

# PublicSector MANAGER

THE MAGAZINE FOR PUBLIC SECTOR DECISION-MAKERS

DECEMBER 2020/JANUARY 2021



## Battling a pandemic

Fight against HIV and  
AIDS rages on

## Leading with distinction

Dr Phil Mjwara's secret  
to success



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# The tide is turning on corruption

**T**here are tangible signs that government is backing its anti-corruption speak with tough action.

As International Anti-Corruption Day was marked on 9 December, we can take comfort in the strong anti-corruption message that is being reinforced by every official probe, arrest and court case.

The people who have lined their own pockets – or those of family and friends – with State resources must be shaking in their boots. In turn, potential investors are

feeling new optimism and South Africans are shaking off a bit of the anger that took hold during the state capture saga and intensified with each subsequent case of corruption.

Worst to bear was the misuse and theft of valuable resources meant to lessen the burden caused by the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), by both government officials and private individuals.

Government acted swiftly against these people, who not only robbed South Africa's most vul-

nerable but also eroded our nation's sense of humanity at a time when our people were pulling together to fight a common enemy. Our law enforcement agencies are empowered by law to act independently, without fear, favour or prejudice.

At the end of October, it was announced that four new Special Commercial Crimes Courts would be established to deal with cases of COVID-19-related corruption. At the time, the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) was investigating 932

such cases.

In a move to promote transparency, President Cyril Ramaphosa has promised that the reports of SIU investigations will be made public, once all the necessary processes have been completed.

## Supporting economic recovery

It is heartening to see how active the Hawks (Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation), the National Prosecuting Authority, the Asset Forfeiture Unit and the SIU have been over the

past months as corruption is one of the biggest threats to the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan recently announced by the President.

The plan has both short- and long-term goals to alleviate the increase in poverty caused by the pandemic and to build a robust, inclusive economy. However, success depends heavily on the creation of an environment that presents few opportunities for corrupt individuals and that quickly red flags issues of concern.

On the country's multi-billion rand infrastructure investment plan, the President said that proper project preparation will enhance transparency, and eliminate and detect corruption. In November, this was further echoed by the Public Works and Infrastructure Minister Patricia de Lille, who affirmed that the project will be underpinned by an anti-corruption strategy.

Policies and frameworks

are being created to guide all anti-corruption approaches, most notably, the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and implementation plan being developed jointly by Government and civil society.



**Minister in The  
Presidency,  
Jackson Mthembu.**

The plan will improve transparency, monitoring and accountability across society, thus clamping down on corruption in both the private and public sectors.

## **Nationwide response**

All of society, from business to social partners and public servants,

need to bolster this strategy by acting firmly against any corruption and fraud in their midst. This pressing challenge demands a nationwide response.

The positive climate being created by the country's anti-corruption law and order entities, should provide new incentives for people with concerns of wrongdoing to speak up.

Nothing and no-one is sacrosanct, and no-one should be sheltered by their positions or wealth. The Constitution is very clear that no-one is above the law.

Behind the scenes, government's capacity to stop corruption and deal with wrongdoers is ongoing. Developments include:

- lifestyle audits of Cabinet members and other public representatives;
- compliance with the Public Administration Management Act of 2014;
- the strengthening and better resourcing

of law-enforcement agencies to enable the identification and swift prosecution of corruption and fraud;

- the development of the Public Procurement Bill to lessen corruption in the appointment of contractors by public entities, including state-owned companies. It will also ensure that political office bearers at all spheres of government do not do business with the State.

Public servants sign a code of conduct that states they must "report to the appropriate authorities, fraud, corruption, nepotism, maladministration and any other act which constitutes an offence, or which is prejudicial to the public interest".

I urge you to become a corruption watchdog, not only because it is your legal obligation to do so, but because you care about the people of this country and are guided by a strong moral compass.



# HIV and AIDS is still a pandemic in South Africa

**W**orld AIDS Day on 1 December shines the spotlight on a catastrophic virus that for nearly four decades has wreaked socio-economic and health havoc on South Africa.

The first official AIDS case in the country was reported in 1982. Within two decades, the country was in the grip of a frightening health crisis, with children being orphaned, skilled employees being lost, productivity decreasing and our health system overburdened.

In 2004, Statistics South Africa estimated the accumulated number of AIDS-related deaths to be 1.49 million.

The tide started turning in 2005 when a national antiretroviral treatment (ART) programme was launched. Last year, 126 805 AIDS-related deaths were reported.

Although South Africa has the highest global infection rate, with an

estimated 7.8 million people living with HIV (PLHIV) in 2018, our success rate in combatting the crisis is also globally recognised and our ART programme is the world's largest.

Apart from the mass ART programme and decreased mortality rate, South Africa has enjoyed great success with its Know your Status campaign.

In 2018, it was announced that the country had reached the first 90% of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS's (UNAIDS) 90-90-90 goals when over 90% of the 7.8 million PLHIV in SA were found to be aware of their HIV status.

South Africa is also well on its way to reaching the second and third goals in ensuring 90% of PLHIV are on ART and 90% are virally suppressed.

In fact, in 2019, UNAIDS confirmed that three districts in KwaZulu-Natal had reached 90-90-90.

Another significant milestone came in October when the University of the Witwatersrand and researchers from the HIV Prevention Trials Network announced that the long-acting injectable antiretroviral drug cabotegravir – a pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) – was found to be highly effective in preventing the virus in women.

This is heartening news for women in Sub-Saharan Africa who continue to experience high HIV incidence. Although an oral PrEP has been available for some time, it is easy for women to forget to take their pill each day, which then puts them at risk of exposure.

Sadly, the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic has impacted South Africa's HIV progress. This is because health resources have been redirected to fight COVID-19 and, fearing infection, people have been reluctant to seek



**Phumla Williams,**  
**GCIS Director-General.**

medical care for other conditions.

According to the Minister of Health, Dr Zweli Mkhize, HIV testing fell by 46% between April and June 2020. Speaking at the launch of the 7th annual Rotary Family Health Days, he stressed that HIV and AIDS is "still a pandemic in this country, more threatening than COVID-19".

Public servants are urged to take up Minister Mkhize's call of encouraging South Africans to get tested and, if positive, to start treatment so that they can live a long and healthy life, and keep their immune system strong enough to fight off other diseases, including COVID-19.

# WHAT WILL PEOPLE SAY?



There is no excuse for abuse.  
People can only help if they know.  
**TELL SOMEONE.**

Police: 10111  
Stop Gender Violence: 0800 150 150  
Childline: 0800 055 555

**Violence and abuse are poison to society. Let's make it stop.**



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# HIV and AIDS – Progress made but battle continues

**A**s we continue our efforts to manage the devastating Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, we cannot ignore the other public health challenges that our country faces.

For more than three

decades, our country has been engaged in an ongoing struggle against HIV and AIDS, which has cost many lives and caused great hardship and suffering.

Recently we joined people across the globe in marking World AIDS

Day. As the Chair of the South African National AIDS Council, Deputy President David Mabuza led the national commemoration with an address on progress in the country's response.

This year, World AIDS Day took place under

difficult conditions.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in the country, with the nation-wide lockdown and the pressure on our health facilities, many HIV, AIDS and tuberculosis services have suffered.

This has posed a chal-



lenge for people testing and starting antiretroviral treatment. Many people found it difficult to collect their medicines and fewer people accessed other services, such as voluntary male medical circumcision.

At the same time, there are many lessons that have been learnt from our public health response to COVID-19 that can strengthen our fight against HIV and tuberculosis.

## Reduction in new infections

South Africa continues to have the largest number of people living with HIV in the world. It is encouraging, however, that over the last decade we made progress in reducing the number of new HIV infections in the population by nearly 60%.

It is also encouraging that HIV infections in adolescent girls and young women have significantly declined in the last decade. This is a crucial group because they are much more likely to be at risk of getting HIV.

Our treatment programme has contributed to a reduction in the number of deaths due to AIDS by 60%. There has been a greater reduction in HIV-related deaths among young people.

It was possible to reduce the number of deaths because we, together with our partners, have rolled out an extensive antiretroviral programme reaching millions of people living with the disease.

At the beginning of the decade, our programme to prevent mother to child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV had very low coverage. Now we have one of the highest rates of coverage of PMTCT in Southern Africa, which has substantially reduced rates of infection among children.

## HIV prevention

While we have reduced deaths and new infections, we still are far from reaching the goal we committed ourselves in 2016 of achieving a 75% reduction in HIV infections by 2020. If we

succeed in doing so, we are likely to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030.

Unfortunately, we are not there yet. We have to do far more to ensure that young people are empowered to prevent infections, including through changing behaviour, accessing

any part of our population.

South Africa needs to increase efforts to medically circumcise young men to reduce their risk of acquiring HIV. Unsafe circumcision should not leave young men with lifelong health problems, and no one should die from circumcision. We

**“We cannot hope to end HIV if we ignore the needs, concerns and rights of any part of our population.”**

condoms and testing regularly. We need to make sure that everyone who is infected has access to treatment and care.

We need to work harder on HIV prevention among key populations, including sex workers, men who have sex with men, and people who inject drugs. We must end the stigma and discrimination towards these populations. We cannot hope to end HIV if we ignore the needs, concerns and rights of

must make sure that young men have safe circumcision.

## Strengthening the response

We are encouraged by findings of a recent study on pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). Unlike antiretroviral treatment that is given to people who are HIV positive, PrEP involves the regular use of antiretroviral drugs by HIV negative people to prevent infection.

The study, conducted

by scientists from the HIV Prevention Trials Network, found that long-acting injections once every eight weeks was better than the daily tablet used for HIV prevention. These findings have the potential to significantly strengthen our response to the epidemic.

## Empowerment

If we are to succeed in ending AIDS as a public health threat within the next decade, we need to combine these medical breakthroughs with fundamental changes

in behaviour. We also need to tackle the economic and social conditions that contribute to high rates of infection.

One of our central tasks is to empower adolescent girls and young women, educationally, economically and socially. They need to be able to make their own decisions about every aspect of their lives, including their sexuality and sexual behaviour.

As the country marks 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against

Women and Children campaign, we need to work even harder to address the unequal relations between men and women – which contribute both to gender-based violence and to the spread of HIV.

Ultimately, we will achieve the end of AIDS through the empowerment of young people, women and other people at risk. This includes empowerment through access to information, advice and support. It includes access to education and economic

opportunities, especially for young women. Empowerment also means that every person must have access to testing, treatment and other health services.

The people of South Africa have come so far, endured so much and made such great progress in the fight against HIV, AIDS and tuberculosis.

Let us intensify both our resolve and our actions to confront and overcome AIDS once and for all.



# COVID-19

**Help prevent the spread of  
respiratory diseases like COVID-19**



**Wash your hands often with soap  
and water for at least 20 seconds.**

**COVID-19 Hotline: 0800 029 999**



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# Dr Phil Mjwara backs the basics

**A**t the heart of innovative ideas that will help improve the Public Service is getting the basics right.

This is the opinion of Dr Phil Mjwara (61), the

Director-General (DG) of the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI), who was named the Best Director-General (National) of the Year at the recent Batho Pele

Awards. The department was also recognised as the Best Functioning National Department of the Year.

Mjwara believes that service excellence can be achieved by all public servants and state entities. The secret to his success, he says, is putting in place policies and systems that ensure the department functions even in his absence.

The awards are judged across a number of criteria, one of which is the Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT).

“MPAT is a system that government has put in place to ensure that the basics of government departments are performed. We [the DG’s nominated for the Batho Pele Awards] are

measured on our ability to manage the department’s finances properly, the human resources plans we put in place, strategic orientation and role of leadership.

“The scores we received from the adjudication panel suggest that the work we do in the department, as measured by MPAT, is performed at an above average level in all categories,” he says.

Mjwara adds that his department gets many of the basics right, such as paying suppliers within 30 days, maintaining good human resources records, ensuring a functional internal audit process and having effective audit and enterprise risk committees in place.

## Setting the tone

As the chief official of the department, he sets the tone for how the staff conduct themselves. Among his chief responsibilities is all policy development in the science and technology sector in South Africa.

Dr Phil Mjwara was named Best Director-General (National) of the Year at the Batho Pele Awards.



In addition to the Batho Pele awards, the DSI has been recognised for adhering to best practice in its corporate and financial governance, having received three consecutive clean audit outcomes from the late Auditor-General, Kimi Makwetu.

Mjwara says that this was achieved by having the right policies, people and tools in place to properly execute the department's mandate.

Having clearly defined roles is crucial in ensuring that the department functions at its optimum capacity. In addition to this, the department has put peer review systems in place to hold each other to account – and managers are included in this review process.

Peer review meetings take place monthly, where senior managers give a status update about how things are progressing in their respective sections. Once a manager presents, other managers give their input on how that particular section is

performing.

The inputs by the managers are robust and honest, says Mjwara.

"We have a similar arrangement with our entities. We don't always agree on things but we make sure that we speak freely as that is how we can get to the root of a problem."

## Effective systems

The department has also put in place a tracking system that measures how long documents take to be processed.

"I have put in place mechanisms for things like document flow. If, for example, Minister Blade Nzimande wants something, we have turnaround times that are clear on how these things move from the Ministry to my office and from my office to the Deputy Director-General and back to my office, and from my office to the ministry. Every month, we track the speed of memos and submissions."

Mjwara says the systems he has put in

place – and which are driven by the executive management team – have resulted in a highly functional department, which is evidenced by the awards and clean audits.

He explains that these systems inform how staff conduct themselves in doing their work. The finance department, for example, has to ensure that all of its records are kept and can be produced during an audit. When it comes to supply chain, all rules must be diligently followed.

"You cannot have somebody saying that they did not know that they must get three quotations.

"You cannot have a person saying that they have not set up a bid specification committee when a bid is being awarded. All these internal processes are very clear."

## Producers of knowledge

The DSI has some lofty ambitions, says Mjwara, who has been the DG

since 2006.

It aims to produce one percent of all the knowledge produced in the world. This can be achieved by building a research enterprise, he says, and by utilising the research that is produced at universities and other research institutes.

The DSI recently unveiled seven hydrogen fuel cell systems that resulted from intensive research. This alternative energy technology could eventually be rolled out nationally to alleviate the pressure on the country's electricity grid.

The project was a partnership between the DSI; the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure; the Department of Defence; local companies Bambili Energy and HyPlat; and international companies PowerCell Sweden, Horizon Fuel Cell Technologies (Singapore) and Element 1 Corporation (United States).

Further contributions, in the form of methanol





The staff and management of the Department of Science and Innovation are a class above the rest.

and hydrogen fuel for the fuel cell units, were also received from Air Products South Africa, Protea Chemicals and Sasol.

Hydrogen fuel cells produce electricity by means of a chemical reaction, using hydrogen as the basic fuel, together with platinum-based catalysts.

“This offers us the opportunity to produce clean energy,” says Mjwara.

The hydrogen fuel cell systems are currently the main source of power at

the field hospital established at 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria, as part of government’s response to the Coronavirus.

Mjwara says the technology will also be deployed at schools and other public entities, particularly in rural areas.

“The development and use of this type of technology can reduce the demands placed on Eskom as the cell works on renewable energy.”

## Cultivating success

The former Group Ex-

ecutive responsible for research and development at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) says that among his greatest achievements is leading the team that won the bid to host the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) on behalf of the DSI.

Before his posting at the CSIR, Mjwara was the Director of Technology Development at the then Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology.

Under his leadership,

Mjwara says he was able to see the growth of the DSI’s work and mandate, whilst also seeing an increase in the number of bursaries, research grants and scholarships given to students.

Mjwara worked in academia as a lecturer at the University of South Africa, Wits University and the University of Fort Hare (UFH). Born in Lamontville, Durban, he has a Doctorate in Physics from Wits University and a Master’s Degree in Physics from UFH.

# COVID-19

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# SIU closing in on corruption



**T**he Special Investigating Unit (SIU) is closing in on those alleged to have been involved in the misappropriation of Coronavirus (COVID-19) relief funds.

As the world marked International Anti-Corruption Day on 9 December, South Africa's fight against corruption has zoomed in on those who sought to benefit from the pandemic at the expense of the citizens and the State.

In July 2020, President Cyril Ramaphosa signed a proclamation allowing the SIU to probe any allegations relating to the misuse of COVID-19 relief funds.

This allowed the SIU to investigate any unlawful or improper conduct in the procurement of any goods, works and services during or related to the national state of disaster in any State institution.

If the SIU finds evidence

that a criminal offence has been committed, it is obliged to refer such evidence to the prosecuting authority.

The SIU was also empowered to institute civil proceedings for the recovery of damages or losses incurred by the State.

## Taking action

Head of the SIU Advocate Andy Mothibi says among the recent proclamations signed by the

President, this is the most prominent.

To ensure that action is taken speedily, President Ramaphosa has instructed the SIU to submit interim reports on investigations every six weeks.

"We have been at it since then. Some of the prominent focus areas in this investigation are the Gauteng and Eastern Cape departments of health but, of course, we are conducting investigations in all other provinces," he says.

The SIU is investigating more than 200 companies in Gauteng and has already made findings in some of those that it focused on initially.

Mothibi says where procurement processes were irregular, the SIU has made referrals for disciplinary hearings to be held.

This has led to the head of Gauteng Health being placed on precautionary suspension pending the completion of the investigation. He will also face

disciplinary proceedings for misconduct.

In the same department, the head of supply chain management was also suspended, and the chief financial officer of the department resigned. His pension has been frozen pending investigation.

"We are in court with a number of companies alleged to be involved in these irregularities," he says, explaining that companies that had their accounts frozen by the SIU went to court.

"Arguments by parties were made and we are expecting that the court will order that their accounts as well as some pensions should remain frozen until the civil litigation process is completed."

## Progress report

In October when the SIU submitted the second progress report to the President, the SIU was investigating over 700 contracts across the country.

From April to August 2020, the National Treasury had allocated R15.6

billion for COVID-19 relief funds.

Of this, R10.5 billion is under investigation by the SIU.

"This represents 67% of the total amount. This is quite a lot. These are all the contracts where allegations were made and which are under our investigation. Of the R10.5 billion under investigation, approximately R223 million was referred to the Special Tribunal to be recovered," he explains.

The Department of Justice and Correctional Services established the Special Tribunal with the aim of recovering monies taken from the coffers of the State unlawfully.

## Investigations

Outlining the progress made in investigations, Mothibi says the SIU has achieved the following:

- 5 645 disciplinary action referrals have been made and a further 127 potential disciplinary referrals are likely to be made.
- 215 cases have been referred to the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) and a

further 110 are likely to be referred to the NPA.

- 31 systematic recommendations have been made to State institutions to improve processes and sys-

**"Of the R10.5 billion under investigation, approximately R223 million was referred to the Special Tribunal to be recovered."**

tems.

- 41 774 referrals were made for administrative action.
- 43 matters have been instituted in the Special Tribunal, worth R6.9 billion.
- 42 civil matters are in the normal courts, worth R9.943 billion.
- 43 admissions of debt have been signed, worth R52 million.

- 30 matters to be instituted in the Special Tribunal.

Mothibi says the SIU has increased momentum in the health sector and it plans to do the same in the local government sphere.

"We will be prioritising infrastructure and helping the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure to focus on anti-corruption in the infrastructure space.

"We collaborate with other law enforcement agencies through the Fusion Centre."

## Impact on the economy

According to Mothibi, corruption has a negative impact on the economy.

"Corruption actually drains out the coffers of government unlawfully. As a result, government becomes unable to deliver on most of the critical areas that are meant for the improvement of the lives of ordinary citizens.

"If people's lives are negatively affected, they almost cannot participate in economic activi-





ties," he explains.

One of the objectives of the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan is to fight corruption to ensure that State resources are not wasted.

## National Anti-Corruption Strategy

A further boost to the country's fight against corruption is the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS), which is a significant tool that will assist law enforcement agencies root out corruption, says Mothibi.

The NACS was recently approved by Cabinet and will provide a nationwide corruption intervention framework.

"The SIU played a part in the development of the strategy from day one.

We are going to play a vital role in supporting its implementation," he says.

The NACS is a culmination of countrywide consultation with various sectors, including business, government and civil society.

In addition, its reference groups, comprising civil society, academia, business and government representatives, have supported the strategy's compilation.

The NACS covers six pillars, which include:

- Promoting and encouraging active citizenry.
- Whistle-blowing.
- Integrity and transparency.
- Advancing the professionalisation of employees.
- Enhancing govern-

ance in institutions.

- Strengthening resourcing and coordination of performance and accountability.

The strategy also proposes an interim National Anti-Corruption Advisory Council as a structural arrangement to ensure greater monitoring, accountability and transparency.

This interim structure will commence with a process to set up an independent overarching statutory structure that will report directly to Parliament.

## Civil society

"Over and above conducting normal investigations, the strategy also speaks to the involvement of civil society in

the prevention of corruption," Mothibi says.

A number of initiatives are already underway.

"We have the Health Sector Anti-Corruption Forum and have just had the inaugural meeting of the Local Government Anti-Corruption Forum. These forums include government and civil society representatives, and they cover both the prevention and investigation sides," he explains.

Mothibi says the SIU will ensure appropriate implementation of the strategy.

Report corruption on the SIU anonymous whistle-blower hotline at 0800 037 774 or email [siu@whistle-blowing.co.za](mailto:siu@whistle-blowing.co.za)



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# Empowerment a weapon in the war against GBVF

**G**overnment has reiterated its commitment to focus on women's economic empowerment initiatives in an effort to ensure they fully assume their rightful place in the economy and society.

Speaking at a virtual dialogue to mark the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children campaign, President Cyril Ramaphosa said advancing women's economic empowerment is fundamentally tied to the Constitutional right to dignity.

He added that empowering women financially gives them greater control over their lives.

"As part of this effort, earlier this year we announced that South Africa will be setting aside 40% of all public procurement for women-owned enterprises.

"A National Procurement

Task Team has been set up to drive this process. It is already rolling out capacity-building programmes to prospective beneficiaries to ensure women business owners are equipped to participate in public procurement," said the President.

## Supporting women-owned businesses

As part of the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, government is increasing its support to women-owned small, medium and micro enterprises to enable them to benefit from, among other things, the infrastructure development programme and opportunities in manufacturing, agriculture and tourism.

The President stressed that supporting women-owned businesses is crucial, if "we are to take full advantage of the

opportunities arising from the African Continental Free Trade Area when it comes into operation early next year".

He said women would also benefit from government's land reform programme and have more access to land that they can use to produce food and goods.

Women's economic participation will also be improved through the Presidential Employment Stimulus programmes.

The focus on women's economic empowerment is part of efforts to eradicate gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) and build a non-sexist South Africa," said Minister in The Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities Maite Nkoana-Mashabane.

Addressing a media briefing by the Inter-Ministerial Committee on GBVF, the Minister said

initiatives to fast track the empowerment of women-owned businesses will be implemented from December 2020 onwards.

"Women will be capacitated in business registration and compliance, procurement and regulatory provisions, financial literacy, marketing tools, access to markets and access to finance and opportunities."

A training manual is being developed in this regard.

## Safe workplaces

South Africa is in the process of ratifying the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention C190, which establishes a global standard for the protection of women in the world of work.

"The aim is to ensure safe workplaces that are free of violence against women. This work also aims to galvanise nation-

al leadership for gender equality and address GBVF in the workplace at the highest levels of decision making," the Minister said.

This year marks 22 years since South Africa embarked on the United Nations (UN)-led 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children campaign. It takes place annually from 25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) to 10 December (International Human Rights Day).

The theme for this year's 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children campaign is 'Women's Economic Justice for a Non-violent and Non-sexist South Africa'.

## GBVF National Strategic Plan

Government continues to fight the scourge of GBVF in the country within the framework of the GBVF National Strategic Plan (NSP).

Approved by Cabinet in March 2020, the plan was developed to respond to GBVF in the

country.

It aims to provide a multi-sectoral, coherent strategic policy and programming framework to strengthen a coordinated national response to the crisis of GBVF by the government of South Africa and the country as a whole.

"As part of institutionalising the implementation of the NSP, a number of processes have been employed by the department to enforce accountability, provide leadership and coordinate implementation.

"We are working with

various departments to prepare and submit weekly reporting to the President on progress made in implementation of targets set out in the NSP," said Minister Nkoana-Mashabane.

## Accountability

The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities has successfully advocated for inclusion of GBVF as a standing agenda item on all Directors-General clusters and Cabinet meetings.

"This is part of enhancing accountability and

better coordination of the NSP implementation. We have also partnered with UN Women and civil society to institutionalise the multi-sectoral implementation of NSP," the Minister said.

All provinces are working on putting in place or strengthening and aligning coordinating structures to the NSP.

"This process is essential as provinces also have to start reporting on progress. Ultimately, this process will be replicated at the district level, championed by the mayor," the Minister said.



# Investing in SA's future



President Cyril Ramaphosa addresses the third South Africa Investment Conference.

**T**he third annual South Africa Investment Conference yielded more than R100

billion in investment commitments that are set to benefit sectors across the country and aid in

economy recovery.

Fifty companies pledged R109.6 billion at the recent conference.

This brings the amount of investment pledges to R773.6 billion in the past three years, meaning South Africa has now reached 64% of its target of R1.2 trillion over five years.

With this year's conference taking place in an extremely subdued economic climate, President Cyril Ramaphosa said securing investment commitments of over R100 billion is a remarkable achievement.

"Several of the investment commitments made at this conference are in sectors that have been hard-hit by the Coronavirus (COVID-19), especially the tourism and hospitality industries. These investments will go a long way towards their recovery," he said.

The investments are spread across various sectors along the length and breadth of the country.

## The roadmap

In the opening address of the conference, the President told investors that the Economic Reconstruction and Re-

**“Significantly, these investments are taking place throughout the country, with projects planned or underway in all eight metropolitan municipalities and 26 district municipalities in all provinces.”**

covery Plan will serve as South Africa's roadmap going forward.

He said government was hard at work to ensure that it provides fertile ground for potential investors and spurs economic growth.

The plan's priorities include a massive infrastructure programme, an employment stimulus package to create and support jobs, immediate steps to achieve energy security and measures to deepen local industrialisation and African integration.

“The private sector is vital to the achievement of these priorities and shifting the economic trajectory of our country.

“This is particularly true of our infrastructure programme, which relies on private investment in

new infrastructure projects to create efficient, world-class network infrastructure and boost aggregate demand.”

Through the Infrastructure Fund, public funds will be used to leverage private investment on a larger scale.

## **Operation Vulindlela**

To drive the delivery of key reforms, government established Operation Vulindlela with a dedicated team from The Presidency and National Treasury.

“‘Vulindlela’ means to ‘open the way’ in isiZulu and isiXhosa. Operation Vulindlela will open the way for high-impact economic reforms in network industries such as energy, water, telecommunications and

transport, as well as in attracting critical skills and streamlining the visa regime.

“We will focus on a number of priority reforms with clear timeframes, and make sure they are effectively and swiftly executed. The team reports directly to me on progress in implementation,” said the President.

The President also called on investors to take up the opportunity presented by the pending African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) - set to take effect in January 2021.

The AfCFTA will establish a continental market of some 1.3 billion people, with a combined GDP in the region of \$2.3 trillion dollars.

“With its advanced

infrastructure, diverse economy, sophisticated capital markets and developed manufacturing capacity, South Africa is the ideal location for any company wanting to reach the continental market with greater effectiveness from a cost and logistical point of view,” said the President.

## **Results evident**

Government is closely tracking the implementation of the 102 projects announced at the last two conferences. To date, R172 billion of the committed amount has been spent on projects.

The sector that has seen the greatest flow of investment from these commitments is mining and mineral beneficiation, with just over R63.6 billion having been spent.

The flow of investment into the ICT sector currently stands at R31 billion, while the automotive sector has attracted about R23 billion.

“Other sectors that have seen substantial actual investment flow so far include property and





hospitality at R8.2 billion; infrastructure at R7.7 billion; forestry, paper and pulp at R6.3 billion; fast-moving consumer goods at R6 billion and financial services at R5.6 billion,” said the President.

Nineteen investment projects from the past two years have already been completed or launched.

A further 44 projects – representing 57% of the total investment commitment – are under con-

struction, with another 12 projects in the early stages of implementation.

Unfortunately, 21 projects – representing around 10% of the total commitments – have been delayed or are on hold as a result of COVID-19.

“This means that despite the severe disruption of the last few months, the vast majority of projects are making steady progress.

“Significantly, these

investments are taking place throughout the country, with projects planned or underway in all eight metropolitan municipalities and 26 district municipalities in all provinces,” said President Ramaphosa.

A new pharmaceutical manufacturing plant built by Aspen Pharmacare in Nelson Mandela Bay, which was one of the first investment pledges at the inaugural conference, has reached a preliminary agreement

with Johnson & Johnson to manufacture and package its COVID-19 candidate vaccine.

Aspen has been able to build further capability to manufacture vaccines following the investment commitment it announced at the inaugural conference.

“This would position the Eastern Cape as a global hub for the manufacturing of vaccines and other pharmaceutical products.”

The most recent project to be commissioned is a new liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) storage facility built by Bidvest and Petredec in Richards Bay, the largest of its kind in the world, which will bolster the supply of LPG to South Africa and the region.

Nissan will start production on its R3 billion production plant for the Navara bakkie in 2021, while Dalisu Holdings, a black industrialist company manufacturing chemicals, will be commissioning its factory in December 2020.

The Toronto Group, a beneficiary of the Black Industrialists Scheme,

broke ground on its green charcoal facility in August this year.

Poultry producers such as Astral have reached commercial operation of new facilities and are now expanding even further as part of commitments in the SA Poultry Master Plan.

## Honouring commitments

Naspers Chief Executive Phuti Mahanyele-Dabengwa said the company had followed through on its R4.6 billion investment commitment.

In 2019, when the commitments were made, Naspers had already invested in a stake in technological start-up, Sweep South. At the time, the company was hiring 15 000 people. The number has now grown to 20 000, Mahanyele-Dabengwa said.

Naspers invested R1.4 billion in Foundry, a South Africa-focused start-up funding initiative that helps talented and ambitious South African technology entrepreneurs develop businesses.

Over the past year, the multinational has also

invested in start-ups Aerobotics, FSM and StudentHub. About R2.3 billion of the commitment was directed to extend-

**“We’ve always seen mining as a catalyst for economic development in South Africa because the resources the country has are quite extensive.”**

ing Naspers operations in South Africa.

This, Mahanyele-Dabengwa said, shows the commitment to growing not just companies the size of Naspers but also small businesses that are looking to make a difference in the lives of South Africans.

Also making good on its investment commit-

ment is United States technology multinational Amazon Web Services (AWS).

During the 2019 leg of the conference, Amazon pledged to build its first cloud data centre in Africa, in Cape Town. The commitment came to fruition when the centre was open earlier this year.

Speaking at this year’s conference, AWS South Africa’s Country Manager Rashika Ramlal, said: “We are proud and honoured to be part of the transformation. Tyme Bank is using our services to support customers.”

With small businesses seen as drivers of economic growth for South Africa and Africa, AWS is “uniquely positioned to help them access infrastructure that was previously only accessible to enterprises globally”.

“There’s no start-up cost. They are able to access information, experiment and innovate,” said Ramlal.

The AWS investment in June came with 3 000 permanent jobs.

Anglo American Chairperson Nolitha Fakude

said the company has made good on its R87 billion pledge because it still believes in South Africa and what it has to offer. The company has already invested R57 billion of the committed total.

“We’ve always seen mining as a catalyst for economic development in South Africa because the resources the country has are quite extensive.

“As a company that has been operating here for more than 100 years, we know of the huge opportunities that are here, should stakeholders work together to realise them.”

Procter and Gamble’s General Manager for South Africa Vilo Trska said the company had in the past year produced on the R300 million pledge made in 2018 for the production of Always sanitary pads.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Procter & Gamble is forging ahead with investing R260 million in improving its production capabilities and plant facilities to drive up local supply for local demand.

# HIV and AIDS targets in sight

**S**outh Africa is not new to battling pandemics. While the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic arrived on our shores less than a year ago, the country has been contending with the HIV and AIDS pandemic for almost four decades.

More than 7.7 million people in South Africa are living with HIV and AIDS.

But thanks to government interventions and programmes, the progress in the battle against HIV and AIDS is evident.

Addressing a World AIDS Day commemoration event in Gauteng recently, Deputy President David Mabuza, in his capacity

as chairperson of the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC), noted the success of government's Cheka Impilo National Wellness Campaign.

## Cheka Impilo

"It is a campaign that aims to initiate people on HIV treatment, find the missing TB cases and screen people for non-communicable diseases.

"Cheka Impilo or testing is emphasised because if a person does not know their health status, it is difficult to treat them for a disease or virus like HIV, TB, non-communicable diseases as well as COVID-19," he explained.

From April 2019 to

March 2020, more than 18 million people were tested for HIV, exceeding government's annual target of 14 million.

Currently 92% of people living with HIV know their status.

"We have ensured that 73% of people diagnosed with HIV receive sustained antiretroviral treatment. Therefore, the country has a treatment gap of 17%. We are encouraged that our country's performance to reach a 90% viral suppression level, stands at 88%," he said.

## 90-90-90 targets

Government has been working towards the United Nations AIDS (UNAIDS)

90-90-90 targets.

The targets are that by 2020, 90% of people living with HIV will know their status, 90% of all people with diagnosed HIV infection will receive sustained antiretroviral therapy and 90% of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy will have viral suppression – where the viral load or the amount of virus in a person's blood is reduced to an undetectable level.

"We are encouraged by the recently released Thembisa, which is a leading mathematical model of HIV in South Africa. According to this model, most provinces are making progress in the attainment of the



90-90-90 targets, with KwaZulu-Natal leading in this fight. Together, we need to build on this progress and accelerate our efforts," he said.

The Deputy President added that government is committed to concurrently addressing HIV, TB and COVID-19.

"Our programmes and resources are dedicated to respond in equal fashion to these multiple health conditions, along with non-communicable diseases, without sacrificing one for the other.

"By taking this approach, we will be able to rationalise the scarce resources and improve efficiencies, without one problem undermining the other."

## Largest treatment programme

Speaking to *PSM*, SANAC CEO Thembisile Xulu echoed the President's sentiments, highlighting the progress made against HIV and AIDS.

She pointed out that the country has the largest treatment programme in the world, with over 4.9

million people currently accessing antiretroviral treatment – the majority of whom are in public healthcare.

"About 80% of national HIV response funding comes from the national fiscus and this is commendable. In many other African countries, heavy reliance is placed on foreign aid or donor funding for the HIV programme.

"The HIV prevention, care and treatment commodities which are available for free to the public, come at a huge cost to government," added Xulu.

## New medicines

The investment in the HIV programme has seen new medicines being introduced, such as TLD for HIV – a three-in-one, fixed-dose combination, and 3HP for TB prevention, a treatment taken once a week for three months.

TB and HIV treatment go hand-in-hand because TB is one of the leading causes of death among people living with HIV, while TLD has fewer side effects, which

improves adherence, and it also acts faster in attaining HIV viral suppression.

More recently, a pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) treatment was launched and is being rolled out. PrEP is an HIV prevention medication that helps reduce the risk of infection by people who are vulnerable to HIV.

However, Xulu believes the country needs to improve treatment initiation, adherence and viral suppression for the paediatric population.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown, people defaulted on their treatment.

"Many people missed their clinic appointments and failed to collect their medication – this suggests that we have a large number of people who are defaulting," she said.

## Public healthcare

Public health specialist at the University of KwaZulu-Natal Ozayr Mohamed said even in the face of challenges posed by COVID-19, the

country is well positioned to combat HIV and AIDS because of its existing public healthcare programmes, most notably its massive antiretroviral treatment programme.

Thanks to this treatment programme and other HIV and AIDS programmes, UNAIDS reported a 50% decrease in AIDS-related deaths between 2010 and 2018. The number of new HIV infections fell from 390 000 to 240 000 during the same period.

"Despite the numerous deficiencies in the public health system, the HIV and AIDS programme has been prioritised.

"Innovative measures were implemented to accelerate the number of people being tested and initiated on antiretroviral treatment," he said.

Mohamed added that for greater success to be achieved in the fight against HIV and AIDS, government must intensify efforts to tackle social factors such as poverty, gender inequalities and inadequate education as well as limited access to health facilities.

# Basic education on track

## for post-COVID-19 recovery

**A**fter being hard-hit by the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the Department of Basic Education is looking to innovate in 2021 to ensure further recovery from the setbacks of 2020.

One the things that will be done differently in 2021 is the scrapping of June examinations, which will be replaced with controlled tests, Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga tells PSM.

She says the time that would have been set aside for the administration of the June examinations will also be used as additional teaching time.

In addition, ongoing collaborations with partners such as the National Education Collaboration Trust will ensure that the content produced for television and radio



stations, the internet and mobile applications continue to be developed and improved for learners to watch after school or on weekends.

The Department of Basic Education (DBE), through its partnerships

with various stakeholders, is in the process of establishing broadcasting studios in each district.

In recent years, the DBE has invested in the curation of video lessons and the utilisation of various media platforms,

including social media apps such as Facebook, to reach out to learners and to respond to subject-related questions.

Going forward, teaching plans that will address teaching overload are being developed.

"Redundant content and concepts will be omitted from the curriculum," she explains.

"The first few days of schooling in 2021 will be dedicated to revision and consolidation of concepts from the previous grades. The teaching plans are part of a three-year recovery plan, which will address learning losses incurred from the 2020 academic year," the Minister adds.

### Rolling out ICT

Minister Motshekga says the technological changes that have already been implemented



to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on teaching and learning will continue.

“The department is not planning to reinvent the wheel but will continue to modify the systems that are already in place, should there be a second wave of COVID-19.”

As COVID-19 affected the country’s schools, a number of modes of delivery were explored and utilised.

These included the use of technology, where possible, to deliver lessons through Microsoft Teams or Zoom; and teachers working remotely, with assistant teachers in class mediating the delivery of curriculum to learners.

To ensure that the roll-out of ICT in schools continues, the Minister says various initiatives are being implemented, including:

- 4 697 mainstream schools received ICT solutions and the rollout of ICT in 447 special schools is underway.
- Access to the national and provincial department websites/e-

learning portals, Thutong Portal and DBE Cloud for online learning and assessment.

**“The department is not planning to reinvent the wheel but will continue to modify the systems that are already in place, should there be a second wave of COVID-19.”**

- Offline solutions with intranet are being rolled out in areas with poor or no internet connectivity, though the DBE e-Library

solution and other initiatives from partners like the Thabo Mbeki Foundation.

- Virtual classrooms/online schools have been established through partnerships to reach remote learners.
- The connectivity of schools is being accelerated through the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies’ SA Connect initiative (587 schools were assisted in 2020/21) and other initiatives, like the Thabure partnership, which connected schools in the Northern Cape, Limpopo and Gauteng in 2020/21.
- Electronic Communications Service licensees are in the process of zero rating local education content websites; 365 applications have already been processed.
- Partnerships with national and community broadcasters are ensuring television and radio support pro-

grammes for teachers and learners.

## Overcoming challenges

Minister Motshekga acknowledges that there have been a few challenges in the past in the rollout of ICT infrastructure in schools across the country.

While the department appreciates that technology is the strongest factor shaping the education landscape, it often finds the smooth and effective integration of educational technologies challenging.

The most notable obstacles are the acquisition of new equipment and the adaptation of curricula and teaching techniques to incorporate new education tools.

Theft and vandalism of ICT devices in schools, budget cuts and the redirecting of funds, insufficient equipment or connectivity issues are additional challenges, says the Minister.

“We must ensure that ICT devices are accessible to schools so that learning materials are

digitised and children can learn from home in times like these," the Minister says.

## The pandemic and beyond

The Minister says the DBE managed to salvage the academic year by revising the school calendar for 2020 and aligning the teaching plans with the number of days left for teaching and learning.

Looking ahead, the department wants to ensure all learners have the opportunity to grow, while also playing its role in ensuring economic recovery.

The DBE has diversified the curriculum offering to ensure that all learners are catered for.

"We are in the process of implementing the Three Streams Model curriculum which will cater for learners with academic, occupational and vocational inclinations. The occupational and vocational learning pathways will cater for learners who would want to enter a specific trade or job in various industries such as automotive, healthcare, woodworking, etc," says the Minister.

To ensure that the curriculum is in line with

the 21st century, a curriculum on coding and robotics is being piloted in schools across the country.

Boosting education and skills development is one structural reform that the department plans to use to support the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan.

This calls for efficient resource mobilisation, says the Minister.

She adds that the basic education sector has been allocated R7 billion to implement the Education Employment Initiative, which was intro-

duced in support of the Presidential Employment Stimulus Programme. The initiative aims to create 200 000 employment opportunities for education assistants and 100 000 for general school assistants.

The Minister says the programme will create career opportunities for unemployed young people with a passion for teaching.

A further R2.43 billion has been set aside for school governing body-funded posts in fee-paying schools and posts at government-subsidised independent schools.



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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



# Bridging the digital divide



Photo: Pixabay

**E**xpanding access to the internet and reducing data costs have been recognised as crucial cogs in the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP).

At the launch of the ERRP, President Cyril Ramaphosa said

interventions of the plan include reducing data costs for every South African and expanding broadband access to low-income households.

He added that the release of high-demand spectrum by March 2021 and the completion of digital migration will re-

duce data costs for firms and households.

The licensing of a high-demand frequency spectrum has long been earmarked as a significant step towards reducing data costs and driving investment in digital infrastructure.

High-demand spec-

trum, also known as International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT), refers to radio frequency bands that are in high demand by mobile and wireless operators.

It is anticipated that the high-demand spectrum will lay the platforms for a rapid expansion of the digital economy.

Government, through the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) is taking the needed steps to sell this spectrum to telecoms operators through auctions.

## Economic benefits

ICASA Chairperson, Dr Keabetswe Modimoeng, explained the benefits of the IMT.

"The spectrum auction proceeds will have broader economic benefits for the country as they will also incentivise broadband infrastructure investment and thus stimulate economic growth.

"More importantly, the release of spectrum is

critical to ensure continued provision of good quality broadband services and the lowering of the cost to communicate (particularly data costs) in South Africa.”

Winners of the auction will be required to meet certain obligations, most prominent of which is to provide internet coverage to underserved areas. Mobile network operators will also look towards this new spectrum to strengthen the capacity of new services such as 5G.

## Internet access

Government has already made significant strides in making internet access more affordable, through reduced data costs and the launch of free public WiFi hotspots across the country.

According to Internet World Stats, 55% of South Africans now have access to the internet. Growth has been largely driven by mobile connections, as digital devices and data become increasingly affordable.

According to ICASA's State of the ICT Sector in South Africa 2020 report, smartphone penetration rose from 81.7% in 2018 to 91.2% in 2019.

In addition, following a decision by the Competition Commission, mobile operators Vodacom and MTN were required to reduce their data prices by between 30% and 50%, effective from 1 April 2020.

President Ramaphosa said government is seeking new ways to further broaden internet access, including the provision of subsidies for low-income households.

“We are developing innovative new models to provide low-income households with access to affordable, high-speed internet through connection subsidies for broadband and support for public WiFi hotspots.”

The development of public WiFi hotspots has taken off in South Africa in recent years and there are around 330 000 of these hotspots across the country.

Similarly, positive improvements have been made in the zero-rating of websites by mobile operators, which allows consumers to utilise websites without charging their internet data plan.

**“We are developing innovative new models to provide low-income households with access to affordable, high-speed internet...”**

Almost 1 000 websites in South Africa are zero-rated, with most focused on providing online learning content and other educational information.

## SA Connect

SA Connect is government's project aimed at ensuring universal internet access by 2030.

Following the significant economic impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the announcement of the ERRP, government is now focused on accelerating the SA Connect project.

Speaking at a webinar, Communications, Telecommunications and Postal Services Minister Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams said Phase 1 of the project has been completed and Phase 2 is closer to being launched.

“The first phase of the project prioritised connectivity of the 970 government facilities, [namely] healthcare centres and schools in the underserved areas of the eight identified district municipalities.

“Government is currently conducting a feasibility study for funding SA Connect phase two, which will cover the rest of the country.”





Photo: Think WiFi

Phase 2 will see connectivity expanded to rural areas and to 42 000 government facilities. R1 billion has been provisionally allocated for SA Connect's implementation in the 2021/22 financial year.

The Minister highlighted the importance of bringing internet access to rural areas.

"It becomes crucial that we take services to where people are at. That is why the second phase will be looking at bringing connectivity to where people are. If it means the home, let it be brought home," she said.

## Driving the 4IR

On a much broader

scale, government has developed a comprehensive framework for South Africa to be fully prepared for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).

A Presidential commission was set up to map the way forward for the 4IR and the commission's 222-page report was released in late October.

As per the report, the aim is for "South Africa to have a globally competitive, inclusive and shared economy where the technological capability and production capacity is driven by people harnessing the 4IR to propel the country forward towards its social and economic

goals, instead of falling behind."

The report highlights the essential need to be able to connect people with digital technologies.

"The drive to connect people and businesses to the internet with digital infrastructure is urgent and imperative if South Africa is to prepare for 4IR adequately.

"We, therefore, cannot afford to allow the digital divide to deteriorate further into a digital chasm by continuing to lag behind technological progress."

The commission recommended actions such as rapidly enacting legislation, continuing with the wide-

spread deployment of fibre broadband and accelerating the spread of 5G networks through a 5G Express Policy.

"In all, the commission's analysis has led to the conclusion that the 4IR is an opportunity for South Africa to integrate itself into the broader African market as envisaged in the long-term economic recovery plan.

"We recognise this moment as containing within it the potential to use technology to address the most challenging development problems faced by South Africa and the rest of the continent," the report states.

# COVID-19

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# UNDP paints picture of COVID-19 impacts

**T**he Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has taken its toll on vulnerable groups in the country, entrenching existing socio-economic challenges, such as poverty, unemployment and inequality.

With the recently released COVID-19 Rapid Needs Assessment Report highlighting the impact of the pandemic on the vulnerable, government will have the opportunity to enhance its strategies to better aid those most in need.

The report was undertaken by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in South Africa at the request of the Department of Social Development. It focused specifically on vulnerable groups.

The report highlights food security, unemployment and disruptions in basic and higher education as some of the factors that affect South Africans and includes recommendations as well

as global and regional data and analysis.

## Finding solutions

Social Development Minister Lindiwe Zulu says the report will help government boost its strategies as the country continues to fight COVID-19.

With the contents of the report now public, UN agencies and government and non-governmental stakeholders will deliberate on it and discuss possible solutions.

According to the Minister, the pandemic has caused tremendous uncertainty and presented unprecedented socio-economic challenges for countries across the globe, including South Africa. It also reversed the gains that government had made in improving the economy.

The assessment results demonstrate that the pandemic has entrenched existing socio-economic challenges, such as poverty, unemployment and inequality.

"It is crucial for all countries to 'build back better' by addressing both the short- and long-term socio-economic impacts of COVID-19," notes the Minister.

She adds it is also important to consider the opportunities that the pandemic has brought, which include, among others, the rapid use of technology and the knowledge of how quickly government and social partners are able to collectively respond to disasters.

## Leaving no one behind

UNDP South Africa Resident Representative, Dr Ayodele Odusola, says the South African Constitution and the Sustainable Development Goals recognise the importance of leaving no one behind.

It was for this reason the report focused on the marginalised and most vulnerable groups in society.



"We want to use this report to develop an interactive portal system that will be a digitalised dashboard for everybody to see what happens in addressing challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic," he says.

Dr Odusola says the greatest impact was found to be in vulnerable groups such as informal workers and people living in informal settlements, and this means that policy attention should be driven towards those groups to ensure that their livelihoods are improved.

Strategies and policies developed by government and the private sector must ensure equal participation in the economy and equal access to services, he adds.

## Findings of the report

One of the findings is that government responded immediately to manage the spread of the virus by establishing the National Command Council, declaring a state of disaster and formulating mitigation strategies.

The report found that approximately 740 000 people were at risk of falling below the poverty line in the country, in addition to those who were already under the poverty line before the pandemic.

Around 2.5 million informal workers lost either some or all of their income-earning potential.

It was found that about two million children were not receiving their child support grants, nine million children lost access to school feeding schemes, 13 million children were affected by school closures and above half a million households had inadequate access to food.

In addition, 200 000 homeless people, 266 000 refugees and asylum seekers and 162 000 prisoners were also affected

by the pandemic.

These figures were collected at the early stages of the pandemic and it is believed they will change once the information is updated on the digital dashboard.

It was also found that

**“If we do not empower citizens to be able to sustain themselves, then we are wasting our time.”**

the economy had already contracted before COVID-19, with an unemployment rate of around 29%. This worsened during the pandemic as a result of the reduction in production and lack of transportation due to the lockdown.

Of the workforce of 16.5

million people, 60% was affected by the pandemic.

Because the agricultural sector was also negatively affected, and farmers' production was compromised, food prices went up.

To address this, government set up an agriculture response fund and distributed food parcels to those who needed them the most.

The report recommends that government continue to support agriculture because it was heavily affected by the pandemic, provides the most jobs to the people and addresses food security and nutrition.

Government also needs to improve access to the services that were heavily affected by COVID-19.

The economy of the country needs to be revived, with emphasis on improved economic participation, and governance structures need to be empowered.

Some of the lessons learnt is that a systemic change is necessary in South Africa, not only in response to the pandem-

ic but to enhance the provision of services and thus position the country to effectively deal with future pandemics.

## Lessons learnt

The Minister says it is important to implement the lessons already learnt from COVID-19 to further protect lives should a second wave of infections hit South Africa.

“If we do not empower citizens to be able to sustain themselves, then we are wasting our time.

“South Africans are resilient in that they were able to remove a system that did not work for them during the apartheid era, and their resilience was also seen by how they obeyed the lockdown regulations that government introduced to manage the spread of the virus,” she says.

Minister Zulu adds the report should not be left to gather dust on shelves, nor is it a report for the Department of Social Development alone. Instead, she stresses, it can be used by all levels of government to address ongoing challenges.

# Khawuleza app to improve service delivery

**G**overnment efforts to improve service delivery and empower citizens have been given a boost, thanks to the newly launched Khawuleza mobile app.

The brain behind the app is young systems and data architect Katlego Nkosi, who works at the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME).

Recently, the Deputy Minister in The Presidency, Thembi Siweya, launched the modernised Presidential Hotline, which comes with the Khawuleza mobile app and USSD code.

Currently, the Presidential Hotline can only be reached through telephone and email channels, with a target turnaround time of seven days.

However, the new app and USSD code will enable citizens to lodge ser-

vice delivery complaints in all official languages through their cellphones and track their queries through a reference number.

Whistle-blowers will now be able to report any poor service delivery and corruption anonymously.

Currently in the pilot phase, the app will focus on service delivery in Limpopo.

Based on experience gathered and an assessment of the state of readiness in other provinces, the Khawuleza mobile app and USSD code will be rolled out in the remaining eight provinces, an effort which will then culminate in a national launch of a re-engineered Presidential Hotline.

## Access to services

Nkosi explains that the idea to develop the app came about when Deputy Minister Siweya was appointed to the department.

"She had put together a think tank to look at how we could improve access to the Presidential Hotline

and also modernise it.

We thought of coming up with something that the youth would like to use to access government services."

Nkosi says the development of the app was centred on access to services, being able to track the communication process after a complaint

Katlego Nkosi is creating and implementing technology that improves the lives of South Africans.





is lodged and enabling citizens to interact with government.

"One of the main goals is to enable government to directly respond to citizens, and to enable the youth to understand and engage with government about its programmes."

The app was developed in-house, thanks largely to the department's well-developed Information Technology (IT) Internship Programme. Participants assisted with developing and testing the app's technology.

Nkosi's experience in the IT sector has enabled him to develop multiple systems within government and the private sector.

In his current job, he mainly works as a systems and information architect and data modeller.

The latter includes the development of analysis and monitoring tools to monitor the performance of various government departments and State institutions and the development of systems that make it easier for

government officials to be aware of issues before they become critical.

"There's a broad range of systems at the DPME that deals with the work done in all spheres of government, including systems used to monitor local municipalities and facilities.

"Our efforts with the ICT component is to make sure that the development and architecture of systems aids in the efficiency of work and the mandate of the DPME," he adds.

Nkosi believes the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) offers many opportunities for government to improve service delivery and suggests government uses data analysis when developing service delivery policy.

He says that technology should be better utilised to keep citizens updated on the various programmes taking place in their areas, to show the progress being made in line with the National Development Plan Vision 2030.

## The road to success

Nkosi has had a number of successes in the private sector too.

These include the creation of the Expert Down-

**"One of the main goals is to enable government to directly respond to citizens..."**

time Monitoring System in 2012, which is used by the mining, feed mill and automation industries and the creation of an insurance portal in 2014, which was developed for Barclays ABSA Africa and was installed in the company's self-help personal and life insurance kiosks.

Another of his accolades is the creation of the Fleet Management System Development and app for Imperial Fleet in 2016 to manage licences, fines, telematics and all

aspects related to fleet management.

"But the most prized success for me has to be the Khawuleza app because this project has the biggest impact and will have long-term results, which will have the ability to forecast issues before they even arise," he says.

Nkosi finds his job exciting as it gives him the opportunity to have a positive impact on people by creating and implementing technology that improves their lives.

His future plans include developing an integrated government data collection system that will enable government to become a technological leader in the 4IR era and enable citizens to use government search engines to access useful information and become global citizens through technology.

The Khawuleza mobile app can be downloaded from the Google Play Store. Alternatively, visit the website – [www.khawuleza.dpme.gov.za](http://www.khawuleza.dpme.gov.za) – for more information.

# Kimi Makwetu: A visionary and eternal patriot

**T**he history of black South Africans' entry into the accounting and auditing profession will definitely have a big chapter about Auditor-General (AG) Kimi Makwetu and his generation.

This will be preceded by a chapter on amavundlilela – the trailblazers like Professor Wiseman Nkuhlu and Nonkululeko Gobodo who showed us that we, as black people, can follow accountancy as a profession.

Makwetu's generation – people like his predecessors Terence Nombembe and Shauket Fakie, amongst others – played a huge role in ensuring that the number of black chartered accountants grew.

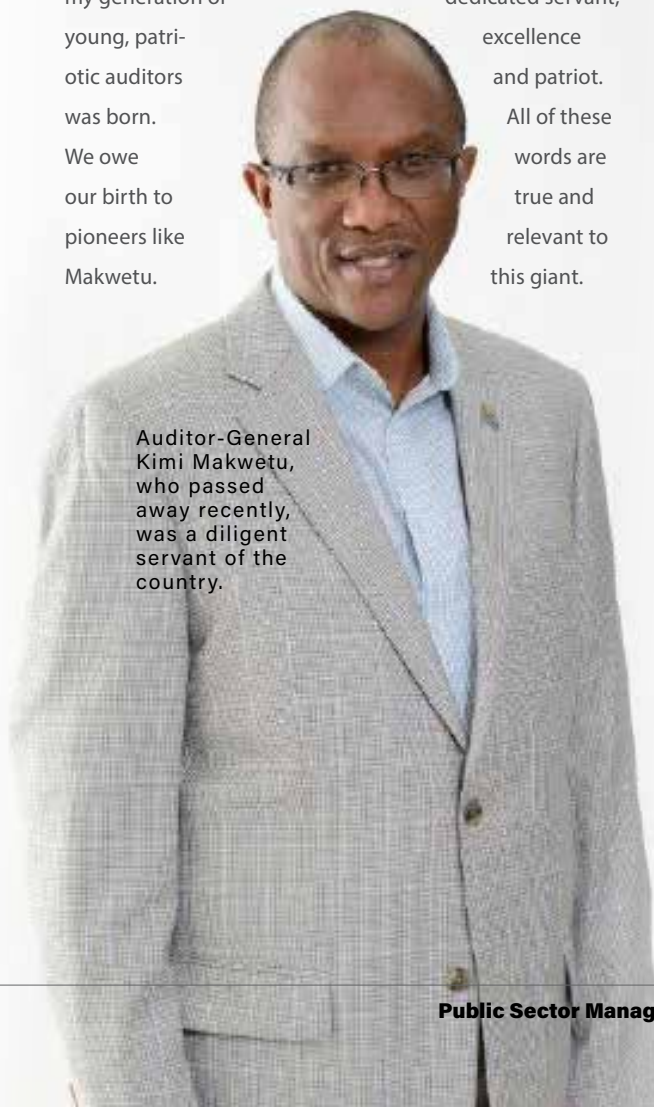
They also cultivat-

ed a sense of national duty by showing us that it was imperative for some of us to get into public sector auditing and actively support our democracy. That is how my generation of young, patriotic auditors was born. We owe our birth to pioneers like Makwetu.

## Teacher, mentor and friend

Since his passing, many endearing words have been used to describe Makwetu – words such as incredible, ethical,

dedicated servant, excellence and patriot. All of these words are true and relevant to this giant.



Auditor-General Kimi Makwetu, who passed away recently, was a diligent servant of the country.

But to us, Makwetu was our leader – the one who showed by example how we can diligently serve our country. He was an incredible teacher, mentor and friend.

He may have been the head of South Africa's supreme audit institution, but he was also a man who showed us as an institution how we can be a beacon of hope for our beloved country.

## A pioneer

As a visionary leader and a patriot, Makwetu was always restless about the state of public sector governance systems, as he asserted that the lapses were having a significant impact on how basic services were delivered to the ordinary citizens.

But as an eternal patriot, he always impressed on us that it will never be enough for us to just issue negative audit findings every year.

He firmly believed that, for the sake of the ordinary South Africans, we need to empower those charged with governance and oversight to

address the administrative failure.

To this effect, he pioneered many game-changing audit initiatives in a bid to ensure that our country's governance systems are improved.

Many are aware of the enhanced powers Parliament gave the office of the AG. Makwetu personally drove this process through to its approval, as he felt that such amendments will help improve governance.

Before his untimely passing, Makwetu was about to release his second real-time audit report on government's COVID-19 expenditure.

Unlike normal audits, which take place after the fact, these special audits were Makwetu's way of ensuring that relief funds meant for the most vulnerable were dispensed appropriately.

To ensure that the public sector improved its systems, Makwetu also introduced state of records reviews and preventative controls guidelines – mechanisms meant to assist those

charged with governance and oversight to proactively pick up and remedy administrative

**“... he pioneered many game-changing audit initiatives in a bid to ensure that our country's governance systems are improved.”**

lapses before they become endemic.

One of Makwetu's passions was transformation of the auditing industry, especially creating opportunities for women and young people from previously disadvantaged groups to enter and excel in the profession. During his term, our office has reached a stage where 50% of our executive committee are

women.

These are just a handful of the visionary initiatives Makwetu led. For those who are interested in reading more about his legacy, our latest (2019/20) annual report is a great read that aptly summarises his journey and role in helping to improve our democracy.

### **Honouring the legacy**

As the national audit office, we believe that the best way for us to honour the legacy of this great South African is to follow in his footsteps by maintaining an institution that he ensured would become the pride of all citizens – one that is independent, fair and transparent in delivering on its constitutional mandate.

Through his contributions, we are a better accountancy community globally, a better country and a better organisation.

In his honour, the audit office pledges to continue to demonstrate that which he held true and lived daily – the

integrity and dedication to serving our country diligently and with humility, accountability and resilience.

Fortunately, Makwetu left us with all the tools we need to carry on where he left off. And through his mentorship, we are ready to take up the baton and continue to serve South Africa and its citizens in line with our constitutional mandate, as we always have under his stewardship.

Zikhali, for your leadership, your dedication to promoting accountability in the public sector, your commitment to preserving the integrity of the audit profession and your unshakable patriotism – we thank you.

Equally, we thank your wife, Sisi Miranda, and your children for sharing you with us, and for allowing and supporting you to serve South Africa with distinction, even during strenuous times.

Phumla ngoxolo Zikhali.

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**\*Tsakani Maluleke was recently appointed AG. She was the Deputy AG since 2014.**

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# Gauteng

## backs economic recovery plan

**A**s the economic hub of South Africa, Gauteng will play a major role in helping the country recover from the impact of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19).

The province is already taking action to kickstart economic recovery.

In his address at Parliament during the debate on the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, Premier David Makhura outlined how the provincial government will support the plan.

"As the most urbanised province, and driver of over one-third of the Republic's economy, we take seriously our responsibility as one of the main engines of the national recovery," said the Premier.



Gauteng Premier David Makhura says the province is throwing its weight behind the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan.

### Infrastructure investment

Infrastructure investment is a crucial pillar of the national recovery plan, and Gauteng has also placed this as a top priority, working with a number of partners to drive investment.

Gauteng is focused on using infrastructure investment to reignite the economy in two critical ways.

The first is by co-investing with investors in high

growth sectors to drive special economic zones (SEZs) and new industrial clusters.

The second is by creating special purpose vehicles to finance bulk infrastructure to unlock private sector development in strategic new nodes, new cities and SEZs in each metro and district.

"Through the SEZ and revitalised township industrial parks, we are bringing Blacks, women

and young people into high growth priority sectors of the post-COVID-19 new Gauteng economy.

"These sectors directly echo the national strategy, with a focus on green energy, advanced manufacturing, the digital economy, business services, infrastructure and construction, and agro-processing," he said.

Premier Makhura highlighted the R3.4 billion Tshwane Automotive SEZ, which is already under construction, as the starting point for expanding economic growth that will eventually extend across all priority sectors. The SEZ will centre on the production of Ford vehicles, with a capacity to produce 200 000 vehicles per year by 2022.

### Township economy

Special attention is also being paid to developing

the township economy.

The province has launched a new Township Economic Development Bill, which sets out the transformative regulatory and policy interventions needed to change how commercial activity is governed and supported in township areas.

"We are doing this with the explicit goal of expanding existing businesses in township areas and enabling the creation of new business activity to drive mass-scale employment and self-employment in deprived communities," explained the Premier.

With regards to the Presidential Employment Stimulus, Premier Makhu-ra said the province is looking forward to being a major implementer of the new public employment programme.

"New kinds of public works [that] we have battle-tested in Gauteng demonstrate the wisdom of the President's approach.

"The youth brigades initiative deployed by our

Department of Education in partnership with our Tshepo 1 Million programme has proven the case with 5 000 young people tasked to directly manage pandemic health risks in schools."

Backed by the presidential stimulus programme, the province now intends to expand these public employment programmes to provid-

## **"...we are already mobilising rapidly to support and implement the President's vision."**

ing opportunities across disadvantaged communities.

Gauteng is actively supporting tourism recovery and growth through a number of partnerships in the commercial and leisure tourism sectors.

"This includes the resurrection of the Gauteng Air Access Partnership in collaboration with OR Tambo International Airport. We are also actively ramping up tourism

infrastructure upgrades in our major leisure belts including the Cradle of Humankind, Dinokeng and Vaal region."

### **Green economy**

Gauteng will also support the green economy, incorporating it into industrial and spatial development strategies.

"Green industrialisation is one of the focus sec-

tors for our expanded SEZ network, with bio-energy, industrial cannabis (including hemp production) and green agro-processing all part of the planned investment mix," the Premier explained.

The province is closely aligning its Growing Gauteng Together 2030 (GGT2030) initiative with the goals of the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan.

"Because there is such clear convergence between the national plan of action and the Gauteng City Region economic recovery plan, we are already mobilising rapidly to support and implement the President's vision.

"The GGT2030 plan of action includes forging partnerships with the private sector to drive the expansion of high growth sectors."

Some of the major projects of GGT2030 include the development of a high-end capacity rail freight corridor between Gauteng and the Eastern Cape, the development of new cities such as Lanseria Smart City and Vaal River City, and the continued expansion of SEZs.

"Detailed modelling that we have done on the impact of GGT2030 shows that within a decade, following this bold path, we can cut unemployment in Gauteng by two-thirds and halve poverty in our province," he added.



# BRICS: Standing together in tough times

**P**resident Cyril Ramaphosa has called on the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) grouping to strengthen trade and investment ties, particularly in Africa.

"We call on our BRICS partners to ramp up investment in not just South Africa but across the continent, particularly in the manufacturing sector," he said, in a recent address to the virtual 12th BRICS Leaders' Summit.

Investors will realise considerable benefits by investing in Africa, particularly with the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area from January 2021, he said.

President Ramaphosa called on the international community and BRICS partners to support a comprehensive stimulus package for African countries.

"This will enable African countries to contain the disease and rebuild our

damaged economies."

The New Development Bank (NDB), in particular, has a significant role to play.

"To date, the bank has approved US\$4 billion of Coronavirus-related emergency assistance projects, including US\$1 billion to South Africa to support our health response and social relief measures."

President Ramaphosa welcomed indications from the NDB that it aims to provide up to US\$10 billion in crisis-related assistance and to support economic recovery efforts.

He added that the battle against the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) and the search for a vaccine demonstrated the need to accelerate the establishment of the BRICS Vaccine Research and Development Centre in South Africa, as agreed in the 2018 Johannesburg Declaration.

"We support the initia-

tive to establish an integrated early warning system for preventing mass infectious diseases, and believe this is a project that could be supported by the NDB.

"Investing in science, technology and innovation will not only prepare us for future health emergencies, but it will also enable us to confront other global challenges."

President Ramaphosa said COVID-19 has highlighted the need to strengthen multilateralism as the preferred means to advance mutual interests.

"We reiterate our call for reform of the United Nations Security Council to ensure that it is more representative and inclusive, in line with the principle of the sovereign equality of all states.

"We need to ensure that trade rules take the

interests of developing countries into account, particularly with respect to development through industrialisation, he added.

In this regard, the President said reform of the World Trade Organisation is key to rebalancing the global trading system and ensuring that its benefits are shared more equitably.

He said BRICS was a testament to the power of solidarity.

"Our meeting today – in the midst of economic and social turmoil – is evidence that our partnership is strong and enduring.

"Working together, let us continue our onward march towards shared peace, security and prosperity, not only for our respective countries, but for all of humanity," said President Ramaphosa.



# WHAT WILL THE NEIGHBOURS SAY?



There is no excuse for abuse.  
People can only help if they know.

**TELL SOMEONE.**

Police: 10111  
Stop Gender Violence: 0800 150 150  
Childline: 0800 055 555

**Violence and abuse are poison to society. Let's make it stop.**



government  
communications

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



# BRICS backs SA's agenda

**G**lobal cooperation in a world faced with the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is vital in meeting the needs of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals.

In 2020, under the Russian Chairmanship, the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) grouping maintained the momentum despite adverse global

challenges, including the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The XII BRICS Summit culminated in the Moscow Declaration that affirms the commitment of the bloc to multilateralism and mutual respect.

BRICS countries have stepped up to the challenge in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

They started providing

support to each other and to the hardest hit European countries as early as March 2020.

South Africa received a US\$1 billion loan from the BRICS's New Development Bank (NDB) to help fight COVID-19 and for humanitarian aid.

In addition, South Africa has had close cooperation with the bloc partners on the provision of personal

protective equipment, the repatriation of South African citizens and the sharing of virus control/treatment measures.

## National interests

BRICS membership has elevated South Africa's position in the international arena and helped it become a more credible democratic mouthpiece for Africa



on global and continental issues.

South Africa's foreign policy agenda is closely intertwined with that of the bloc. Thus, the country can address the violations of international law and promote its national interests in international fora with the wholehearted support of the BRICS partners and the developing south.

The bloc supports the reform of international institutions to promote the interests of all, especially the developing countries.

The group's support has already secured South Africa a non-permanent seat at the UN Security Council in 2019-2020.

India has been elected for the term 2021-2022 and Brazil is a candidate for the biennium 2022-2023.

BRICS supports the African Union's commitment to promote the "Silencing the Guns in Africa" initiative, the implementation of the

African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), combating illicit financial flows from the continent and extending the Debt Service Suspension Initiative for low-income countries.

South Africa's economic situation has been exacerbated by the pandemic. Intra-BRICS cooperation has the potential to boost South African efforts to reconstruct and recover its national economy, dovetailing the operationalisation of the AfCFTA.

## Enhancing trade and investment

BRICS countries adopted the Economic Partnership Strategy for 2021-2025 which serves as a key guideline for enhancing cooperation in trade, investment, the digital economy and sustainable development, with a special focus on improving the business environment for small and medium enterprises.

The opening of the

third NDB office – Eurasian Regional Centre in Moscow – will further promote the investment cooperation of the group.

So far, the institution has funded about 65 projects totalling \$21 billion. By the end of this year, the NDB expects approvals to reach US\$26 billion.

There are nine projects approved for South Africa with a total portfolio worth more than US\$3 billion.

The expansion of the NDB membership will also see Southern African Development Community members joining the financial institution and the attraction of more development capital for southern Africa.

## People-to-people cooperation

Apart from being a political and economic group, BRICS countries pay due attention to the bolstering of the people-to-people cooperation

in the fields of culture, sports, films, youth and academic exchanges.

This year saw the establishment of the BRICS working group on culture, organisation of the Fifth Film Festival meetings of youth officials, young diplomats, and scientists.

Other informal youth-related initiatives include the BRICS Youth Energy Summit and cooperation within the framework of the Youth Energy Agency as well as the international BRICSMATH.COM online mathematics competition for students.

Events such as these do not only raise awareness at the grassroots level, about the BRICS partnership, but also provide the South African community with the opportunity to enhance human capital in the post-COVID-19 recovery.

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**\*Ashraf Patel is the Digital Economy Associate at the Institute for Global Dialogue.**

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# What's your plan for retirement?

If you have not started saving for retirement, start immediately, even if it is still many years away. The earlier you start saving, the more compound growth you will accrue.

Most people have mixed emotions about retirement. While to some it is the end of their long

career, others are more optimistic and see it as the beginning of their golden years.

"Approaching retirement can be a daunting prospect and a huge emotional barrier to overcome, especially for the sandwich generation – people typically in their last 10 years to retire-

ment, who are responsible for supporting their own children while also caring for their aging parents," says Errol Meyer, a legal specialist at Standard Bank Financial Consultancy.

The fact that people are living longer and children are still dependent long after they have

completed their schooling are perhaps the main reasons, he adds.

## Take charge

In addition, saving for post-retirement medical expenditure is fast becoming a reality for many. What can we do if we find ourselves in these scenarios?



Implementing a sound strategy is the answer, but how do we do this?

"Firstly, take charge and be accountable for your actions. Although pension fund rules may dictate that you have reached retirement and are entitled to a pension, the choice to retire remains yours.

"Some things are beyond your control, but choosing the date of your financial independence, historically known as 'retirement', coupled with the most effective way to save for this date, is crucial," explains Meyer.

There are three stages during which many people will have to make crucial choices.

The first is the building up of funds. The second is the date that you feel confident you are financially independent, and the third is drawing down on your capital.

If you have not accumulated sufficient funds, you may feel the need to work longer, have a second career, or turn a hobby into an

income-earning business venture.

"Taxpayers can claim tax deductions for contributions made to a retirement fund and nothing prevents a taxpayer who contributes to a pension fund from making additional contributions to another retirement fund.

"Currently, contributions are tax deductible up to 27.5% of remuneration or taxable income, subject to the annual maximum," says Meyer.

The final stage of retirement decision-making is when the balance of the funds must be invested in a compulsory annuity, whether a guaranteed life annuity or a living annuity, he adds.

The latter requires more ongoing financial advice on drawdowns and should be carefully monitored, preferably in consultation with a competent financial planner.

## What is a retirement annuity?

A retirement annuity (RA) is a vehicle for a person wanting to save for a

comfortable retirement.

And, while a RA can help you invest for your future, it also currently offers the following additional benefits, says Meyer. These include:

- Paying tax on your proceeds is deferred until your retirement, which means there's a larger balance that will compound, tax-free, for as long as you keep your money invested.
- At retirement (or when you turn 55), you can currently withdraw up to one-third of your savings out of a RA, as a cash lump sum, tax free for up to R500 000. As per the regulations on RA's, the remaining amount must be transferred to an annuity account and can be used as your monthly pension.
- Your creditors cannot touch your RA if you become insolvent. No-one, other than you and your chosen dependents, can have access to your funds.

- Even if you are not disciplined, your RA will 'save you from yourself', as you cannot access it until you are 55. This means your savings will only be available when they are most needed and for what they are intended: your retirement income.

- You can make monthly contributions, add a lump-contribution (salary bonus or tax return) or, if needed, pause or even stop your RA deposits at any time without significant impact on your investment value. But try to keep your contributions regular, no matter how big or small.

- Having a RA gives your investments access to different asset classes and geographical regions.

Before making any final decisions, it's always worth speaking to a professional financial planner about your options.

*Additional information sourced from Standard Bank.*

# Skin cancer:

## What to look for



**A**s skin cancer is usually curable, when detected and treated early, it is important to have your skin checked by a dermatologist regularly.

If you do not, a malignant melanoma (MM) – the most dangerous form of skin cancer – can spread deeper into the

skin and to other areas of the body, including the organs. If this happens, it can be deadly.

With Skin Cancer Awareness Month commemorated from 1 December to 31 January, *PSM* sheds some light on the various forms of skin cancer and what to look for.

“Skin cancer can occur

in anyone, despite their race, age and gender,” says Dr Khensani Ngobeni-Mkize, a Mbombela-based specialist dermatologist.

She explains that sun damage to the skin starts in childhood and poor sun protection puts children at risk for skin cancer later in life.

While there are various types of skin cancer, the three most common ones are basal cell carcinoma (BCC), squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) and MM.

“The early warning signs of skin cancer include a fast-growing lump, scaly patch on the skin, mole changes and non-

healing ulcers,” says Dr Ngobeni-Mkize.

## Basal cell carcinoma

BCCs are common and account for the majority of skin cancers in South Africa. Most of them are slow-growing and often start as small, red, shiny spots or nodules that may bleed occasionally

In darker skinned people, they can also be brown or black.

While a small number of BCCs occur on the trunk and legs, they usually develop on sun-exposed parts of the body, especially the head and neck.

Frequently, two or more of the following features are present in one BCC:

- A scar-like area that is white, yellow or waxy, and often has poorly defined borders. The skin itself appears shiny and taut.
- An open sore that bleeds, oozes or crusts and remains open for a few weeks, only to heal up and then bleed again.
- A reddish patch or irritated area. Some-

times the patch crusts and may also itch.

- A shiny bump or nodule that is pearly or translucent and is often pink, red or white. The bump can also be tan, black or brown and can be confused with a mole.

## Squamous cell carcinoma

SCCs are the second most common form of skin cancer in South Africa. They tend to develop on skin that has been exposed to the sun for years and are most frequently seen on the head, neck and back of the hands.

The appearance of primary SCC tumours can vary, but the most common forms include:

- a firm, red nodule on the face, lower lip, ears, neck, hands or arms, that may bleed sometimes.
- a flat lesion with a scaly crust on the face, ears, neck, hands or arms.
- a new ulceration or raised area on a pre-existing scar or ulcer.

- an ulcer or flat, white patch inside the mouth.
- a red, raised patch or ulcerated sore on or in the anus or on the genitals.

## Malignant melanoma

MMs often resemble moles and some develop from moles. The majority of melanomas are black or brown, but they can also be skin-coloured, pink, red, purple, blue or white. Signs of MM can be summed up as ABCDE, as described below:

- **Asymmetry:** If you drew a line through the mole, the two halves would not match.
- **Border:** The mole's border would be uneven.
- **Colour:** A number of different shades of brown, tan or black. A melanoma may also become red, blue or another colour.
- **Diameter:** Melanomas are usually larger than 6mm, but

may be smaller when first detected.

- **Evolving:** Any change in the size, shape, colour or elevation or any new symptom, such as bleeding, itching or crusting.

A metastatic melanoma is when the melanoma has spread to one or more parts of the body.

It first tends to go to the lymph nodes, near where it formed. From there, it can travel to organs like the brain, lungs, liver, bones and other areas of the skin.

Always protect yourself from the sun by wearing a broad-based hat; applying broad-spectrum sunscreen, with UVB and UVA protection, that contains minerals and is water resistant; and avoiding the sun between 10am and 3pm.

If you are worried about any suspicious skin lesions, consult a dermatologist as soon as possible and make sure to keep that area of your body covered from the sun.

*Additional information from the Cancer Association of South Africa.*

# How to perfect Christmas lunch

If you are stressing over Christmas lunch, stress no longer – help is at hand. We have rounded up the perfect mixture of traditional and modern recipes to make your Christmas lunch sparkle.

## Mango and shrimp salad

### Ingredients

- 500g shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 ripe mango, peeled and sliced
- 1 avocado, sliced
- 40g rocket
- 20g fresh basil
- 500g baby butter lettuce
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 3 tbsp lime juice
- 1 tsp extra virgin olive oil
- 3 garlic cloves, minced

### Directions

In a bowl, add the shrimp, garlic, olive oil, lime juice, salt and





pepper. Mix together until coated well.

Heat a pan over medium to high heat. Add the shrimp to pan and cook until cooked through. Remove from stove and set aside.

In a salad bowl, combine the lettuce, basil, rocket cherry tomatoes, mango, avocado and toss together. Top with shrimp and serve.

## Roast chicken

### Ingredients

- 1 whole chicken
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- Salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 medium lemon, thinly sliced
- Freshly chopped parsley, rosemary or thyme

### Directions

Heat the oven to 220°C. Pat the chicken dry with paper towels.

Drizzle the oil on the chicken and rub it all over the skin. Season inside and out with salt and pepper.

Place the herbs and lemon inside the cavity



of the chicken. Put the chicken breast-side up in a large casserole dish and roast the in the oven for 15 min-

utes, on the middle tray.

Reduce the temperature to 180°C and continue roasting for

a further 50 minutes to one hour. Remove the chicken from the oven and let it rest 15 to 20 minutes before carving.



## Baked cheesecake

### Ingredients

#### For the crust

- 2 packets Tennis Biscuits
- 150g melted butter

#### For the filling

- 500g cream cheese
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup castor sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- 1 tsp lemon rind, finely grated
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp cake flour
- 2 large eggs
- 250g sour cream

Beat the castor sugar and cream cheese with electric mixer until smooth. Continue mixing and add in flour, lemon juice, lemon rind and vanilla essence until combined. Add in the eggs, beating until smooth. Pour in the sour cream and mix until combined.

Pour mixture into the base and place the pan on a baking tray and bake for one hour or until the filling is set. Remove from oven and

let it cool. Garnish with berries before serving.

## Watermelon lemonade

### Ingredients

- 1 cup water
- 1 cup sugar
- 1.3kg cubed seedless watermelon
- 700ml lemon juice
- 2l sparkling water
- Lemon slices, for garnish

### Directions

Place the sugar and water in a saucepan

and bring to the boil. Stir continuously and reduce heat to simmer until the sugar is dissolved. Let it cool completely.

Purée the watermelon in a blender until smooth. Pour watermelon purée, cooled syrup and lemon juice into a serving jug and leave in the fridge for 30 minutes.

Pour the sparkling water into the watermelon mixture, top with ice and garnish with lemon slices before serving.

## Mixed berries for garnish

### Directions

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Line and grease the sides and base of a 20cm springform pan.

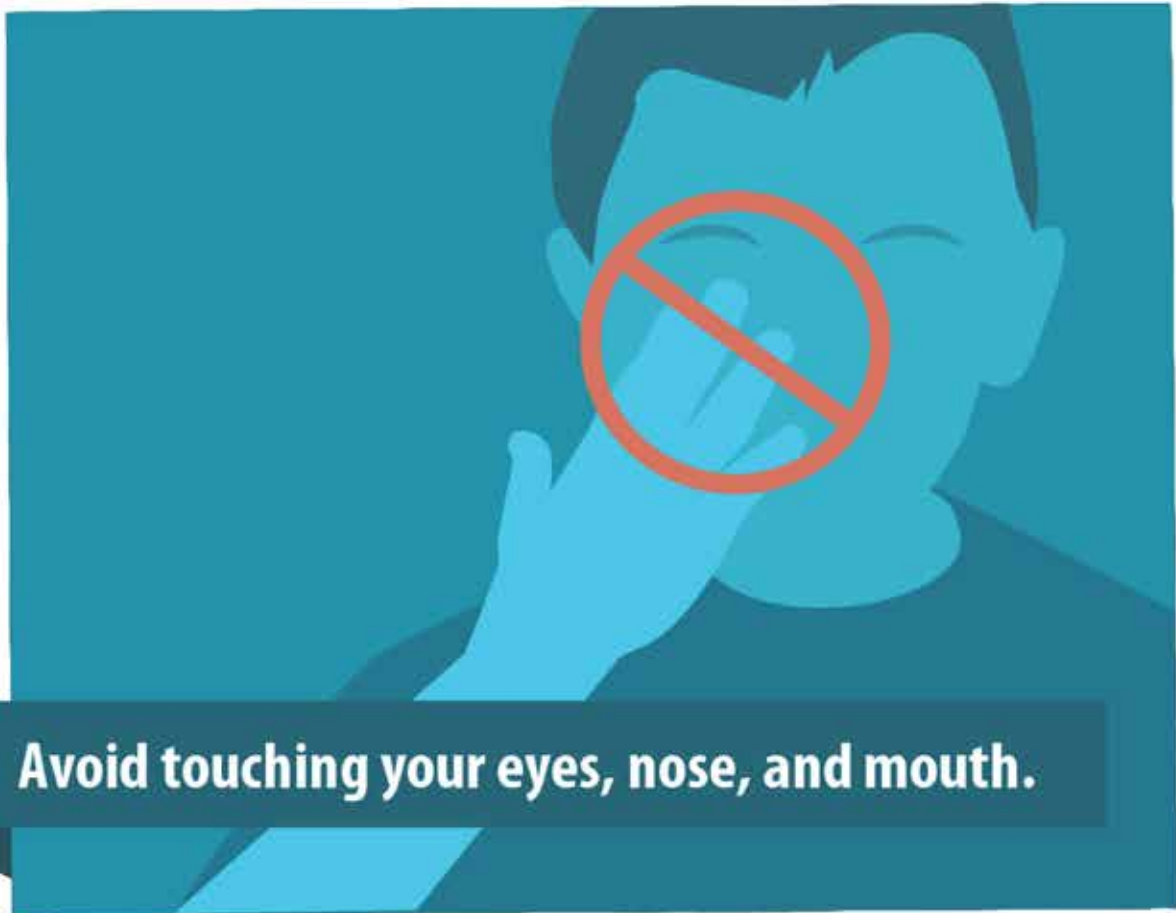
In a food processor, crush the biscuits until fine. Continue processing and add the butter until well combined.

Spoon the crust mixture into the pan, spreading it evenly over the base and side. Leave it to chill in the fridge for 30 minutes.



# COVID-19

**Help prevent the spread of  
respiratory diseases like COVID-19**



**Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.**

**COVID-19 Hotline: 0800 029 999**



**health**

Department:  
Health  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



# Be casually smart this festive season

If you are looking for the perfect outfit for Christmas lunch, look no further. We have a few smart casual options for you to choose from that are all trendy and versatile.

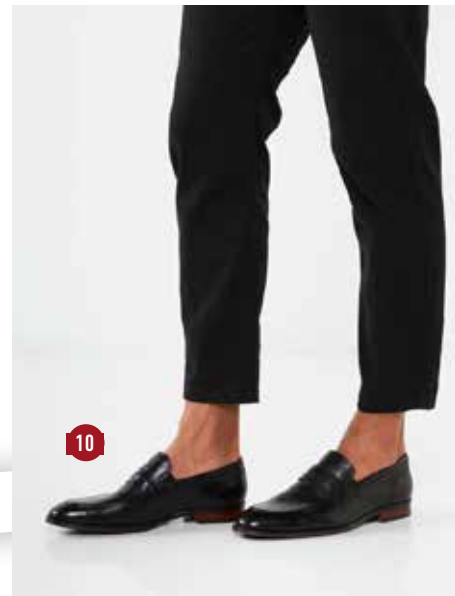
1. Look good and support Pretoria-based designers Purple & Grey Afrocentric with this beautiful dress. You can find it at their Pretoria shop or online at [zando.co.za](http://zando.co.za), **R 1 199**.
2. This comfortable hanky dress from Contempo is easy to wear and stylish, **R575**.
3. Madison sling-backs are trendy and pair with anything from jeans to dresses and jumpsuits, [zando.co.za](http://zando.co.za), **R329**.
4. Jumpsuits remain on-trend this summer and can be worn with heels or flats, Sissy Boy, **R999**.
5. A floral summer dress is perfect for a day or night out, Sissy Boy, **R799**.







6. This light blue, fitted cotton shirt from Polo can be worn formally or casually and offers a great fit, **R999**.
7. Pair these loafers with a formal shirt and short chinos for a great smart casual look, Jeep, **R499**.
8. Long cotton chinos can be worn in and out of the office, and are comfortable and durable, Polo, **R799**.
9. Opt for the versatility of this long-sleeved shirt, which can be buttoned up to make it short-sleeved, Soviet, **R499**.
10. Slip into something amazingly comfortable with these Steve Madden dress shoes, **R1 599**.



# Spread

## some cheer

It has been a tough year, but if you got through it with your finances unscathed and are looking to spoil your loved ones, we have the perfect Christmas gifts to add to your list.

1. Charlotte Rhys is renowned for its luxury bath and body care range. Try the Spring Flowers liquid soap and hand lotion gift set, Charlotte Rhys, R389.
2. These Destiny Aaliyah hoop earrings with Swarovski crystals are beautifully crafted and reasonably priced, takealot.com, R590.
3. The Jimmy Choo Blossom special edition perfume is an exotic, fruity scent, zando.co.za, R900 for 60ml.
4. This Ferrari backpack is perfect as a laptop bag or for travel. It also has a built-in USB port for a powerbank, Makro, R1 399.
5. Humble & Mash's whiskey and spirit stones are perfect for the whiskey connoisseur. Carved from soapstone, they keep drinks cool without diluting them, yuppiechef.co.za, R249 for a set of nine.
6. Feel like a kid again building the Lego Marvel Avengers Iron Man helmet. It's a build-and-display set in metallic red and gold, Toys R Us, R1 199.
7. Tom Ford Grey Vetiver is perfect for a charismatic man who loves citrusy, spicy fragrance, Foschini, R1 995 for 50ml.





# WHAT WILL PEOPLE SAY?



Police: 10111  
Stop Gender Violence: 0800 150 150  
Childline: 0800 055 555

There is no excuse for abuse.  
People can only help if they know.  
**TELL SOMEONE.**

**Violence and abuse are poison to society. Let's make it stop.**



government  
communications

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



# Inspired

## for adventure

**F**rom Cape Town, our group of Land Rover 2020 Defenders made its way via Wellington over Bainskloof Pass. One of our missions on this trip was to stop often with the aim to support local businesses along the way.

Once over the pass, we made our way to Waverly Hills for their divine rooibos ice cream and pumpkin fritters. We headed towards Ceres, passed Prince Alfred Hamlet, cruised over the Gydo Pass and through the Kouebokkeveld, famous for its fruit orchards.

After a quick stop at the coffee-cum-truck shop,

Wonderlik in Die Dorp op Op-die-Berg, we finally hit the gravel road, heading into the majestic Cederberg Wilderness Area.

Add to this perfect setting campfire stories by the one and only Kingsley Holgate, his son Ross, and their entire expedition team, and we were in our element.

The Holgates' adventures are the stuff of legends and the number of lives they have impacted along the way is inspiring. We met up with them half-way through their Mzansi Edge Expedition – a 70 day, 10 000km humanitarian journey to track the outline of South

Africa, while distributing over 200 000 nutritional meals to needy families close to wildlife parks and in rural communities.

From Cape Town to Kathmandu, Cape Town to Cairo and an east-to-west crossing along the Zambezi and Congo Rivers, among many other arduous journeys, Kingsley is known as the most-travelled man in Africa. Sitting in the Cederberg, surrounded by mountains to explore, we could not help but feel inspired for adventure.

Kromrivier Cederberg Park is an eco-friendly escape in the Heart of the Cederberg. A getaway

retreat located on the Kromrivier Farm approximately 250km north of Cape Town, it is the oldest tourist destination in the heart of the Cederberg surrounded by fynbos and majestic orange rock formations.

It is a haven for avid hikers, mountaineers and explorers. Sanddrif Private Holiday Resort chalets or camping is another good accommodation option in Cederberg.

### Cederberg to Paternoster

When the time came to leave, we sadly bid farewell to the resident pups at Kromrivier Cederberg

Park and meandered through the mountain passes and gravel roads of this incredible mountain range as we headed towards the wild West Coast.

A perfect spot to stop and stretch the legs was at De Tol Farm Deli where we simply could not resist a tea tasting accompanied by fresh roosterkoek. This is also the perfect place to stock up on Piekernierskloof wines.

Our lunch spot was Isabella's, situated on the water in the unpretentious fishing town and crayfish mecca of Lambert's Bay.

There is much to do in the surrounding areas of Lambert's Bay, including epic surfing at Elands Bay, bird watching at Papendorp where the Olifantsrivier meets the ocean, and of course, wine tasting at Doringbaai, Klawer, Vredendal and many more West Coast wine farms.

We however needed to make our way further down the coast before sundown to our next overnight spot – Die



Strandloper Boutique Hotel and Spa.

Our abode was the hotel cottages, situated about 300m from the

hotel. Built in the classic Paternoster style, our cottage was a beautiful self-catering unit with two bedrooms, each

with its own en-suite bathroom.

If you are staying at Die Strandloper, you have to opt for dinner at the renowned Leeto restaurant, overlooking the beach where seagulls playfully hovered over the water. Cape Columbine Nature Reserve offers camping, which is another good accommodation option in Paternoster.

From beach walks, to sea kayaking with dolphins, to simply enjoying the artsy vibe created by local artists with their paintings, sculptures, pottery and photography exhibited at various galleries and stores in the village, Paternoster is one the best breakaway towns to rest and renew the soul.