

PublicSector

MANAGER

Minister Kubayi on

reinforcing justice
for GBVF survivors

Women's Month

Building resilient
economies for all

Devrani Moonsamy

Women's Forum
South Africa alumni turn
inspiration into impact



Contents: August 2025

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Strengthening the justice system to protect survivors of GBVF



Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) remains one of the most harrowing human rights violations in our country. It robs women and children of their safety, dignity and freedom, while undermining our broader efforts to build a peaceful, equal and just society.

As we commemorate Women's Month 2025, we are reminded that the struggle against GBVF is far from over.

We must strengthen our resolve to protect the most vulnerable and to ensure that every woman and girl in our

country lives free from fear and harm.

GBVF a pandemic

President Cyril Ramaphosa has correctly described GBVF as a "second pandemic" in South Africa, a crisis with far-reaching consequences and destructive for our social fabric. This is not an exaggeration, but a powerful call to action.

Like any pandemic, GBVF demands a response marked by urgency, coordination and national solidarity.

As Minister of Justice and

Constitutional Development, I reaffirm our unwavering commitment to building a justice system that delivers meaningful outcomes for survivors of GBVF.

Legal framework to tackle GBVF

South Africa has a robust legal framework to combat GBVF. Key pieces of legislation, such as the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act of 2021, the Domestic Violence Act of 1998, and the Criminal and Related

Matters Amendment Act of 2021, have been significantly strengthened in recent years.

These amendments have enhanced victim protection, tightened bail provisions, and introduced harsher penalties for perpetrators. The National Register for Sex Offenders is being expanded, with legislation under review to improve public access while balancing privacy and protection for vulnerable groups.

Rise in convictions

Convictions for sexual offences

have risen steadily over the past three years. In 2022/23, there were approximately 1 426 convictions, with about 69% resulting in direct imprisonment.

This number rose to around 3 109 in 2023/24, with nearly 79% resulting in direct imprisonment, and further increased to approximately 3 697 in 2024/25, maintaining a similar imprisonment rate.

These figures reflect the tangible impact of improved legislation and intensified prosecution.

Our 66 Thuthuzela Care Centres (TCCs) have provided comprehensive support, including medical, psychological, and legal services, to over 44 000 survivors. These centres are the cornerstone of our survivor-centred approach, helping to reduce secondary victimisation and improve access to justice.

In collaboration with the SAPS and Forensic Science Laboratories, we have processed over 60 000 DNA samples, an essential tool in identifying and prosecuting serial offenders.

New sexual offences courts

To further improve access to justice, particularly in rural and underserved areas, the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development has established 16 new sexual offences courts.

Furthermore, two new TCCs are being introduced: one in Rietvlei, KwaZulu-Natal, which is expected to open in November 2025, and another under development, with four potential sites currently under review.

These specialised courts are designed to deliver faster trials

and trauma-sensitive services, including private testifying rooms and trained intermediaries, to better support survivors.

We have also introduced a policy requiring that protection orders be served by the clerk of the court on respondents within 24 hours of issuance, ensuring swift protection for those at immediate risk.

We recognise concerns about delays and uneven attention in the justice system and are working with key partners through the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) Cluster to improve coordination and accountability in tackling GBVF.

Improved coordination

A key intervention has been the implementation of the 90-Day

Acceleration Programme, led by the National Joint Operational and Intelligence Structure (NAT-JOINTS), aimed at fast-tracking the execution of the National Strategic Plan on GBVF.

In response to the urgency and scale of the crisis, the Cluster has revitalised and re-constituted the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on GBVF as the central coordinating body to fast-track government interventions, resolve systemic challenges, and ensure measurable, tangible progress.

The rollout of the Integrated Deployment Plan in GBVF hotspots has improved service delivery at critical points, such as police stations, hospitals, TCCs and shelters.

One remarkable success story comes from Limpopo, where over 1 600 domestic violence cases were finalised in just 100 days, achieving an 86% reduction in the case backlog. This achievement, realised through the 100-Day Challenge model, is now being replicated in other provinces.

Furthermore, the development of the Integrated Reporting Repository (IRR) is enabling more accurate tracking of GBVF-related data, supporting evidence-based decision-making and accountability.

These coordinated interventions are bearing fruit: in high-

“Our 66 Thuthuzela Care Centres (TCCs) have provided comprehensive support, including medical, psychological, and legal services, to over 44 000 survivors.

profile convictions, in landmark judgments, and in community-based efforts that are making women and children safer.

Each conviction signifies justice served. Each timely protection order represents a life potentially saved. These outcomes are not just statistics, they are stories of courage, survival and hope. They are proof that a survivor-centred justice system can and does make a difference.

Collective moral duty

This Women's Month, I call on every South African to take an active stand against GBVF. This is not the responsibility of the justice system alone, it is a collective moral duty. We must challenge harmful norms, support survivors, hold perpetrators accountable and foster a culture in which women and children are safe and free.

The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development I lead, remains fully committed to building a South Africa that is safe, just, and equal for every woman and girl.

Our work is firmly guided by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, which affirms the State's duty to protect women and children from GBVF and abuse.



"One remarkable success story comes from Limpopo, where over 1 600 domestic violence cases were finalised in just 100 days, achieving an 86% reduction in the case backlog. This achievement, realised through the 100-Day Challenge model, is now being replicated in other provinces."

Protecting the vulnerable

Rooted in the values of dignity, equality and freedom, the Constitution guarantees equal protection under the law, prohibits gender discrimination,

and places an obligation on the State to act to promote equality, particularly for those disadvantaged by unfair discrimination.

We will continue to advocate for stronger laws, more effective implementation and uni-

versal access to justice. Let us ensure that justice is not only done, but seen, felt and experienced by those who need it most. Let us honour those we have lost by protecting those still with us. ♦

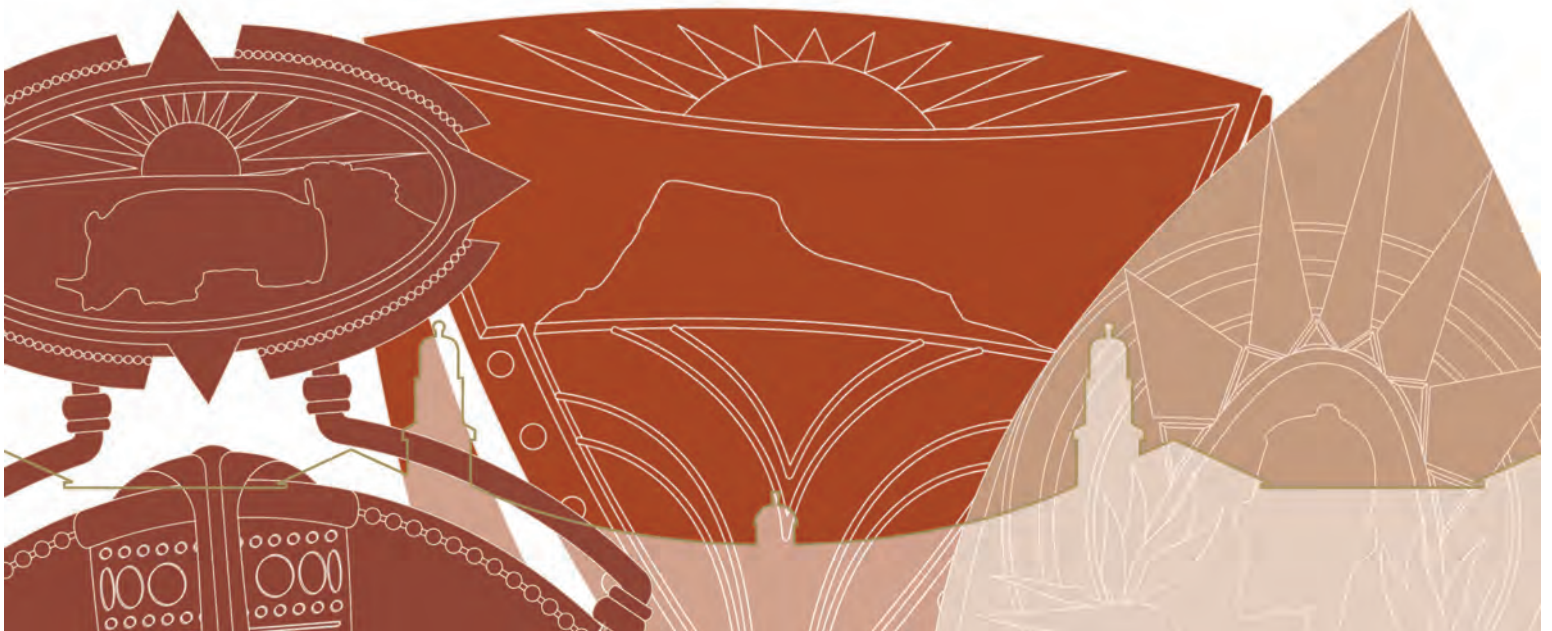


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Re-imagining South Africa together through the National Dialogue

South Africa has come a long way since the dawn of democracy. Once a nation where human rights for all were not recognised, we have worked hard on our journey of transformation to appreciating the beauty and strength of our diversity in upholding and protecting the rights of all citizens. This hard-won freedom came at a great cost, with many lives lost during the Struggle.

One of the many heroic fights for freedom – embodying resilience and solidarity in the pursuit of equality – was the march by more than 20 000 women to the Union Buildings on 9 August 1956, to protest the extension of Pass Laws to women. This month, we commemorate Women's Month in their honour.

As we reflect on that legacy, we fully acknowledge the work that lies ahead of us. More than three decades since the dawn of democracy, government continues to advance freedom, strengthen democratic values and build a better life for all.

Government recognises the need to confront the persistent challenges we face – inequality, unemployment, social divisions, gender-based violence and femicide, and a growing disconnect between citizens and public institutions.

To address these and other national challenges, President

The official National Dialogue platform elaborates on this process which offers us an opportunity to pause, reflect and collectively envision the South Africa we want to build. It provides a platform to confront uncomfortable truths, hear diverse voices and co-create solutions grounded in the lived

inclusive engagement. From the Convention for a Democratic South Africa to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, South Africans have always turned to dialogue as a means to resolve conflict and forge a shared future.

As President Cyril Ramaphosa reminded us when announcing the dialogue:

"At every important moment in the history of our country, we have come together as a nation to confront our challenges and forge a path into the future in dialogue with one another. Through dialogue we were able to deal with the challenges that the apartheid system caused in our country and achieved peace and overcame violence"

The process will formally begin with the First National Convention on 15 August 2025, bringing together representatives from government, civil society, labour, business, traditional leadership, youth and community organisations. This convention will mark the start of a multi-phase pro-



Cyril Ramaphosa has launched an inclusive National Dialogue: a people-driven, society-wide process to reflect, reset and reimagine South Africa's future.

experiences of South Africans.

Dialogue is not new to us. The country's democratic transition in the early 1990s was founded on negotiation, compromise and

cess that will continue through local and sectoral engagements, culminating in a second National Convention in early 2026.

In his State of the Nation Address in February 2025, President Ramaphosa called on all of us to participate in the National Dialogue to define a vision for our country for the next 30 years and find solutions that will build on what has been done since 1994 in ensuring continual improvement in the lives of people.

The dialogue will cover a wide range of themes, including:

- ◉ Economic transformation and job creation.
- ◉ Social cohesion and nation building.
- ◉ Governance, accountability, and participatory democracy.
- ◉ Land reform and food security.
- ◉ Safety and gender-based violence.
- ◉ Poverty, inequality and hunger.

The Dialogue will provide a platform for citizens to contribute to shaping a democratic and prosperous South Africa, giving credence to our commitment of ensuring a people-led, society-wide process

of all stakeholders working together as a nation. This will enable the National Dialogue to forge a social compact to realise the aspirations of the country's National Development Plan.

To support this complex process and ensure broad legitimacy, several support structures have been established, including:

- ◉ **Eminent Persons Group:** A panel of respected South Africans providing strategic guidance and oversight.
- ◉ **Inter-Ministerial Committee:** Chaired by the Deputy President, this committee coordinates government's role in the process.
- ◉ **Steering Committee:** Oversees the programme of action and ensures inclusive participation.
- ◉ **Preparatory Task Team:** Facilitates logistics and stakeholder engagement until the Steering Committee is fully operational.
- ◉ **Secretariat:** Provides administrative and technical support to the entire process.

As public servants we carry a responsibility to ensure that

participation in the dialogue is constructive, coordinated and responsive. This will be undertaken through use of all our platforms, to keep South Africans informed and involved in this vital process. We have a responsibility to combat misinformation and disinformation by ensuring that accurate, empowering messages dominate public discourse with a view to further enrich the dialogue.

Public servants are encouraged to also participate and contribute in the dialogue in shaping the future of our country. The

National Dialogue is not merely a platform for discussion, but a powerful mechanism for action – laying the foundation for a more inclusive and united South Africa.

We should approach this moment with humility and hope. Let us listen more than we speak, and engage not to defend, but to understand. And let us remember that the strength of our democracy lies not in the perfection of our institutions but in the willingness of the people to come together in pursuit of a better future.❖

For more information, visit:

www.stateofthenation.gov.za/national-dialogue



Nomonde Mnukwa, GCIS Acting
Director-General.



**THE
NATIONAL
DIALOGUE
OF SOUTH
AFRICA**

Dtic to unlock economic reform through billions of investments

Image: Freepik

Trade, Industry and Competition Minister Parks Tau has revealed that his department is driving a R700 billion investment pipeline into the economy to unlock reform.

Delivering his 2025/26 Budget Vote Speech in Cape Town recently, the Minister emphasised that investment is the lifeblood of growth and job creation.

"That is why we have meticulously curated a R700 billion pipeline of credible, investable projects spanning critical sectors.

"From 25 gigawatts of transformative energy projects worth R339

billion – solar parks, wind farms, battery storage, gas-to-power – that will finally end energy insecurity and catalyse industrial revival, to vital upgrades in transport and logistics, manufacturing, agro-processing, and digital infrastructure," he said.

Together with improved performance of South Africa's electricity, rail and logistics sectors, as part of the country's growth agenda, Minis-

Minister Parks Tau tables the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition budget vote for 2025/2026 before Parliament.

Image: DTIC



ter Tau said the department is committed to an industrial policy that will improve the competitiveness of South African manufacturing, support investment in new industries and build on South Africa's mineral and resource endowments.

"Our industrial policy promotes local economic activity, and its review will be guided by opportunities in diversification, decarbonisation and digitalisation," he explained.

Creating opportunities

In order to turn constraints into opportunities, Minister Tau said the department is convening investors, industry and regulators in strategic platforms; co-investing as equity partners in priority sectors; catalysing credit guarantees, policy certainty bonds and conces-

sional infrastructure finance; and enabling fast-track licensing, streamline visas for scarce skills, and digitise permits through "an Omnibus Fast-tracking Act".

He added that the department is pivoting its development finance institutions (DFIs) – the Industrial Development Corporation, National Empowerment Fund and Export Credit Insurance Corporation – from passive lenders to frontier-seeking equity partners, creating new industries as their original mandates intended.

"With the support of Cabinet, we have stabilised the governance at our DFIs. We are working with our partners in government, including the National Treasury and the Department of Small Business Development to catalyse the deployment of dynamic financ-

ing instruments that will unlock trillions in private capital," said the Minister

Alongside this, and in line with the DFIs plans for industrialisation, he said the department is planting the seeds for the industries of tomorrow.

He made reference to the Critical Minerals and Metals Strategy that is backed by a powerful 150% tax incentive for New Energy Vehicle manufacturers from March 2026. The strategy aims to move South Africa beyond raw exports into high-value beneficiation.

Renewable energy

With regard to South Africa's renewable energy, which President Cyril Ramaphosa recently described as having a potential to underwrite the country's Green Hydrogen Commercialisation Strategy, Minister Tau

said the department has identified the Boegoebaai Special Economic Zone in the Northern Cape as the ideal location for the initial rollout of the energy plan.

"Provinces such as the Western Cape and Eastern Cape have also been targeted for economic development. This sector proves that [when] we one line with our sister department of Energy and Electricity, we can realise our decarbonisation goals," he added.

Additionally, the Minister said the rollout of the National Policy on the Commercialisation of Hemp and Cannabis will be supported by one line schemes, dedicated hubs, and pioneering Cannabis Indigenous Knowledge Sandboxes, which promises to generate new rural livelihoods and significant export revenue, targeting 10% annual growth from a R14 billion base.

Inclusive economic transformation

Minister Tau emphasised the importance of the Transformation Fund, that was announced by President Ramaphosa earlier this year, in driving a structural economic shift. He said for too long, enterprise and supplier development (ESD) efforts have fallen short of their potential.

"Despite regulations requir-

ing companies to allocate 3% of their net profit after tax towards ESD, only 61% of these funds reach their intended beneficiaries. This leaves an estimated R26 billion untapped each year. The Transformation Fund changes this. By ring-fencing, aggregating, and centrally managing these contributions, we will ensure that they are deployed with scale, discipline and impact,” the Minister explained.

These funds include the Equity Equivalent Investment programme pipeline projects of R1 billion and other sectoral funds (R3 billion) such as mining, information communication technology, automotive and financial sector.

Smarter transformation

“The response to this initiative has been overwhelmingly positive, and the message is clear: South Africa is ready for a smarter, more accountable model of transformation,” said the Minister.

International collaborations

Minister Tau said he envisions an Africa that is not on the periphery of global trade, but at its very heart, as South Africa is demonstrating through its

G20 Presidency. He described a future where South Africa spreads its wings to engage the world, not merely as an exporter of goods, but as a creator of value, a connector of regions and a catalyst for shared prosperity.

Consolidating the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) is central to what he described as “a Butterfly Strategy”.

“We celebrate the rise of South African value-added exports under the AfCFTA to R820 million, but this is just the beginning. We are aggressively finalising an automotive pact to deeply integrate our manufacturers into regional supply chains and expediting the ground-breaking Protocol on Digital Trade, positioning Africa as our bedrock, resilient market.

“Despite regulations requiring companies to allocate 3% of their net profit after tax towards ESD, only 61% of these funds reach their intended beneficiaries. This leaves an estimated R26 billion untapped each year.

“We are also assuming the Chair of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), where we will lead the conversation on a reimagined SACU,” said the Minister.

Enhanced global trade

Beyond the continent, the department is actively resetting and deepening key partnerships, including enhancing mutually beneficial trade and investment, having submitted its General Terms Framework Deal, and secure the future of Africa Growth and Opportunity Act with the United States.

He added that the department’s renewed intent with the European Union focuses on a Clean Trade and Investment Partnership, backed by an initial R90 billion commitment,

opens vital duty-free access for exports in key sectors.

“This initial amount is a facilitation which we expect will unlock even more investment value,” he explained.

The Minister added that the department is also intensifying the implementation of the Framework Agreement with China, with a particular focus on diversifying South Africa’s trade. He welcomed the recent announcement made by President Xi Jinping regarding preferential market access to African Countries.

The Dtic has a budget of R11 billion for the 2025/26 financial year, which the Minister described as a focused down payment aimed at removing trade barriers, ensuring effective resource deployment, and catalysing new growth frontiers. ♦



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Learn Serve Grow



Empowered women passing torch

When the International Women's Forum South Africa (IWFSA), FASSET, and Duke University's Corporate Education launched the Women in Leadership Programme (WLP) in 2022, they planted the seeds of a movement designed to uplift 1 000 women in the financial sector.

But the real impact of the programme looks set to go beyond the reach of these female executives, with its tentacles set to reach women at all levels across the sector – thanks to beneficiaries, who are committed to paying it forward.

Following their graduation, many of the women who completed the WLP came together to form the IWFSA Alumni

Network, a powerful collective of women leaders from across the public and private sectors. The purpose? To “pay it forward.” The alumni initiative is built on the principle of lifting as they rise – empowering the next generation of women leaders using the knowledge, tools and mentorship they received through the programme.

“The idea of the alumni is to pay it forward,” says Devrani Moonsamy, one of the graduates in a recent interview with *Public Sector Manager* magazine. “We have realised how beneficial this beautiful programme was and how many tools it has given us to be able to then deal with the

Devrani Moonsamy is leading with purpose in the public sector.

challenges that women face. A woman's life is just unique".

Moonsamy currently serves as Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer) at the Ombud Council, where she is responsible for budgeting, reporting, risk and audit coordination, and financial strategy.

Paying it forward

The programme's alumni have become active mentors and role models, creating platforms for growth, learning and meaningful connection. "Women need to hear that other women are going through the stuff that they are going through. With the skills that we have developed, we mentor a lot of people. It is an initiative that we have undertaken," explains Moonsamy.

The Alumni Network is led by an executive committee of 20 members and operates through dedicated portfolios focused on mentorship, education, wellness and professional development.

"We get our networks to sponsor venues, we host online and in-person sessions, and we invite excellent speakers to speak on real topics that affect women."

A recent session tackled the often-overlooked topic of menopause – an issue with

profound implications for many women. "It was a very significant topic as it may impact a woman from achieving her goals," she explains. "Some women do not even know they are going through it. So, creating such awareness is so important because it impacts your work, it impacts your studies - everything".

Through these initiatives, the alumni are not only providing support – they are reshaping

the leadership landscape. "We are hoping to have improved plans for the years to come. The alumni is something that is geared towards making South Africa better from a woman's perspective. Women need to be uplifted, and for us, we have identified this cause as a responsibility of ours".

Moonsamy is a highly accomplished finance executive with close to 20 years of experience in the public sector

Public service

Her public service journey began at the Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA) in 2006, where she completed her articles before moving to Boxing South Africa. "At Boxing South Africa, the audit findings were significant when I joined and recurring every year," she recalls. "During my time at the AGSA, I was inspired to join the Public Service to try and improve sys-

Moonsamy with fellow leaders of the IWFS Alumni Network.



“A recent session tackled the often-overlooked topic of menopause – an issue with profound implications for many women. ”



Moonsamy with delegates of the Finance Indaba 2024.

tems and processes – financial reporting, specifically”.

She went on to serve in senior roles at the Competition Commission and the Competition Tribunal, helping both organisations achieve clean audit outcomes. “By the time I left the Competition Tribunal, the entity had no finance or procurement audit findings,” she says proudly. “When I left – which was during the COVID-19 pandemic – I had made the finance environment completely paperless”.

In 2023, she joined the then newly established Ombud Council. “It was a new organisa-

tion. It had no systems, no bank, no policies,” she says. “When I heard that this was a Schedule 3A entity, I was really excited to come in and start policies from scratch”. Moonsamy is proud that the Ombud Council celebrated its first clean audit in its first external audit in the 2024/25 financial year.

Finding her purpose

But for Moonsamy, the WLP redefined everything. “I knew I was doing all these good things but I could not put into perspective as to what was my purpose,” she reflects. “Before

starting the programme, I was not as deep as I am now in terms of understanding [the impact] of the work that I am doing. I used to work and want to succeed, but now I work to improve the lives of South African citizens”.

She describes the programme as transformative. “It gives you these leadership tools that allow you to deal with anything. It gives you the strength and ability to know that you can overcome anything”.

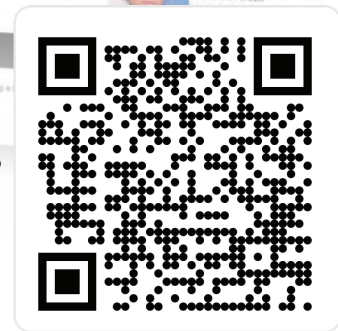
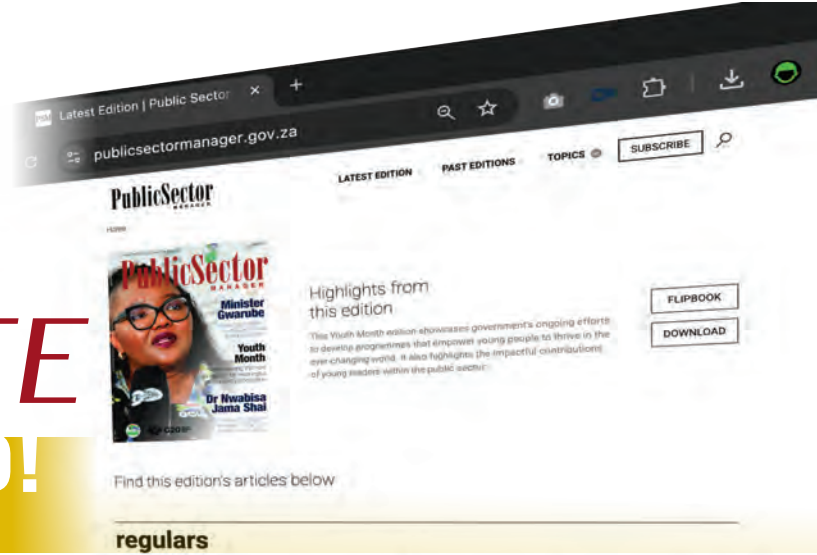
“Following the conclusion of the programme, the women – who hold positions in both the

public and private sector – were empowered so that they could in turn empower and uplift other women”.

That responsibility now drives her. “I hold it very close to my heart to develop people who do work for the country,” she says.

Moonsamy is a woman inspired not only to lead, but to lead with purpose. “My inspiration is to improve the public sector...And through the alumni, we are creating a new blueprint for what empowered leadership in South Africa should look like”. ♦

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Engineering academic trailblazer: Dr Mabuwa's remarkable journey



Dr Sipokazi Mabuwa's journey from a rural upbringing to becoming a leading figure in mechanical engineering is nothing short of inspiring. As a Senior Lecturer at the University of South Africa (UNISA) with a Doctor of Engineering degree and a rapidly growing academic profile, she represents a new generation of South African scholars who are not only breaking barriers in their fields but are also deeply committed to uplifting others.

The 35-year-old, born and raised in in Wil-lowvale, in the Eastern Cape, says she comes from a humble background, that was shaped by "love, resilience and community".

Dr Mabuwa credits the women in her family, many of whom built careers in education, health, and domestic work, for instilling in her the values of education and faith. "School and church were non-negotiable pillars of life. I believe we were always given all the support, love and resources needed to succeed academically".

Her interest in engineering was sparked in high school, driven by her strong performance in Mathematics and Science, and nurtured by the encouragement of a passionate teacher, Sibulele Mniki.

"She encouraged us to explore fields that were

categorised as 'scarce skills' and went the extra mile by bringing us university application forms," she recalls. "As I explored my options, I became particularly drawn to mechanical and electrical engineering".

Inquisitive mind

Her curiosity about why certain fields were male-dominated led her to mechanical engineering. "Coming from a household where gender roles were never rigid, I was curious to understand why certain careers were still seen through a gendered lens. That curiosity soon turned into determination".

Mabuwa's academic journey began at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), where she earned her Diploma, Bachelor of Technology, Master of Engineering, and eventually her Doctor of Engineering in Mechanical Engineering. Each academic milestone became a promise to herself to continue pushing forward. "Every graduation ceremony became more than a celebration—it was also a moment of silent commitment".

Her early professional roles at CPUT, including Computer Numerical Control Trainee, Metrology Technician, and Strength of Materials Labora-

tory Technician, laid a strong technical foundation. "These early experiences helped me gain hands-on experience with materials testing and mechanical processes, and understand the academic environment from a support perspective".

In 2021, she transitioned into a lecturing role at CPUT, marking a turning point in her career.

"I started contributing to research publications, securing National Research Foundation grants, and supervising postgraduate students, which broadened my academic capacity".

Her career later took her to Durban University of Technology (DUT), where she served as Senior Lecturer and acted as Head of Department when required. She also contributed to faculty and institutional ethics committees. "These roles refined my leadership, policy

engagement, and strategic planning skills, while deepening my appreciation for academic governance and integrity".

In her current role Mabuwa teaches and supervises doctoral and master's students while pursuing her research.

Her research focuses on materials engineering, particularly advanced friction stir technologies such as Friction Stir Welding, Friction Stir Processing, and Friction Stir Additive Manufacturing.

"My research has significantly contributed to optimising welding processes to enhance material performance, particularly for applications in aerospace, automotive and marine industries".

Breaking new grounds

She co-founded the International Conference on Applied

"Coming from a household where gender roles were never rigid, I was curious to understand why certain careers were still seen through a gendered lens".

Research and Engineering with her mentor, Professor Velaphi Msomi. "It has become an international platform that promotes African research visibility and enables global networking".

Despite obtaining her Doctor of Engineering degree as recently as 2022, she has already built an impressive academic record, including a recently awarded NRF Y2 Rating for the period 2025 – 2029, in recognition of her active research contributions.

Recognition

Her efforts have earned her a nomination for the 2024/25 NSTF-South32 Awards in the Emerging Researcher category.

"Being recognised for the work we do is really satisfying. It felt like a silent note that says, 'We see you.' Especially being a black female South African in mechanical engineering; this

was not only for me but for every South African who feels demotivated”.

Her commitment to education and mentorship is unwavering. "One of the things I enjoy the most is playing a part in shaping our students into future engineers," she says.

"Witnessing students develop their skills, critical thinking and problem-solving abilities is very motivating".

She appreciates UNISA's supportive research environment. "Knowing I have the resources and encouragement to pursue my research interests provides

a solid foundation for continuous motivation and academic growth”.

Women in engineering

As South Africa marks Women's Month, Mabuwa reflects on the role of women in engineering. "There is a noticeable increase in initiatives dedicated to profiling and celebrating women in these fields. But significant gender imbalances persist, particularly at senior leadership levels”.

She advocates for actionable strategies to support

women. "We need proactive and measurable strategies from institutions and companies for attracting, retaining and promoting women. Greater engagement of male allies is crucial. Robust mentorship and active sponsorship are vital for breaking the 'glass ceiling'”.

As a woman in a male-dominated field, she has faced her share of challenges. "I have often been overlooked, not because of my abilities, but because of my gender. Rather than let that discourage me, it motivated me to work ten times harder”.

Looking ahead, Mabuwa's focus is on growth and giving back. "One of my key goals is to continue developing my professional profile with the aspiration of reaching full professorship”, she says.

She envisions structured mentorship as a transformative tool. "Mentorship played a pivotal role in helping me break through barriers. I envision supporting or even establishing a non-profit organisation focused on mentoring young people from an early age". ♦



Dr Mabuwa's research focuses on materials engineering

Image: DC Studio on Freepik



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Nicolene Minaar: Nurturing the future of air traffic control

As the Pool Manager for Air Traffic Services Officers (ATSO) at Cape Town International Airport, Nicolene Minaar plays a pivotal role in shaping the next generation of air traffic professionals. Her journey – marked by passion, perseverance and purpose – reflects a deep commitment to mentoring and developing young talent in one of aviation's most challenging environments.

Minaar highlights the emotional resilience and clarity required to navigate a dynamic, high-stakes career. Her own path to air traffic services was far from linear.

"When I finished my matric, I initially wanted to study Radiology... However, I saw an article in a local newspaper for a bursary for an Air Traffic Assistant. I had no idea what this was at the time."

Curiosity soon led her to arrange a visit to the local Air Traffic and Navigation Services (ATNS) centre. "I only then realised what air traffic control was and I was immediately intrigued," she recalls. That pivotal moment would mark the beginning of a decades-long career in aviation.

Growing through the ranks

Nicolene joined ATNS in January 2002 as an Air Traffic Service Assistant. Over the next two years, she trained and was validated in the role, working in several capacities that built her technical competence and understanding of the operational environment.

Nicolene Minaar is guiding the next generation of air traffic professionals.



"In 2005, I was nominated and attended an Aerodrome course to become an Air Traffic Controller. Unfortunately, I was unsuccessful in passing the course," she shares candidly.

Rather than allowing the setback to deter her, Nicolene channelled her energy into leadership. "In 2006, a supervisory position became available... a Principal Air Traffic Service Assistant. The role entailed managing the daily operations relating to the Air Traffic Assistants."

In August 2022, she was promoted to Pool Manager for air traffic assistants, a role with wide-ranging responsibilities and a direct impact on the development of future Air Traffic Control Officers (ATCOs).

"I officially started in this role in August 2022. My experience in the supervisory role was a great

advantage," Nicolene says. "The new role was exciting and has its own new challenges. However, it is an opportunity for growth and to make meaningful impact on my staff and colleagues".

That impact is most visible in her work with newly trained ATSOs as they transition from the ATNS Training Academy (ATA) into live operations. "When they leave the academy, the knowledge they received there is mostly theoretical... we are required to train them to utilise the theoretical knowledge and apply it practically," she explains, adding that this is a challenging task for both trainees and managers.

Nurturing the future generation

Adding to the complexity is the profile of the recruits. "The majority of the new trainees are between the ages of 18 and 23. Some of them literally left school

the year before, so it is their first time in a working environment. And most have never been to, or lived in Cape Town before. It has a big impact on them. As a manager, I have to consider all these aspects and assist as far as practical".

Nicolene's passion for mentorship shines through her approach to on-the-job training.

"I set specific objectives for the training shift and the output. I provide feedback and support during the training. I encourage active participation during validation training to achieve the required competencies – knowledge, skill and attitude".

The training process is highly practical, incorporating classroom presentations, simulations, demonstrations, talk-throughs, as well as detailed briefings and debriefings.

The scope of Nicolene's responsibilities is intense; ranging

from managing shift rosters and staff performance to overseeing validations and even handling disciplinary matters.

"Yes, it is intense," she acknowledges. "Firstly, I prioritise the tasks, a to-do list helps me. I create a routine; however, this does not always work since our environment is continuously changing. I track my progress, and I must be flexible. That is very important in my role."

Asked about the most rewarding part of her job, Nicolene does not hesitate, "the most rewarding part of my job is to see the new trainee joining my unit. They are trained and successfully validated as an ATSO at Cape Town," she explains.

"A few years later, they attend an ATC course at the ATA, successfully pass, and validate at their new ATSU anywhere in the country. After several years, they return to Cape Town; either because of a transfer request or due to an ATC position – and when I see how they have grown in their profession and as a person, this really makes me so proud. Because I was part of their growth and journey. I was part of their foundation phase".

Outside of her professional life, Nicolene prioritises balance and wellbeing. "I enjoy reading. I love listening to music; all kinds of genres. I spend time with my family and I enjoy taking a walk in nature." ❖

An ATNS air traffic control room .



Auto industry continues to drive investment, jobs and innovation

BMW GROUP



Image: GCIS



South Africa has a well-established auto manufacturing industry that is more than a century old. It has proven to be one of the most resilient sectors of our economy.

Since the first assembly plants were established in the Eastern Cape in the 1920s, the auto industry has grown to become the largest manufacturing sector in the country. South Africa's role in global vehicle manufacturing has expanded and grown.

Auto companies like Toyota, Ford, Nissan, Volkswagen, BMW

and Mercedes-Benz have plants here in our country that produce vehicles for the local market and for export to many other countries in the world.

A number of these companies continue to expand their investments in our country. The sector currently supports more than 115 000 direct manufacturing jobs and more than 500 000 across the value chain. It contributes approximately 5.3% to GDP.

However, the industry is under growing pressure. The introduction of stricter vehicle

emissions regulations in leading export destinations such as the European Union, as well as new tariffs from the United States, are expected to have a significant impact on the sector.

With exports currently accounting for approximately two-thirds of local vehicle production, it is critical that we strengthen the sector to not only overcome current headwinds, but to ensure its long-term sustainability.

Last week, I attended the launch of BMW's new X3 plug-

in hybrid at the company's Rosslyn plant in Tshwane. South Africa is the exclusive global production site for this model. The shift from internal combustion engines (ICE) towards hybrid and electric vehicles (EVs) in a number of markets means that green mobility is becoming increasingly important for automotive manufacturers.

The latest investment by BMW following their pledge at our South Africa Investment Conference in 2023 is a welcome signal to investors that South Af-

rica remains a favourable place to do business. As Government, we are working to ensure there is an enabling regulatory and policy environment to support the growth of this burgeoning industrial activity.

Our five South Africa Investment Conferences, where we invited companies to make investment pledges that are translated into actual investments, is an important platform for companies to declare their investment intention to South Africa and demonstrate that South Africa is an investable market.

Government support to the car manufacturing industry through the Automotive Production and Development Programme will position South

Africa as a key global manufacturing base for vehicles of the future.

This isn't just critical to the sustainability of the sector, but to growing the workforce and skills of the future.

BMW, for example, has a training academy that focuses on competencies like EV assembly and robotics. The company is also a founding partner of the Youth Employment Service (YES), which was established between government and the private sector to create work experience opportunities for young people.

This initiative introduces young people into the world of work for a year of experience and training. Often if they meet the standards of the participat-

ing company they stand a good chance of being absorbed as employees of the company. BMW's participation in this programme has supported more than 3 500 young people with training and work placements across all nine provinces.

We have invited more companies to participate in the YES programme as broadly as BMW has done.

We are working to ensure that more production takes place locally, creating more employment. To do this, we must up-skill our workforce and facilitate the creation of new companies across the value chain.

As such, we welcome initiatives by the sector to support skills development through initiatives such as the Centre

of Excellence at the Tshwane Automotive Special Economic Zone. This centre has an artisan training academy, an incubation hub and a science, technology, engineering and mathematics programme for high school learners.

There are also a number of industry-driven training initiatives focusing on technical and artisanal skills, and deepening collaboration between government departments, vocational colleges and companies to grow a new skills pipeline.

Protecting existing jobs in the sector is paramount, particularly in the light of the looming US tariffs. The need to diversify our export base has become all the greater. We are committed to working with the sector to expand its continental footprint, building on the already strong growth of exports to the SADC region and leveraging the trade relationships that exist.

Amid these challenges, South Africa's auto industry is making the investments needed to build resilience, protect jobs and lead the way into a new era of green mobility. ♦

This President's Message was first published on the 28th of July 2025.



South Africa places paid and unpaid care work as a priority for G20 working group



Image: GCIS

Minister in The Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, Sindisiwe Chikunga delivers the keynote address the 3rd Technical Meeting of the G20 EWWG

South Africa is one of the few countries that explicitly enshrine gender equality in its Constitution. Section 9 of the *Bill of Rights* guarantees that women and men have equal rights and access to opportunities. In accordance with this constitutional mandate, all individuals – regardless of gender – are entitled to equal participation and contribution across all sectors of the economy, politics and society, at every level.

Emerging as a beacon of hope in the pursuit of gender equality,

South Africa ranked 20th out of 146 countries in the *2023 Global Gender Gap Report* released by the World Economic Forum, with a score of 0.787. While this reflects significant progress, persistent challenges – such as gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF), economic disparities, health inequities and socio-political barriers – continue to hinder the full realisation of gender equality.

As part of its leadership role within the G20 Empowerment of Women Working

Group (EWWG), South Africa is spearheading efforts to promote women's participation and representation in leadership, governance, and decision-making, while also advocating for increased ownership and control by women across economic and social sectors.

The group focuses on three priorities – care work, financial inclusion and GBVF.

The 3rd Technical Meeting of the G20 EWWG, recently held at Kruger National Park in Mpumalanga, focused on “The Care

Economy – Paid and Unpaid Care Work and Household Responsibilities”.

Care work and inequality

Care work is essential for the well-being of individuals, families and society. It includes a wide range of activities that meet the physical, emotional and social needs of people, including caring for children, the elderly, and those who are ill or living with disabilities, as well as domestic tasks like cooking,



Delegates at the 3rd Technical Meeting of the G20 EWWG.

cleaning, and collecting water and fuel. It is classified into paid and unpaid care work.

Unpaid care work refers to the essential tasks performed within households and communities without monetary compensation. This includes childcare, caring for the elderly or sick, cooking, cleaning, fetching water and fuel and other domestic chores.

Paid care work encompasses direct care for persons within a household or institution for pay or profit.

In South Africa, as in many parts of the world, women disproportionately bear the burden of both paid and unpaid care work. Studies show that women in sub-Saharan Africa, including South Africa, spend as much as 3 to 3.4 times more on unpaid care work than men and boys. This is often due to traditional gender roles that assign women as primary caregivers and

Studies show that women in sub-Saharan Africa, including South Africa, spend as much as 3 to 3.4 times more on unpaid care work than men and boys.

homemakers.

Delivering the keynote address at the event, Minister in The Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, Sindiwe Chikunga, made an urgent call for inclusive economic transformation that places women at the centre of key value chains.

Calling the care economy the "hidden engine" that sustains the visible economy, the Minister

urged G20 nations to take bold steps to quantify, invest in and redistribute care work.

"If we costed all paid and unpaid care work, it would equal about 40% of global gross domestic product and 380 million jobs. Remove care and almost half the world's economic value would evaporate overnight," she warned.

Outlining a three-part call to action, Minister Chikunga

pressed for public investment in care as critical infrastructure, the regular measurement of unpaid care through time-use surveys, and legal reforms to support parental leave, living wages for carers, and equitable workplace policies.

"Treating care as peripheral is not a statistical error; it is an act of economic self-harm rooted in patriarchal thinking," she said.

Key aspects and challenges

Delegates underscored the urgent need to improve conditions for women in the paid care workforce, who are overrepresented in roles such as domestic work, early childhood development, home-based care and community health. Despite their vital contributions, many care workers are informally employed, earn below the national minimum wage, or are classified as volunteers, leaving them without access to labour protections, sick leave or unemployment benefits.

Limited training and professional development opportunities, coupled with unsafe and often exploitative working conditions, further hinder their ability to advance or secure decent work. Weak enforcement of labour laws and inconsistent policy implementation exacerbate these challenges.

Addressing these issues through improved wages,

formalisation, stronger legal protections, and better training is essential for safeguarding workers' rights and ensuring the sustainability and quality of South Africa's care economy.

"Our work will be measured by practical outcomes: a woman whose unpaid care burden is lighter; a girl who stays in school because a community crèche opened; a survivor who receives timely support and justice. These are the tests that matter," said Minister Chikunga.

Policy and advocacy

The group noted growing momentum in South Africa for stronger care policies and improved conditions for care workers. Central to this effort is the adoption of the "5Rs" framework – Recognise, Reduce, Redistribute, Reward, and Represent – as advocated by the UN Women. The framework emphasises recognising the value of care work, reducing the burden of unpaid care (particularly on women), and redistributing responsibilities more equitably. It also calls for rewarding paid care workers with fair wages, decent working conditions, and social protection to support decent work and inclusive economic growth.

Recommendations

The meeting highlighted the need to strengthen care systems as part of its G20 EWWG priorities, calling for increased public investment in affordable, accessible, and quality care services – including childcare, elder

care and healthcare, supported by essential infrastructure. A key recommendation was the meaningful inclusion of care

“Our work will be measured by practical outcomes: a woman whose unpaid care burden is lighter; a girl who stays in school because a community crèche opened; a survivor who receives timely support and justice. These are the tests that matter.”

workers in policy processes and improved representation.

Policy proposals included equal paid parental leave to encourage shared caregiving responsibilities and challenge gender norms, along with expanding social protection, particularly the Unemployment Insurance Fund, to cover informal and self-employed workers, the majority of whom are women.

The delegation also stressed the importance of robust data collection on unpaid care work to inform evidence-based policymaking. Addressing both paid and unpaid care challenges was framed as essential for achieving gender equality, reducing poverty, and driving inclusive growth.

South Africa is currently preparing a declaration aligning with its three priority areas for the G20 EWWG agenda. ♦

Delegates at the 3rd Technical Meeting of the G20 EWWG.



Image: GCIS

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Addressing the persistent challenge of teenage pregnancy in South Africa

Teenage pregnancy remains a significant and complex public health and social issue in South Africa, carrying profound consequences for the young mothers, their children, families, and the broader society.

While there has been some fluctuation in recent years, the overall trend points to a persistent problem. Data suggests that approximately 1 in 7 mothers in South Africa are teenagers. In 2022/23, an estimated 150 000 girls

between the ages of 10 and 19 fell pregnant. Disturbingly, a significant number of these pregnancies occur in girls under 15, with reports indicating nearly 10 births daily to girls who are not yet 15 years old.

Addressing a stakeholder engagement, held in Pretoria recently to address the persistent scourge of teenage pregnancy, Deputy Minister in The Presidency responsible for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, Mmapaseka Steve

Image: Freepik



Letsike said the scourge of teenage pregnancy is not only a health concern but a threat to the nation's social and moral fibre and future prosperity.

The Deputy Minister said in 2024 alone, over 90 000 pregnancies were recorded among girls aged 10 to 19 and 2 328 of those pregnancies were in girls between 10 and 14 years old.

"When a young girl becomes a mother, her chances of finishing school plummet, her job prospects diminish and she often becomes trapped in a cycle of poverty.

"In other words, today's teen pregnancy is tomorrow's poverty and inequality. We must recognise this as not only a

public health issue but a social justice emergency," the Deputy Minister urged.

The complex drivers behind teenage pregnancy

Teenage pregnancy in South Africa is a deeply complex issue, shaped by a variety of social, economic and cultural factors. At the heart of the problem lies poverty. In some cases, early pregnancy may even be perceived as a rational choice, offering access to government child support grants or a perceived path to adulthood in environments where opportunities are scarce.

Despite existing policies, many

schools and communities still fail to provide comprehensive, accurate, and age-appropriate sexuality education. This lack of proper guidance leads to reproductive ignorance, leaving teenagers vulnerable and ill-informed about safe sex practices and contraception.

Access to contraceptives and sexual reproductive health services also remains a significant hurdle. Even when available, young people often face stigma, unfriendly health workers, and concerns about confidentiality. These barriers discourage many adolescents from seeking the support they need.

Gender inequality plays a critical role as well. In many

communities, harmful gender norms create unequal power dynamics, where boys are socially permitted sexual freedom, while girls face sexual taboos and are expected to be passive. These imbalances leave girls vulnerable to coercion and exploitation.

A disturbing number of teenage pregnancies, especially among girls aged 10 to 14, result from non-consensual sex and statutory rape. Gender-based violence remains a harsh reality for many young girls, exacerbating the crisis.

Family environments also contribute to the issue. Dysfunctional households and a lack of open communication about sex between parents and children

leave adolescents without vital guidance and emotional support. Without this foundation, they are more susceptible to risky behaviour.

Peer pressure and a natural tendency toward risk-taking can

lead teenagers to start sexual activity earlier, often without protection. Meanwhile, the pervasive influence of highly sexualised media further lowers the age of sexual debut, shaping young people's perceptions and behaviours in powerful ways.

Addressing the challenge

Government, together with various non-governmental organisations, has rolled out several initiatives to combat teenage pregnancy. One key effort is the Integrated School Health Programme, which brings health services directly to schools.

Through

regular visits by nurses, learners receive education on puberty, menstruation, preventing pregnancy, and sexually transmitted infections (STI) awareness, and are referred to clinics for contraceptive access.

In addition, awareness campaigns like Ezabasha Dialogues and the Risiha Community-Based Prevention programme, along with stakeholder engagements led by the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, work to educate communities about the causes and consequences of teenage pregnancy, fostering dialogue and prevention at grassroots levels.

Sexual and reproductive health rights

Efforts also focus on providing contraception – condoms, pills, injectables, implants – alongside

STI prevention and counselling. The Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act of 1996, offers legal options for terminating unwanted pregnancies. The Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-Free, Mentored, and Safe programme addresses socio-economic disparities and HIV risk among adolescent girls, while community mapping in provinces like KwaZulu-Natal helps target resources in high-risk areas. Parenting programmes such as Sinovuyo improve communication between parents and teens, fostering informed decision-making.

Despite these initiatives, challenges persist due to social norms, behavioural factors, and difficulties reaching all vulnerable populations. There is also a need to better involve young men in prevention. Addressing teenage pregnancy requires sustained, multi-sectoral efforts, including comprehensive sexuality education, youth-friendly health services, social support, and tackling poverty, gender inequality, and violence.

Government is in the process of engaging stakeholders as part of an initiative to establish a roadmap to south africa's teenage pregnancy prevention and management response. ♦

Deputy Minister in The Presidency responsible for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, Mmapaseka Steve Letsike

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Education professionals for a changing world:

A global narrative from the third G20 Education Working Group Meeting

The coastal town of Zimbali, in KwaZulu-Natal became a locus of global reflection as education leaders, policymakers, and academics convened for the Third G20 Education Working Group (EdWG) Meeting. Hosted under South Africa's G20 Presidency, the meeting centered on a unifying theme, "Education Professionals for a Changing World". Against a backdrop of geopolitical shifts, technological transformation, and widening inequities, this gathering underscored a profound

truth: educators are not only the backbone of learning systems – they are catalysts for social renewal.

Teachers as system shapers

Throughout the meeting, the centrality of teachers was reaffirmed with clarity and conviction. Their influence transcends instruction; they cultivate resilience, mediate anxiety and ignite curiosity in the classroom. Yet across the

globe, persistent challenges weaken their capacity to thrive. Attrition in remote areas, aging demographics and eroding public esteem have converged to create a crisis in the profession. Delegates expressed concern over burnout, inequitable continuing professional development (CPD) access and administrative overload. These issues, exacerbated by digital disruption and economic pressures, call for urgent systemic reinvestment.

At the heart of every thriving education system is a teacher who is respected, well-trained, and motivated. The message was clear: investing in teachers is more than educational policy – it is a moral and developmental imperative.

Interconnected pathways to reform

Discussions naturally gravitated toward three interwoven pillars that must inform systemic change:



Image: G20 Education Working Group content team

The Third G20 EdWG Meeting took place at the Capital Zimbali Resort in KwaZulu-Natal.

- Cultivating a capable and professional teaching workforce.
- Reimagining continuous development through life-long learning ecosystems.
- Aligning teaching competencies with evolving curricula and learning environments.

These pillars are interconnected, each reinforcing the others. Without strong, skilled educators, new curricula remain ineffective; without ongoing support, even the most talented teachers face stagnation. Delegates shared a litany of

challenges – lack of succession planning, marginalisation of substitute educators, outdated data systems and mounting psychological stress – all of which highlighted the need for resilient, adaptive planning and more inclusive professional development.

Innovative models and promising practices

Hope emerged through shared innovations that are reshaping the profession. Countries like India and China showcased scalable digital CPD models

reaching millions. The United Kingdom's teacher census demonstrated how data can personalise learning and support retention. Other nations highlighted hybrid career tracks, exchange programmes and mobility frameworks that foster regional collaboration and mutual recognition.

The projected global demand for 44 million teachers by 2030 underscores the scale of the challenge. Solutions lie not only in recruitment but in making teaching an aspirational career – with competitive salaries, clear progression routes and

compelling public narratives that honor teachers' contributions to society.

Teaching beyond the classroom: life-wide and lifelong learning

As delegates explored the changing nature of teaching, a broader paradigm took shape: professional development must evolve beyond pedagogy and subject knowledge to include relational intelligence, emotional literacy and leadership capacities. Especially in Early Childhood Development (ECD),

frameworks now emphasise care, empathy and community-building.

Inspired by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's call for lifelong learning, the meeting embraced education as a system that extends into community centers, vocational hubs, libraries and workplaces. The inclusion of Technical and Vocational Education and Training and ECD professionals, and those who train teachers, reflects a growing awareness that the entire learning ecosystem must be capacitated.

Professional growth

Mentorship, coaching and peer-led learning were championed as low-cost, high-impact methods for professional growth. Schools can become vibrant hubs of inquiry and reflection, fostering cultures of collaboration and shared practice. Countries are now emphasising teacher-led models, blended training platforms, and flexible learning pathways tailored to individual career stages and local contexts.

Strategic planning and partnership for impact

Building a professional teaching workforce requires agile

planning systems capable of responding to acute shortages and fragility. Emergency training programmes, substitute staff integration, and psychosocial support for new teachers were surfaced as vital strategies. But as several participants noted, policy alone is not enough. Transformative change demands collective action.

Delegates underscored the importance of partnerships – between government, unions, higher education institutions, civil society, private sector innovators and media platforms. Collaboration must extend into classrooms and communities, where parents and local lead-

ers play crucial roles in affirming the dignity and prestige of teachers.

Monitoring, evaluation and real-time data collection were flagged as essential for continuous improvement. More granular insights into migration trends, teacher deployment, performance and certification are critical for informed policy and resource allocation.

Toward a global compact for teachers

As the curtains closed on the meeting, the sentiment was unmistakable: teachers are nation-builders. To invest in their capacity and wellbeing

is to invest in the future itself. South Africa's G20 Presidency, rooted in the values of Solidarity, Equality and Sustainability, provided a powerful platform for global collaboration.

This gathering laid the foundation for a new global compact for teachers – one that champions excellence, equity and collective responsibility. The work now continues in every country, classroom and policy chamber. By translating these insights into concrete country-level actions, we move closer to education systems that are not only fit for the future but inspired by humanity, dignity and hope. ❖



Image: G20 Education Working Group content team

Drinking Water Safety & ARVs



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Austria and South Africa

forge closer ties in landmark state visit

In a historic move to bolster international diplomacy and economic collaboration, Austria's Federal President Alexander Van der Bellen led a high level delegation visit to South Africa on 4 July 2025. The visit, hosted by President Cyril Ramaphosa, marked a significant step in deepening the longstanding relations between the two countries, with a pronounced focus on sustainable economic partnerships, innovation, green technology and cultural exchange.

The Austrian delegation, which included senior government officials, business leaders, and academic representatives, engaged in comprehensive discussions with their South African counterparts. The agenda covered areas of mutual interest, notably renewable energy, advanced



President Cyril Ramaphosa hosts Austrian Federal President Alexander Van der Bellen during his state visit to South Africa

manufacturing, skills development and climate resilience.

At the core of the visit was

the Austria-South Africa Business Forum, held in Pretoria, where over 60 Austrian

companies met with South African industry leaders to explore trade and investment



President Cyril Ramaphosa delivers the keynote address during the South Africa-Austria Business Forum in Pretoria.

At the core of the visit was the Austria-South Africa Business Forum, held in Pretoria, where over 60 Austrian companies met with South African industry leaders to explore trade and investment opportunities.

opportunities. Key sectors under review included clean energy, agro-processing and component manufacturing. There are also opportunities in critical minerals beneficiation, pharmaceuticals, and technology and innovation.

South Africa's economic recovery

President Ramaphosa highlighted key progress around South Africa's economic recovery. The economy has shown signs of recovery, electricity supply has improved, and infla-

tion has moderated positively. South Africa is driving massive infrastructure drive with key investments concentrated in energy, transport and logistics, water and sanitation, and digital infrastructure.

The country has also established an Infrastructure Fund to leverage blended financing from private investors and multilateral development banks. The fund has a pipeline of projects in water, sanitation, energy, transport, digital infrastructure, agriculture, agro-processing and housing.

Industrial plan

South Africa is also actively developing an industrial plan to support the growth of electric vehicle and battery production. The plan includes incentives for manufacturers, investment in charging infrastructure and localisation of components. The country has a supportive and enabling industrial policy. This policy involves the expansion of special economic zones and harnessing the potential of the African Continental Free Trade Area.

These special economic zones

are located across the country, each with unique offerings for investors.

"Austria sees South Africa as a gateway to the African continent," said President Van der Bellen during the forum. "This visit underscores our commitment to fostering innovation-driven partnerships that create shared prosperity and address global challenges like climate change."

Deepening economic cooperation

"South Africa is Austria's largest economic and trade partner in Africa. Our country accounts for almost a third of Austria's total exports to the continent. There are more than 70 Austrian companies with subsidiaries or agencies in South Africa across a range of sectors. There is significant potential to deepen investment and trade links in areas such as the green economy, energy, manufacturing, infrastructure development

and tourism,” said President Ramaphosa.

During the visit, two Memoranda of Understanding were signed – one on cooperation in consular affairs and the second one on technical vocational education and work-based training, which will support South Africa’s efforts to produce the skills our economy needs.

President Ramaphosa emphasised the potential for joint innovation. “Austria’s technical excellence combined with South Africa’s entrepreneurial spirit opens the door to powerful synergies. We look forward to a future of mutually beneficial cooperation that empowers our youth and uplifts our economies.”

Global reform of multilateral institutions

President Ramaphosa also emphasised that South Africa and Austria share the belief that the institutions of global governance, and particularly the United Nations Security Council, must be reformed to meet the challenges and realities of the world today.

The state visit was also an opportune moment for South Africa to discuss the theme for South Africa’s G20 Presidency;

“Solidarity, Equality and Sustainability”.

The G20 theme envisage a world order in which every person, every community and every country has equal opportunity to progress and to thrive.

Sustainable development

A recurring theme throughout the visit was the shared commitment to sustainable development. Austria, recognised for its expertise in environmental technologies, presented collaborative models in urban mobility, waste management, and circular economy practices. South Africa, on its part, welcomed these engagements as vital to achieving its Just Energy Transition goals.

South Africa holds the world’s largest reserves of platinum group metals, which is a competitive advantage to produce sustainable energy technologies. The South African businesses are also eager to explore opportunities in Austria, an economy that offers European Union (EU) single market access, has high purchasing power and is a stable, innovation-driven economy.

There is also a high demand for South Africa’s agricultural products in the EU, including high-quality South African



wines and speciality foods, including rooibos.

Promoting tourism cooperation

“South Africa holds a special place in the hearts of many Austrians not only as a valued economic partner but also as a destination of extraordinary natural beauty and cultural richness. Every year, more than 20 000 Austrians choose to visit this remarkable country, strengthening the bonds of friendship between our peoples,” President Alexander Van der Bellen concluded.

During the state visit, both governments reaffirmed their commitment to further promoting tourism cooperation, with plans to enhance direct

connectivity, marketing initiatives, and sustainable tourism development ensuring that travel between Austria and South Africa continues to grow in both volume and value. ❖



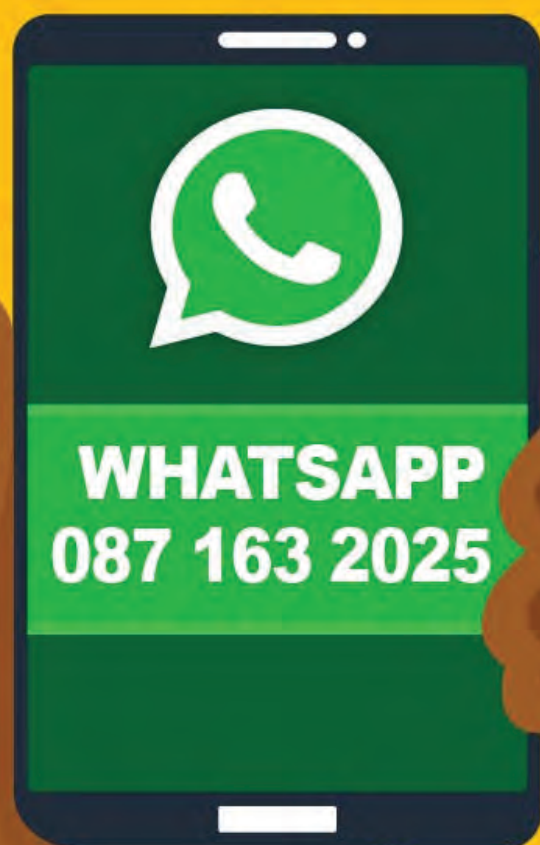
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South Africa makes significant progress towards exiting FATF Grey list



Image: National Treasury

Ismail Momoniat, Technical Advisor to National Treasury and head of South Africa's delegation to FATF.

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recently announced that South Africa has successfully completed all 22 action items outlined in the Action Plan adopted following its grey listing in February 2023.

The FATF is a global intergovernmental body that develops policies and sets international standards to combat money laundering, terrorist financing and the financing of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

South Africa's grey listing by the FATF negatively affected the country's economy and reputation, resulting in reduced foreign investment, higher borrowing costs and diminished international standing.

According to the National Treasury, the decision – made at the last FATF Plenary in Strasbourg in France – recognises South Africa's progress and calls for an on-site assessment to verify that critical Anti-Money Laundering and the Combating

of the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) reforms have been implemented, and that the necessary political will remains in place to sustain progress.

In an exclusive interview with *Public Sector Manager* magazine, Ismail Momoniat, Technical Advisor to the National Treasury and head of South Africa's delegation to FATF discussed the significance of this latest development. He outlined the steps the country has taken to address the identified deficiencies

and meet the requirements for removal from the FATF grey list.

Grey listing explained

"Firstly, South Africa got grey listed because our system of anti-money laundering, including the legal framework and implementation, was very weak in 2018-2020. I would attribute that directly to State Capture... The FATF basically looks at the abuse of financial systems for money laundering," he explained.

In simple terms, grey listing makes international financial institutions hesitant to do business with a country's banks and financial institutions due to the associated bad reputation and higher money laundering risk.

He added that by the time former President Jacob Zuma was forced to resign in 2018, key State institutions, including the South African Police Service (SAPS), the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI) ("Hawks"), South African Revenue Service (SARS), the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) and others had been severely weakened.

"Under his Presidency, there was also great resistance to update our standards on fighting money laundering, as was the case in 2015-2017. South Africa is a member of the FAFT, which has 40 recommendations [the standards], and when it conducted a mutual evaluation, we failed on 20 of the 40 standards and failed all 11 measures on implementation (that it calls immediate outcomes), and that led to our grey listing in February 2023," he explained.

Rebuilding

To address the issue, South Africa reached an agreement

with the FATF to implement 22 action items as a condition for removal from the grey list – a process that took two years and four months to complete.

In a media statement released in June, the National Treasury commended the dedication and efforts of the law enforcement entities, especially the DPCI of the SAPS, the State Security Agency and the NPA for the sustained increase in investigations and prosecutions of serious and complex money laundering and terrorist financing cases.

This enabled the country to secure the upgrades of the last two remaining action items, often considered to be the most difficult of the 22 action items. The FATF acknowledged this progress in its statement (Jurisdictions under Increased Monitoring – 13 June 2025), which notes:

"South Africa has made the following reforms including: (5) demonstrating a sustained increase in investigations and prosecutions of serious and complex money laundering and the full range of [terror financing] TF activities in line with its risk profile; (7) updating its TF Risk Assessment to inform the implementation of a compre-

"During this visit, the joint group will assess the country's ongoing commitment to implementing measures against money laundering, terror financing and other financial crimes."

hensive national counter financing of terrorism strategy..."

The National Treasury emphasised that the improvements to South Africa's AML/CFT regime are crucial for the country, considering the legacy of state capture.

"Improvements in these domains are critical not just for getting off the grey list, but for strengthening the fight against crime and corruption, and for contributing to the integrity of the South African financial system," stated the National Treasury.

It further stated that exiting the FATF grey list marks a significant step forward as South Africa continues to enhance and strengthen its supervisory and

criminal justice systems.

"The completion of the action plan paves the way for the final step before the FATF can delist South Africa, which is an on-site visit to South Africa by the FATF Africa Joint Group," National Treasury explained.

During this visit, the joint group will assess the country's ongoing commitment to implementing measures against money laundering, terror financing and other financial crimes.

The on-site visit will take place on 29-30 July before the next FATF Plenary, and if the outcome is positive, South Africa will be delisted from the grey list during the FATF's next Plenary in October 2025. ♦

Made for women, by women:

Style with purpose

This month, South Africa commemorates Women's Month as a tribute to the more than 20 000 women who marched to the Union Buildings on 9 August 1956 in protest against the extension of Pass Laws.

To celebrate this month, *Public Sector Manager* magazine speaks to the Managing Director and founder of Ledikana Creations, Mapholo Ratau, about the importance of supporting South African women designers.

"We should support South African designers because they help to create local jobs, uplift communities, and empower other women...many of whom are single mothers balancing family and business," said Ratau.

She added that South African designers run sustainable, ethical businesses that promote cultural pride, skills develop-

ment, and collaboration.

"When you buy from a South African designer, you are not just buying a beautiful piece, you are investing in a woman's dream, a community's future, and our country's economy.

"Many of us are single mothers, employers, mentors, and creatives, building ethical and sustainable businesses from the ground up. Fashion is our voice and through it, we tell powerful African stories while creating jobs and preserving culture," she explained.

Below are some of the items that she recommends for Women's Month, and explained what each item signifies:

Sepedi Nyebelese Dress: R 2 799.99

The dress is traditional yet modern with matching headwear that beautifully blends rich



Sepedi Nyebelese dress: R 2 799.99

* Prices correct at the time of publishing.



Babina Noko felt backpack:
R 1 699.99

cultural heritage with contemporary style. It features vibrant fabrics and distinctive Sepedi patterns, often with updated cuts for comfort.

"The matching headwear (doek) completes the elegant and culturally significant ensemble. This versatile attire is ideal for any occasion, from formal events to daily wear. It allows you to celebrate Sepedi culture proudly and fashion-

ably," she explained.

Babina Noko Felt Backpack: R 1 699.99

The Babina Noko travel bags blend vibrant African patterns with eco-conscious design. Made from recycled plastic bottles, they are surprisingly soft, durable, and stylish. This range offers comfortable, lightweight bags perfect for any journey.

African Faces Pleated Dress

The dress is not on the website but available on order. It is a dress with the "Faces of Hope" African pattern. It is perfect for the empowered corporate woman. It blends traditional African artistry with a sophisticated, contemporary style.

The vibrant pattern and elegant pleats offer a dynamic and professional aesthetic. According to Ratau, the dress allows women to express cultural identity and confidence in any business setting.

"It is a powerful statement of strength, grace and unique flair for the professional woman," she said.

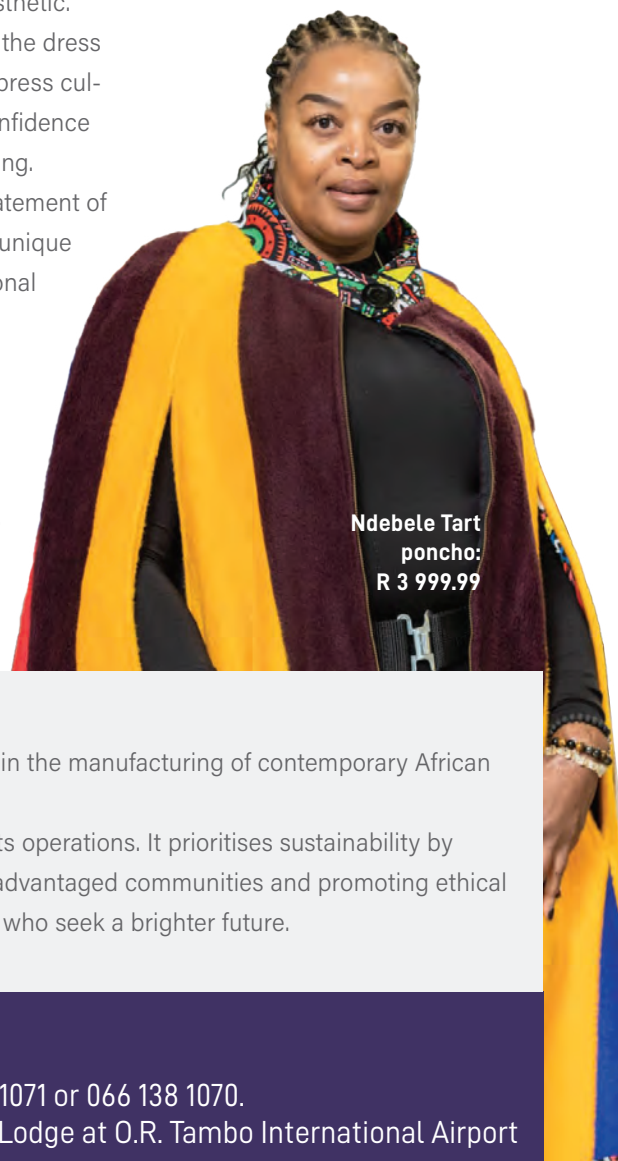
Ndebele Tart poncho: R 3 999.99

Effortlessly combine fashion and culture with the Nde-

bele tart poncho. Made with authentic Ndebele blankets, Ratau said this poncho not only provides warmth but also celebrates traditional art.

With convenient pockets and a stylish zip, it is the perfect addition to your wardrobe. It beautifully marries traditional Ndebele geometric patterns and vibrant colors with modern, comfortable silhouette. ❖

** Prices correct at the time of publishing.*



Ndebele Tart poncho:
R 3 999.99

About the designer

Ledikana Creations is a South African fashion and accessories brand that specialises in the manufacturing of contemporary African garments, hats, and other fashion items.

It is a sustainable business that embraces eco-friendly practices in every aspect of its operations. It prioritises sustainability by using locally sourced materials, supporting South African women from previously disadvantaged communities and promoting ethical production methods. To uplift other women in the industry, Ratau trains black women who seek a brighter future.

For more information about Ledikana Creations, visit:

www.ledikana.com | Email info@ledikana.com Call: 011 684 1049, 011 390 1071 or 066 138 1070.

You can also visit the stores at O.R Tambo International, Airport and City Lodge at O.R. Tambo International Airport

A traditional delicacy: slow-cooked ditloo

This Women's Month, **Chef Lebo Phala** shares a recipe of a hearty, plant-based dish made with slow-cooked *ditloo* (jugo beans) and a medley of vegetables, infused with fragrant spices.

"*Ditloo* are nutrient-dense legumes that were often used as a protein-rich meat substitute in African households. This dish not only honours indigenous ingredients but also promotes plant-forward, wholesome eating rooted in tradition and sustainability," she explained.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups *ditloo* (jugo beans), soaked overnight.
- 6 – 8 baby potatoes, halved.
- ½ each red, yellow and green pepper, chopped.
- 1 cup mushrooms, sliced.
- 2 carrots, diced.
- 1 onion, chopped.
- 1 cup Brussels sprouts, halved.
- 2 teaspoons masala spice.



- 1 tablespoon curry paste.
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed.
- 1 teaspoon fresh ginger, grated.
- 2 tablespoon oil (sunflower or vegetable oil).
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin.
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander.
- Salt, to taste.
- Water, as needed.

Method:

- **Cook ditloo:** Place pre-soaked beans in a large pot, cover with water, and bring to a gentle boil. Simmer on medium heat with the lid on until completely softened (about one hour). Drain and set aside.
- **Sauté the vegetables:** In a

saucepan, heat oil over medium heat. Add onion, red/yellow/green peppers, carrots, mushrooms, baby potatoes, and Brussels sprouts. Sauté gently for 8 to 10 minutes until slightly tender.

- **Add aromatics and spices:** Stir in garlic, ginger, masala spice, cumin, coriander, and curry paste. Continue sautéing until the mixture is fragrant and onions are soft and golden.
- **Combine and simmer:** Add the cooked beans to the vegetable mix. Stir well, add a bit of water if needed for consistency, and let simmer for 10 to 15 minutes. Season with salt to taste and serve hot.

Tips:

- You will need a large pot for boiling beans, a saucepan or deep pan for sautéing and mixing vegetables, a wooden spoon or spatula, knife and chopping board, garlic press or grater for garlic and ginger
- The meal can serve six people. It takes about 20 minutes to prepare, and one hour and 30 minutes to cook.

Serving suggestions:

- Serve with warm phuthu, basmati rice, or steamed dumplings.
- Garnish with fresh coriander or a squeeze of lemon juice for extra brightness. ❖



About the Chef:

Chef Lebo Phala was born and bred in Mohlaletse Village in Ga Sekhukhune, Limpopo. She holds a Diploma In Food Preparation and Cooking from Capsicum Culinary Studio. She is the founder and Executive Chef at HL Culinary, a brand that curates fine dining experiences rooted in indigenous African cuisine. She is also a professional photographer, videographer and a visionary who is passionate about women empowerment and promoting African heritage and culture.

For more information about HL Culinary, you can email: lebo@hlculinary.com or follow them on Instagram: [@hlculinary_experience](https://www.instagram.com/hlculinary_experience).

Desert beauty:

|Ai-|Ais/Richtersveld Transfrontier Park

Conjure up a desolate and forbidding landscape, seemingly devoid of life, except for some people dotting along the horizon. Make a startling discovery upon closer inspection when the mirage dissolves into the human-like *half-mens* (half person)

and the harsh environment prove to be a treasure trove containing the world's richest desert flora.

Hauntingly beautiful and seared by a blistering sun, the lava mountains and sandy plains form southern Africa's largest Mountain Desert Park,

|Ai-|Ais/Richtersveld Transfrontier Park.

Though surrealistically harsh – this is the driest part of the Northern Cape – the rugged Richtersveld nurtures 30% of South Africa's succulent plant species. With less than 50 mm

of rain annually, it also sustains leopards, lizards and adventurers. Water is scarce, and life depends on morning fog – '*Ihuries*' or '*Malmokkies*' – rolling in from the Atlantic, nourishing reptiles, birds, and mammals alike. Gnarled quiver trees, towering aloes and the distinctive *half-mens* stand sentinel over this enigmatic land.

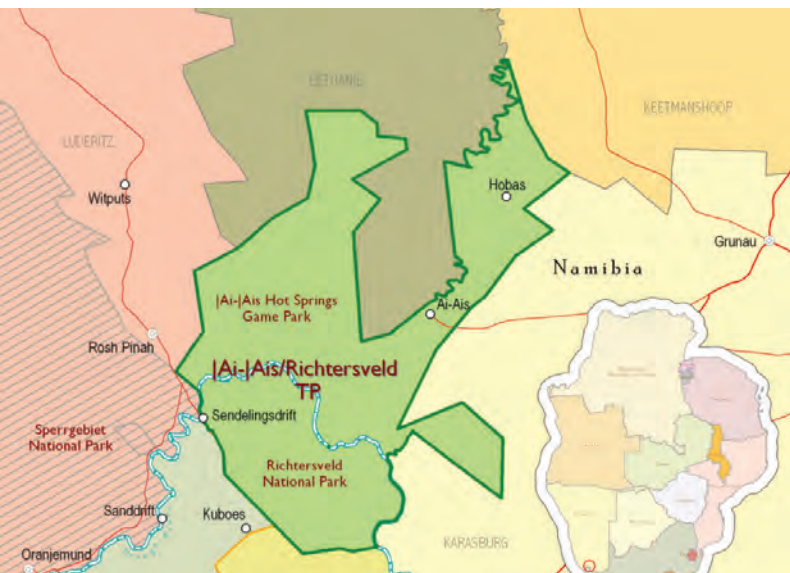
Paradoxically beautiful, it is a land for those keen to 'rough it'. You can explore it from the comfort of your 4x4 or paddle the river, taking in the awe-inspiring, seldom-seen purity of a mountain desert wilderness.

Shared heritage

On 1 August 2003, the late former Namibian President Sam Nujoma and former President Thabo Mbeki signed an international treaty incorporating

The |Ai-|Ais/Richtersveld Transfrontier Park is southern Africa's largest mountain desert park.





the Ai-Ais Hot Springs Game Park in Namibia and |Ai-|Ais/Richtersveld National Park in South Africa, resulting in the establishment of the |Ai-|Ais/Richtersveld Transfrontier National Park.

Extensive community consultations were conducted beforehand, as the |Ai-|Ais/Richtersveld National Park in South Africa is owned by the |Ai-|Ais/Richtersveld community and managed on a con-

tractual basis with the South African National Parks. This allows the full participation of the local community through elected members representing the four towns in the area, Kuboes, Sanddrift, Lekkersing and Eksteenfontein and of local pastoralists.

Benefiting local communities

These communities would all benefit from increased

tourism to the area, while at the same time conserving its unique biodiversity. In addition, a transfrontier park would maintain the cultural heritage and traditional lifestyle of the Nama people.

The traditional lifestyle of the Nama people is based on nomadic pastoralism, the |Ai-|Ais/Richtersveld being one of the last regions where this way of life has been preserved. A number of significant archaeological sites are situated in the area, including a shelter at Die Toon near Tatasberg. This site has been dated back to 2200 BC.

One of the main features of the combined park is the world's second largest canyon – the Fish River Canyon.

Sendelingsdrift serves as a border post for crossing into

Namibia. On the South African side, a pontoon has been established to ferry people and vehicles across the Garib (Orange) River. The pontoon has a carrying capacity of a 32-seater bus or two fully-loaded double cab 4x4 vehicles.

Succulents of the Karoo

The |Ai-|Ais/Richtersveld National Park is a very good example of one of the most interesting mega-ecosystems of the world, the succulent Karoo.

There is no desert flora on our planet possessing similar species richness and individuality of flora. On a surface area of one square kilometre, more than 360 plant species of flowering plants (angiosperms) are found at a site with an average rainfall of only 68 mm per year.



The clear atmosphere above the park provides visitors the perfect stargazing experience.

The |Ai-|Ais/Richtersveld includes two floristic kingdoms. A magnificent variety of dwarf shrubs with water-storing leaves belongs to the succulent Karoo region of the Greater Cape Flora, while its western portion forms part of the East Gariep Centre, the most important centre of the Nama Karoo Region.

The |Ai-|Ais/Richtersveld is divided into two portions belonging to two major climatical systems: the temperate winter rainfall region with its high air humidity, and the inland region with higher temperatures and

important summer rains and low humidity. Both units are closely placed against each other, separated by a narrow transition zone of about 10 to 20 km.

One outstanding example of such unique life forms is the psammophorous plants – plant species that fix a layer of sand to their surface to build a protective shelter against the force of sandstorms and the related sand blasting.

The |Ai-|Ais/Richtersveld is widely reckoned as one of the world's richest succulent areas. It is estimated that 50 generas

out of a total of 160 from the Mesembryanthemaceae family occur here.

A number of endemic plant species only occur in small colonies on the highest peaks. About 30% of the total floristic composition is endemic to the park.

There are four main landscape units: the Orange River and adjacent floodplains; gentle undulating plains (distributed in the Summer/all year round rainfall area); rolling hills and rugged mountains.

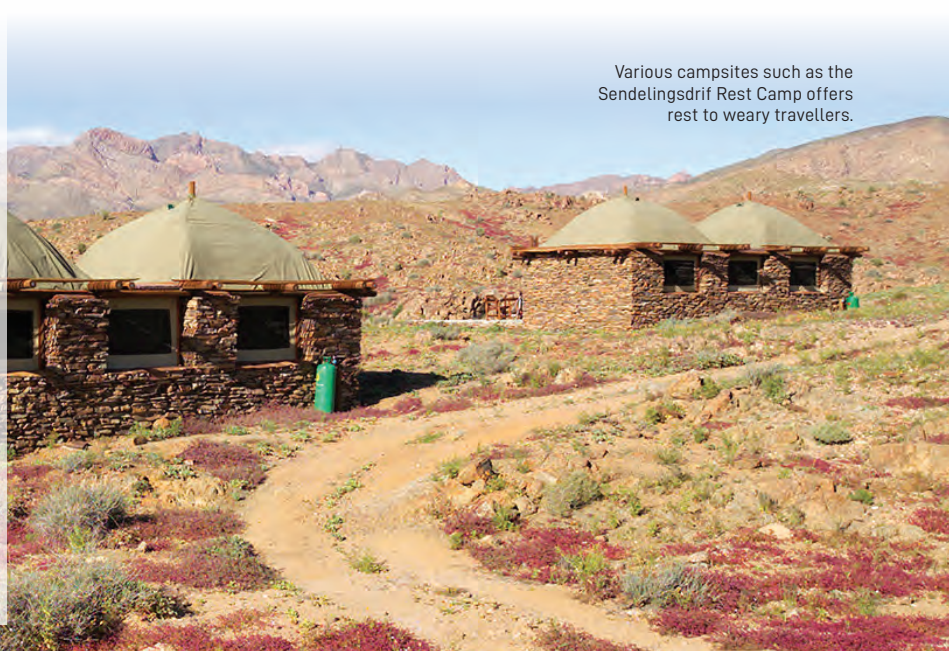
Ancestors in the trees

Two trees are particularly associated with the |Ai-|Ais/Richtersveld: the bastard quiver tree (Kiewiet April 2001) and the *half-mens* (half-human), *Pachypodium namaquanum*.

The *half-mens* is a succulent with an unbranched, cylindric stem, 1.5 to 2.5 metres, and sometimes up to 4 metres, in height. Near the top, it has a tuft of branches, which lean northwards at an angle of 20 – 30 degrees. The Namas revere the human-like trees as the embodiment of their ancestors, half-human, half-plant, mourning for their ancient Namibian home.

The animal species found in the area are adapted to withstand the harsh, arid climate. Other species are concentrated in the denser vegetation bordering the Orange River, including 56 species of mammals and 194 bird species. Furthermore, a large variety of lizards (35 species) and snakes (16 species) are found in various microhabitats. ♦

There is no desert flora on our planet possessing similar species richness and individuality of flora. On a surface area of one square kilometre, more than 360 plant species of flowering plants (angiosperms) are found at a site with an average rainfall of only 68 mm per year.



Various campsites such as the Sendelingsdrif Rest Camp offers rest to weary travellers.