weather, function is considered just as much as fashion in the brand's fabric choices.

Cropped shirt (brown linen) from <https://researchunitstudio.com/>: **R1 499.**

Bucket hat (olive) from <https://researchunitstudio.com/>: **R699.**



3

* Prices correct at the time of publishing.

4. Helon Melon

A trusted and longstanding brand, by Helen Gibbs, that accurately combines timeless with youthful. Psst, here is a secret: you could wear the pyjamas (PJs) as a summertime set.

Suede backpack from

<https://helonmelon.co.za/>: **R4 500.**

Shortie PJs from

<https://helonmelon.co.za/>: **R1 295.**

** Prices correct at the time of publishing.*



4



5



5. Ditsala Designs

Something about warm weather screams accessories! This homegrown brand by Koketso Mohlala has bold Afrocentric designs that are sure to enhance any outfit.

Spelete earrings from <https://africariseonline.co.za/> or Africa Rise stores (Marshalltown, Sandton City and Menlyn Mall): **R899.**

Hammanskraal Africa ring from Spelete earrings: <https://africariseonline.co.za/> or at Africa Rise stores (Marshalltown, Sandton City and Menlyn Mall): **R400.**

About me

*Rangaka is the founder of NEO by Neo Victoria Rangaka (NVR), a premium African brand aimed at creating designs that redefine the African identity. You can contact her on 082 929 7653 or nvrangaka@gmail.com or Instagram: @neovictoriarangaka or @neobynvr.



Chicken Skewer, Middle Eastern style

Chef Moleleki Lelimo believes that food is a form of love language as it brings people together. As a chef, his mind crosses borders, curious of delights enjoyed by different nations of the world. This helps bring ideas to life, and enjoyable with friends and family.

In this edition, Lelimo shares his Middle Eastern Style Chicken Skewer recipe served with hummus, vegetable salad and lavash.

"This is a simple, quick yet tasty meal, easy to prepare for those week nights when you want to hang your boots as quick as possible and enjoy the meal with a glass of pinotage," he said.

Skewers

Ingredients:

- Deboned chicken thighs, skin off.
- 1/2 a cup plain yoghurt.
- 1 teaspoon paprika.
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional).
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin.

- 2 cloves minced garlic.
- A squeeze of lemon (about 1 tablespoon).
- 1/2 teaspoon salt.
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper.
- 2 tablespoon tomato sauce.
- 1 tablespoon olive oil.

Method:

- Place all the marinade ingredients in a bowl and mix well.
- Pat dry the chicken thighs with a paper towel to ensure that the marinade sticks well.
- Dip the chicken in the marinade, cover and let it sit for at least 30 minutes while preparing other items of the meal.
- Get your hands dirty and fold the chicken thighs and place them on wooden skewers.
- Sear the chicken skewers in a heated skillet to give it a bit of charring, this helps lock moisture in the meat and enhances flavour.
- Once nicely browned, transfer to a pre-heated oven (200 °C) and cook for about 20 to 25 minutes. Turn on the top element of the oven to set the skewers to golden brown. Remove from the oven and cover with tin foil till ready to serve.

Stir fried vegetable salad

Ingredients:

- Baby carrots (peeled and halved).
- Baby corn (halved).
- Rocket.
- Pepperdews.
- Salt and pepper.
- Olive oil.
- Lemon juice.

Method:

- Heat up a heavy base skillet on medium to high heat and add olive oil.

- Stir fry the baby carrots and baby corn for about 4 to 5 minutes or until nice and tender but crunchy (they cook through quite quick).
- Season with salt and pepper and put aside.
- When ready to assemble the salad, dress the rocket leaves with a mixture of olive oil, lemon juice, salt and pepper.
- Arrange your cooked vegetables on a bed of rocket along with some pepperdews.

"It would not be sufficiently Middle Eastern without the hummus," said Lelimo.

Hummus

Ingredients:

- 1 tin chick peas.
- A squeeze of 1/2 a lemon (1/4 cup).
- 3 tablespoons of olive oil.
- 3 tablespoons of tahini (a condiment made with toasted ground sesame seeds).
- 1 large clove of garlic.
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin.
- Salt to taste.
- 3 tablespoons of water (or aquafaba from the chick pea tin).

Method:

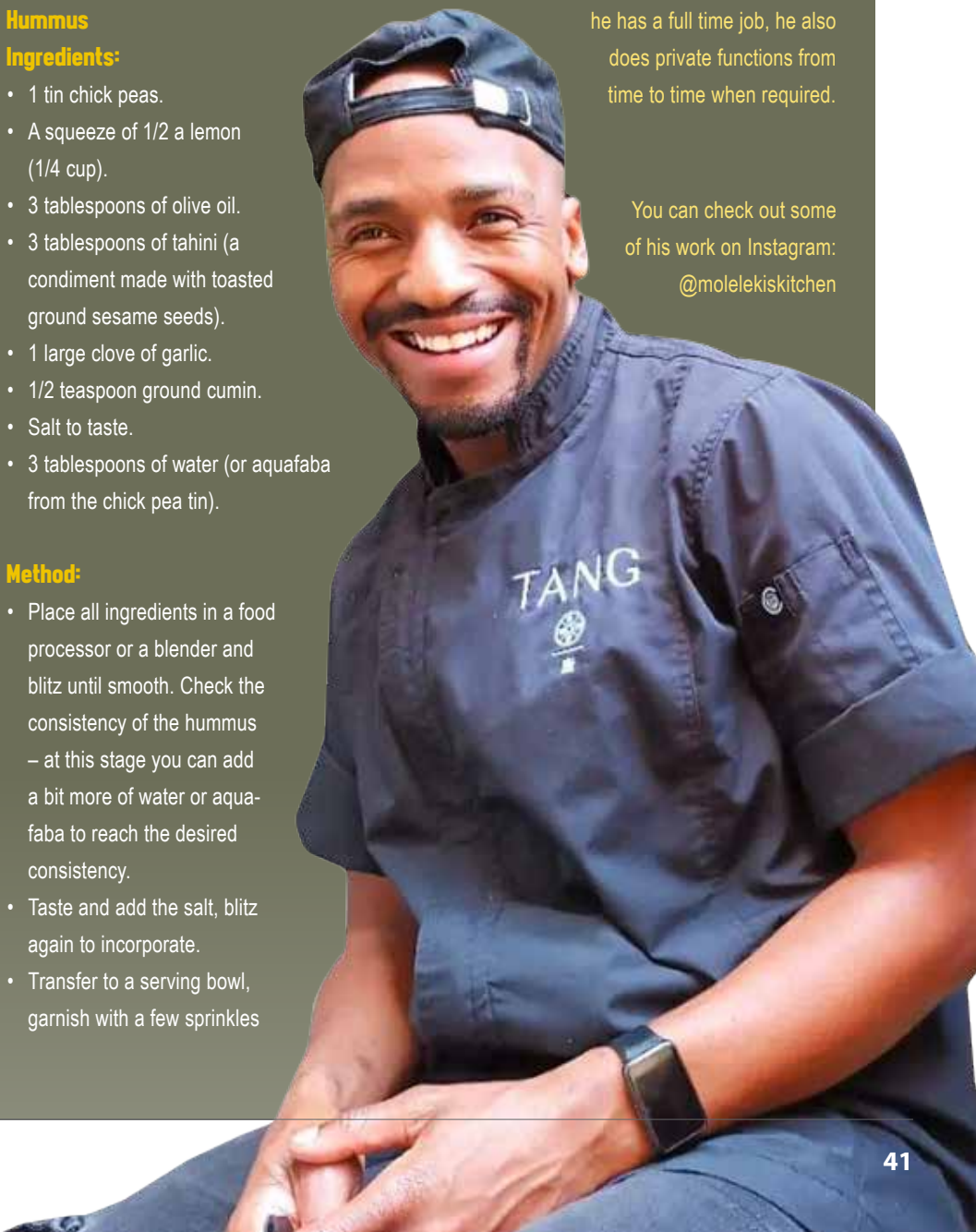
- Place all ingredients in a food processor or a blender and blitz until smooth. Check the consistency of the hummus – at this stage you can add a bit more of water or aquafaba to reach the desired consistency.
- Taste and add the salt, blitz again to incorporate.
- Transfer to a serving bowl, garnish with a few sprinkles

of paprika, olive oil and olives.

"Hummus is not only delicious to eat but a great source of protein and fibre, along with many other health benefits. When creating dishes, the first thought should always be on the healthy side of what one consumes because we are what we eat," explained Lelimo.

*Originally from Excelsior in the Free State, Lelimo is a Sous-Chef at one of the high-end restaurants in Cape Town. Although he has a full time job, he also does private functions from time to time when required.

You can check out some of his work on Instagram: @molelekiskitchen



Enjoy hassle-free holiday by visiting a visa-free country

If you have ever been denied a visa for an all-expenses-paid trip, you know how heart-breaking that can be.

But with over 100 countries worldwide where South Africans can enjoy the convenience of travelling visa-free, you do not have to miss a trip. South Africa is ranked 52nd by the Henley & Partners Passport Index for 2023, with a visa-free score of 106. This means that South African passport holders can travel to 106 countries visa-free.

Visaindex.com places the South African passport 57th in the world. A ranking typically refers to the travel freedom given to passport holders of a particular country.

The rankings mean that South African passport holders are eligible to travel visa-free to more countries worldwide. However, travellers are still required to have a passport which is valid for six months after the departure date, with some countries offering visas on arrival and some offer-



ing electronic travel authorisation. They must also adhere to the health requirements of their destination countries, including health insurance and vaccinations.

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation advises travellers to complete the following checklist before embarking on a trip:

- Register your trip online with the South African embassy (in the country you are visiting) before leaving the country;
- Keep a copy of your passport's information page, relevant visas, travel insurance, travellers' cheques and credit card with you, separate from the originals. Leave a copy in an envelope someone you know;
- Ensure that your next

of kin knows what your movements will be while away. Leave a detailed itinerary with them. Contact them regularly; and

- Always act within the pre-scripts of the law in your destination country.

Public Sector Manager
 magazine contributor Zinhle

Vukosi Mathonsi.



Vukosi Mathonsi.



Brenda Ngonyama

Dlamini-Mugabe recently chatted to two South Africans who travelled to visa-free destinations to find out how their experiences were.

Thailand

Vukosi Mathonsi recently travelled to the Phuket Islands in the city of Patong in Thailand. She says the hassle-free travel arrangements were a selling point for her destination choice.

She chose Thailand because of the slightly stronger Rand and the visa exemption for South Africans. There were also no medical requirements such as taking yellow fever or malaria vaccination before travelling.

Phuket is known for tropical beaches and its vibrancy.

"Patong is a tourist destination through and through. There is just so much excitement and freedom. You completely lose yourself to the madness of the night life and it is totally safe. The

shops, restaurants and clubs are always open," Mathonsi recalled.

Tourists can treat themselves to Thai delicacies, such as the pad Thai, the oyster egg and khao pad.

There are also water activities such as canoeing and snorkelling to enjoy.

Mozambique

South Africans require no visa to travel to neighbouring Mozambique.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention however, recommends that travellers take prescription medicine to prevent malaria.

Brenda Ngonyama recently drove to Bilene from Johannesburg. She says the holiday resort seems popular among South Africans as 90% of the cars she saw had South African registration numbers.

She adds that the blue lagoon, white sands and palm trees

make Bilene a feast for the eyes.

When it comes to cuisine, Mozambique is big on sea food. Visitors can order food on the go while at the beach.

"Their sea food is fresh from the ocean. The team that organises your order is meticulous. You place an order of fish or prawns with a chef who then passes it on to the fisherman who makes the catch and then gives it to the chef to prepare," explained Ngonyama.

Another option is to order from the fish market. Tourists get treated to an array of live fish and lobsters of different colours. You pick whatever sea food tickles your fancy and hand it over to a team that gets it ready for you.

For adventure, Ngonyama went

skiing and sailed on the ocean on a banana boat.

The South African Rand, which is stronger than the local currency, the Metical, makes it affordable to enjoy Mozambique to the fullest.

Some of the countries South Africans can visit visa-free

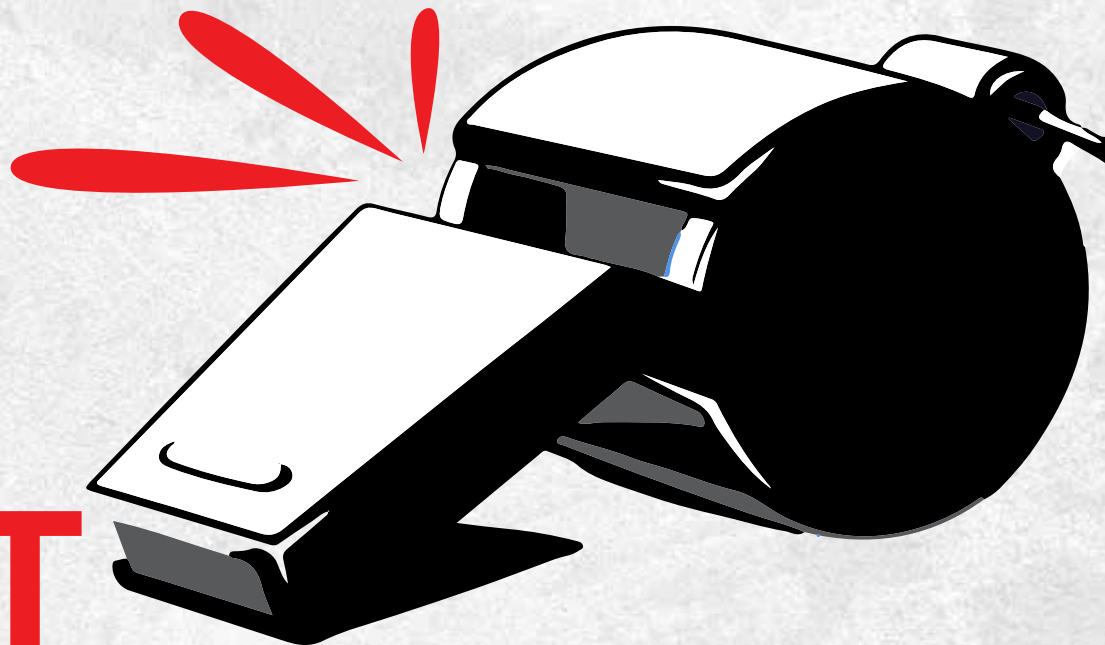
- Algeria
- Bahamas
- Cape Verde
- China
- Costa Rica
- Egypt
- Ghana
- Jamaica
- Mexico
- New Zealand
- Norway
- Senegal
- Sweden
- Thailand
- United Arab Emirates
- Uruguay

For the full list visit:

<http://www.dha.gov.za/index.php/immigration-services/exempt-countries>

Advice for South African citizens travelling abroad:
<https://www.dirco.gov.za/advice-for-south-african-citizens-travelling-abroad/>

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MOVING TOWARDS 30^{YRS} OF FREEDOM



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

