THE PEOPLE'S DIALOGUE

Participation and Engagement Report

May 2020

Foreword

In 2015 I made the difficult decision to leave my career as a successful businessman behind and enter the world of politics. I did not make this decision out a desire to become a career politician, but because I felt that I could no longer sit on the side-lines and watch as the country I love so dearly collapses before my eyes.

As a black entrepreneur under the dark days of Apartheid, I never believed that I would see South Africa make a peaceful transition to democracy. I voted for the ANC under Nelson Mandela in 1994 and celebrated his inauguration as I looked forward to an explosion of opportunities for all of us who had been oppressed by the Apartheid-regime. This explosion never came.

While I had worked hard to build a successful business as a black man in a time when the system did not want me to succeed, I watched as those with connections to the tripartite alliance grew their wealth through empowerment deals without ever risking a cent of their own money. Moreover, I watched as personal greed became a bigger motivator for the political elite than serving those who had elected them.

I became increasingly despondent over the slow pace of progress and the lack of economic opportunity for the broader black community. While the CODESA negotiations had delivered the peaceful transition we so desperately needed, the deal that had been brokered seemed to favour political parties and career politicians more than the people.

The Zuma years, which we now look back on as a lost decade for South Africa, saw the project of personal gain over public service reach new heights through a concerted program of State Capture. Zuma's decision to fire Finance Minister Nhlanhla Nene in December 2015, and replace him with an unknown Gupta-stooge, Des van Rooyen, was the last straw for me.

Driven by the anger I felt for how the ANC had squandered the opportunity to elevate millions of black people out of poverty, I decided to dedicate my time to the effort of unseating the ANC from power. I joined the DA, and ultimately made myself available as their Mayoral Candidate for the City of Johannesburg in the 2016 Local Government Elections.

On the 3rd of August 2016, the residents of the City voted for change. Just three weeks later I was elected as the Executive Mayor by a complex seven-party coalition with the support of the EFF.

For three years, we worked tirelessly to deliver change to the residents of the City. Yet, despite the gains we were making, internally the coalition was fractured with members often more concerned with the personal or political benefit they were deriving from the arrangement than the impact we were making on improving the quality of life of the City's most impoverished communities.

By October 2019, the situation had become untenable. I could no longer reconcile myself with those who were opposed to our pro-poor program of action and tendered my resignation from the DA and the Mayoralty on the 21st of October 2019.

In the days and weeks that followed, I was inundated with calls to start my own political party. This was not something I had considered, nor something I particularly wanted to do. I had increasingly come to the view that political parties and career politicians operate with self-interest as their primary driver of decision making, and not in the interest of ordinary South Africans.

Despite this, in my time as Executive Mayor, I was fortunate to meet thousands of South Africans from all backgrounds. They confirmed my deep-seated belief that our Country is loaded with potential. While we face many challenges as a nation, I believe that we are capable of finding innovative solutions to these challenges, driven by the countless talented individuals who share my desire to fix South Africa.

The People's Dialogue was launched as a platform to give these ordinary South Africans a voice in shaping a shared future for our country. The initiative was grounded in the belief that we can no longer afford to leave our future, as a people, to our political system and our politicians.

I also wanted to make use of the opportunity to gauge the political views of South Africans. If I was to consider launching a political party, I wanted to ensure that I could do so based on support for the values I hold dear: non-racialism, a free-market economy, social justice, the rule of law, and electoral reform.

This report serves to capture the millions of engagements and summarise the tens of thousands of substantive inputs we have received. I am immensely proud of what our campaign has achieved and deeply inspired by the shared desire of so many South Africans to build a country that works for all its people.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Michael Beaumont, my former Chief of Staff, and André Coetzee, the

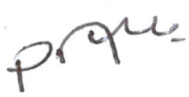
former Director of Policy & Planning in my Mayoral Office. They have been with me on this journey since day one, volunteering their time to get this project off the ground. Without their dedication and sacrifice – working 48 hours a day, seven days a week, without expecting a cent in return – the campaign would not have achieved the success that it did.

I would also like to thank the Non-Executive Directors of The People's Dialogue, Thabang Sebotsane and Lt Gen Deliwe de Lange, for their steadfast commitment to this project. Their advice and guidance have proven invaluable over the past couple of months.

My deepest appreciation goes to my wife Connie and our family for their unwavering support during this turbulent time. Their dedication to the project of fixing South Africa, and their willingness to fund the campaign, are what made The People's Dialogue possible.

Lastly, I would like to thank every person who made a submission to this unique social experiment. I have been overwhelmed by the quantity and quality of the submissions we have received. Please know that your voices have not only been heard, but have reminded us why our beautiful country is worth saving.

Thank you.



Herman Mashaba

Founder and Chairperson

The People's Dialogue

Editor's Note

The People's Dialogue was launched as a social experiment grounded in the belief that the voices of ordinary South Africans are not afforded the prominence they deserve in identifying the challenges we face as a country, and how best to address them.

The People's Dialogue thus sought to gather the views of as many South Africans as possible around the central theme of what *they* believed needed to be done to arrest the socioeconomic decline of their country, and ultimately fix South Africa.

Over the course of the three-month campaign, South Africans were engaged over social media, via an online submission platform, and through face-to-face engagements. Over 125,000 substantive submissions were received.

This report seeks to summarise the submissions provided by participants and provide high-level insights into their views.

Owing to the volume of data collected over the course of the campaign, The People's Dialogue appointed independent consultants to perform the majority of the analysis. Johann Krige – who was responsible for compiling the Interim Report released in January 2020 – was appointed as the primary author, while Lize-Marié Visagie was appointed to provide additional research and analysis capacity.

Unless stated otherwise, the contents of this report based on analysis of the data gathered by The People's Dialogue. The findings and statements within this report do not reflect the views of the authors.

André Coetzee
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Declaration: The authors declare that they were appointed as independent consultants to The People's Dialogue and have no direct involvement in the organisation, nor any conflict of interest in relation to this report. However, both authors were employed in the Private Office of the Executive Mayor of Johannesburg during Herman Mashaba's mayoral term.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
BBBEE	Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment
CODESA	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
DA	Democratic Alliance
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighters
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
EWC	Expropriation without compensation
FDI	Foreign direct investment
GBV	Gender-based violence
HDI	Historically disadvantaged individuals
ICT	Internet and communications technology
IPID	Independent Police Investigative Directorate
NHI	National Health Insurance
NPA	National Prosecuting Authority
PPP	Public-private partnership
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SACP	South African Communist Party
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SANDF	South African National Defence Force
SAPS	South African Police Service
SARS	South African Revenue Service
SETA	Sector Education Training Authority
SMME	Small, medium, and micro enterprises
SOE	State-owned enterprise
TPD	The People's Dialogue
UBI	Universal Basic Income

Introduction

Background

On 21 October 2019, the Executive Mayor of the City of Johannesburg, Herman Mashaba, announced his resignation as a Democratic Alliance (DA) member, and consequently from the Mayoralty.

Following his resignation, he was faced with a decision about his political future. While he remained committed to the project of fixing South Africa, he no longer believed that he had a political home in any of the existing political parties. This view was seemingly shared by a broad cross-section of society, with mounting calls for Mashaba to start his own party. This was not something he had previously considered.

Mashaba felt strongly that the South African political system had failed citizens. His time as the Executive Mayor made it clear to him that the political system did not serve the residents of the City, but instead served the interests of political parties and career politicians.

Mashaba came to the view that to the voices of ordinary South Africans needed to take precedence over those of politicians who had lost touch with those they were elected to serve, should there be any hope of addressing the challenges facing South Africa.

The People's Dialogue (TPD) was conceived as a means to achieve this objective. It was designed to give ordinary South Africans a voice in shaping a shared future for the country by allowing for a solutions-oriented conversation between like-minded South Africans who simply sought to see their country reach its true potential.

Mashaba also saw the People's Dialogue as a platform to gauge the political views of South Africans on a range of key issues. If he were to consider starting a new political formation, he wanted to ensure that it would be based on a shared belief in a set of core values he held dear.

The People's Dialogue was thus formally launched on the 6th of December, inviting South Africans to contribute their thoughts on what needed to be done to fix South Africa. The campaign concluded on the 29th of February 2020.

The People's Dialogue is a unique social experiment that is novel in the size and expanse of public participation. As will be discussed in more detail below, over 125,000 substantive submissions were received over the three-month campaign through a dedicated website, via social media and through direct community engagements facilitated by Mashaba.

This document serves to provide a summary of the inputs received and an in-depth overview of the insights gained from analysing the submissions.

Initiating the conversation

The Dialogue was launched grounded in the belief that South Africans have grown weary of a political system that elevates ideological considerations over the implementation of pragmatic solutions to the multitude of challenges faced by South Africans daily. This is something Mashaba had experienced acutely during his tenure as Executive Mayor. Residents simply want the City to work for them.

Mashaba further maintained a strong belief in the creativity and ingenuity of the South African people. Given the opportunity to do so, Mashaba believed that ordinary South Africans would come forward with innovative solutions to our collective challenges.

Based on these beliefs, the Dialogue was launched by inviting people to offer their insights into what South Africa's most significant challenges are, and what should be done to fix them.

Responses to these questions were gathered primarily via three channels:

- a website that allowed participants to make submissions in response to open-ended questions
- through social media in response to posts by Herman Mashaba or by using the hashtag #SASpeaks
- during direct community engagements

The campaign was designed to consists of two phases. The first phase, which ran from the beginning of December 2019 until the middle of January 2020, encouraged participants to respond to a single question "What do you think needs to be done to save South Africa?"

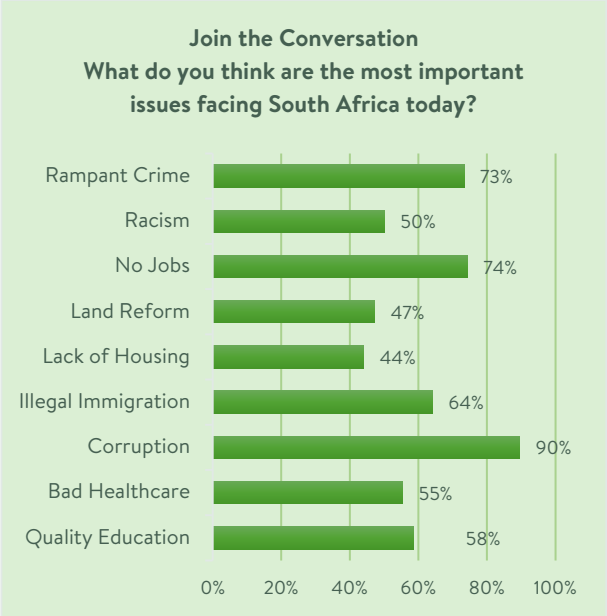
The second phase would use the inputs received during the first phase to identify recurring topics and themes and allow for greater engagement with these in particular.

Thought-provoking social media content was developed to stimulate debate and encourage participants to share their ideas either through social media or via the website on a

survey-like form. The first such form, used primarily during the first phase of the campaign, was titled "Join the Conversation."

The form asked participants to select which issues, out of a set of nine, they deemed to be the most important issues facing South Africa today.

The table below shows the results of the "Join the Conversation" survey (which received 12,056 submissions by the end of February 2020) and indicates the participants' perceptions on which issues are the most important challenges our country.



Additionally, participants were provided with the opportunity to share their thoughts on an open-ended question calling for their ideas on what needed to be done to address the challenges facing the country.

During this period, TPD contracted an independent consultant to provide a high-level analysis of the content of the submissions received during the first phase of the campaign. This research and analysis culminated in the Interim Report on the People's Dialogue, published on the 21st of January, 2020.[1]

The Interim Report identified 14 recurring themes that participants deemed the most important. These themes were (in alphabetical order): corruption, crime & justice, the economy, education, the environment, Eskom (power production), governance, healthcare, housing, immigration, land reform, the political system, race & racism and other social issues.

Engaging with the Interim Report will provide the reader with a comprehensive overview of the first phase of the campaign.

Phase 2 of the campaign

Following the launch of the Interim Report, the second phase of the campaign sought to delve in greater detail into the prominent issues that had been raised during the first six weeks of the campaign.

As such, the remaining six weeks of the campaign – from the middle of January until the end of February 2020 – were structured according to six broad topics stemming from the 14 themes identified in the Interim Report.

A week each was subsequently dedicated to the following topics: Corruption, Jobs & Economy, Crime & Security, Immigration, Redress, and the Political System.

The second phase of the campaign saw social media efforts targeted towards these six broad themes, and website submission forms were created for each theme.

Similarly, to the first phase of the campaign, participants were invited to comment on social media posts, provide submissions to surveys and open-ended questions on the website, and participate in direct community engagements in the form of house meetings.

Mashaba also wrote opinion pieces to frame the thematic discussions, and recorded video content to introduce the topic of each week and stimulate further engagement.

While social media content during the second phase of the campaign was developed with reference to the findings of the Interim Report, participants were free to give any input them deemed relevant to the conversation.

TPD thus guided the conversation on the six identified themes, but participants had and exercised the freedom to bring up additional topics and issues. As such, this report introduces various new topics that were not identified in the Interim Report. This report also provides more in-depth insights into those topics that were identified in the Interim Report.

[1] The Interim Report may be found on the People's Dialogue's website, or at this URL: https://bit.ly/2RDSlJv

A note on the campaign

This report seeks to summarise the submissions received during the duration of the campaign, and no distinction is made with regards to the date of specific submissions.

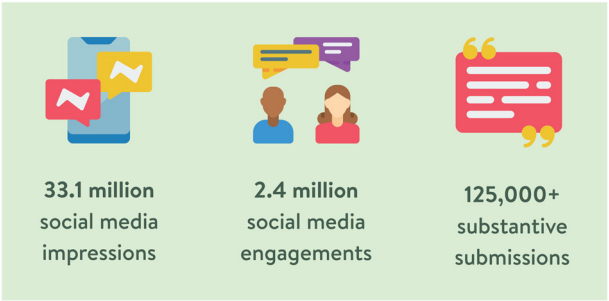
Theme-specific surveys were generally launched at the beginning of a week, accompanied by the announcement of that week's topic. However, the surveys could be accessed and completed at any point following their launch. As such, the "Join the Conversation" form could be completed for the full duration of the campaign. In contrast, the form related to the Political System, for example, was only available for the final week of the campaign. This explains the declining number of submissions received for each successive topic.

It is also worth noting that the campaign was agile and responded to public events that took place over the three-month period. One such example is the attention given to issues related to Eskom because of extensive load-shedding during December. It follows that inputs received from participants were often guided by public events and their coverage in the media.

Overview of engagement

During the three months of the campaign, South Africans participated in unprecedented levels in what must be one of the most extensive political and social experiments of South Africa's democratic history, as illustrated by the following:

- The website received 74,958 views from 34,094 unique users. By the conclusion of the campaign, there were **15,250 substantive submissions** across eight topics (the six themes plus Join the Conversation and Eskom).
- On Twitter, Mashaba posted 675 tweets over the three months, which received **21.1 million impressions**[2], which led to **1.12 million engagements**[3], with an average engagement rate of 3.5%.[4] In total there were 68,360 tweets relating to TPD over the campaign period.
- On Facebook, Mashaba's 346 posts **reached 8.8 million unique users** and led to **9.67 million impressions** and **1.28 million post engagements**, with an average engagement rate of 9.7%. The posts received a total of 43,911 comments.
- In total, The People's Dialogue campaign thus achieved 33.1 million impressions and 2.41 million engagements on social media platforms.
- This resulted in a total of **125,087 substantive submissions, comments and replies** received through the three online platforms, with additional inputs coming from direct community engagement.



Website submissions

There were eight different forms that participants could provide feedback on, each form focusing on a specific theme. As mentioned previously, theme-specific forms were only opened for input upon the launch of the theme in question. Consequently, participants had less time to engage with the surveys related to the themes introduced towards the end of the campaign.

All inputs received via the website, including all responses to open-ended questions, were included in the master dataset.

Survey Name	Submissions
Join the Conversation	12,506
Eskom	913
Jobs & Economy	611

[2] **Impressions** refer to the number of times a tweet (or post) appears to users in either their timeline or in search results. It is an indication of how many users have seen a specific tweet or post.

[3] **Engagement** refers to the total number of times a user interacts with the tweet or post. This includes retweets, shares, replies, comments, follows, likes, and clickthroughs on links, hashtags, embedded media, usernames, the profile photo or tweet expansion.

[4] **Engagement rate** measures the level of engagement that a tweet or post receives from an audience. It is an indication of how many users that have seen a tweet or post, subsequently engaged with it. An engagement rate of 1% and above is seen as a good engagement rate (on Facebook and Twitter). The engagement rate is calculated by dividing the number of engagements by the number of impressions. It is vital to understand the engagement rate as it indicates content that provokes a response.

Immigration	529
Crime & Security	323
Corruption	245
Redressing the Legacy of Our Past	43
Political System	80
Total Submissions	**15,250**

Social Media Engagement and Analysis

Instead of creating new social media properties from which to run the campaign, TPD made use of Herman Mashaba's existing presence on Facebook and Twitter to drive engagement. This was done to capitalise on his large following.

All replies to Mashaba's posts and tweets throughout the campaign were captured, including all mentions of Herman Mashaba and all references to the campaign hashtag #SASpeaks. These were subsequently included in the master dataset. Some interesting statistics can be drawn from this dataset:

- Average characters per tweet: **128** (compared to the Twitter-average of below 50 characters per tweet)
- Average length per Facebook comment: **26 words/122 characters**

Posts and Tweets were classified according to the six themes – Corruption, Crime and Security, Immigration, Jobs and Economy, Redress, the Political System – and ranked by engagement rate.

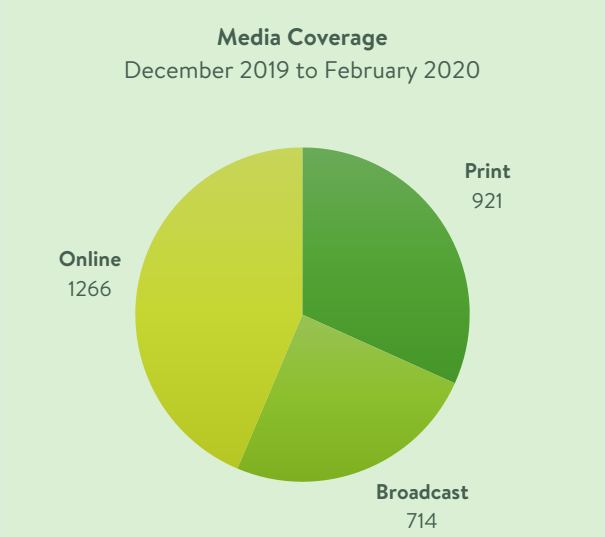
Engagement rate is used to measure the level of interaction Mashaba receives on the content he posts and tweets and is seen as an indication of the level of interest in a particular issue. This allowed individual posts and tweets to be benchmarked against the average engagement rate on Facebook and Twitter, respectively.

A trend analysis was subsequently performed of content with both above- and below-average engagement. While insights drawn from this analysis are not scientific, they revealed some interesting patterns which will be discussed in the respective thematic chapter.

Earned media coverage

It is worth noting that in addition to the social media reach the campaign achieved, TPD and Herman Mashaba succeeded in generating significant earned media coverage across print, broadcast, and online platforms over the three months of the campaign. This served to increase public aware of the Dialogue and assist in sharing content aimed to generate engagement.

In total the People's Dialogue and Herman Mashaba received over 2,900 media stories over the duration of the campaign.



Audience demographics

Demographic data related to participants in the campaign was collected for the website, and to a lesser extent on social media.

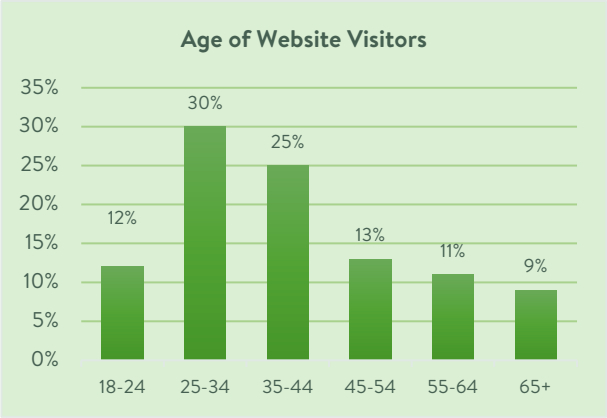
Website data was gathered from Google Analytics for The People's Dialogue website, for the period of 6 December 2019, to 2 March 2020.[5]

[5] With the exception of data related to gender and age, which was only available for 1 – 28 March, 2020. The data on age and gender thus only serves to be an indicative snapshot of visitors to the website, and is not a reflection on the demographic data of the submissions made via the website.

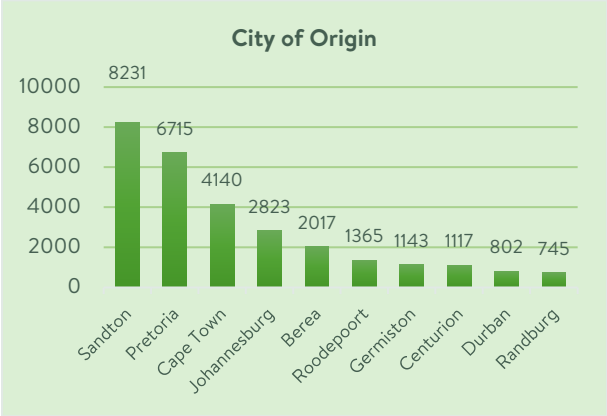
The total number of visitors to the website during the period was 34,209, with most users being referred to the website through social media or direct links (e.g. links embedded in online news articles, e-mails or shared via messaging applications). In terms of traffic generated through social media, Facebook accounted for 62% of users, and Twitter for 32%. The vast majority of visitors to the website – 80% – did so using mobile devices.

Unfortunately, the demographic data provided for website visits and participation through the means of the website is limited, and the graphs below only give an indicative snapshot of the visitors to the website. What these data indicate is a reversal of representation on the voters' roll, which indicates that 55% of registered voters are female and 45% male.

The most represented age groups were 25-34 and 35-44 (accounting for 55% of website visits), providing a potential Millennial-bias to the submissions received on the website. The same age group accounts for approximately 44.8% on the voters' roll.[6] While not absolute proof, this may indicate that young people have a desire to contribute politically and have their voices heard. However, they might feel that voting is not an effective tool for political participation.[7]



Most of the visits to the website, or 71%, originated from Gauteng, indicating that Mashaba has strong name recognition in the province. Mashaba's name recognition in Gauteng is potentially linked to him growing up in the area, his involvement in local communities, and his term as Executive Mayor of Johannesburg.



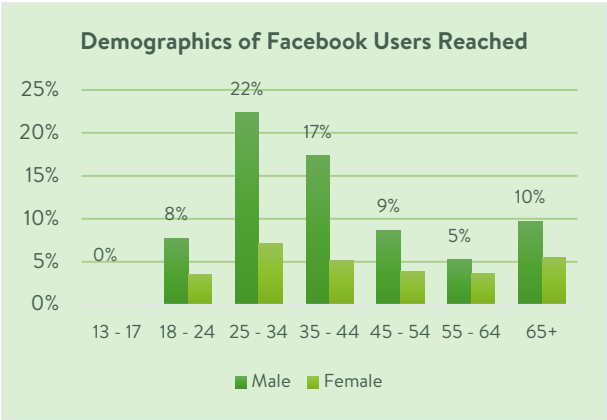
Subsequently, interest in the People's Dialogue seems to be highest in Gauteng. Furthermore, five out of the top ten localities fall within the borders of the Johannesburg metropolitan area. Only two of the top ten localities are outside of Gauteng. The available data indicates that participation was higher in urban areas than in rural areas.

Social Media audience

While Facebook records extensive demographic data about its users, less information is available from Twitter.

The data below was gathered from the Herman Mashaba Facebook Page Insights, for the period of 6 December 2019 to 29 February 2020.

Of the Facebook users reached, 29% were female, and 71% were males. The most represented age groups were 25-34 and 35-44. This mirrors the website demographics discussed previously, an intuitive deduction given that most of the traffic to the website came via social media referrals.



[6] The related age group on the voters' roll is 20-39.

[7] For more information on understanding the factors that influence young South African voters' voting behaviours, please see Lauren Tracey's 2016 report: https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/Mono193-1.pdf

Similarly, the majority of Facebook users engaged throughout the campaign were based in Gauteng with Johannesburg and Tshwane standing out above other localities. A significant number of users, however, were based in other metropolitan municipalities, with Cape Town and Durban seeing high levels of participation.

General insights into submissions

As indicated above, over 125,000 substantive submissions were received and included in the master dataset. Some interesting statistics can be drawn from this:

- Total number of words of all submissions: **3,527,642**
- This to approximately **10,079 pages full A4 pages** of text, or 37 full-length books.
- Average length per website submission: **60 words**
- Average number of words per submission for all submissions: **28**
- Total number of characters of all submissions: **22,496,215**
- Average character length of submissions: **180**
- Total submissions over 180 characters: **40,824**

The table below provides an insight into the number of times specific phrases were mentioned in the submissions.[8]

Word / Phrase	Occurrence
Access	857
Amnesty	55
Army	280
Asylum	162
Audit	586
Border	4,157
Bosasa	69
Cadre	665
Capital	868
Children	1,701
Citizens	3,166
Communism	65
Competent	1,230
Corporate	250
Corrupt	11,377
Crime/Criminal	9,759
Death Penalty/Sentence	1,533
Economy	5,029
Education	5,785
Election/Elect	4,591
Entrepreneur	803
Eskom	2,743
Ethical	629
Finance	811
Foreign	5,632
Free Market	150
Gender-Based Violence	48
Government	10,061
Grant	4,114
Gupta	386
Health	1,960
Housing	2,842
Immigration	4,222
Informal	191
Jail	1,985
Jobs	9,959
Joburg/Johannesburg	3,334
Justice	1,686
Labour	1,017

[8] The word search included variations of word, e.g. economics and economy, but not misspellings of words.

Land Reform	314
Leader	8,188
Mayor	2,321
Minister	1,126
Money	4,786
Murder	1,262
NPA	460
Officials	1,423
Parliament	1,162
Party	8,585
Police	5,063
Policy	737
Politics/Politicians	14,936
Populism	317
President	3,021
Prison	1,214
Public	4,333
Public Protector	67
Race	1,943
Racist/Racism	1,719
Rape	953
Red Tape	153
Redress	130
Reform	731
Robbed/ Robbery	291
SAPS	621
Servants	760
Socialism/ Socialist	426
SONA	1,526
South Africa	13,487
Spaza	190
Tax	4,154
Tender	1,297
Tsotsi	44
Union	949
Violence Against Women	17
Vote	6,018
Woman	463
Women	855
Zuma	1,831

Analysis methodology

To best understand the validity of the findings of this report, it is also useful to understand how the data was analysed. All 125,087 submissions were included in a master dataset. Basic analytics were run on the data set to determine keywords and themes (the table above serves as an example).

The datasets were then further broken down into smaller subsets, organised loosely by themes. Analytical codes were run on these smaller datasets to identify submissions on specific topics. By using qualitative research software, reports on each topic were generated, which included submissions that matched the identified code.

For example, a code using "corruption" and its derivatives could be run across the datasets, and the software would then generate a report including all submissions that referred to "corruption." A total of 106 codes were used in analysing the datasets.

Further analysis was guided by the frequency of occurrence of specific themes or topics, with those with a higher occurrence receiving more attention.

Quotes from website submissions and comments and replies from social media engagement are included in this report. The inclusion of these comments and quotes are to highlight solutions or pertinent issues raised by participants in their own words. Social media comments will only refer to the platform of origin to protect the privacy of participants. In terms of website submissions, only first names and province of origin are used, where available. Where participants did not provide such information, the quote is attributed to "Anonymous." Some quotes have been edited for language errors without impacting meaning.

Limitations of the experiment

While the amount of substantive data collected from interactions with participants makes this experiment novel, there are certain limitations to the findings contained in this report. The following points are highlighted in that respect:

- **Dialogue design:** Topics and issues for discussion were guided by TPD, as well as mainstream media coverage and other public events. Load-shedding during the first month of the campaign is one such example. It follows that participants were more likely to show a

bias towards discussing topics that were at the forefront of public discourse.

- **Limited audience**: As seen in the section on audience demographics, participation in the Dialogue does not accurately represent the South African populace.
- **Information requirements**: Numerous participants noted that the requirement to submit personal information such as their contact information together with their submission was a deterrent to participation. People feared that their personal data might be compromised or used for marketing purposes, which may have dissuaded participation from some individuals.
- **Quantity and quality of social media responses:** A full qualitative analysis of all social media inputs was made difficult by both the quantity and quality of inputs received. Typographical errors, slang and colloquialisms complicated the use of artificial intelligence.

While all efforts were made to mitigate these risks in the compilation of this report, the insights it puts forward must be read together with a caveat about their transferability to the broader South African population. Nonetheless, the heterogeneity of the pool of participants means that a vast diversity of views is captured within this report, which should be seen as a summary of the inputs received, and the trends they serve to highlight.

Structure of this report

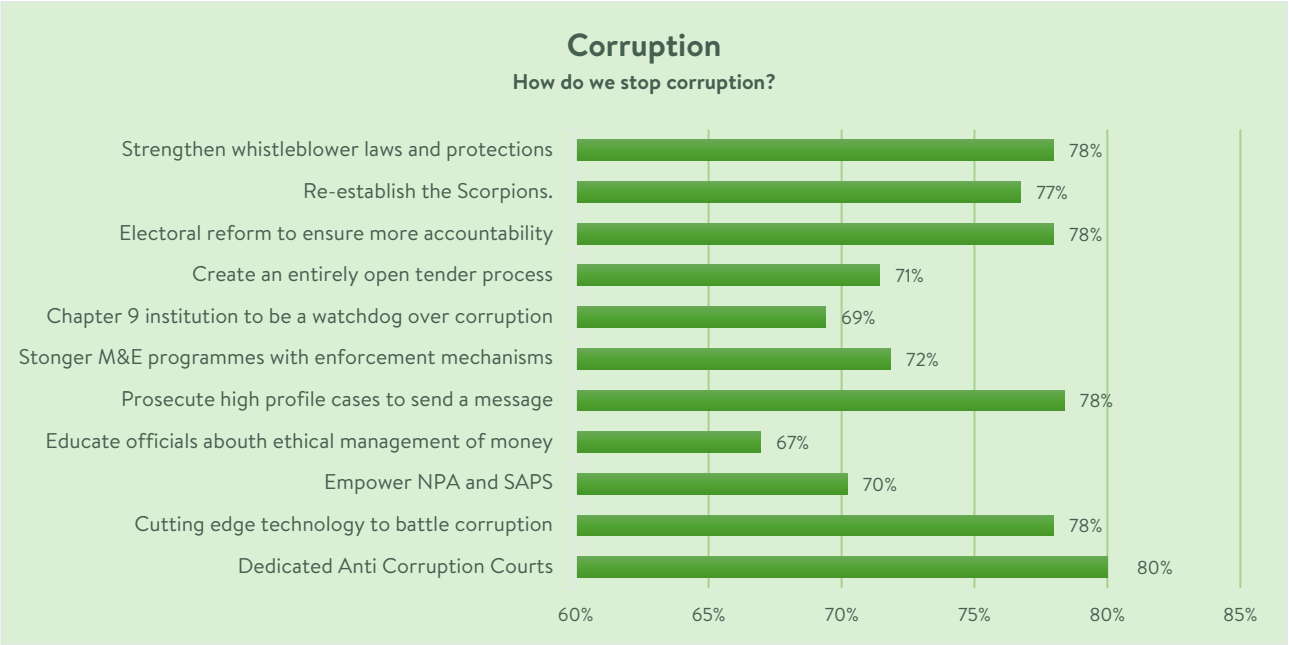
The remainder of this report is predominantly structured according to the six themes of the second phase of the campaign. Each chapter provides a summary of the submissions received and analysed concerning the theme in question.

While theme-specific forms were used to collect additional inputs around the six themes in the second phase of the campaign, many submissions made during the first phase of the campaign, and captured through the "Join the Conversation" form, spanned across multiple themes or issues. All submissions relating to a specific theme were considered in the compilation of the chapter dealing with that theme.

As will be illustrated in the chapters below, there is a high degree of inter-connectedness between the various themes. As such, each chapter may refer to other themes and sub-themes, as it specifically relates to that chapter.

Following the discussion of the six themes, additional insights will be drawn in the concluding chapters.

Corruption



Introduction

In the survey conducted in "Join the Conversation," 90% of participants indicated that they believe corruption is a significant challenge to South Africa's growth prospects, making it the highest-ranking of the nine options. Participants thus clearly deem corruption to be at the core of South Africa's problems.

Generally, participants believe there is a strong link between the African National Congress (ANC) and corruption, and that the party is responsible for creating a culture of corruption that led to state capture. Additionally, the culture of corruption is deemed to be deeply entrenched within society.

On both Facebook and Twitter, posts related to corruption received higher than average engagement and elicited a large number of responses. A common theme was the lack of accountability and action in the form of prosecutions when the perpetrators are often widely known. Frequent reference was made to the Guptas, Zuma and Bosasa. The expressed sentiment among most users was negativity regarding the lack of justice and complacency when it comes to the issue of state capture in particular.

This chapter of the report will discuss the substantive nature of the submissions received on corruption. The chapter is sub-divided into seven sub-sections: the political system, crime and security, the impact on the economy, monitoring and prosecution, education, immigration and social justice and redress.

The inclusion of the specific sub-sections indicates how far-reaching participants believe the impact of corruption to be. There is little trust in the ability of political leaders and public servants to act ethically, and the effect of that behaviour is seen across a variety of societal issues.

The political system

Participants believe that the political leadership of the country and the nature of the South African political system is the most significant contributor to the high level of corruption experienced today.

Political leadership

As mentioned above, the blame for corruption is mostly placed at the feet of the ANC and its leadership. The downward trajectory experienced during the Zuma-presidency still impacts the country's growth prospects. Participants do not believe that Zuma's resignation as the president made any difference to the ANC's propensity for corruption. ANC leaders act in self-interest only, and the only way to address corruption is to remove the ANC as the ruling party.

> *"We are tired of "ANC Unity" because if you are corrupt in the ANC, you get promoted" – **Anonymous***

"South Africa will never grow with an ANC government; corruption is now ingrained in their blood." – ***Gary, Gauteng***

"Thieves must be sent to jail period. That is my stance, but most importantly ANC must be removed from Power. They failed with flying colours. We can't be led by clueless people like these." – ***Twitter input***

"ANC government can't be tough on criminals because they are a party of criminals… The only solution is to convince people around South Africa to vote them out." – ***Facebook input***

"The ANC faction calls looting and corruption' radical economic transformation'. They use this so-called RET to empower or benefit their immediate family, friends and comrades." – ***Facebook input***

Since his election as President of the ANC, Cyril Ramaphosa is considered to have failed with delivering his "New Dawn." The lack of high-profile arrests is seen as an indicator that either Ramaphosa is complicit in corruption, or that he is putting the interest of the ANC ahead of the interest of South Africa. Both those scenarios are deemed to be an utmost betrayal of his duties as the President of South Africa.

The country's leadership is setting an example for the rest of the population. If leaders act in a corrupt manner and are not held accountable for their actions, the rest of the population believe that they are also entitled to gain material wealth through illicit measures.

People that participate in corruption and make sure that they "keep the right people happy" gain power and protection.

"The corrupt are supported by some very influential people that want to see South Africa fail. The corrupt are embedded very deep into all aspects of government, media, law enforcement, courts, utilities, education, medical, municipalities, banking and big business." – ***Facebook input***

However, participants also believe that it is not only political leaders and public servants that are to blame for corruption.

On social media, numerous respondents raised the issue of private sector corruption regarding the Steinhoff matter, among other things. Corruption is seen as endemic in South African culture with very few perpetrators being held accountable for their deeds.

There is also broad agreement that private sector stakeholders that participate in and facilitate corruption should be held accountable for their actions. Additionally, regular citizens must also take responsibility for not encouraging or facilitating corruption. There needs to be a significant value-shift that leads to the total eradication of corruption within our society.

As will be discussed in more detail in the chapter on the Political System, participants believe that there needs to be a greater separation of politics and governance. Politicians' influence in the operations of state-owned entities (SOEs) is seen as harmful to good governance. Politicians do not act on best practice and evidence-based decision making, but rather in self-interest and corrupt motivations.

The high levels of corruption amongst the political leadership are considered to be a fundamental cause of the country's problems. The weak economy, the poor state of education and healthcare, the disrespect for the rule of law and porous borders are all deemed in some part caused by corrupt politicians and officials.

"Lack of jobs, immigration issues, bad health care, racism, land reform etc. is not the root of the problem. These are symptoms caused by lack of leadership and corruption and will be solved when we stamp out corruption." – ***Anonymous***

"While a president is curtailed by his/her party politics, unable to respond rationally to issues and unable to react to bad motives (i.e. corruption), we are a rudderless ship." – ***Anton, Free State***

"We are in a situation where the corrupt politicians are running this country like hell where they belong." – ***Facebook input***

"As long as there's no thief politician behind bars, it is impossible to stop corruption that ruins our resources." – ***Facebook input***

Participants believe that South Africa desperately needs ethical, incorruptible leadership to ensure that decisions are made in pursuit of the common good, rather than based on greedy individual needs. These leaders must also not put the interests of their political party or organisation before the needs of the country.

The public sector

Participants' primary concern on corruption in the public sector is about the interference of politicians in areas where they should not be involved, such as procurement. The ANC's policy of cadre deployment results in the appointment of incompetent officials in crucial positions, who are beholden to the ANC and thus likely to participate in corrupt activities. When cadres gain positions through the help of politicians, it creates an expectation of reciprocity and leads to networks of corruption.

> *"Introduce vetting of tender board committee members. Today vacancies are not filled by qualified applicants but political nepotism."* – ***Letekane, Gauteng***

Political interference is most prominently seen at SOE level. Participants believe that individuals who are closely related to politicians or who are card-carrying members of a political organisation should be barred from serving on the boards of, or in executive positions in, public entities or SOEs. There needs to be a greater separation between political parties and the business of the state.

The lack of accountability of public servants that are complicit in corruption is of great concern to participants. There simply has not been enough convictions of corruption compared to the damage that the project of state capture has done to South Africa's economic growth prospects.

> *"Once employees of SOEs have committed fraud with irregular tenders or spending etc., they should be sacked immediately and never be allowed to work in any form of government again."* – ***Talia, Eastern Cape***

> *"Anyone found guilty of corruption cannot be eligible for a role in the public service, especially high up in government!"* – ***Arlette, Western Cape***

Public procurement

The abuse of state funds through procurement processes needs to be addressed, should corruption be curtailed. Government has to develop more efficient systems to deal with procurement and ensure that the economic empowerment goals of state procurement are achieved.

The current approach to awarding tenders is deemed to be deeply flawed. While participants acknowledge the potential of the state to use its economic power for empowerment, the current system is abused by politicians and procurement decision-makers.

The overly bureaucratic nature of the procurement process may aim to prevent corruption, but it reduces the state's ability to govern effectively. It further serves to enrich "tenderpreneurs" and politically connected individuals and companies, as it is too easy to hide financial interests in companies tendering for government contracts while at the same time influencing the outcome of tender decisions.

> *"Tenders should be given to qualified and deserving people with skills and knowledge and not just because they are the members of the ruling party. Some high profile individuals, like ministers, councillors and MEC's have companies which they have registered under the names of the foreign nationals and/ or their relatives' names, and those companies are always benefiting from all the projects."* – ***Atline, Gauteng***

> *"There needs to be a continuous analysis of the applicable costs for these tenders. The government can't be paying R500 for a 500ml bottle of water."* – ***Dineo, Gauteng.***

Electoral reform

Participants believe that South Africa's electoral system contributes to the pervasiveness of corruption. Politicians are only accountable to the political parties to which they belong, rather than their constituents. There is thus widespread support a system where politicians are more accountable to their voters, as politicians will be less likely

to participate in corruption if they have to account directly to members of the public.

Communities have the potential to self-organise and create organic structures that could improve how the actions of politicians are monitored, making it more likely that corruption will be picked up.

> *"Our current system of politics and governance not only creates and maintains division but allows rampant corruption and no accountability."* – ***Anonymous***
>
> *"Transform our electoral system and implement a constituency-based system that will drive service delivery, accountability and eradicate corruption."* – ***Anonymous***

Anyone with any history of corruption or fraud should not be allowed to stand for political office. Politicians should be adequately vetted, and only qualifying candidates should be allowed to hold office.

Crime and security

Participants view corruption for what it is: a criminal act of stealing money that belongs to the public. One of the major concerns is the perceived lack of accountability as there are almost no consequences for individuals that participate in corruption. Thus, there is no deterrent to corruption.

The criminal justice system

Participants are supportive of the creation of specialised courts that focus on cases of corruption. The current approach of setting up commissions that do not have the legal mandate to prosecute corrupt individuals is seen as a waste of resources. Those resources could be better spent on capacitating specialised courts that can conduct virtually the same type of investigations as a commission but could then also prosecute and find people guilty of criminal offences.

In addition to the support for specialised courts, participants support the establishment of an independent body that focuses solely on the prevention and prosecution of corruption. Such an independent body must work closely with the courts to ensure swift prosecutions.

> *"Corruption is a crime against humanity. We need to be ruthless in tackling this monster. Anti-corruption division within the state must be created, chaired by the opposition. This is to create the harshest scrutiny to those who seek to embark on this path. We need a mandatory 15 years in jail for corrupt individuals."* – ***Gcina, Gauteng***
>
> *"I agree with the dedication of special anti-corruption courts, but they must be given powers to work outside of the normal processes which are hamstrung by human rights. They must be strictly no bail courts. Work on fixed minimum sentences of no less than 15 years with no appeal and no parole."* – ***Matome, Gauteng***

The above quote illustrates another suggestion proposed by participants: refuse parole and bail to suspects found guilty of corruption to demonstrate the seriousness of the crime.

Some participants believe that the legislation surrounding corruption is sufficient, but that the implementation of the legal framework is what allows corruption to flourish. As such, the focus should be on prosecution and implementation of existing sanctions rather than trying to change the law.

Punishment for corruption

Participants are in support of harsher penalties for corruption, which might require amending legislation to provide for an increase in the sanctions for acts of corruption. Criminals found guilty of corruption must not be allowed to ever work in the public sector or politics. They must pay back the proceeds of their corrupt activities (attach their assets if necessary) and should be subjected to longer jail sentences and severe fines. Some participants believe that these criminals may be allowed amnesty if they pay back all the money that they stole.

Criminal legislation should also make provision for holding public servants and politicians to a higher standard than the general population, by allowing for harsher penalties.

Some participants are also of the opinion that corruption amounts to economic treason and deserves to be subjected to extreme penalties.

> *"We need to regard cases of corruption which involves money from the fiscus as TREASON, as such, those found guilty should be prosecuted with the death sentence as a penalty, as I believe, the amount of taxation being collected by ANC is enough to fund reasonable spending."* – ***Anonymous***
>
> *"Serious jail time for perpetrators. It's equal to sabotaging our country."* – ***Walter, Gauteng***

There is some limited support for amnesty in exchange for information/admissions of guilt with that understanding that anyone found guilty of further corruption after being granted amnesty must then be punished harshly. Furthermore, anyone that comes forward with admissions of guilt must be barred from serving in the public service.

Participants clearly want to see action with regards to corruption. While the commissions set up to investigate corruption are seen as a positive step, the lack of results is frustrating.

High profile cases

Participants are severely frustrated with the lack of prosecutions, especially relating to high-profile cases. Participants find it unacceptable that individuals with severe corruption allegations against them are still allowed to serve in executive positions within the ANC, government departments and SOEs.

Prosecuting high profile cases will send a message that corruption will not be tolerated, regardless of an individual's status in society. Politicians must be sent to jail and not receive any special treatment from authorities.

Law enforcement authorities must confiscate the proceeds of corruption from politicians and implement severe punishment such as punitive financial measures and increased jail-time. Politicians that commit corruption are not only guilty of the crime of corruption, but also the crime of betraying their duty to act in the public interest, which is an inherent aspect of their responsibilities.

*"Elected representatives must be held to a higher level of accountability than members of the public. Insufficient evidence to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt is a far cry from proving innocence!" – **Colin, Gauteng***

*"SA needs change because corruption is running rampant, and it seems to be thriving quite well in SA. The Gupta Brothers need to be brought in they used as an [example]. We [are] tired of rich people thinking they can walk over the rest of us. SA needs change, drastic change." – **Thapelo, Gauteng***

*"Start jailing those that were complicit in State capture and send a strong message. This includes extraditing the Guptas." – **Gary, Gauteng***

Law enforcement

South Africa's law enforcement agencies are not immune to the impact of corruption. Participants believe that the prevalence of corruption within law enforcement agencies contributes to the disregard of the rule of law in South Africa.

*"The corruption in the Police force is staggering. Both the SAPS and the Metro police are involved from the very top to the lowest ranks. Everybody is on the take. Our police commissioner Beke Cele is also corrupt and a big talker but very little action. Much of this corruption in the policing sector is backed up by corrupt politicians." – **Rothney, Gauteng***

*"Police should stop taking bribes from criminals and more especially foreigners involved in criminal activities." – **Ahmed, Gauteng***

*"We need a police force that's dedicated to South Africa and not police officers who are dedicated to corruption, bribes and laziness." – **Yolanda, Limpopo***

"Law enforcement agencies need to serve the people of

*the republic with equity and impartiality, not a particular political party. No card-carrying member of any political party must be allowed to serve as a law enforcer" – **Letekane, Gauteng***

*"The first point of call is to fire and or jail all those who are known to be "rotten" within IPID / SAPS / NPA / State Security Agencies. As long as these rotten people are still in these institutions, there will still be a market for bribery & corruption from the above as they are connected. Heavy jail sentences for corrupt cops (hard labour) may help prevent cops from going rogue." – **Gary, Gauteng***

The rule of law is undermined when law enforcement officials are prone to bribery. Officials may conduct seemingly innocuous acts such as losing dockets or breaking the chain of evidence. Any law enforcement officers suspected of corruption must be suspended, and if found guilty, may never serve in law enforcement again.

Finally, participants believe that the battle against corruption may be augmented by the reestablishment of a specialised unit (like the Scorpions) that focuses on corruption. Such a move should be made in conjunction with the establishment of specialised courts and an independent body that focuses on corruption to ensure efficient investigation, prosecution and sentencing of corruption.

Impact on the economy

The poor state of the economy influences the propensity of people to get involved in corruption. Participants believe that people are willing to participate in criminal acts to obtain material wealth because there are less legitimate opportunities to do so.

At the same time, corruption reduces the resources available for improving the areas of society that need it the most. Corruption is not limited to stealing money; it amounts to stealing opportunities from current and future generations.

The money lost to corruption reduces the amount of money that the state has available to spend on fulfilling its mandate. As was evidenced in the past few years, the state is experiencing a revenue shortfall. The state is now trying to address the revenue shortfall through increasing tax rates. The increase in taxes effectively shifts the financial responsibility of paying for corruption to innocent citizens, who are supposed to be served by those that are complicit in corruption.

*"Arrest top politicians who are corrupt and they must pay back the money. Government can't charge more per cent of tax while I'm not the one who stole state money. I'm tired of paying something I didn't do." – **Galise***

*"Politicians steal and get away with money that was supposed to help the needy South Africans. The current administration has normalised corruption, by shifting ministers from one post to another, no accountability." – **Kenneth, Gauteng***

Participants believe that if the government can develop an efficient manner of recovering the money lost to corruption, the fiscus will receive a significant cash injection. The increased revenue can be used to service debt or to invest in priority projects.

The role of labour

Many participants also believe that labour unions have a level of responsibility for the pervasiveness of corruption in South Africa. Labour leaders participate in corrupt activities by accepting bribes from employers, and subsequently, they do not represent the interests of workers. This is specifically endemic to private labour dispute resolution, which means that labour disputes should be resolved in a manner that all stakeholders have access to the proceedings.

*"[On the] issue of unions: their representation of employees should be monitored and managed accordingly. The employees' interest should be paramount." – **Dineo, Gauteng***

Labour unions also protect employees that are guilty of corruption. When employers try to discipline employees for corrupt activities, labour unions provide protection to the employees and prevents accountability.

*"Unions need to be held accountable for the unlawful actions of their members; conversations with unions cannot continue to be one-sided and only about job losses. Where were the unions when their members were exploiting Eskom's lack of management?" – **Anonymous***

Corruption is also seen to be prevalent in the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). Rather than seeing the fair allocation of work opportunities to local communities, politicians manipulate the process to benefit their patronage networks, and so retain political support. The allocation of work opportunities must take place without political interference.

Corruption and the energy sector

Eskom's procurement of sub-quality coal is seen as a brazen example of corruption and state capture. The far-reaching impact of the damage it has caused to power-generation infrastructure and subsequent economic damage is unacceptable. Those responsible for those contracts need to be severely punished for their role in creating load-shedding

> *"Publish ALL Eskom suppliers (not only tenders) how much they are being paid monthly/annually. If there is proof of fruitless, wasteful expenditure or fraud, both suppliers and officials involved must pay back the money or go to jail."* – ***Anonymous***

The prevalence of unqualified cadres in senior management positions in Eskom reduces the efficiency at which the utility can run. Eskom's operations have a significant impact on the economy, and those in management positions should be appointed only on skill and ability to contribute to the turn-around of Eskom, rather than political affiliation.

There are industry councils that provide oversight over technically skilled employees, so political oversight mostly results in political interference rather than ensuring efficient management of Eskom.

The consensus is that corrupt officials and politicians benefit from corruption at Eskom. Innocent South African citizens and businesses suffer because of that corruption.

> *"To uplift South Africans, prosecute and sentence the fat cats at Eskom who have lined their pockets and those who mismanaged our resources while we suffer through load-shedding. Why aren't they in jail yet?"* – ***Facebook input.***

Monitoring of corruption

The current monitoring mechanisms employed by the government to uncover corruption are seen as inadequate. Government officials that want to be corrupt can manipulate the system too easily, and those that are not corrupt struggle to complete their duties efficiently due to burdensome processes.

The mechanisms in place, while aimed at curtailing corruption, end up slowing down government processes while having little effect on limiting corruption. Essentially, corrupt officials are seen to be able to manipulate the system to their own benefit without getting caught.

Systems should be put into place to alert tax authorities of sudden significant increases in personal wealth. Those that experience disproportionate wealth gain should be subject to income and lifestyle audits and provide proof of sources of the source of their wealth.

There is a need for more independence in the monitoring of corruption. The current system entrusts the corrupt to monitor and curb corruption.

> *"A mandatory audit on material transactions processed (as determined per geographical area) to ensure that money is paid and contracts are offered in a way that creates value (for all stakeholders and the economy)."* – ***Tshepo, Free State***

> *"There should be an autonomous (non-government) standing committee responsible for analysing and regulating parliamentarian's expenditure patterns and external revenue streams that may be generated by members of parliament aside from their standard remuneration from government."* – ***Vusi, Gauteng***

More resources should be allocated to the combatting of corruption and monitoring of government financial flows – if irregular and corrupt expenditure can be reduced, there will be a strong return on investment on such funds allocated.

Participants support the utilisation of high-tech solutions for monitoring corruption, e.g. implementing payment systems using blockchain technology. Current paper-based systems are easy to manipulate and should be replaced with digital methods which are accessible to the public. Information relating to how public money is spent should only be classified when absolutely necessary (state security etc.).

> *"Peer to Peer (P2P) interactive connectivity could curb corruption and foster reciprocal altruism."* – ***Anonymous***

> *"We also need an anti-corruption police division with investigators who have deep skills in technology like AI, forensics and psychology. We need to continuously run monitoring operations to see who is corrupt or not."* – ***Gcina, Gauteng***

> *"The use of cybersecurity technologies will help fight corruption and blockchain which will allow the administration see how money is being spent, on what and by who to avoid corruption."* – ***Anonymous***

The role of education

Awareness

There is a perceived lack of awareness surrounding the impact of corruption. Participants believe that too many citizens do not understand how corruption at government-level has implications on their personal financial interests.

> *"Corruption is so endemic that I think the only way to start addressing it is to educate people as to the origin and purpose of government funds. Many people behave as if they are not aware that it is THEIR OWN money that is being looted. All of us pay tax. Everyone who buys anything ever pays tax. But people seem to think that is "government money". This should be a school subject. People have to understand that the money cannot be spent on themselves if it is eaten by their so-called leaders." – **Heinrich, Kwazulu-Natal***

Voters should be exposed to educational programmes, targeted at reducing the likelihood of re-electing corrupt politicians. Only once voters are truly informed can we wish to exercise real democracy.

In addition to educational programmes, information regarding the government's business should be shared more freely. However, it must also be shared in a way that is understandable to lay-people, i.e. without the use of complex language and jargon.

> *"I think the public needs to know publicly about government plans, who's got tenders, and what public need to do in order to expose those who mismanage tender funds. This can be reached by publicly placing a TV show on SABC which will focus on those." – **Sthembiso, Gauteng***

> *"When people try to take your money from your pocket, you put up a fight, but when politicians take money from your pocket (through corruption), it is OK." – **Anonymous***

> *"Corruption starts with us ordinary citizens; we bribe to avoid traffic fines, to secure tenders and so forth, we have normalized corruption as part and parcel of living in the modern age indeed. The best way to combat this evil practice is through educating the masses at the grassroots level first, the impacts of corruption on the society and what the country would benefit if it were to be corruption free." – **Moela, Limpopo***

Government institutions

Participants believe that the Department of Education functions in a corrupt manner, especially in the management of funds allocated for educational purposes.

Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) are also deemed to be corrupt. The people that manage SETAs abuse the funding received from the government for personal gain, rather than for skills development.

School-level education

Children need to be taught ethics from a young age, instilling the value that cheating is harmful to themselves and others. This lesson can be taught through practical exercises where the children feel what it feels like being cheated.

> *"Only if they feel it practically in their souls, you will influence people. There are amazing games that can be played with children where they feel cheated and then discussions afterwards. Then you play the same game without cheating." – **Aletta, Gauteng***

> *"Functioning primary school education is key to reversing the trend in the next generation. Therefore: 1) Set a target for bringing prosecutions against mismanagement/embezzlement in the department of education and provincial education government. 2) Implement bans from public tender on individuals linked to culpable under-delivery of public projects, and ban companies in which they hold directorship/ownership." – **Thobani, KwaZulu-Natal***

> *"I believe that fighting corruption will resuscitate the morale for education, because corruption discourages the educational society. Everyone sees no purpose of going to school except to be a politician and live wealthy lifestyle by the proceeds of corruption." – **Anonymous***

Participants thus clearly believe that corruption can be fought through education. A concern amongst participants

is that people do not understand the adverse implications of corruption fully, and will thus continue to allow corrupt politicians to be re-elected.

Immigration

Many participants are concerned about the corruption of border officials, and the impact that has on illegal immigration. Illegal immigrants can easily bribe their way into the country. The impact of corruption on immigration will be discussed in more detail in the chapter on immigration.

> *"Deal with corruption in our law enforcement, specifically in our ports of entry. If an officer is caught taking a bribe charge them with treason" – **Vuxisi, Gauteng***

Corruption at the Department of Home Affairs further impacts the state's ability to battle illegal immigration, as officials accept bribes and sell fake documents to foreign nationals.

> *"I was at a barber in Pretoria around 2015/2016 and overheard a conversation with one Nigerian national telling his friend that he "knows someone inside" who can do his papers for R9,000. So the problem is INSIDE! We have corrupt officials in Departments such as Home Affairs." – **Musa, Gauteng***

> *"Corruption in the Department of Home Affairs has greatly contributed to illegal immigrants having fake documents or legit I.Ds in an illegitimate way." – **Zibusiso, Gauteng***

Social justice and redress

Participants believe that corruption has been fundamental in the slow rate of progress with redress. Mechanisms that were intended for black economic empowerment (BEE) have been abused by the politically connected elite to ensure the limited redistribution of wealth.

Corruption within the Department of Housing is seen as a key driver behind the slow rate of redistribution of property: publicly funded housing schemes are often of low quality, over-priced and prone to corruption. The amount of money being spent is disproportionate to the progress made in providing property ownership.

Corruption also impacts the way that government housing is allocated: those that are connected to local political decision-makers get preference over people ahead of them on the housing list.

Finally, there is also abuse of the housing system by individuals that get multiple houses through corruption and then use those properties to generate income.

Conclusion

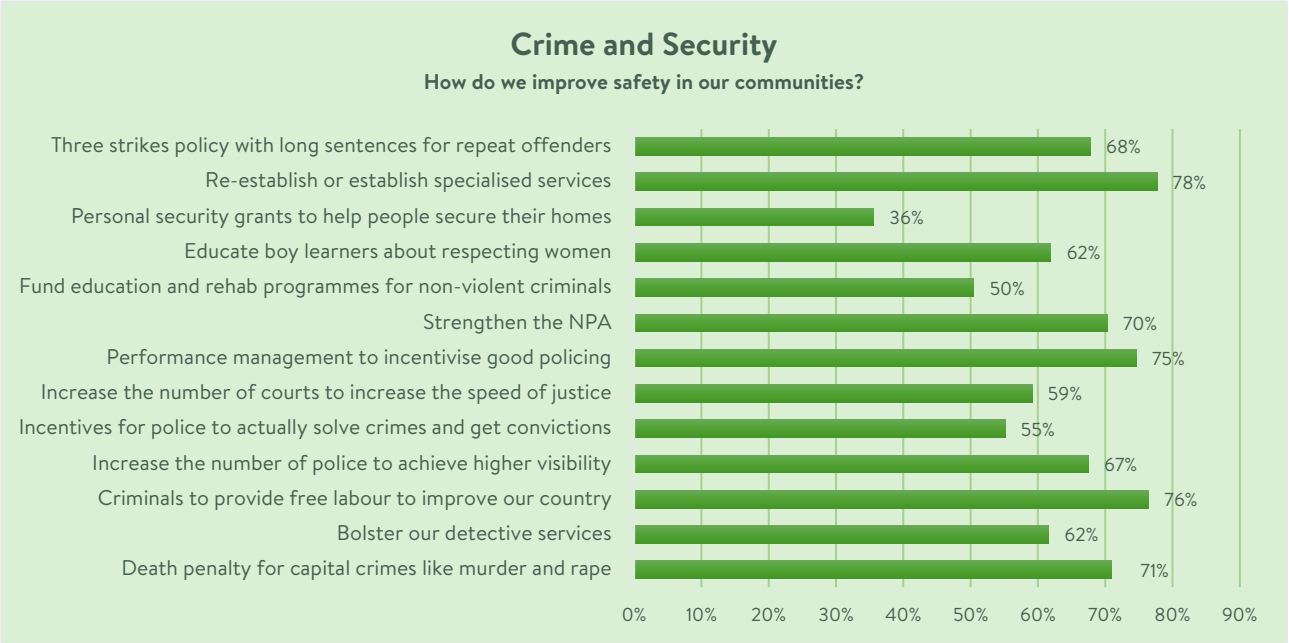
Participants in the Dialogue are very passionate about corruption and the damage it has done to our society. There is a clear call for ethical leadership that does not tolerate corruption. Those guilty of corruption must be held to account, and be treated like the criminals that they are.

Fighting Corruption

Recurring suggestions and solutions put forward by participants to combat corruption include:

- Arrest and prosecute corrupt high-level officials and politicians
- Prioritise electoral reform to ensure that politicians are accountable to their voters
- Improved support to the justice system to ensure swift resolution of corruption-related charges
- Increase penalties for those guilty of corruption, especially elected officials
- Implement progressive monitoring systems and lifestyle audits for politicians to ensure that public money is spent on what it is intended for
- Focus on education to teach people about the impact and evils of corruption
- Reduce political interference in government entities and SOEs
- Change correctional centres into prisons and ensure that prisons are capacitated and resourced
- Employ individuals with management experience in high ranking based on their skills instead of their political connections
- Put an end to the tender system as we know it and replace it with a modern and transparent procurement platform.

Crime and Security



Introduction

At the most basic level, South Africans do not feel safe in their homes and communities. Participants see crime and security as one of the top issues plaguing South Africa. In the "Join the Conversation" survey, 73% of respondents indicated that rampant crime is a significant issue, making it the third-highest ranked issue.

Crime is broadly seen as a symptom of a combination of social ills: unemployment, inequality, poverty, and lack of education. Participants are sympathetic to the fact that many people are driven to crime by economic circumstances, but still, believe that more should be done to prevent and deter crime. Participants argue that to address crime effectively, the government needs to address other structural challenges first. This is easier said than done: reducing unemployment is dependent on increasing business and investor confidence, which in turn requires a reduction in crime. This point illustrates the interconnectedness of the various challenges facing South Africa.

While there is a certain level of sympathy for people that commit crime out of necessity, there is no sympathy for career criminals or people in positions of power that commit crimes. For example, there is a recurrent opinion that politicians or public office holders need to be held at a higher standard, and subsequently receive harsher punishment when convicted of crimes.

Violating the public trust should be seen as an aggravating circumstance when it comes to sentencing.

This chapter will discuss six sub-themes: the criminal justice system, policing practices, the prison system, gender-based violence (GBV), immigration and social justice.

The criminal justice system

The general impression of participants is that the criminal justice system provides too much protection to criminals over the rights of innocent citizens. It should be criminals that live in fear, not the rest of the country.

Another general feeling is that the justice system disproportionately works against the poor. The system, participants argue, is designed in a way that benefits the rich, and that you can pay your way out of trouble

Criminal legislation

As mentioned above, participants share a strong feeling that criminals are enjoying more rights than innocent people, and that the rights of criminals are often protected at the cost of the rights of the innocent. For example, the right to bail and parole often puts violent criminals back on the street, where they can further torment their victims. Parole is granted too easily to career-criminals and dangerous offenders. Criminals guilty of multiple serious

crimes such as rape and murder should not be granted parole.

One social media post that received much attention surrounded President Ramaphosa's decision in mid-December 2019 to drastically reduce the prison sentences of over 14,000 inmates.

While there was some sympathy from both Facebook and Twitter users, the overall sentiment was one of disbelief and criticism.

"This is moral compromise exemplified. The sanctity of the legal system is a casualty." – ***Twitter input***

"The problem with this presidential blanket release of detainees is that it defies the logic behind correctional services and whether corrected or not you still get released." – ***Twitter input***

Generally speaking, posts on social media related to the severity of punishment relative to the crime committed received higher levels of engagement. Responses to the appropriate punishment for the rape of a child were very emotive with proposed sentences ranging from life in prison to mutilation and death penalty. Responses on the death penalty were very divided; even though some were in favour of bringing the death penalty back, many felt that it is an inhumane method of punishment. This is further elaborated upon later in this chapter.

Participants believe that the current sanctions provided for in legislation are not strict enough to deter crime effectively. There is a call for legislative reform to ensure that criminals receive harsher punishment for their crimes.

Drug-related crime

The general sentiment amongst participants is that substance abuse and drug-related crime causes significant harm to communities. Despite this, there is no clear consensus among participants regarding what they believe to be the best approach to reducing criminal activity related to substance abuse and drugs.

"Drugs are bad, but their criminalisation breeds cartels and gangs. If they're legalised, the black market loses its power and so do criminal entities that profit from it." – ***Anonymous***

"Communities they see and know the people that are selling drugs to our kids, communities must unite and go with police officers to each and every person that is dealing with drugs." – ***Velly, Gauteng***

"The government must unite with all the security companies and all criminal activities shall be taken seriously for the drug user they must be arrested regardless of them doing any crime, and they shall be taken to the nearest rehabilitation centre. For those dealers, they shall be arrested without bail." – ***Simphiwe, Mpumalanga***

"Start with the drug dealers. Arrest and sentence them. Stop boosting stats by arresting drug addicts." – ***Jacqueline, Western Cape***

Participants are divided about how the government should react against drug users. Some indicated that the focus should be on progressive laws that facilitate rehabilitation, while others advocated for a no-tolerance approach.

Participants do, however, mostly share the opinion that drug dealers and the heads of criminal networks should be treated harshly. Participants feel that drug dealers are known to communities and the police, but the police fail to act against them due to fear of retribution or corruption.

Arresting drug users and low-level street dealers is perceived to have little impact: it is more important to utilise intelligence services to target criminal networks.

"The more the drug dealers are allowed to thrive - the more criminals we create - as the users need money to buy their drugs - so they do crime, and the drugs make them feel invincible - so the crimes become more violent." – ***Wendy, Gauteng***

Prosecutions

Participants are dissatisfied with the perceived inefficiency in the prosecution of crimes: dockets are lost, and the chain of evidence is broken too often. This speaks to the poor quality of training of the police and prosecution officials.

Participants are also concerned about the number of cases that do not end up in trial: corruption within the prosecuting authorities is seen as detrimental to justice.

Effective resolutions of prosecutions are essential to deter crime: criminals are not scared of the South African justice system, as they believe that the system is incapable of prosecuting crimes in a timely and efficient fashion. As such, criminals are not deterred from committing crimes, as the risk of ending up in prison is not high enough.

> *"Never-ending investigations with no consequences. Since the dawn of democracy, it's commission after commission, investigations after investigations, waste of taxpayers' money but no prosecutions. We need to revisit our justice system… our justice system is just a joke, the weakest in the whole world, no wonder why crime is normalised in societies. We are helpless; useless migration laws, useless borders, a lot of illegal guns pouring in, corrupt security officers, drugs everywhere. In fact, we are the most stupid country in the whole of Africa, whatever is happening here you'll never find happening in other parts of Africa."* – ***Facebook user***.

The lengthy periods that criminal cases spend in the courts are also a point of lamentation. The court process must become more efficient, which can be done through the adoption of technological advances and modernised practices.

As with other areas of public service, political interference in law enforcement is a cause of concern for participants. The South African Police Service (SAPS), NPA and all other law enforcement agencies should be a professionalised service free of political interference, and oversight functions should be exercised by an ad-hoc parliamentary committee and an independent watchdog. The powers of ministers should be limited, and cadre deployment must be banished.

The death penalty

The death penalty is a complex topic and must be approached with extreme caution. This section will not serve to address the constitutionality, morality, or scientific merits of the death penalty. It will only serve to reflect on the submissions made by participants.

It is common cause that Herman Mashaba is a long-standing advocate of the death penalty for certain crimes including child rape, serial rape, and premeditated murder. In this context, it must be noted that the "Crime and Security" questionnaire made mention of the death penalty, as did Mashaba's social media content during the week dedicated to this theme. The purpose of this content, however, was to stimulate debate. It certainly succeeded in doing so.

Posts and tweets on the death penalty received a high rate of engagement while "death penalty" or "death sentence" was mentioned 383 times in the online submissions.

Across all platforms, the issue of the death penalty was a polarising one, with both sides of the argument enjoying support.

Support for the death penalty

Those participants that are in support of death penalty believe that it should be reserved for the most severe crimes, and in most cases should be reserved for repeat criminals: rape, murder, human trafficking and violent crimes against women and children. On both Facebook and Twitter, users proposed the death penalty for those guilty of corruption, especially when state funds are swindled.

On Facebook, some commenters requested the state to implement the Apartheid-style death penalty.

> *"Easy. Death penalty number 1. You kill someone you will be killed. Easy. You steel. Your hand or hands get cut off. You rape. You lose your rape tool. Easy as that. People can protect themselves the way it supposed to be. Shoot when life is in danger even if that person is running away then ask questions and ask valid questions."* – ***Facebook input***

> *"Introduce the death penalty and execute all the murderers, rapists, drug dealers, terrorists, etc."* – ***Facebook input***

> *"Our problem is that our system is terrible at rehabilitating criminals, so now we have a very large number of repeat offenders. That's what I think the death penalty should target, repeat offenders."* – ***Twitter input***

> *"Fear is a very powerful tool and should be used where necessary. A social contract between two people is only as good as each party maintaining their side of the agreement. Painful and stricter enforcement of the law needs to be established; it is no longer feasible to threaten prisoners with jail sentencing; they seem to*

*welcome that fate. Various forms of capital punishment need to be re-established and unleashed on those who have been found guilty of heinous crimes." – **Morena, Free State***

*"Most importantly, we need capital punishment back, Botswana is doing well with the system, and here we are putting political correctness above the needs and the safety of citizens. No wonder foreigners can also come into our country and kill our police; there is no real deterrent for crime." – **Leanne, Gauteng***

Opposition to the death penalty

Participants made various arguments in opposition to the death penalty. It is likely to increases the likelihood of killing wrongfully convicted people. Scientific research has shown that the death penalty does not serve as a deterrent to heinous crimes. Finally, because of the unequal application of criminal justice, the death penalty will affect the poor disproportionately.

Many users on both Facebook and Twitter noted that the death penalty would not be under consideration if the current prison system and justice system were operating as it should. In effect, they were insinuating that support for the death penalty is primarily driven by frustration with the high levels of crime and a lack of justice.

*"No, it won't work with this incapable and weak institution like the NPA. Innocent people will end up dying like flies." – **Facebook input.***

*"No, that is not the way to go. Divine Law must be honoured. And too many innocent people have been framed and ended up on death row due to a corrupt justice system. Definitely not. Let's move to higher consciousness - not lower. Mortal man has no business deciding the way or time of death for another - the law of consequences applies (karma) - if you take a life, you'll pay for that. Just no." – **Facebook input.***

*"The death penalty has no deterrent effect. There are also lots of wrongful convictions. Reformatory centres should be brought back. Remember, imprisonment is to protect society by separating offenders who are a serious threat to the lives and personal security of members of the community. It's dicey." – **Facebook input***

*"Death penalty can reduce it but also innocent people will also die.... I think jail should be just that JAIL... Prisoners must suffer in there so those who think to break the law think twice.... Prisoners are in hotels in jails... They watch TV, eat whatever they want. I mean prisoners have rights more than us, innocent people, our kids in schools, eat soup while criminals eat meat every day. Make jail a place of pain, and all this will end." – **Facebook input***

*"No, we should not, chemical castration perhaps for the rapist. The death penalty is permanent while there is a possibility to get it wrong, and there is no proof that it actually changes behaviour. With our history as well it will only kill black people." – **Twitter input***

Policing practices

The general feeling amongst participants is that way that policing is conducted in South Africa is inadequate and does not do enough to prevent crime pro-actively. Participants are supportive of an increase in the budget allocated to the SAPS so that more police officers can be employed, visible policing increased, policing practices improved and to provide better compensation for lower-level law enforcement officers.

The South African Police Service

The sentiment on Facebook and Twitter was that SAPS needs to be professionalised and capacitated to deal with crime. Issues that were continuously highlighted included the inefficiency of SAPS, too few police personnel, corruption of police officers, and poor salaries.

Suggestions made on how to improve policing in South Africa include the following:

- Law enforcement officers should receive better salaries, as this would increase a sense of loyalty to their duties and reduce the likelihood that they would accept bribes
- Participants seem to have empathy for law enforcement officers and the fact that they are expected to work in high-risk environments without decent compensation. It is thus understandable that our law enforcement agencies are underperforming and that officers of the law are not as committed to their duty.
- Lower-ranking law enforcement officials also often see corruption in higher ranks (senior law enforcement officers getting enriched unfairly). The example set by leadership has an impact on the rest of the police force.

"Our problems start with the police. Our police are incompetent, unpatriotic and easy to bribe. We should improve our vetting process so we can have people who actually want to serve. That being said, there are many

who love their jobs but are under-resourced; and there are many laws that stand against them. This can be demoralizing. Criminals have a lot of rights. If a criminal shoots at the police, he shouldn't live. Criminals should know they'll get manhandled if they physically fight a cop." – ***Thabo, Eastern Cape***

- The vetting practices of the police should be more stringent as the perception is that too many criminal elements manage to infiltrate the police force. Background checks and polygraphs should become part of the vetting process.
- There is advanced technology available for the investigation and prosecution of crime, but this is under-utilised. Initial investments may be high, but the increase in resource efficiency over time, and the potential economic effects of crime reduction, will provide returns on such investments. The adoption of technology must be paired with proper training and maintenance plans to ensure maximum benefit.
- Start with basics such as digital record-keeping and improved surveillance methods.
- But there are also calls for high-tech interventions, such as the use of drones, especially at hot spots and borders.

"Intense integration of the state systems, i.e. Labour, Home Affairs, SAPS, should be integrated so to easily track and know those who've committed a crime through fingerprints & biological samples - like in the first-world countries." - ***Sindizo, Gauteng***

- While investments in technology are essential, it is also crucial that law enforcement agencies are equipped with the critical resources required to complete their duties with efficiency and while feeling safe. Outdated weaponry and safety equipment reduce the ability of law enforcement to fight crime effectively
- Reduce the resources spent on the protection of VIPs as well as Presidential Protection:

"I'm still shocked at why the police minister and other political leaders have a full arm of police officers while us who put them there are not protected, what makes them different from us? With our tax money?!" – ***Thapelo, Gauteng***

- Augment police services with assistance from the military. Participants believe that South Africa is not facing any real military threats and is not involved in conflict, so the military should assist in law enforcement and peacekeeping. This should be accompanied with additional training to the military so that they can be deployed for policing duties.
- Law enforcement power should be decentralised with municipalities enjoying greater jurisdiction:

"Police must be radically decentralised as per the United States model: municipalities/counties must have their own law enforcement and budgets with sheriffs/chiefs of police elected by the voters living there. This will create a responsive and agile law enforcement service more resilient in resisting corruption and inefficiency." – ***Anonymous***

- There is also some mention of the challenge of police officers mixing with the general populace. In essence, the sentiment is that when police officers live within the communities that they are supposed to police, criminals may threaten or intimidate their families, which may decrease law enforcers' ability to deal with criminals, out of fear of harm being caused to their families.

"Our police are working with criminals; the solution is to deploy police to different places, not their hometowns. Police are scared to arrest criminals because criminals are [threatening] their families." – ***Tsoantso, Western Cape***

"They must never be allowed to stay at the same residence with the people. They may visit but not reside. This will make them feel safe when dealing with serious crimes. The reason our police fail in performing their duties diligently is as a result that criminals are their next-door neighbours and they got easily killed if they are found to be a nuisance to the criminals." – ***Letuba, Gauteng***

Other law enforcement agencies

Specialised units are seen as an effective way of dealing with crime. However, participants noted that South Africa's specialised units were decimated by political interference during the Zuma-presidency. Specialised units are perceived to be more capable of combatting specific types of crime due to their specialist training and knowledge, but they also need to be allocated sufficient resources and training. These units should be allowed to function entirely independently from political interference and control, with only specially trained representatives providing oversight.

There is a broad sentiment that South Africa's intelligence services were compromised during the Zuma-era, and are now corrupt and participate in criminal activities. The lack of proper intelligence decreases the ability of law enforcement to conduct proactive policing, and places law enforcement officers in danger. The intelligence services require better training, more resources and should be run as a professional service that does not protect the interests of the political elite.

The Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID) plays a vital role in holding the police accountable. However, IPID's current practices often interfere with the ability of police officers to conduct their duties. Protocols need to be improved to ensure that IPID's role finds a balance between holding SAPS accountable and allowing SAPS to fight crime.

A call for the Scorpions to be introduced was often repeated, particularly on Facebook.

> *"Reinstate the Scorpions. It must be independent for no citizen will adjust their behaviour if their leaders are criminals."* – ***Facebook input***

> *"Bring back the scorpions and cancel the hawks. The hawks don't have powers to deal with high profile cases like scorpion's had."* – ***Facebook input***

Performance management

Participants believe that the performance of the police must be improved, which can be done by improving the training provided to SAPS, as well as their organizational culture. One suggestion includes getting professionals from countries such as the UK, US, and Israel to train our police. The public cannot have trust and have confidence in SAPS if the police force is not a professional unit. Overweight and poorly trained police officers contribute to a negative image of law enforcement.

The fitness of police officers was also a point of contention. Participants call for the employment of more young police officers as they are more likely to be fit and able to comply with the physical aspects of the job.

> *"I think the system should employ young people who are fit because … [you] can check the police system has many people who are old and are no longer fit enough to can chase culprits."* – ***Facebook input.***

In general, training and selection are identified as an area that requires an overhaul. The standards for passing selection are too low (pass-one, pass-all), and the minimum requirements for cadets need to be improved. Shift SAPS' recruitment efforts from recruiting those seeking employment to those seeking to serve a purpose and the community.

> *"I also think that we should introduce a fitness test every six months for our police, as far too many of them are morbidly obese (very fat) and some cannot move from their chairs to the counter at the stations. Get rid of the dead wood."* – ***Mary, Eastern Cape***

> *"Policemen and women must receive the necessary training to become part of a team that fights crime. All citizens should be able to apply to join the police force if they are passionate about law and order, and making our country safe, no matter what colour, culture, language or religion they may be."* – ***Lynne, Gauteng***

Participants also believe there need to be better systems to monitor police performance. Failure to achieve performance and services standards must be met with disciplinary action. In geographical areas where there are high crime rates, investigations should be launched into the local police to determine why crime continues to flourish in such areas.

> *"There should be ratings for every claim/call/visit we do at police stations; negative ratings should be investigated with serious concern."* – ***Thapelo, Gauteng***

Community policing

There is surprisingly strong support for the role that communities can play in visible policing. Rather than providing grants for personal security systems, participants seem to favour an approach where funds are made available for empowering communities to assist law enforcement with policing.

Private security is done for profit, which means that it is mostly wealthy areas that benefit from private security. More impoverished neighbourhoods are excluded due to a lack of economic viability to provide private security. Therefore, community policing or collaborative policing is seen as a potentially useful alternative.

Community policing is seen by some to have high potential in dealing with drug dealers and criminals known to the community, as the community has a vested interest in removing criminals from their areas.

Similarly, local police stations need to do more to improve the relationship with the communities they serve, through regular meetings and more visible patrols.

"I had an idea that we group each community according to sections and hire our unemployed brothers. Give them security training and each household contributes R100 monthly for salaries. Those guys patrol the streets during the night according to wards/sections with the help of the police dedicated to that ward/section." – ***Jabulane, Mpumalanga***

"I believe that if security agencies, the police, and community watch all work hand in hand. Then criminals stand no chance, communities will become safer a lot quicker, and unity will be formed within the community along with outside agencies to combat other issues in specific areas." – ***Sudheesa, KZN***

Corruption

Corruption within law enforcement is of great concern to participants: both police officers and traffic officials are perceived to take bribes and provide information to criminal associates.

This is considered to be a lack of proper controls over and monitoring of law enforcement officers. It is suggested that the government should start incorporating monitoring technology such as body-cameras and dash-cams to record law enforcement's practices and deter bribe-taking.

"The police must be the police, not criminal syndicates in uniform." – ***Anonymous***

"Increase police visibility, and shuffle police around police stations so they don't get used to working in one area, as they get comfortable and start working with criminals." – ***Tshifhiwa, Gauteng***

The prison system

As discussed above, participants believe that the current punishment that criminals face does not serve as an effective deterrent to crime. Alongside prosecution and policing, the correctional services are seen as an area that needs improvement.

Rehabilitation

There is a general feeling that there are not enough prisons, which reduces the ability of the prison system to focus on the rehabilitation of prisoners. Also, there is a realisation that established prisons are under-capacitated.

"Build more prisons. This would bolster the SA Economy in smaller (non-centralized) areas and smaller towns. [It] makes it more difficult for prisoners to escape, draws employment away from large cities and grows smaller towns." – ***Albert, Western Cape***

"The courts have a saying nowadays that the accused is sentenced to outside sanctions due to over-full prisons. Criminals regularly get released early due to "over-full prisons". If our country has so many criminals as the news and stats say, build more prisons to keep honest citizens safe." – ***Albert, Western Cape***

Participants suggest that lesser crimes may be punished through sanctions like community service. Such sanctions

have the potential to reduce the overcrowding in prisons also a benefit to society, while still punishing criminal behaviour.

A common input from participants is that South Africa's prison system is dysfunctional. In essence, it does not serve as enough of a deterrent to criminals and often leads to more criminal behaviour through the influence of gangs in prison.

"The prison system is not rehabilitating criminals but creating new ones. Hardened (and those who often land up in prison) criminals must be separate from minor offenders." – ***Patricia, Western Cape***

Participants believe that there needs to be a more significant focus on rehabilitation. The recidivism rate is too high in South Africa, as criminals do not get rehabilitated in prisons. Rehabilitation must be aimed at creating empathy and providing the offenders with the opportunity to serve the communities that they caused harm to.

"As part of rehabilitation, offenders should have sessions with victims to understand their pain and even reconciliation sessions" – ***Timothy, Gauteng***

Prison conditions

Many participants are of the view that the conditions in South African prisons are too luxurious, and that criminals and prisoners receive better treatment from the government than innocent citizens. The conditions in prisons were particularly compared to those in public hospitals.

"The other issue is that criminals have no fear at all for the justice system because life inside our South African jails is a luxury with all facilities like education and other human rights whilst the victims and their families are left to suffer the crime(s) caused upon them and the trauma." – ***Raymond, Gauteng***

"Make prisons not so cushy and make prisoners work to improve the country. Prison is not a holiday." – ***Karen, Western Cape***

"Jail must be a jail, not a hotel or motel because those people are enjoying themselves more than us. They're happy and free, while we are always scared outside." – ***Malesela, Gauteng***

"Offenders must be punished, not put in a prison where it seems like a resort where they have access to everything that even an ordinary citizen cannot afford, like free education and other luxurious things. There must be a punishment that makes criminals think twice before committing a crime." – ***Precious, Gauteng***

"Prisons should not be like hotels. No meat on the menu. Cold showers. No beds. Hard labour. It is guaranteed to put anyone off committing crime." – ***Imtiyaz, KwaZulu-Natal***

"Make prisons prison and not current honeymoons. No more free education for prisoners. Death sentence for murder, rape, corruption. If s criminal commits armed robbery, just for the fact that he's armed, even if he can surrender, kill him. Life sentence to corrupt police officials." – ***Facebook input***

"Punishment should fit the crime. Prisoners should work for their stay in prison, i.e. hospital bedding etc. should be washed and prepared by prisoners. Thieves should receive a harsher sentence taking into consideration that the stealing is the beginning of other criminal elements." – ***Facebook input***

The idea of introducing forced labour as a part of prison sentences enjoy some level of support. This sentiment is mirrored in the social media analysis where the need for hard labour and harsher circumstances in prison is highlighted.

Some participants believe that the labour of prisoners should be used in major infrastructure projects, which has the potential to reduce the costs of such projects.

Others believe that prisoners must become self-sustainable, e.g. they must do work for salaries that are used to pay for the services they receive or maintain farms on prison grounds so that the state does not have to spend money on providing food for the prisoners.

"They must do hard Labour and make sure schools, hospitals and all government institutions are properly cleaned in that way government will have enough money to fund education, and we won't have to pay companies to get tenders" – ***Jabulisile, Limpopo***

"Criminals serving time for minor crimes like robbery, theft, fraud should be sentenced to hard labour and must go break rocks and grow food then get paid with food plus 50c per/hour." – ***Mandlenkosi, Gauteng***

Gender-based violence

Participants acknowledge that gender-based violence (GBV) is a scourge in our country and that South African women often live in fear for their lives. A major challenge

is that victims of abuse and GBV do not feel comfortable reporting the crimes committed against them, due to poor responses to such crimes by SAPS. The police often lack empathy, or there are no female officers to deal with such cases. This can be improved through sensitivity training.

"Our Police Stations are not an environment "safe" for us as women can report these crimes and trust that it will be met and treated with the sensitivity it deserves." – ***Omphile, Gauteng***

Participants want to see greater investment into specialised programmes that assist women and children that have become the victims of abuse, including the provision of shelters.

"Women are a constant target; please give them high voltage tasers and direct spraying pepper spray." – ***Lindokuhle, KZN***

"Women need to be and feel empowered to know their worth, to know right from wrong and what they deserve from life. They need to know; they will survive and have a future, even when their abuser is no longer there. Women need to know it's safer and better to talk up and expose their abused than to keep quiet." – ***Tracy, Western Cape***

"Women of this country - and globally - have had enough. This cause should have the full backing of the government. Women are the caregivers, the nurturers and the breadwinners for the future leaders of South Africa. They have consistently been proven more reliable than men as employees. Yet they are treated with utter disrespect, abandoned, abused and ridiculed; by their husbands, brothers, friends and the police. Women die at the hands of men in violent, brutal and unacceptable ways. But very little is being done to address this. This segment of the population constitutes more than 50% of the number of people in SA. If #SASpeaks, then women should also be heard. We need equality in our workplaces, in decision making, in our homes and in the way we are treated." – ***Anonymous***

Education is an essential aspect of addressing GBV: boys should be taught from a young age to treat girls as their equals. However, care must be taken to ensure that boys are not left behind, as envy and pride can lead to violence.

"We need to start talking to the men, in and out of prison. Punishment alone will not solve the problem. The root cause is the bad mindset of boys and men. That's where we should start in order to help future generations. Bring back boy scouts and other such activities for the youth. Drum majorettes for girls etc." – ***Nolundi, Gauteng***

"Support organisations that specialise in dealing with young boys & men in terms of funding in order for these organisations to be able to take these young boys on educational field trips like correctional facilities & boys town for when or should they go astray & want to commit a crime, they will be very well aware of the consequences they will face." – ***Thando, Gauteng***

Participants believe that the courts are not playing a significant enough role in battling GBV. The evidence collection process can be traumatic, and the prosecutors may also not be sensitive enough to the trauma experienced by the victims of GBV.

Furthermore, maintenance cases should also be amended. As it stands, maintenance rulings are often detrimental to mothers and their children.

"It will be good if especially the court systems surrounding maintenance cases can be drastically changed. Currently, the mottos printed and put on the court walls advocate that the courts will handle cases in the interest of the children. This is not the case due to the interpretation of human rights and other loopholes used by defect fathers. This is abuse and many a mom and children suffer because of this abuse. This is much bigger than anyone can ever think." – ***Facebook input.***

Additionally, the criminal justice system does not provide enough protection to women and children:

"There should be a change in terms of how the parole system works. Some of the crime is being committed by the same offenders who are released on parole. They come to our vulnerable communities and commit the same crime they were jailed for. Bail should only be given to offenders who do not pose a danger to our communities. We want to live in a SA where women and children can work freely on the street without the fear of being murdered. We need to rise up as Mzansi and fight crime." – ***Clemencia, Gauteng***

Finally, there is a general concern about the safety of women, especially when driving at night. There is concern when it comes to police victimising female drivers.

"I want to take him (President Ramaphosa) to task on the issue of traffic officers pulling women and truck drivers off the road at night - and robbing, raping, hijacking them… One young woman was severely assaulted and another verbally attacked both times by male and female rubbish, legal cops. NOTHING HAS

HAPPENED TO THEM. I want answers! I will NOT STOP for them. Any ideas on how to reach this so-called 'president'?" – ***Facebook input***

Immigration

The perceived link between crime and immigration will be discussed more in-depth under the chapter on Immigration. Still, it is worth noting that participants feel that illegal immigrants and poor border control lead to increased criminality. Illegal immigration has an impact on the drug trade, poaching, black market goods and contact crimes.

Participants want to see that law enforcement use more modern equipment and resources to secure our borders against the influx of illegal immigrants.

"Let's use border patrols and drones to police our borders but also be compassionate of the plight of refugees as we don't want to be like the USA." – ***Facebook input.***

Social justice

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, there is a general feeling amongst participants that the criminal justice system disproportionately disadvantages poor and black South Africans. The justice system is not equally applied to all, and wealthy South Africans receive better treatment than the rest of the country. Unequal treatment only serves to entrench social injustice.

There is a broad perception that while there is a justifiable focus on blue-collar crime (i.e. crimes of theft, violence, etc.), too little attention is afforded to white-collar crime (including corruption). This entrenches inequalities. White-collar crimes often have a higher economic cost to the country and should be punished accordingly.

Law enforcement also does not provide the same level of protection to the poor as it does to the wealthy: there is much less police presence in townships and rural areas than there is in more prosperous areas. Poor regions also do not have the benefit of private security.

Participants believe that the circle of criminal behaviour will continue if socio-economic conditions do not improve, and all people have more equal opportunities. The high levels of inequality, poverty and lack of access to economic opportunities mean that many people have to resort to crime to make a living.

"We can not have a country divided by the educated and the not educated. This will only keep the circle of crime going." – ***Anonymous***

"Grow the economy, lower crime, improve education, we can become a shining beacon in Africa, we can become the Wakanda of the world." – ***Anonymous***

Participants also highlight the impact that education has on the propensity for criminal behaviour: the cycle of poor education leads to low employability, which leads to desperation and eventually, crime.

In addition to traditional education, ethical education is needed to deter young people from crime. Education needs a mixed approach, which includes teaching young people necessary life skills and focusing on extra-mural activities. Teach children from a young age how to avoid a life of crime

> *"Fund more students wishing to study law as a recruitment strategy the same way as prospective teachers who are attracted by bursaries. This way, criminals will know what our country is prioritizing, and by doing so, that will deter them from participating in crime, knowing the arm of the law is strong."* – ***Lebogang, Northern Cape***

Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates the adverse impact that crime has on the ability of South Africans to enjoy their freedoms and pursue their dreams.

Not only does crime hinder economic growth by deterring investment and increasing the cost of doing business, but it adversely impacts the quality of life of innocent citizens.

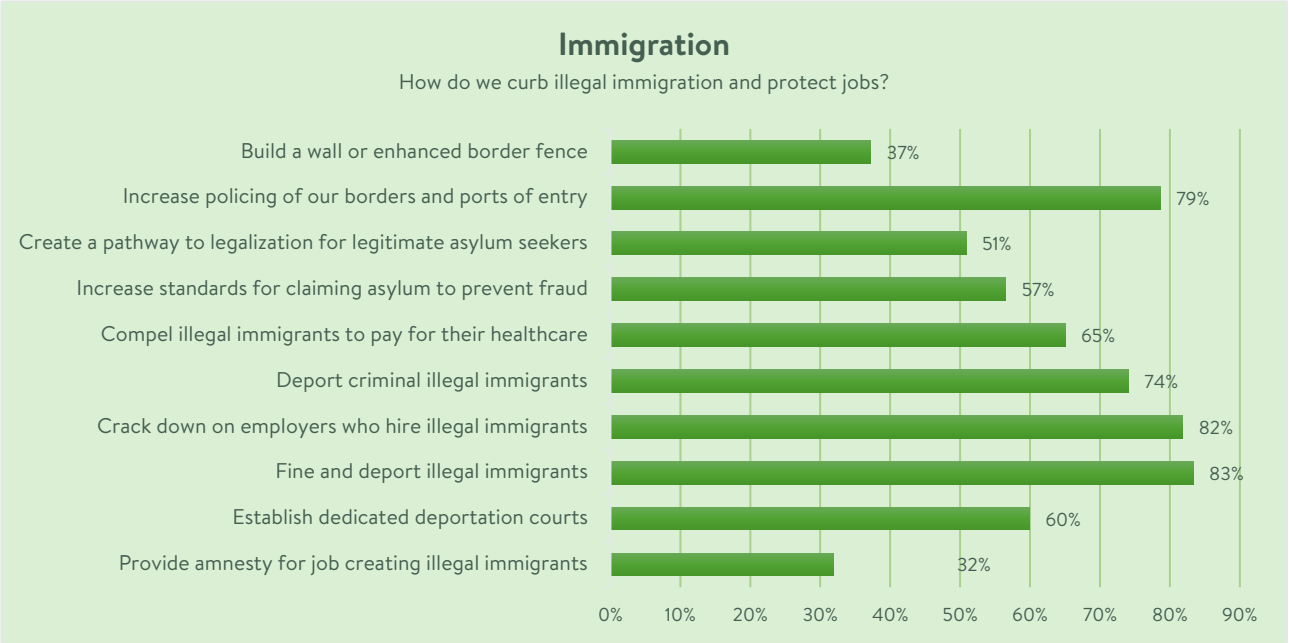
Crime cannot be addressed by only dealing with the symptoms of crime. South Africa requires structural change that improves the underlying conditions that drive people to crime.

Building a Safe and Secure South Africa

Recurring suggestions and solutions put forward by participants to improve public safety include:

- Make criminals fear the criminal justice system by implementing stricter sanctions and improving prosecutions
- Increase the support to law enforcement and ensure that they have the right tools and training to fulfil their duties with pride and efficiency
- Bring back specialised units with adequate resources to tackle specific types of crime such as drug-related crime and 'farm killings'
- Supplement the police force's capacity through increased support for community policing
- Reform the prison system in a way that facilitates rehabilitation
- Address the core of GBV and allow women to feel safe in their homes and communities
- Introduce stronger border controls to combat illegal immigration and the importing of counterfeit and illicit goods.

Immigration



Introduction

In the "Join the Conversation" survey, 64% of participants indicated that illegal immigration is one of the biggest challenges facing South Africa.

There is overwhelming support for stricter regulation of immigration and improved border controls: participants feel that the government's insufficient management of immigration is detrimental to South Africa's development. Illegal immigrants in South Africa are perceived as placing a strain on already constrained resources.

Participants have mixed opinions on legal immigrants. Some participants believe that foreign nationals that come here legally contribute positively to the economy and that immigration regulations should be amended to make it easier for people with skills to come into the country. It is suggested that this can help with skills scarcities and aid the economy.

On the other hand, some participants believe more protectionist measures should be taken: South Africans should receive priority over foreign nationals, or certain classes of jobs should be reserved for natural born South African citizens.

> *"We need fearless leaders who will put the people of South Africa first. All undocumented foreign nationals need to leave (not only Africans but [also] the Chinese, Europeans and Indians)."* – ***Anonymous***

Mashaba has been a vocal advocate of improving border security and taking a harsh stance against illegal immigration. Participants had mixed opinions on Mashaba's approach. While many are supportive of the stricter regulation that Mashaba advocates for, others accuse him of xenophobia and tribalism.

The issue is an emotive and often polarising one that engenders a high level of engagement. Social media posts relating to illegal immigration received great attention in all instances.

Despite the complexity of the issue and mixture of opinions, it is clear that immigration, especially illegal immigration, is a topic that elicits a passionate response. This chapter seeks to discuss the perceptions of solutions suggested by the participants in the Dialogue. This section will discuss six sub-themes: criminal justice, border management, amnesty and asylum, immigrants in South Africa, the impact on the economy and public resources.

Criminal justice

Participants accuse the Department of Home Affairs and ports of entry of institutionalised corruption. The perception is that it is too easy for immigrants to bribe relevant officials to gain entry into the country or to obtain fake documents.

The general feeling amongst participants is that the laws regulating immigrants are not strict enough. The current legal system is too lenient on illegal immigrants and allows too many people to enter the country without proof of potential to contribute positively to the economy.

The alternative view is that the laws are sufficient, but that implementation is poor. Poor execution is caused by a lack of resources, a lack of political will, corruption, skewed international relations and the absence of specialised courts that can deal with immigration issues.

Furthermore, there is a sentiment amongst participants that illegal immigrants are prone to be involved in criminal activity. This sentiment is especially true in cases where illegal immigrants do not have any type of documentation, which means that they are practically untraceable. When this the case, they more willing to participate in criminal behaviour, as there is a low probability of being caught and facing the law.

"When these people are actually taken into custody for committing a crime, the next day, they are walking the streets again. Why are the police not detaining them and deporting them? This can only be corruption; otherwise, it means our police are totally ineffective. Then the world says we are xenophobic - not true - our people are just tired of being on the receiving end of crime." – ***Wendy***

Border management

Participants are unanimous in their view that the South African government is failing to manage the country's borders effectively. There needs to be more visible policing of the border and better processing of foreign nationals entering the country's ports.

Various technological solutions could vastly improve the management of South Africa's borders, such as drones and closed-circuit/infrared cameras. Border officials should receive proper training on how to use such technologies, and measures need to be taken to ensure that funds are not misappropriated.

"Let's use border patrols and drones to police our borders but also be compassionate of the plight of refugees as we don't want to be like the USA." – ***Facebook input.***

"Control borders, strict visas for notorious countries with crime, revoke all citizenship received after '94, harsher sentences for thieves, protect our sovereignty, ban foreign goods than can be produced, all small businesses for South Africans only, change labour laws, abolish BEE, Affirmative action, reduce provinces, electoral reforms, creation of paramilitary to combat serious crime like highjacking, cash in transit and farm killing. Limit rights of immigrants, reduce the number of asylum seekers. No immigrants to be employed for more than one year in any sector and in government prohibited. Sell SOEs and regulate unions. Increase research programs, encourage inventions and realign higher education into technical, educational and nursing colleges, Technikons and universities using previous models. Bring back death penalty" – ***Facebook input***

In addition to the human management aspect of the borders, the infrastructure guarding the borders requires improvement. Currently, the country's borders are too porous, and there are not enough physical deterrents at critical points to prevent foreign nationals from entering the country illegally.

Some participants suggested that officials should be rotated between border posts, which is seen as a potential measure to reduce corruption at the border. These participants believe that if officials are at one position for a long time, they can be compromised through corrupt networks.

"Illegal immigration was allowed to grow into a lucrative business for cartels. People are recruited to come and sponge on our very vulnerable social justice system." – ***John, Western Cape***

Some participants also believe that the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) should be deployed at the border to assist with curbing illegal immigration, which will add additional human resources to the efforts of guarding our borders. The defence of our borders are deemed to be a critical function of the SANDF, and the

defence budget must be increased to ensure that our borders are secured.

Amnesty and asylum

The topic of providing amnesty to foreign nationals currently in South Africa illegally to specific categories of foreign nationals provoked mixed opinions from participants. Some believe that legitimising the presence of immigrants will allow them to contribute to the economy in positive ways. Others believe that amnesty will show weakness and that the immigrants that came here illegally do not deserve to be given amnesty.

"We must never forget that we are talking about human beings here, and most illegal immigrants are here because they are escaping some kind of tragedy." – ***Christelle, Northern Cape***

"Offer amnesty to all illegal immigrants in the Republic and encourage them to be properly documented. Those who are running businesses: help them to register their businesses so that they are able to contribute to the fiscus through tax." – ***Nicholas, North West***

"Close the borders and prioritise South Africans first for jobs." – ***Lwandle***

"BUILD REFUGEE CAMPS! Let United Nations take care of them, We live in squatter camps far away from our cities because all buildings have been hijacked by these illegals." – ***Twitter input***

Participants have an understanding that there are legitimate asylum seekers, but are concerned about the current approach to approving asylum, seeing that there are too many people that are granted asylum-status without a valid reason. Corruption within Home Affairs needs to be eradicated, and the process and standards for asylum-seekers need to be improved.

To illustrate this point, one participant indicated that he is a refugee from Ethiopia and that he has lived in South Africa for 18 years. Eight of those years were as an asylum-seeker, and ten years as a recognised refugee. This individual is a qualified business accountant and tax practitioner while his wife is a qualified lawyer. Despite their academic qualifications, the bureaucratic process for getting permission to work means that it is tough for refugees to use their skills in economic activity.

Decisions regarding asylum status should be made quicker, regardless of whether applications are accepted or rejected. While asylum-seekers are in limbo, they cannot work and are a burden on state resources. The below quotes elaborate on this individual's views on South Africa's treatment of asylum-seekers.

"Concerning immigrants, I suggest, you first increase the standards for claiming asylum to prevent fraud. I can see you have the resources to establish and monitor immigrants if you only manage to tackle corruption.

As for contribution to the economy, I have noticed more has to be [done] to force immigrants to pay their taxes and pay for healthcare, especially recognized refugees.

For instance, I have a certification decision pending since 2017. To my surprise, my 4-year permit was also reduced to one year without a proper explanation of why. This decision affected my practice, my business account, and even my tax profile. My wife, despite being an LLB holder and experienced in the field, is an asylum-seeker for the last ten years and is a housewife without a proper job. This system failure makes the immigrant unproductive to the economy and a burden to society."

Participants also believe that South Africa should also use its international relations mechanisms to ensure that fewer people require asylum in South Africa, which includes acting against oppressive governments on the continent.

"The South African government must engage the countries where these people are coming from and establish the reason why they are running away. These people have serious issues why they are running away from their host countries and as long as South Africa keep on being too diplomatic and endorsing stolen elections the pressure on its fiscus will be much more than we have." – ***Bopelo, North West***

"The issue of illegal immigration is political. At the root of that problem is SADC. The protection that rogue regimes enjoy from SADC exacerbates humanitarian crises. Humans will always move in times of crisis, whether legally or illegally, it is some sort of human evacuation process when they are faced with a crisis. To curb illegal immigration, South Africa has to take a stand against dictatorships in SADC and sanction them even pull out of SADC like Britain's Brexit, so that they are able to implement immigration laws without trying to please their fellow comrades running failed states." – ***Prince, Gauteng***

Deportation

While there is support for the deportation of illegal immigrants, participants also believe that deportation has

limited effectiveness: many of those individuals that get deported return to South Africa within a few months, as the border controls are so weak.

There is a general frustration with the fact that so many people from Africa are choosing South Africa as their final destination: the influx of foreign nationals is negatively impacting the quality of life of South Africans. Some participants believe that there should be a specialised police unit that focuses on identifying and deporting illegal immigrants.

*"Illegal immigrants must not walk the streets freely as they are doing now. There must be a police unit that deals explicitly with them, arrest them and take them to a centre where they'll be detained. They must be taken to do community work (with their legs cuffed obviously) such as painting schools and other public buildings and also to clean the fields of those public buildings. Their payment will be the food, clothes, beds, water and electricity that they get at the centre." – **Phure***

*"Look, man, we shouldn't even entertain illegal immigrants, they should be captured locked or repatriated. Let's talk about socio-economy, in my view, let us have only one shop for a Pakistani citizen in a community. Drugs should be the next chapter." – **Twitter input***

A small minority of participants believe that all foreign nationals should be deported from the country, regardless of whether they are here legally or not. South Africa's priority should be South Africans, and the presence of foreign nationals diminishes the state's ability to provide services to its citizens. However, participants mostly believe that foreign nationals that are here legally should be allowed to stay in the country, but drastic action should be taken against illegal immigrants attempting to enter South Africa.

The impact on the economy

Jobs

The general impression amongst participants is that illegal immigrants are taking jobs that should be reserved for South Africans. The perception is that foreign nationals are willing to work for lower wages and employers prefer undocumented foreign nationals, as they are less likely to report contraventions of labour laws. Therefore, participants strongly support the idea of cracking down on employers that hire undocumented foreign nationals.

*"We have enough real born South Africans. We do not need immigrants taking what we don't have to give." – **Anonymous***

*"Now is the time to revisit our law regarding illegal immigration. The main reason why most south African don't have jobs is because all the entry job level that was supposed to belong to all South African citizens is being taken by illegal foreigners." - **Samuel***

*"Look after South Africans first. Manage, record and monitor the period immigrants spend in SA. They must be monitored to observe and comply with tax laws." – **Nomachina***

*"Jobs have to be reserved for South African citizens. Illegal immigrants should be taxed double. Those who commit crime should get heavy sentences if they are foreigners." – **Nomfuneko, Gauteng***

*"South Africa needs stronger border and visa control for African countries. We can't be the dumping ground for the whole of Africa. We don't mind if people come here the legal way, but we can't take them all when our own people don't have jobs." – **Anonymous***

*"We need to introduce a policy that makes it mandatory for all businesses or companies doing business in South Africa to have at least 95% of South Africans in their employees' records." – **Thabiso, Western Cape***

*"The exploitation of foreigners by South African-based foreign employers is an issue. The illegal immigrants are employed by dual citizenship employers that also flee from the very outside countries" – **Portia, Gauteng***

*"South Africans need jobs, but businesses prefer to hire foreigners!" – **Facebook input***

Additionally, participants believe that employers should be forced to ensure that they only employ people that have the legal right to work in South Africa. As mentioned above, a perceived problem is that employers prefer to hire illegal

immigrants, as they are more likely to work for lower wages (often under minimum wage).

> *One cannot talk about making it easy to hire South Africans without touching the South African Department of Labour. They fail to enforce minimum wage to employers first. Illegal immigrants are likely to produce cheap labour.*
> ***Facebook input***

Attracting scarce skills

While participants are opposed to the presence of illegal immigrants, there is also strong support for making it easier for foreign nationals with scarce skills and job-creation potential to relocate to South Africa.

The current process of applying for work permits in South Africa is extremely onerous, and many employees are having trouble filling positions that require educated workers.

> *"People [that have] scarce skill-sets should be allowed work permits, so long as the skills they bring are transferred to up-skill South Africans. Should they change jobs and not work in the field that they got their work permit, they should be deported." –* ***Basil, Gauteng***

> *"I think we need to have legal immigrants with rare skills." –* ***Mbuyiselwa, KwaZulu-Natal***

> *"We want/need skilled immigration. The borders must be managed better; the inflow of unskilled workers better managed. We can't help others if we can't even provide our own." –* ***Twitter input***

Regulation of foreign business ownership

The views on foreign nationals owning businesses in South Africa are mixed. Some believe that foreign-owned enterprises have the potential to contribute significantly to the South African economy, while others believe that it is taking away economic opportunities from South Africans.

> *"I think you can give them certain business permits, not work permits unless they hold critical skills. And double tax them. The permits must be renewed every two years and R3000 for renewal that money must be only used to create South African citizens' jobs and in public sectors like health and education. With those documents, they will be easily traced when committed crime." –*
> ***Christopher, Gauteng***

> *"As for foreigners opening shops in South Africa, we need to change the law that they must employ at least one South African for a minimum of four days per week at R20 per hour. This way, South Africans can also benefit." –* ***Anonymous***

Participants believe that foreign-owned businesses should be subjected to stricter regulations, as they are often unregistered and thus do not have to comply with the same standards as South African businesses. This has an impact on competitiveness, as foreign-owned firms can then offer lower prices. As a result, consumers prefer to buy from foreign-owned businesses.

The abovementioned phenomenon is particularly prevalent in the informal market/spaza shops, where shops owned by foreign nationals offer lower prices.

> *"Why do you have grocery shops owned by foreign nationals, who insist on cash payment on purchases and any electronic trace is forbidden?" –* ***Titus, Gauteng***

Where foreign nationals do own businesses, some believe that they should be taxed at a higher rate than South African businesses.

> *"I also believe that only those that have businesses running should be taxed accordingly. I believe currently we have thousands of immigrants making a profit from our country. But they do not contribute to our GDP, because they are not in our books. The spaza shop also is one of the dirty nests these illegal immigrants hide in, so that again also needs some regulation." –* ***Sphamandla, KZN***

Public resources

Participants believe that illegal immigrants place strain on the state's ability to provide services to its citizens. A common perception is that foreign nationals present in South Africa do not pay any form of taxes while consuming services such as public healthcare.

Participants generally feel that illegal and legal immigrants should not receive the same level of free services as South Africans do. The argument is that it is South Africans that pay the tax, so free services should be reserved for South Africans.

> *"Deduct the costs of illegal immigrants from remittances sent to those countries, i.e. deduct the costs of illegal immigrants' health care, schooling, thievery and prison costs from any money sent to those countries by companies or individuals as a tax." –* ***Warren, Gauteng***

"Exclude foreign nationals from [getting] free health care. They should pay R200 for health care visit and buy their own prescription, pay R400 for a hospital visit and R300 daily for admission, with an additional R200 for medication and food." – ***Johannes, Gauteng***

Housing

As far as public housing is concerned, participants believe that government-funded housing should be reserved for natural born South Africans citizens, and immigrants – legal or illegal – should not be eligible for free housing. The government may provide low-cost housing to foreign nationals, but immigrants must still pay rent and for services.

Participants believe that it is illegal immigrants that are responsible for hijacking properties. Swift action needs to be taken against anyone illegally occupying abandoned properties, and those properties should be expropriated and used for the provision of low-cost housing. If foreign nationals are found guilty of hijacking those buildings, they must be deported.

Education

The influx of migrants is perceived to place a strain on public schools. Classes are overcrowded and foreign children struggle to learn due to cultural and language differences, which makes the job of teachers harder. The government should be providing educational opportunities to immigrants through other means, and even in cooperation with foreign governments. However, South African taxpayers should not be paying for the education of the children of illegal immigrants.

Healthcare

Participants are particularly vocal about the adverse impact that the prevalence of illegal immigrants has on the quality of public healthcare. Due to the good reputation of South Africa's healthcare (when compared to neighbouring countries), many foreign nationals enter South Africa solely to get free treatment at South African healthcare facilities. As such, healthcare facilities are overburdened, and cannot provide a high quality of service and care to citizens.

Some participants believe that foreign nationals should not qualify for free healthcare. They have to pay for services delivered to them by the South African government; even if it is not the full value of the services offered.

"Do away with Social Grants paid to the children of foreigners. Do away with Free Healthcare provided to foreigners. We have our own problems, we cannot carry the whole continent on our shoulders..." – ***Facebook input***

Conclusion

The above discussion illustrates the mixed views of South Africans regarding the issue of immigration. However, participants in the Dialogue believe that more should be done to curb illegal immigration, as the current trend of population growth caused by immigration is not sustainable.

At the same time, participants believe that South Africa's immigration policy should be reformed. Foreign nationals with skills that are required in the South African economy should face a simple process to acquire a work permit, and South Africa should actively recruit skilled workers from other countries.

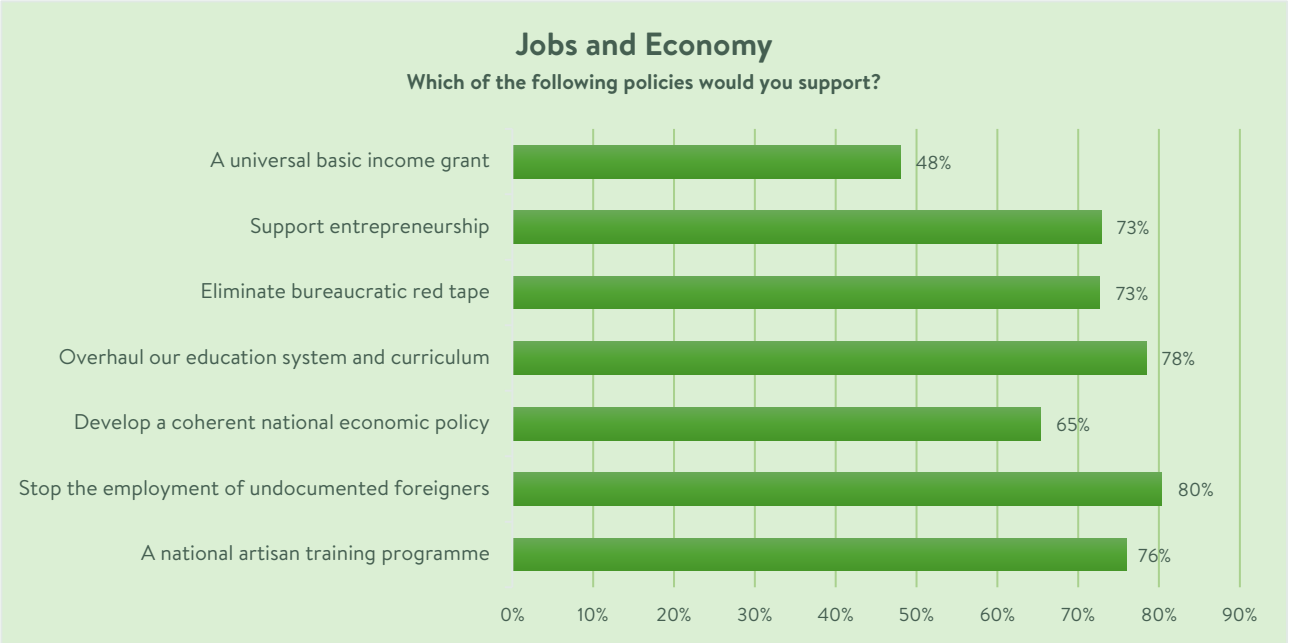
Whether the perceptions held by South Africans are correct or not, a failure to address the underlying issues will only serve to increase anger, frustration and xenophobia.

Reforming Immigration Policy

Recurring suggestions and solutions put forward by participants to combat illegal immigration include:

- Improve the implementation of immigration legislation to reduce the number of immigrants entering the country illegally
- Make it easier for skilled foreign nationals and legitimate asylum seekers to enter South Africa to obtain the necessary documentation.
- Drastically improve border management, both in terms of human and physical resources
- Accelerate the processing of illegal immigrants currently in the country
- Reserve certain classes of jobs for South Africans and crack down on employers employing illegal immigrants
- Prioritise South Africans for access to free public services and make foreigners pay for access

Jobs and Economy



Introduction

The lack of employment was the second most significant challenge identified by participants in the "Join the Conversation" survey. The lack of jobs and poor performance of the economy has an impact on all other themes identified in this report, as inequality, poverty and unemployment are seen as the root causes of South Africa's different challenges.

As will be discussed in the section on the support for Herman Mashaba's core values, the participants in the Dialogue are firmly in favour of a market-based economy where state interference is reduced. However, participants also believe that the state has a role to play in ensuring that structural issues in our economy and society are addressed. There are no doubts that the ANC's approach has failed on both fronts.

Participants believe that South Africa's poor economic performance must be addressed as a matter of absolute urgency. There is an explicit acknowledgement of the interlinked nature of corruption, crime, education, governance, political leadership, quality of life, inequality and transformation and the economic conditions in the country.

This chapter will provide an overview of the submissions provided on issues relating to the jobs and economy. The five sub-themes of this chapter include economy policy, education, small, medium and micro business (SMME) support and economic infrastructure.

Economic ideology

Based on the submissions received, the trend amongst participants is support for a market-based economy where politicians and the state do not interfere with the ability of businesses to flourish. However, there is also the acknowledgement that the government has a role to play to ensure that the dangers associated with capitalism do not adversely affect the citizens of the country, especially the vulnerable members of society.

In essence, the government should limit interference in economic issues to the prevention of exploitation. Regulations should aim to ensure that the private sector acts in a manner that is beneficial to the country, including playing a part in the economic empowerment of historically disadvantaged individuals (HDIs). In other words, economic policies should take the country's past into account and ensure that interventions are in place to facilitate inclusive and equitable growth.

The government's current approach is considered to be one of over-regulation and unnecessarily bureaucratic, serving only to stifle economic growth. Some of the policies are well-intentioned but implemented in a manner that reduces the likelihood of economic growth. The

perception is that only the political elite and politically connected enjoy the benefits of economic growth, while corruption erodes public trust and business confidence.

In addition to flawed economic policy, the lack of policy coherence is deemed to be hugely detrimental to economic growth. Investors are unlikely to invest in an economy without policy certainty. It would be possible to augment policy certainty with industry policies and incentives, in an attempt to emulate the success achieved in the vehicle manufacturing program.

One participant, Daniel from Gauteng, suggests an eco-social market economy. This type of economic system focuses on a free, innovation-driven, evidence-based and competitive economy that also takes into account societal and environmental welfare. The system consists of three pillars (paraphrased by the author):

- **Economic prosperity**: create the policy environment necessary for high levels of inclusive economic growth. Do so by reducing government interference and red-tape and promoting competition.
- **Social cohesion:** the government's role should be focused on ensuring a fair distribution of welfare gains. Vulnerable parts of society should enjoy aid from the government, but individuals must still take responsibility for utilising that aid in self-improvement.
- **Ecological sustainability:** regulations should remain in place to protect the ecology and natural resources. The focus should be on the sustainable production of goods and services while limiting exploitative behaviour.

Sustainable economic growth

At the core of economic policy should be evidence-driven decisions that are focused on sustainable growth. Unpopular choices that will harm short-term economic growth or gains may be necessary, but decisive leadership is required to pursue long-term benefits that will be more capable of addressing our economy's structural issues.

Mention is also made of the lack of communication and education surrounding government policy. If the state were to provide information to stakeholders in a manner that they can understand, they are more likely to be supportive of tough decisions that will require short-term sacrifice.

Ideological dogmatism

There is a general frustration amongst participants that policy is based on strict adherence to ideology, rather than pragmatic solutions to our economic reality.

Participants believe that the science of economics should be central to economic policy creation and that strict adherence to specific doctrines is detrimental to the change that the country requires.

> *"By accepting economics over ideology, we [do not] ignore the evils of Colonialism or Apartheid. We have to address poverty and the land issue; but the debate must move to our day to day realities which are very similar to many other countries - poverty, immigration, quality education and health."* – ***Anonymous***

> *"[We need] a political party based on a realism-approach. Address the pertinent issues affecting South Africans of all races."* – ***Masekela***

> *"Form a new political party with renewed vision, not contaminated with corrupted and populist individuals. Take real issues at hand like how to grow the economy and improve education. Build a capable state without empty promises."* – ***Eric***

Participants also believe that the government should work more closely with the financial market and economic experts when developing economic policy, rather than relying on the inputs from niche interest groups and political alliances.

> *"A decisive leadership should, in consultation with markets and economic experts, implement policies that will work and improve our economy. Experts in this field are able to offer positive and practical inputs."* – ***Facebook input***

Grants

The views amongst participants regarding grants are complex. While many acknowledge the importance of grants, they are concerned about the dependency culture that a grant system creates. They are also concerned with the way that grants are allocated and managed.

The distrust once again speaks to perceptions of corruption. Participants are concerned that grant money does not reach its intended participants, and that there are people within the bureaucratic chain that misappropriate funds.

There is also a view that the manner in which grants are spent should be more strictly regulated: childcare grants, for example, should be limited to goods and services required for the care of children. While such regulation might be challenging, technological advances may assist.

As will be discussed in the section on SMME-support, participants are very supportive of grants for small businesses. However, such grants should be accompanied by support programmes, such as business mentorship and coaching. The return on investment will be low if the recipients of the grants do not receive additional support.

Concerning universal basic income (UBI), the idea did not receive much support. Concerns are raised surrounding affordability and creating a culture of dependency. Participants seem to understand the intention of UBI but believe that there are better alternatives, such as subsidising private-sector wages, which may improve the availability of low-cost labour and limiting grants to people that require such.

In terms of government intervention, there is a call for the government to introduce more subsidies to the citizens of South Africa that would reduce the cost of living, such as reducing the fuel levy:

> *"Instead of bailing out state-owned enterprises, the government must use that money to subsidize fuel as a deliberate strategy to boost economic activities in the country. Affordable fuel prices encourage consumers to buy more and companies to expand and thus create jobs. Introduce education, health, housing, and transport vouchers to subsidise poor people irrespective of their race group."* – ***Facebook input***

Taxation

Participants believe that South Africa's tax regime serves as a prohibitor to economic growth. Participants believe that taxation policy and legislation should be managed by finance and economics professional, without interference from politicians. There is strong support for tax reform that facilitates the growth of SMMEs that have the potential to create jobs.

> *"Why do we always think more taxes and more complicated taxation is the solution? Why do we never think about how to simplify taxation and reduce it?"* – ***Facebook input***

Furthermore, South African tax policies should be amended in a way that attracts the international investment that we so desperately need. Progressive taxation is deemed to have some potential to overcome the reluctance that international investors may have about South Africa's junk-grade investment rating.

Participants are frustrated at the deterioration of the South African Revenue Service's (SARS) functionality as a result of state capture. SARS must be capacitated and empowered to prosecute economic crimes more efficiently. Their work must be supported by specialised courts to ensure prosecution of those guilty of economic crimes and tax evasion.

Finally, participants are frustrated about the fact that taxpayers have to bear the burden of failed economic policies and state capture. Some participants also believe that ANC-policy and the influence of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) are driving South Africa towards becoming a welfare state, despite not having the tax-base to afford the high levels of welfare provided by the state.

> *"Currently, SA is becoming a welfare state, where the tax base is shrinking, and social grants recipients are increasing."* – ***Facebook input***

Bureaucratic red tape

Participants are undivided in their opposition to and frustration with the high level of bureaucratic red tape. Government red tape is seen as one of the most detrimental inhibitors of economic growth that disproportionally affects SMMEs. Red tape essentially stifles entrepreneurial ventures by increasing start-up costs, tying up cash-flow and increasing the time required for a business to start operating. As such, red tape is a significant contributor to the high failure rate of SMMEs that is prevalent in South Africa.

> *"New business red tape can make a person go mad. Let's take the Tourism industry, ASATA that's and AITA is a must, and the cost min R9000 and you must have an audited statement which also cost min R300. As a start-up business, where must I get that kind of money?"* – ***Mankati, Limpopo***

> *"I am a young South African with a brilliant mind, but I can't get into the market. Because of red tape, there is no funding. I was doing this to close the gap of unemployment as this would have created decent jobs and solved problems of our people."* – ***Bonnie***

> *"Fewer rules and more freedom to start a small or medium-sized business. The red tape costs time and*

*money! Most people don't have the money for all this red tape." – **Ilse, Limpopo***

Labour relations

Participants believe that labour unions have departed from their original purpose of defending the rights of workers, and now pursue short-term gains and political battles. Furthermore, they serve as a home for corrupt politicians and officials and provide protection against accountability.

Labour unions are deemed to be overly politicised, and there should be a more significant gap between political allegiances and labour unions. At the moment, leaders of labour unions act more like politicians than representatives of labour. They also serve in self-interest and refuse to cooperate on matters that are required for sustainable long-term economic growth.

Participants are also wary of the role of the tripartite alliance. Government policy is influenced too much by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the South African Communist Party (SACP), which reduces the government's ability to take assertive action and make tough decisions.

More specifically, the role of the SACP is questioned – the party receives very little support individually, but still has a major impact on government decisions. Participants outright reject communism, but there is still limited support for a form of liberal socialism.

*"We need to emulate successful countries. Countries that have in the past overcome great obstacles and are now flourishing. Ireland and Singapore are examples. We need to somehow get rid of all this populism and communism because it is what is sinking this country, communism has caused so much poverty, death and destruction but still, we cling to these evil soviet era practices." – **Anonymous***

*"Unfortunately, the ruling party always found itself wanting because of inconvenience marriage with COSATU and therefore have to compromise to please labour." – **Facebook input***

While participants acknowledge the importance of labour unions in protecting workers against abuse, they currently only work against national prosperity. The South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) is labelled as particularly problematic and detrimental to educational gains in South Africa.

Suggestions to improve labour relations include:

- Introduce new measures such as alternative dispute resolution to avoid strikes and take more decisive action to stop strikes by essential services workers.
- More government departments should consider insourcing workers, but should only do so when it is cost-effective.
- The army should be used to protect critical infrastructure against unruly strikes organised by unions.
- Introduce legislation that provides employees with the option to work reduced hours. The extra required hours should then be reserved for the youth.
- Labour laws and policies must be relaxed to make South Africa more competitive as an investment destination.
- Address the issue of bullying and poor treatment of subordinates in the workplace – it often happens that deployed cadres are incompetent in their managerial positions, and subsequently create toxic workplaces.

International trade

Foreign direct investment (FDI) is acknowledged as necessary for the growth of our economy. However, South Africa's competitiveness as an investment destination needs to be improved by eradicating corruption, resolving the policy uncertainty surrounding land reform, ensuring stable electricity supply and adopting more business-friendly policies.

While the importance of FDI is acknowledged, there is a common view that the current regime regulating mineral resources should be changed in a way that ensures greater benefit for the South African people.

Many submissions proposed that foreign companies should be limited in how much ownership they can have over mining companies, and mining licences should be granted with conditions, such as requirements that a percentage of profits be used for infrastructure development and service delivery to local communities. South Africa should also shift its focus from exporting raw resources to maximising the economic benefit of the country's mineral resources by processing the resources locally, and then exporting the value-added products.

Finally, there is some concern over the role of China in the country and continent. Some fear that China's vast investment drive in Africa may lead to neo-colonialism and that consumers are too reliant on cheap imports from China. There should be more focus on local manufacturing.

Public-private partnerships

Participants believe that the government lacks the capacity to address all of the challenges facing South Africa by themselves. However, the private sector's potential contribution to improved socio-economic conditions is hampered by complex requirements for public-private partnerships (PPPs). The legislation and regulations surrounding PPPs should be revised to make it easier for private sector stakeholders to assist the government in fulfilling its developmental mandate.

Education

The general feeling amongst participants is that the basic education system is failing the youth of today, and thus the future of the country. Educational standards are deemed to be too low, and there is discontent with the inequality of the quality of education received.

"Lack of education is the root of all problems globally, not just in South Africa. Not only is ours bad, but the level has been dropped on key subjects to enable people to pass. Start at the grassroots level now, or we will have another generation growing up illiterate." – ***Anonymous***

"I feel terribly sorry for all the youth who have clawed their way up to get their degrees and sacrificed so much in the process, how can we enable them to get the jobs they deserve?" – ***Fiona***

"Provide high-quality education at a low cost to the poor and victims of Apartheid so that they have a head start. Then provide equal opportunities to all regardless of race." – ***Andre, Western Cape***

"Firstly, a good education, not a standardized education, teach the children to think for themselves and help them to accomplish their dreams... Teach them trades and skills. Then we need less interference from government and unions so as to develop independent and individual solutions to the problems that we face as a community, let private enterprise flourish and give tax incentives for those who help to develop others... allow private sector companies to subsidize the economy and sell power where the government-run institution (ESKOM) does not have the capacity to supply an uninterrupted service." – ***Facebook input***

"An all-inclusive curriculum which comprises of vocational, practical, technical, arts, artisans, sports streams with remedial education classes at public schools would be a great start...from primary school onwards. Learners who are not academically inclined would benefit immensely, and it will surely help the country in alleviating joblessness." – ***Facebook input***

By lowering the requirements to pass a grade, we are creating a society where mediocrity and poor performance are deemed to be acceptable. Instead, we must strive for excellence.

The above is echoed in a strong sentiment amongst participants that South Africa's educational system is at the core of many of the country's problem. Children leave school without the skills necessary to participate in the economy. As such, South Africa does not only struggle with unemployment but also with employability.

Other opinions about education include:

- Participants are unanimously opposed to the lower passing grade, as this is seen as a political manoeuvre to increase pass rates, rather than providing learners with the opportunity to gain an education.
- While it is essential to improve academic standards, especially in the fields of math and science, South Africa needs to be realistic about the status quo. The legacy of Apartheid-era education means that these fields are under-developed in older generations, and therefore the transfer of these skills will be limited.
- While children with potential should be encouraged and supported, and extra measures should be taken to ensure improvement in these fields across all sections of the population, the focus should be on basic literacy and teaching the skills necessary for lifelong learning. Education has no quick fix and is a generational project. The focus should now be on providing education that will allow the majority of South Africans to improve their economic circumstances so that future generations can benefit from improved socio-economic conditions.
- Free tertiary education should be made available, but only to those that meet minimum academic standards. Free education should also not be reserved for university studies but expanded to artisan and vocational training. Individuals that prefer to study at technical schools or colleges should also be provided with the opportunity to study for free.
- An alternative suggestion is to provide low/zero-interest loans to students, with a lenient repayment mechanism. Recipients will have the opportunity to repay the loans proportionate to their income. Such a system will reduce the burden of student loans while being more financially sustainable from the government's perspective.

Educational reform

Educational reform is necessary for providing people with the means to achieve economic independence. There is strong support for introducing more practical skills development in schools, rather than just focusing on academic subjects. This requires a change in how teachers are trained too, and civil society should also be encouraged to contribute to skills transfers.

"Collaborative initiatives between business and government and training colleges to ensure skills focus is changed to what is required rather than people studying for skills where they have little hope of being employed. Get business representatives in training facilities to drive training requirements. Academics are out of touch with the modern needs of the world. They are using outdated theories to train students and have not moved on and should not dictate training requirements." – ***Anonymous***

"Learners in our schools are mostly taught how to be employees rather than being employers. We need to have learners that come out of high school knowing how to draft a business plan and how to manage and implement a business. We need to focus more on increasing entrepreneurship, especially in youth." – ***Noko, Gauteng***

"Our syllabi are designed to make learners job-seekers and not job creators. Even the education system encourages people to go for what was formerly known as "white-collar jobs". Our education system should change and enable learners to create jobs themselves." – ***Facebook input***

Our education system needs to be reviewed, it must be able to identify talent, develop techniques to harness the talent into a useful skill and it must also inculcate our students with a culture of entrepreneurship and temperament to achieve more." – ***Facebook input***

"We need to restructure our education such that it concentrates more on entrepreneurship, technology, robotics, agriculture so that we can be ready for the 4IR, groom young people to have their own businesses and prepare people how to work the land once land expropriation has occurred." ***– Facebook input***

"We have to teach our children from a young age the value of money and foster a lifestyle of caring and respect. This cannot be done through education alone but has to start with us the adults and leaders through our example." ***- Danie, Western Cape***

"(We need) training courses for every trade. Skills for every kind of job is essential in today's technological era. Man gets replaced by machines as soon as their labour costs are too high. Don't wait for it to happen." – ***Facebook input***

Education and job creation

The education system needs to provide more significant transfer of scarce skills through the provision of artisan

training. The government should engage with the private sector and analyse industry trends to determine which skills will contribute to the growth of the economy, and provide school-aged students with the opportunity to develop such skills. Students should also be taught learning skills so that they can continuously improve themselves after completing their studies.

Skills training should not be limited to urban areas, and there needs to be sufficient attention provided to rural communities.

While the focus is understandably on youth unemployment, people that do not qualify as youth also require attention in terms of creating jobs. Older people were often excluded from educational opportunities in the past due to the discriminatory nature of Apartheid-laws and have never been allowed the opportunity to develop skills.

Institutions that provide artisan training and receive government funding to do so should be monitored closely. The impression is that many of these institutions, including SETAs, are run for personal gain, and the quality of training provided to students is inadequate. The government must ensure that government money is spent on achieving its goals.

"Empower the youth, mainly by providing basic training on particular specialities like plumbing, bricklayers and carpentry - so that they can open their own businesses and employ others." – ***Thapelo, Gauteng***

"Our Artisan workers qualifications should be transferable to the overseas markets so that our people can get opportunities overseas and bring back experiences for us to learn from also giving them a wider market for employment." – ***Christelle, Northern Cape***

"Encourage artisanship and empower colleges to produce more artisans. Most-if-not-all students graduate and leave college as 'former students' and further hustle post-college to acquire artisanship. Ensure that students leave college programs as fully qualified artisans." – ***Facebook input***

Participants believe that the cost of access to the internet should be reduced for those in education, seeking employment, or for the SMMEs dependent on available and affordable data.

Data prices are considered to be too high, and limited infrastructure reduces access to the internet. Educational websites and resources should be zero-rated so that more students can get additional assistance with their studies.

"Reduce the cost of internet access significantly. The future of the world economy is linked to the internet, with software development and other forms of engineering at the centre. We can't give a future-based education to kids if they can't afford to use the internet. Likewise, with entrepreneurship, there's a whole ecosystem of web-related businesses people could be starting, but we're lagging very far behind most countries because access to the internet is so expensive in SA." – ***Facebook input***

"We could have been far as the economy if there was really a political will to support entrepreneurship. But look what do we have now? Small business has no chance in our market." – ***Twitter input***

Finally, participants support subsidised "on-the-job" training: if the government can partner with the private sector to provide opportunities to graduates and school finishers to learn skills and gain professional experience, employability will be improved.

SMME Support

The idea of offering increasing support for SMMEs is extremely popular amongst participants. Participants believe that SMMEs have the greatest potential for delivering economic growth, and as such, the government must do more to ensure that more people can start new business ventures. The failure rate for new ventures is high in South Africa, and the government's role in that failure rate should not be underestimated.

"The only way to create jobs in a troubled economy is to rigorously invest in small entrepreneurs. I am 33 years of age and have a business a small business employing six staff. On numerous occasions, I have wanted to pack up and find a job, but now I have to consider the six families plus mine when I make such decisions. Invest in small business, so that I can now employ another six more." – ***Adrian, KwaZulu-Natal***

"To grow the economy… the focus must be on SMMEs. A reliable database of SMMEs needs to be developed. Many are not captured in the tax system. Additional challenges facing SMMEs include: Using qualified service providers to mentor the SMMEs; SMMEs need proper financial support; the number of loopholes small business must jump through does not support business growth (the whole tax and LRA must be reviewed)." – ***Facebook input***

"Reduce Tax and interest rates for stimulating economic growth for upcoming and existing business as well as

farming communities. The government cannot create jobs but can encourage and enable SMMEs as well as big established companies by supporting them and reducing red tape, making it easier for business creation." – ***Facebook input***

"I think small businesses must be given operating licences at reasonable fees as they are the backbone of economic empowerment." – ***Twitter input***

"Establish tax-free trade zones in townships- this will attract manufacturing- employees won't suffer travel costs and inconvenience." – ***Twitter input***

The focus of economic empowerment should shift from further enriching those that are already wealthy, by providing more support to small businesses. While the government's preferential procurement policies are, in theory, aimed at providing support to SMMEs, the reality is that the scale of many government tenders are too big for SMMEs to be competitive. At the end of the day, it is people that already have resources that become more enriched.

While it is good that the government provides support to SMMEs through procurement, the system must also be of such a nature that businesses are capacitated to be competitive in the open market. The system must not create reliability on government-business. Furthermore, the government has limited resources available and should find a balance between supporting SMMEs and cost-efficient procurement.

There is widespread agreement amongst participants that SMME-support should go beyond just financial support. While the idea of grants supported, it must be accompanied by extra support. The government can increase the likelihood of success of entrepreneurs through facilitating and incentivising additional support programmes, including business mentoring. The government should establish central initiatives where business professionals guide and mentor entrepreneurs. There should be specific funding programmes for HDIs and women, as funding and guidance have excellent potential to be a tool of empowerment.

"A voucher system of subsidy can boost our SMMEs. A consumer will have a choice, and the money will be allocated to end users, not the government officials who usually mismanage the public purse." – ***Facebook input***

The issue of informal trading remains complicated: some participants believe that informal traders should be subjected to more regulation (including business registration). In contrast, others believe that informal traders play a significant role in the economy and should be allowed to trade without government interference.

Policies dealing with informal trading will thus likely have to be balanced between recognising the potential of the informal market to create economic empowerment and the need to protect employees and consumers.

Economic infrastructure

Participants display a general dissatisfaction with the state of the country's infrastructure. They believe that the government is not doing enough to ensure the roll-out of the infrastructure required to sustain economic activity, nor are they maintaining existing infrastructure sufficiently.

The expansion of the country's infrastructure networks will not only have a positive effect on economic productivity but will also create jobs.

Participants believe that anyone that damages infrastructure should be treated harshly: there are even calls for treating damage to infrastructure as economic terrorism.

Natural resources, climate change and the economy

The importance of the country's natural resources is acknowledged. Many participants believe that the raw minerals of the country should be used to benefit the people of the country, rather than major international companies.

There is also strong support for the protection of the country's natural resources. While participants acknowledge the tough balance between protecting the environment and stimulating economic growth, the general trend is that over-exploitation of natural resources poses an existential threat to the country's future.

"Develop a new economy deeply entrenched in a Green New Deal. Bring people together to protect the earth, our land, our country. Planting billions of trees, creating clean new energy, giving agency to people." – ***Warren, Gauteng.***

Participants are aware of the potential impact of climate change on South Africa and would like to see the government taking proactive action to minimise the risk to South African residents.

Water supply is of great concern and is suggested that more dams are built for water capture and storage, and storm drainage networks should capture more water. The government should invest in desalination plants to increase water supply.

It is also mentioned that the impact of climate change is not currently part of the debate on land reform, despite potential far-reaching consequences on the country's agricultural land availability.

South Africa must reduce its reliance on coal and adopt more renewable energies, ban single-use plastics, and all new developments should be taken on with the approach of reducing carbon emissions.

> *"We need to abandon the use of fossil fuels and move on to renewable energy. South Africa has plenty of sun for solar energy. We just need to get with the times and find an efficient way forward."* – ***Facebook input***

In addition, there should also be a nationwide reforestation campaign, which should use water-wise and indigenous vegetation.

Healthcare

Public healthcare elicits a high level of dissatisfaction, and it is believed that too few resources are committed to healthcare and that public healthcare is severely mismanaged.

Apart from the implications for national health, this is also seen to have an impact on economic productivity. Participants noted that time spent queuing at clinics is often time away from work. A healthy workforce is considered to be a productive workforce.

Addressing these issues requires significant investment in public healthcare in a sustainable manner. More funds should be allocated to the training of doctors and nurses. Furthermore:

- There has to be an investment in healthcare infrastructure and services.
- Public healthcare should be modernised, especially with regards to information management.
- Better security should be provided at healthcare facilities, and there must be stricter action taken on drug abuse.

> *"We should encourage and recommit our people to the principles of Batho Pele. Caring is also nurturing. This takes roots in the quality of discourse and who we are while relating to fellow human beings. Health is non-negotiable, and those entrusted with providing it should be held into strong accountability."* – ***Norbert***

Sentiment surrounding the National Health Insurance is mixed, with some participants supporting the current proposal, others supporting the principle but suggesting changes in the approach, and others being opposed to National Health Insurance (NHI) in its entirety. There remains support for patients to retain their right to choose their own health insurance and healthcare service providers.

State-owned enterprises

The majority of participants share concern over the management of SOEs. The perception is that SOEs are failing in fulfilling their mandates and are disproportionally expensive to maintain. As such, some participants support the privatisation of SOEs, while others believe that SOEs should remain under the control of the state, but that management practices need to be drastically improved.

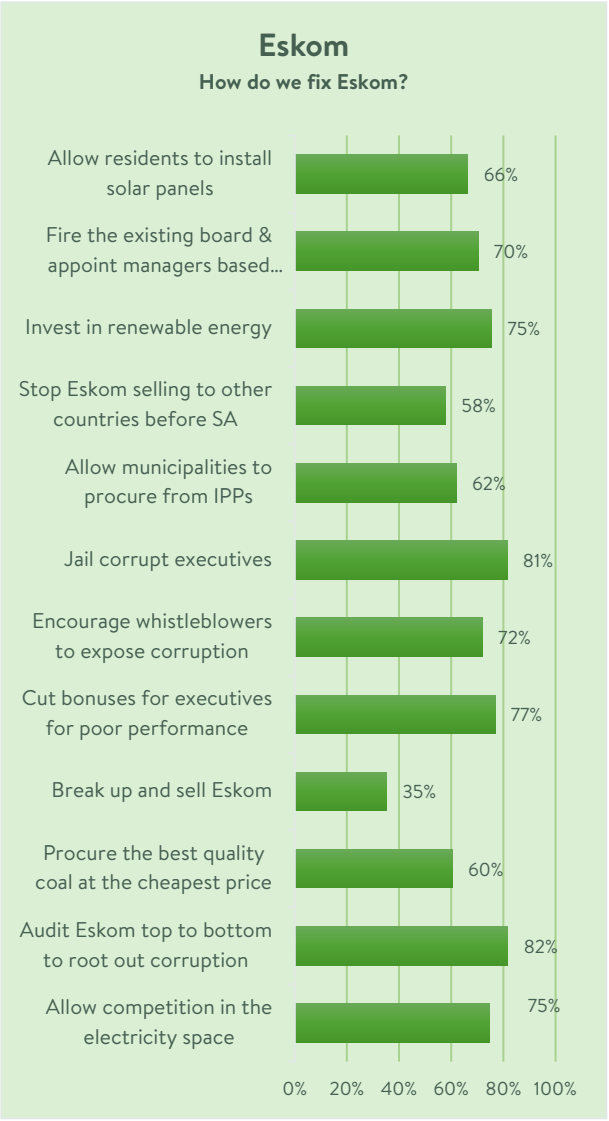
A mixed model also enjoys support: where the government holds either a small majority of ownership (50%+1) or where the government holds a significant minority stake (50%-1). This approach may promote better governance through shareholder involvement.

Political interference in SOEs is seen as a substantial contributor to the state of SOEs. Cadre deployment and appointing executives that are amicable to the needs of the ANC means that the executives in SOEs are not qualified or capable of running such complex entities efficiently. Additionally, SOEs are used by the ANC and corrupt politicians as a source of funds, through manipulation of major tenders.

> *"Get rid of incompetent people. Appoint people that can do the work. There are thousands of people out there who can do the job. Appoint them."* – ***Facebook input***

> *"Without proper management of state entities, our economy will never grow, all the state-owned companies must be led by the people who have careers in business. CEO's must not be selected on comradeship; it must be someone capable of running a successful business, not mere comrades without education."* - ***Isaac, Gauteng***

Eskom



The state of Eskom is a matter that particularly upsets participants, particularly in relating to the impact it has on the economy. The inability of Eskom to provide reliable power supply to the country is causing extreme damage to the country's economy. The mismanagement, maladministration and corruption at Eskom are universally condemned by participants. The chart above shows what respondents believe to be the most important steps required to fix Eskom.

There is support for changing the way that Eskom is structured and run. Participants identified the strong link between the SOE and the ANC and criticised it as an entity serving only the politically connected.

> *"First and critical step will be to take ANC out of ESKOM and politics in general. It must be run like a business, not a charity organization or cash cow for politicians."* – ***Facebook input***

There are varying opinions among participants about the ownership of Eskom. Some believe that the state should remain sole owner. Some support partial privatisation while others support full privatisation. There are also calls for increased competition within the electricity generation sector.

Participants believe that municipalities should have the authority to procure additional electricity from independent power producers. This mechanism should primarily be used to incentivise the growth of renewable energies.

At the same time, municipalities that are in arrears in payment should be forced to repay debts or be cut off. Even though it will be the residents of such municipalities that will suffer, they will know who to hold to account.

Eskom contributes massively to public debt, and a part of that problem is over-staffing. Eskom's wage bill is not reflected in its efficiency, and drastic measures should be taken to ensure that the spend on salaries is reduced.

The government should not allow the unions to dictate decisions on Eskom and electricity generation, especially related to the retrenchment of staff. The thousands of jobs that may be lost at Eskom pales in comparisons to the damage to the economy caused by load-shedding.

> *"A mass purge of excess staff at the entity, they are overstaffed by over 30%, we cannot continue to have our electricity hiked to accommodate people that are not adding value."* – ***Anonymous***

A further challenge to Eskom's financial state is payments from customers that remain outstanding. Eskom should consider debt-relief programmes, or introduce special tariffs for low-income users. Getting parts of payments is better than not receiving payment.

Continued non-payment should lead to disconnection. It is not fair to paying customers that Eskom becomes overburdened through providing electricity to customers that are not paying for the service.

Performance management

Participants believe that there has to be more robust performance and consequence control of Eskom's procurement practices and contracting. Consequence control is especially applicable to coal procurement: any Eskom official or supplier that is complicit in the acquisition of coal that does not meet quality standards should be held criminally liable.

The CEO and the Board of Eskom must have the necessary mandate to make management decisions without interference by politicians, unions or the governing party.

Participants support a comprehensive audit to establish the real state of affairs at Eskom. Of specific interest is conducting a review on Eskom's staff and management and large contracts.

> *"A thorough audit must be done by a reputable, reliable, professional audit company with the main focus on procurement. There are too many middlemen getting fat from procurement. The price of diesel and coal is not competitive, and Eskom is being milked."* – ***Anonymous***

> *"Lifestyle audit all procurement personnel. Outsource procurement functions to professional procurement companies who will ensure transparency in every rand spent."* – ***Anonymous***

The compensation model of Eskom should be reconsidered. In essence, it does not make sense for executives to receive performance bonuses when Eskom cannot comply with its primary responsibility of providing an uninterrupted electricity supply to South Africa.

> *"I think executives and employees shouldn't get bonuses without reaching their targets. A forensic audit should be performed after every six months to help eradicate and detect loopholes."* – ***Anonymous***

> *"Forget about PERFORMANCE bonuses, revise the supply chain, cut jobs as they are 66% overstaffed and appoint people solely on merit."* – ***Facebook input***

Participants are also supportive of revamping the maintenance schedule of critical infrastructure. Even though it may lead to increased load-shedding in the short- to medium-term, it is necessary for long-term sustainability.

Corruption

There is strong displeasure with the level of perceived corruption at Eskom, especially in the field of procurement. Corruption at Eskom related to state capture is seen as a direct cause of Eskom's current problems, including load-shedding.

Participants also want to see action taken against politicians, officials, executives and service providers that were implicit in corruption. The corruption at Eskom continues to have wide-ranging effects on South Africa's economy and should be punished accordingly.

Conclusion

Participants argue that economic growth is crucial to addressing the core issues that plague South Africa. Policy decisions should be based on pursuing sustainable, long-term economic growth. Decision-makers must not be influenced by populist demands or the greedy desires of political patronage networks. Nor should they be limited by a dogmatic adherence to ideology.

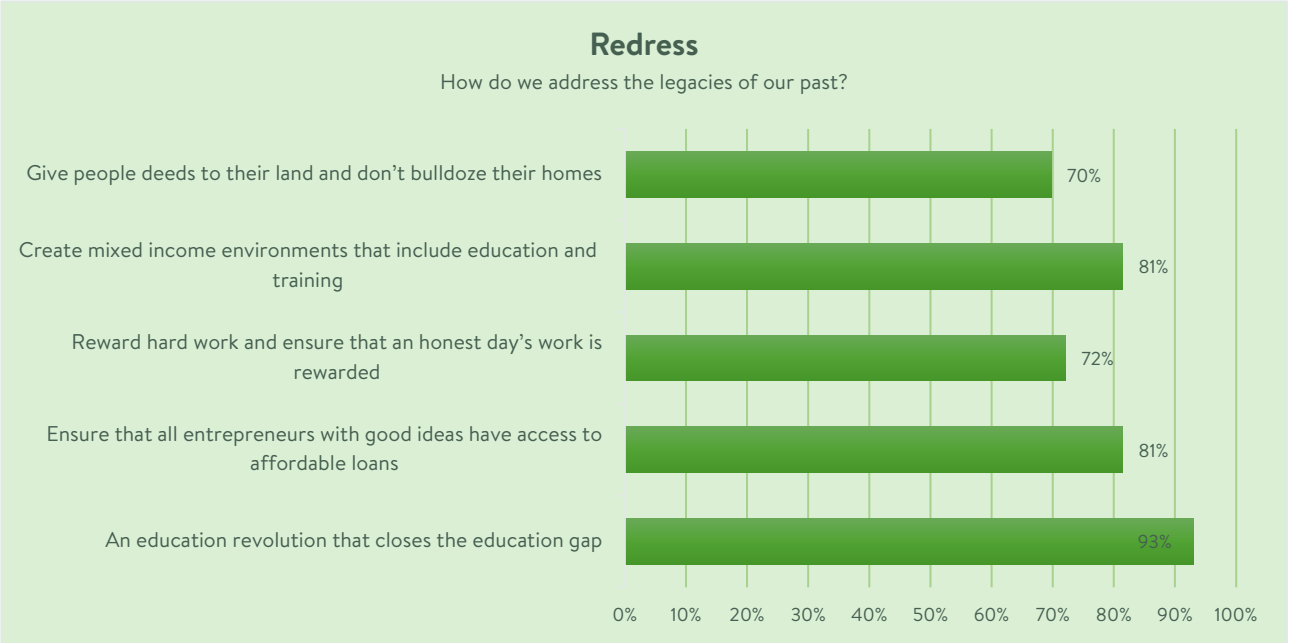
Government's interference in the economy must be reduced so that small businesses may thrive and create jobs. State-owned entities cannot be allowed to remain such a burden on the fiscus. Furthermore, there needs to be a focus on educational reform that provides young people with the skills necessary to enter the job market.

Stimulating Economic Growth

Recurring suggestions and solutions put forward by participants to stimulate economic growth and job creation include:

- Reduce government interference and bureaucratic red tape
- Adopt taxation and regulatory measures that stimulate the growth of the private sector
- Provide financial and regulatory support to SMMEs
- Reform the education curriculum to improve the employability of students leaving school
- Ensure supportive services as part of the educational reform, this includes nutrition, safe and available transport, after-school facilities, and capacitated libraries, extracurricular activities in school, support in the form of psychologists, career counsellors, social workers, etc.
- Invest in economic infrastructure to ensure a reliable supply of basic services such as electricity
- Diversify the energy sector, secure Eskom's power generation capacity and guarantee consistent energy supply
- Establish more equitable beneficiation of South Africa's natural resources
- Fix SOEs by reducing political interference and improving management practices
- Get rid of SADTU in schools

Redress



Introduction

Participants acknowledge the impact that Apartheid has had on unequal development in South Africa, and the majority of participants are supportive of measures aimed at addressing that legacy. As discussed in the section on economic policy, these measures must be aimed at facilitating true economic empowerment, rather than only treating symptoms.

> *"The wrongs of the past are acknowledged by all sensible people. The only way forward is to rebuild the economy by working hand in hand for a common goal for all South Africans."* – ***Lucas, Gauteng***

Participants are aware of the shared responsibility of bringing about real redress it has to be a combined effort between people of all races and backgrounds, educational institutions, the private sector, civil society groups and the government.

However, there is a subsection of participants that believe that the failures of the post-Apartheid ANC government are more responsible for the current state of affairs than the country's past. Corruption is deemed to be a major culprit: if the programmes designed by the government to address inequality and encourage equitable development were implemented as intended, without corruption, the country would have been in a much better place.

The ANC's governance failures have seen the enrichment of a political elite and an increase in inequality. It has also created a sense of reliance on the government.

> *"Yes, there is also a need for poverty alleviation and the building of houses, but we should be cautious of building a nation that is dependent on the government. The dependency syndrome is hindering our progress."* – ***Duncan***

> *"No one can deny the damage Apartheid has created for the majority of citizens in this country. However, a sense of very real pessimism and hopelessness prevails. Hope in redressing inequalities failed brilliantly with a corrupt and patriarchal ignorant self-serving Zuma and his awful cronies still in government."* – ***Shan, KwaZulu-Natal***

This chapter will discuss the views of participants on how to achieve effective redress, through the discussion of economic empowerment, education, race relations, land reform and housing.

Economic empowerment

The core of restitution should be a focus on economic empowerment. Only once inequality can be addressed, can SA move forward. The general opinion seems to be that

"hand-outs" will not foster true economic empowerment. More effort should be put into measures that empower HDIs through education and skills development that will make them more employable or enable them to be entrepreneurs.

The rapid degeneration of South African rural areas is of great concern to participants. It serves to widen the gap between the wealthy and poor: many black South Africans remain "trapped" in rural areas with very little access to economic or educational opportunities.

> *"Rural is a must to combat the ever-growing gap of the rich and the poor. We must encourage rural entrepreneurs to start their businesses in the rural places. We must introduce entrepreneurial education in schools. The use of video technology & internet to have the best teachers reach all the corner of South Africa."* – ***Gcina, Gauteng***

It is essential to address the legacy of the country's discriminatory past, but a focus on the future is required for transformative change to become a reality.

> *"South Africans of all stripes need to accept that the effect of the racial policies of the past must be acknowledged and that the country must be put on a path to correct these negative effects. But South Africans of all stripes need to understand that redress cannot happen overnight. In other words, we should focus on the future in that we need to develop strategies towards the future, and not focus on the injustices of the past."* – ***Anonymous***

Broad-based black economic empowerment

The general sentiment is that, while well-intentioned, economic empowerment initiatives have failed in achieving the goals of broad-based black economic empowerment (BBBEE).

Instead, it has enriched a small elite of politically connected individuals or already-wealthy individuals that could utilise the regulations to their benefit. The system is also too easily manipulated, with BBBEE fronting being a real concern. BBBEE is also seen as detrimental to investment attraction, and participants opposed to BBBEE believe appointments should be made on merit alone.

Despite the failures of BBBEE, there remains support for initiatives aimed at empowering historically disadvantaged individuals. However, these measures should focus on sustainable skills development, rather than solely providing financial gains.

> *"Create another law that requires single large beneficiaries of BEE share schemes - past and present - along with along with all the big businesses that benefited from the Apartheid economic system to donate 2% of their annual income to an entrepreneurship fund."* – ***Napo, Gauteng***

> *"B-BBEE and labour laws are such that companies … are downsizing their investments and looking to leave South Africa."* – ***Anonymous***

> *"Black entrepreneurship will go a long way towards solving this issue [of inequality]. We should focus on certain communities or income groups, with the stated goal of increasing black participation in the economy. This goal must be stated without fear or doubt, because South Africa is currently a fertile ground for radical left populism. It's a fact that South Africa's high unemployment is disproportionately black (especially the youth). Parties like the EFF have created the impression that they are the only ones willing to solve this problem, simply because they are not afraid to state it and are also not afraid to state 'solutions.'"* – ***Thabo, Gauteng***

However, participants believe that race cannot be the only measurement for qualifying for government support. Many black South Africans have achieved economic freedom, and government support should be reserved for those that remain economically excluded.

The role of corporate South Africa

While addressing the legacy of the past is predominantly the responsibility of the government, participants believe that corporate South Africa should take more responsibility for advancing economic empowerment.

The government may incentivise private companies through amending corporate social responsibility regulations and tax incentives. Corporates should participate in skills transfer and can contribute to the distribution of wealth by providing preferential shares to HDIs.

However, participants believe that corporations cannot be trusted to do as much as they can voluntarily. Therefore, specific laws should be introduced to force corporates to increase their social responsibility activities. These laws or regulations should not interfere significantly with profitability. Rather, it must ensure that corporations do not benefit unduly from the exploitation of shared natural resources or cheap labour.

"Create a law that requires all major companies to adopt township schools, fund and establish strong mathematics and science programmes for these schools as well as bring in mathematics teachers from China." – ***Napo, Gauteng***

"The legacy of the past is one issue. But this obsession with making money quickly is what is killing this country. Both the public and private sector leaders have an entitlement attitude that they are entitled to huge sums of money at all costs. Leadership in companies need to know why they are there: to create value for shareholders and to create a stable work environment for their employees." – ***Nazeer, Gauteng***

The role of government in sports

When asked whether racial quotas should remain in sport, and whether the government should be in the business of running sports teams, the response was overwhelmingly in support of less government intervention.

The majority of participants called for the development of sports at the grassroots level, rather than implementing a top-down approach. There was also a sentiment that racial quotas are an insult rather than a tool of empowerment.

"We must reject with contempt these condescending insinuations that blacks are less capable by using words like quotas where it is not desirable. We are smart, we are excellent. We don't need them if they are associated with blacks, unless is for other organisational reasons." – ***Twitter input***

"Quota's are a top-down approach. Invest in sports development at grassroots." – ***Twitter input***

"This quotas thing is reducing the standard of our sport I believe if someone is talented must be given a chance based on principles, not skin colour and we have proven we have lots of talent in our townships and rural areas are up to the government to empower our black youth" – ***Twitter input***

"Racial quotas are an insult to the players. If you place good transformation programs in place at the grassroots level, quotas will become irrelevant." - ***Twitter input***

"How can they speak of nationalising sport, while there are the ones who cancel sport in government school, they must first bring back sport activities in government school. If they are failing there definitely, they will fail with this attempt also" – ***Facebook input***

The role of education

As discussed in the chapter on jobs and the economy, participants believe that education is crucial to addressing South Africa's unequal development of different population groups. Participants are unanimous in their opinion that South Africa's education system is a failure. In its current form, the education system is not a vehicle of redress but only serves to entrench inequality further.

"If we can fix the education system, we will be able to try and fix the horror Apartheid brought to us." – ***Mbongeni, Gauteng***

In addition to the unequal access to quality education, the current system does not make enough provision for external factors that impact the ability of students to learn and develop skills, such as nutrition, academic support, safety and resources.

"Even if a person has access to education, it is his household and family that will determine whether he is successful or not. If he does not have basic necessities in his household, he will have to find ways to support his family and still succeed." – ***Maglin***

Unequal access

Urban areas offer children a better education, but there remains inequality in the quality of schooling between previous Model-C schools and schools in less affluent areas. Education in rural communities is poor, and people living in rural areas are severely disadvantaged.

"It is important to acknowledge that educators who teach previously disadvantaged communities and rural areas face significantly different challenges to those in formerly white schools. Most of these challenges are social and economic, from nutrition to domestic matters that affect the ability of learners to be fully present. So, it's important that part of the solution encompasses a way to address these very real challenges that the majority of black South African learners face." – ***Thuto, Gauteng***

"Education is key to a better life. We should make sure that every South African citizen gets equal education. An educated person can take his family out of poverty, can be a good example within a community and inspire others." – ***Kenneth***

To address the inequality in education, the government must integrate technology into the teaching systems. This requires proper access to information and communications technology infrastructure (ICT) and training to ensure that the skills necessary to utilise ICT for education are transferred.

"The world has changed, and yet even in rural areas everyone has a cellular phone, so free access or very cheap data cost can allow us to educate, develop every inch of South Africa, by using technology, laptops and solutions." – ***Maglin***

"I have to say President Ramaphosa is correct in his efforts to prepare townships and people from poor communities for the Fourth Industrial Revolution. The IT industry is one of the highest paying industries in our country and yet it is one of the most unequal. The majority of coders remain white males." – ***Marina, Western Cape***

There is also a call for changes in the primary and secondary school curriculum, with a lot of support on introducing vocational training on a school level. There is an additional call for schools to cooperate with the private sector on making their curricula more practical and attractive to promote the numbers, especially in artisan fields.

"We need more vocational guidance in school. The kids don't know what's out there, what can be done. Help the kids find their calling and passion at an early age. Not everyone can or wants to be a Doctor, lawyer, accountant. May be somebody can be a "Non-destructive Test Samplelogist " and be damn good at it but you'll never hear of it as a career choice." – ***Facebook input***

"Many of those schools need to work alongside major business players. Amazon for instance as its own academy because by the time students leave varsities the technology has changed that they are unemployable. Also, we need to place the same If not higher standard on our students and come to the reality that not all students have the same capacity. Not everyone can sing, just as not everyone can be a doctor. One last point a degree does not equals employment, wealth or security. The wealthiest people I know have no degrees. Education is good but critical thinking is way more beneficial. Now imagine both."

Adult education

Participants also want the government to address the needs and desires of adults that have been directly affected by Apartheid. Many older adults did not have any access to education and are trapped in poverty due to still not having any opportunities to improve themselves, economically and in terms of education. This is seen as a continued issue that requires intervention.

Educational reform

As discussed in more detail in the chapter on jobs and economy, there is general support for diversifying the educational mix: everyone should receive basic academic training, but vocational training (for scarce skills) should become part of the educational mix. The system should also encourage the development of ICT skills, as it offers career opportunities that do not require formal qualifications.

"Create vocational coaching academies starting from the age of 18, which will blend apprenticeships, so the kids can begin trading when they graduate." – ***Joan, Gauteng***

Race relations

The participants' view on racism is complex. Most participants recognise that racism is still a problem in South Africa and hindering national unity, but that politicians are disproportionately leveraging racism to drive a political agenda and create fear and hatred. The general impression is that day-to-day racial relations between South Africans are not as bad as it is made out to be by politicians and in the media.

"Create a climate for rigorous dialogue that breaks the suffocating, oppressive and dangerous binaries our politicians constantly reinforce." – ***Warren, Gauteng***

"I love our country, our people. I am a 54-year-old white male who was never conditioned by my parents to hate, but rather to love all. The majority of people are frustrated in our country, with no hope at all. …. Our needs are all the same; we are loved by someone; we all love someone." – ***Wayne, Mpumalanga***

However, some participants are highly dissatisfied with the status quo of racial relations. Some are still angry about the income discrepancies between black and white with arguments being pro-black, whereas others identify the white as victims. Some cynically called out Mashaba for dreaming of a non-racial society.

"There's no South Africa. Blacks are poor, but everybody else thrives. How can we come together then? You can keep on dreaming through." – ***Facebook input***

Participants are supportive of measures aimed at improving racial relations, such as programmes aimed at increasing diversity and representation.

Measures should include creating platforms for discourse and debate. There are many painful issues experienced by South Africans, and many of those are influenced by race. There should be attempts at increasing empathy between South Africans. Politicians focus on dividing the nation, as they believe this will be good for their own interests. However, efforts should be taken to create a sense of belonging for all people.

Minority control of the economy

Many participants raised the control over the economy by minority groups as an area of concern. Minority control increases inequality and has a damaging effect on race-relations and national unity.

There are opinions on both extremes of the spectrum on how to deal with minority control. Some participants believe that there should be forced redistribution of the wealth owned by white South Africans. Other participants believe that there is no need for any measures aimed at redress and that the "victim" mentality is holding South Africa back. However, these types of opinions are exceptions.

"We need to first work on the mindset of South Africa and eradicate the belief that the economy lies in the hands of minorities. We [believe that] we can only participate by being employees. We want jobs, [but] who must create jobs for us if not ourselves?" – ***Anonymous***

"Let Africans come up with African solutions for Africa. Let us face the truth our economy is not ours. How are we going to save a country which doesn't belong to us? Let's reclaim what is rightfully ours first and then we can talk about saving a country. Without us owning and influencing our economy, there's nothing we can do." – ***Khambule***

However, there is strong support for interventions aimed specifically at empowering HDIs, but this should not happen at the expense of white South Africans. Participants believe that you cannot uplift parts of society by oppressing others.

"Racism is not the fundamental issue in SA; politics uses it as the default debate to mask the need for real debate around the failing economy and issues as above. If we deal with these issues, racism will deal with itself as many countries continually have to do, even today." – ***Anonymous***

"Those advantaged by the past (and yes, I'm one of them) have to realize that in order to uplift the majority, sacrifices will be needed from the advantaged minority. The 'cake' has not increased in size just because there are more citizens who deserve a slice." – ***Anonymous***

Land reform

The topic of land reform elicits mixed opinions. Some participants support nationalisation of land, redistribution of white-owned land, expropriation without compensation (EWC), redistribution of land that is not in productive use, redistribution of government-owned land and no redistribution at all.

"Land should be nationalized. Those who use it for means of productivity should lease it. No private ownership." – ***Mluleki, Western Cape***

"Land reform is very important. Get rid of shacks. Provide people who want to work the land with land." – ***Nqubuka***

"Land reform is the center of everything in the country. Land in the country is expensive for our people to buy since it is commercialised by the minority group. Our people are the one who suffer the most, but on this matter a lot should be discussed looking at residential land and commercial land." – ***Anonymous***

"Accelerate the land redistribution process but don't give land as a handout. The government must own the land and lease it to farmers on long term contracts with performance clauses." – ***Anonymous***

"Expropriation of land without compensation where it is deemed legally necessary. Expropriation with compensation where necessary to keep the stability of our economy going." – ***Facebook input***

While opinions on land reform remain divided, it is clear that policy certainty is required. The country cannot expect investors to take on the risk currently associated with investing in South Africa. In support of this, there were many queries on what Herman Mashaba's party's stance on land reform will be.

Where agricultural land is redistributed, it should be accompanied by change-management practices, i.e. knowledge transfers between experienced and emerging farmers. The government can subsidise salaries or make

provision for profit-sharing between the old and new owners of the land.

> *"Solve the land reform conundrum without estranging our farmer community; give much better support to new farmers."* – ***Johan***

In addition to land reform, the issue of unequal distribution of land ownership should be addressed through the transfer of title deeds. Too many people occupy housing to which they are legally entitled, but do not have legal ownership.

The consensus was that whatever the government's approach to land reform is, it should be done with great care. Qualifying criteria should be well-developed, and no arbitrary expropriation should take place.

Housing

The government should also take more progressive steps to ensure that the lack of housing is addressed through land reform. Rather than focusing on the RDP-housing system that is subject to corruption and long bureaucratic processes, the government should consider alternative ways of addressing the housing shortage. Widespread corruption in public housing projects results in poor quality houses being delivered.

> *"Start with expropriation and then issue serviced stands to unleash the money stored by the middle class in order to buy houses at retirement."* – ***Mogiso***

Participants also called on the government to be more innovative. Instead of focusing solely on brick-and-mortar structures, the government should provide more serviced stands, low-interest housing loans, subsidised building materials, and look at alternative building methods such as 3D printing.

A recurring thought is that people should be given more control over their housing and that the government should support such initiatives through funding/programmes. Giving away free houses, while necessary, is seen as creating a culture of entitlement and perpetuating the welfare state.

Participants want to see the government reduce their reliance on major companies that take on large housing projects, as there is too much corruption in the sector. Furthermore, the government should ensure that lower-middle-income households are not totally excluded from government schemes.

Informal dwellings and inadequate sanitation impact the dignity of those that cannot afford better housing options, and ensuring that everyone can live in a quality house should be a top priority of government.

Conclusion

While participants mostly agree that redress is necessary in the context of South Africa's past, there is less agreement about the measures required for effecting that redress.

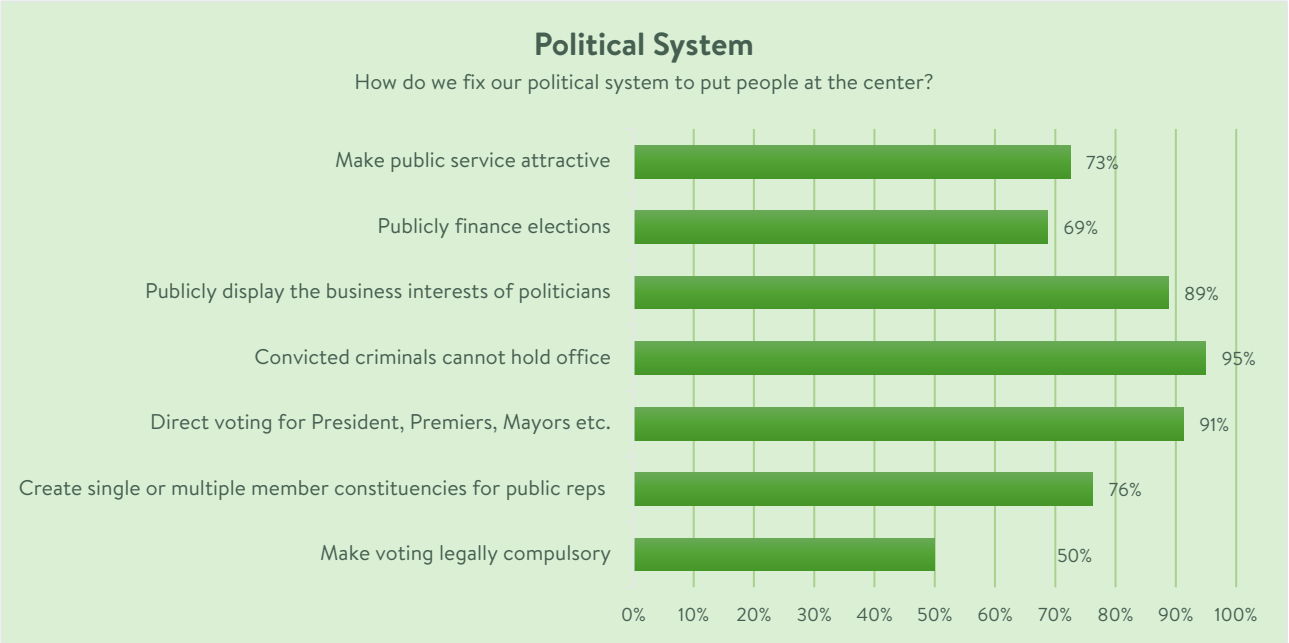
However, participants are once again unsatisfied with the current approach, and believes the well-intentioned system is abused by politically connected individuals. The journey to true redress and an equitable society is long and complex, but it requires a combined effort from all South Africans.

Addressing the Legacy of our Past

Recurring suggestions and solutions put forward by participants to build an include South Africa:

- Eradicate corruption and political interference from redress mechanisms
- Support only those in need of economic empowerment and focus on self-sufficiency
- Implement educational reform that ensure access to quality education for everyone
- Conclude the land reform debate with a decisive plan of action
- Augment housing programmes with alternatives to speed up housing provision
- Improve racial relations and national unity with programmes aimed at creating social cohesion
- Improve supportive services in (especially poor) schools including providing healthy nutrition twice a day, developing safe and reliable transport systems, ensuring sports and culture are in schools, capacitating after school centres and libraries
- Ensure qualified teachers – even if sourced from other countries.
- Empower and promote support services in all schools – including psychologists, career counsellors, social workers.
- Diversify low cost housing efforts – consider looking into new technology, 3D print housings, using containers, etc.

The Political System



Introduction

One of the surprising outcomes of the Interim Report was the high level of support for electoral reform. However, electoral reform is not the only thing required to fix the South African political system.

There is a high level of discontent amongst participants about the failures of the nation's political leadership. Participants believe that many of the troubles South Africa is enduring are due to the lack of leadership. Failure of leadership is accompanied by political leadership geared towards self-interest, and South African politicians practise "politics of the stomach."

The lack of accountability towards the public is cited as a reason for the prevalence of corruption. Public office holders can act with impunity, due to protection being offered by their political parties. When a well-connected politician is found guilty of an offence, they get redeployed, rather than facing the legal consequences for their actions.

> *"Change in government that creates a more inclusive society where all South African skills can be optimally utilized for the advancement of our country. Remove self-centred politicians who thrive on being corrupt and have servant leadership that will take our country to the next level."* – ***Anonymous***

Participants have minimal trust in the current political offerings in South Africa. Participants are also angry with political parties for using polarising messaging to divide the country rather than focusing on unification.

> *"The political landscape is too polarised. For most, it seems as though we have only the "left" or the "right" to choose from. I believe a lot of South Africans are centrists who are in desperate need of a centrist movement. That way, they will have a more sensible alternative to vote for."* – ***Jimmy***

> *"Young people have no faith in the political system because they can see all the lies and corruption. They are smart enough to see what we cannot."* – ***Facebook input***

> *"The people are being held to ransom by politicians who coin all kinds of conspiracy theories to divert attention from the real issues faced by the country, and unfortunately, most people end up believing such."* – ***Anonymous***

This chapter will discuss the perceived challenges of the current political system and the suggestions made by participants on how to create a more equitable democratic society. The sub-themes in this chapter are existing options, electoral reform, the public service and political leadership.

Existing options

Many participants expressed their lack of faith in the existing political parties. The ANC is deemed to be incompetent and corrupt, the DA is deemed to be serving the interest of the white elite, the EFF is viewed as too extreme in their views, and smaller parties are not considered as being capable of offering a viable alternative.

However, some participants also feel that there are already too many parties. The situation leads to ineffective government, due to time being wasted on deliberations and consultations, which leads to an absence of decisiveness leadership.

"Our country will never prosper, not as long as we have so many political parties. The more political parties we have, the less the pressure the ruling party will feel. I mean all these parties are striving to be recognized instead of correcting mistakes by the ruling party. Mr Mashaba's political party will not solve any of our current problems." – ***Facebook input***

"Maybe we need to have fewer political parties! Really, the majority of them agree on most issues! So!! Just amalgamate to form stronger parties who may achieve much more!" – ***Facebook input***

"Too many political parties! Surely you can find common ground with other parties and coalesce! No time for playing games! Time is of the essence!" – ***Facebook input***

Conversely, there is also support for a coalition government, and proponents of coalitions argue that they are better at representing a multiplicity of stakeholders' interest and are the only realistic alternative to the ANC's dominance.

"We need government by a coalition of civil society groups. I'm sick of political parties and politicians wanting all the wealth of the nation for themselves. Sick of public money not being spent on public beneficiation. We need honest, ethical leadership. We need to punish the crooked and prevent them from accessing leadership positions or power over any public funds. Am I looking for fairyland?" – ***Anonymous***

Electoral reform

Participants believe that the current electoral system does not provide the level of democratic accountability that is required for the country. Political office holders are not directly accountable to their constituencies, but rather to their political parties, and often to a small group of political elites.

The ANC is seen as particularly guilty of this, with corrupt and under-performing officials and politicians not being held accountable for their actions. The party is in control of most of the state mechanisms of accountability and oversight, so there is very little genuine oversight (other than the media and civil society groups).

The lack of direct accountability leads to blind loyalty to political parties. For example, participants are generally favourable to President Ramaphosa as an individual leader, but they believe that he refrains from taking tough decisions due to his loyalty to the ANC. Participants accuse the President of prioritising his party over the country.

Participants further believe that voter education must be improved. Many participants think that voters do not understand what they are voting for well enough, and are making uninformed decisions when voting.

In terms of voting behaviour, participants believe that many people are still voting based on identity politics and not based on policy issues or ideology.

This trend leads to complacency within political circles, as politicians expect to get re-elected, despite weak performance. Politicians work to ensure that they are in good standing with the party to which they belong, and not with the people they are supposed to serve

"Teach our communities the importance of voting. Our institutions must play a huge role in teaching youths about electoral systems." – ***Mateboho, Gauteng***

"We also need to educate our citizens, so they fully understand what has happened and who is responsible for it. An educated voter is an informed voter." – ***Sarah, Gauteng***

"More work lies in educating the voters about how they should be active citizens that hold public representatives accountable." – ***Somhlaba, Western Cape***

"Work on voter education. Until voters realise that their vote is power, and not just to support their historical belief and that of their political masters, nothing will change for the better. Wake up and Rise SA. I dislike the EFF and everything they stand for, but I do believe that we all need to become more vociferous in our willingness to have a change in government - not just sporadically and on social media." – ***Facebook input***

"Firstly, basic political education is very important as it allows people to make "informed" decisions instead of emotional ones. People don't really understand the power that they have, emotions and blind loyalty have pushed IDIOTS to power in most cases. Your first move should be to REFORM THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM to give power back to the people. Good luck ngwana papa. Fight!!" – ***Facebook input***

There is strong support for the direct election of the president of the country. Politicians are often beholden to their political party and may place the interests of their party and their supporters above that of the country.

"A new electoral system where corruption is not able to fester and citizens have more control on who is in office. Also, citizens must also be allowed to remove a corrupt politician whether or not it's an election year." – ***Anonymous***

"Direct election of the people's representatives without mention of political parties on the election list. Restrict representation to two terms standing two terms absence." – ***Anonymous***

"Semi-direct democracy is a type of democracy that combines the mechanisms of direct democracy and representative government. In semi-direct democracy, representatives administer daily governance, but citizens keep the sovereignty, being able to control their governments and laws through different forms of popular action: binding referendum, popular initiative, revocation of mandate, and public consultations." – ***Daniel, Gauteng***

"We must actually change our electoral system. This party thing is not working for us groups of criminals protecting each other." – ***Twitter input***

"Party voting has marched over our country's economy. Comrades what's wrong in reacting to another comrade's wrongdoing? The way comrades get away with the murder of looting, it seems the whole party is doing the same; even if naturally we're not cut from the same cloth #SpeakLouderAgainstComrade" – ***Twitter input***

Conversely, some participants prefer the voting system as it is. These participants believe that it is better to vote for a party than a person. A party can get rid of the individual if he/she is not fulfilling his/her mandate, whereas if a person did not represent a party, it might be more challenging to do so.

A system where there is direct election of constituent representatives is also popular. If constituencies can elect their representatives in Parliament, they have more control in holding those representatives accountable.

"Have individuals from a constituency elect their provincial and national parliamentarians from the different candidates representing a political party and

*independent candidates. Successful candidates should be made to have a constituent meeting with their constituents at least once a month to ensure the successful candidate can be held accountable to their constituents." – **Ubaidullah, KwaZulu-Natal***

*"I support the idea of primaries; we want all the members of the party to elect the representatives and all the representatives to be subjected through the eye of the needle. All the people who want to represent us should first articulate problems faced by people and propose solutions in a business plan format with costing of their plans. Each individual who wants to represent the people should be economically literate, and they should be tested if they under a minimum number of acts that govern this country." – **Somhlaba, Western Cape***

There is limited support for changing the relationship between the different spheres of governments: some believe that localising more functions will lead to better governance.

*"I also feel that we should have a federal system as this would allow provincial and local governments a bit more independence in governing instead of taking direction from national governments, which is the furthest government from the people." – **Ubaidullah, KwaZulu-Natal***

The public service

Political control over the public service

There is a high level of dissatisfaction about the policy of cadre deployment in public service. Critical positions should only be filled by people that are capable, experienced and qualified. The current situation at SOEs is a clear example of how cadre deployment negatively impacts on governance.

Participants believe that public service must be professionalised and be immune to political interference. Political appointments must only be in parliament

*"We need to change the entire political system. The idea of cadre deployment has led to state capture and inefficiency in our local municipalities." – **Anonymous***

*"Eradicate political control of the public service by establishing a professional public service over whom the minister of the day does not have hiring and firing powers." – **Anonymous***

Competency of public servants

Participants believe that the impact of cadre deployment and restrictive labour regulations are negatively impacting on the quality of people employed in the civil service.

Loyalty and subservience to the ANC seem to carry more weight than actual capabilities. Additionally, there is minimal performance and consequence management. As a result, public servants are not playing an essential role in improving South Africa.

*"Ensure that competent people with an established reputation for openhanded operating procedures are employed." – **Errol, Gauteng***

*"Competent people must be hired in strategic institutions regardless of political affiliation. SOEs must be able to support the government and not the other way round." – **Risco, Western Cape***

*"People and ministers should be hired according to their knowledge, qualifications and experience and passion, and not get a job because they belong to a ruling political party." – **Atline, Gauteng***

Some participants made a call for mandatory public service for the youth, for which they will be compensated for and during which they will receive training.

Furthermore, the government salary-bill must urgently be addressed, salaries should be performance-based, and employee scorecards and performance monitoring should be made public. The public service must be modernised through the adoption of technology (the requirement of paper-based applications for government positions was pointed out numerous times).

Financial management

Participants believe that the financial management of public funds must be drastically improved. Alongside corruption, mismanagement of public funds is damaging the country's ability to fulfil its developmental mandate, and the following suggestions are made:

- Reduce the bloated cabinet and reduce benefits available to politicians through the revision of the Ministerial Handbook.
- Establish one capital city for South Africa, which will remove the need for official travel and accommodation.
- Implement austerity measures within government departments.

- Use blockchain technology to monitor the flow of public funds, and make the financial statements of all organisations using public money public.
- Place a cap on the salaries earned by government employees/representatives.

Political leadership

Participants believe that too many people enter politics for material gain, rather than for serving the public. A career in politics is attractive materially, so it attracts the wrong type of people. Systems need to change to attract only servant leaders. In addition, many participants felt that officeholders tend to work well into their retiree years when the rest of the nation is compelled to step out of the workforce. As such, the call is for younger political leadership and shorter terms in office.

There are also too many political positions available – local government councillors, members of provincial legislatures and members of parliament, plus the political staff of political principles. This is not acceptable in our system where politicians fail in their primary mandate of representing the people they are elected to serve.

"We need to reform our political structure, especially parliament and the executive. In my view we don't need as many politicians in parliament as " just unnecessary costs." We need to detach parliament from politics and vote people into parliament based on their credentials and service to the community. We need people who are not political but intellectual and independent. This will enable parliament to hold the executive accountable without fear or favour." – ***Anonymous***

Poor political leadership has led to a breakdown in trust in politicians and political parties, especially in the ANC. Participants also believe that political leaders are not in touch with the realities that the majority of South Africans face.

"We need more political leaders with the vision of changing than those who only want to benefit." – ***Anonymous***

"Make sure that factions in the ANC do not try and rig national and provincial elections." – ***Phillip, KwaZulu-Natal***

"When the ANC took power in South Africa, we thought we were free from slavery and racism. But it seems our own people they are the ones who treat us bad. I'm tired of the ANC, I want it out of power because they work for their pockets, not for people." – ***Nicholas, Gauteng***

"The wrong people are sitting in government. It seems they are governing a part of the world that the man on the street is not closely related to." – ***Facebook input***

"Get rid of government officials. We don't need ministers of anything, they do nothing and are only there to collect a salary on the backs of us hard-working citizens, and do nothing for the country." ***– Facebook input***

Participants want leaders that are competent and ethical: some believe that the requirements for higher levels of political leadership should come with minimum requirements such as tertiary education.

"We need true ethical leaders, men and women of integrity and NOT politicians. We need people who will be servants of the people." – ***Anonymous***

"The South African Political is replete with cadre deployment to such an extent that even those parties who are not in power are waiting for their turn to "eat". We really need to cultivate a type of a politician who will be genuinely interested in solving the plight of the poverty-stricken and the less fortunate. The culture of crass materialism has also encouraged our young to forgo virtues of patience in pursuit of wealth, and as a result, they are easily attracted to crime and corruption." – ***Anonymous***

"How do you expect the director to have qualifications, but people who make policies that the director have to implement have no qualifications? We are paying a high price because of politicians, away with appointing politicians and more with academics." – ***Katlholo, Gauteng***

Corruption within political leadership is of great concern to participants, as is illustrated in the chapter on corruption. Participants are incredibly frustrated with the fact that there have been no high-level convictions, which seems to indicate a system that lacks accountability of politicians.

"I think we need to make sure that the people that are responsible for corruption face prosecution that way both our local sector but the international community will have more belief in us as a country." – ***Sarah, Gauteng***

"Get all opposition parties to engage in creating one peaceful, and corrupt-free South Africa, most importantly, get rid of corrupt politicians, especially at the top level." – ***Bonginhlanhla, KwaZulu-Natal***

"Politicians should be held accountable. No politician with a criminal record should contest an election. All corrupt politicians should be charged and arrested and must pay back the money." – ***Raviesh, KwaZulu-Natal***

Another clear sentiment is that South Africa should stop "treating our politicians like royalty." Too many politicians are only pursuing their own economic self-interest, and that is in part because we provide too many benefits and celebrity to politicians. Many participants were outraged when the question was posed on social media about whether ministers of government should live lifestyles of the rich and famous.

Conclusion

Participants believe that South Africa's political system was designed with good intentions, but has since been corrupted by the ANC to the extent that it is now failing in providing democratic governance. Participants want ethical leaders that are accountable to their constituencies, and thus are supportive of electoral reform that increases accountability.

Fixing the Political System

Recurring suggestions and solutions put forward by participants to fix South Africa's political system include:

- Elect ethical leaders that instil trust and provide leadership by example
- Appoint officials based on skills and experience that can provide South Africa with ethical and competent management of departments and SOEs
- Advocate for electoral reform that ensures that politicians are accountable to their constituencies rather than their political parties
- Reduce political interference in the business of the state and get rid of cadre deployment
- Reduce the public sector wage bill
- Improve financial management and hold those that are guilty of financial mismanagement to account

General insights

Corruption

- **Political system:** There is an apparent failure of the political system, which allows the politically connected to act with impunity. **Participants want to see more ethical leadership** in politics and the public sector.
- **Crime and security:** participants believe that the criminal justice system is too lenient on those guilty of corruption. The pace of prosecution must be improved, and participants want to say high profile arrests of those involved in state capture.
- **Impact on the economy:** the poor state of the economy has an impact on people's willingness to tolerate corruption, but corruption also contributes to the poor state of the economy. Labour unions are deemed as part of the problem, and Eskom's woes are primarily attributable to corruption.
- **Monitoring of corruption:** authorities must adopt more progressive mechanisms of monitoring corrupt activities, so that corrupt activities may be prevented.
- **The role of education:** participants believe that South Africans are not informed well enough about the impact of corruption, and thus continue to support corrupt politicians. Furthermore, school-aged learners should be taught the importance of integrity.
- **Immigration:** corruption at the borders and Home Affairs plays a significant role in the illegal immigration issue.
- **Social justice and redress**: corruption within the governing party is perceived to have been fundamentally detrimental to programmes aimed at redress. Money meant for beneficiaries is stolen by greedy, corrupt politicians.

Crime and security

- South Africans do not feel safe in their homes and communities, and crime is seen as a deterrent to economic growth.
- **Cause of crime:** crime is seen as a symptom of the combined social ills of unemployment, poverty, inequality and lack of access to education. Furthermore, the lack of ethical leadership in the country contributes to perceptions of criminal behaviour.
- **The criminal justice system:** participants believe that criminals enjoy human rights protections at the cost of the rights of innocent citizens. Current sanctions do not serve as an effective deterrent, and not enough criminals are successfully prosecuted.
- **The state of policing:** participants believe that South Africa's law enforcement agencies are failing, but that is in part due to insufficient support from the state. The focus must be on increasing the size and efficiency of the law enforcement budget and improving the training of officers.
    - **Performance management:** participants believe that there should be improved performance management mechanisms to ensure that law enforcement achieves its goal of creating a safer society.
    - **Community policing:** participants believe that greater cooperation between the police and communities may lead to safer communities.
    - **Specialised units:** there is broad support for the reestablishment for specialised units to combat high-impact crimes.
- **The prison system:** South Africa needs more prisons, and participants believe that the conditions in prisons are too luxurious. Participants also argue that the prison system does not facilitate the rehabilitation of criminals, but rather encourages more criminal behaviour.
- **Gender-based violence:** women cannot achieve true freedom in South Africa when constantly living in fear of violence. Participants want to see the government act more progressively against GBV, including providing more support and protection.
- **Immigration:** there is a perceived link between crime and immigration, with participants believing that illegal immigrants engage in crime at a disproportionately high rate.
- **Social justice:** participants believe that the criminal justice system disproportionately disadvantages the poor and black South Africans.

Immigration

- **Criminal justice system:** participants believe that the criminal justice system is not strict enough in illegal immigration. There is a divide between support for stricter legislation and regulation regarding immigrants and stricter enforcement of existing laws.
- **Legal immigration:** participants believe that it should be easier for foreign nationals that have rare skills, the potential for creating economic growth or that want to visit South Africa as tourists to get the necessary visas.

- **Border management:** participants believe that South Africa's border management is a complete failure, which contributes significantly to the influx of illegal immigrants.
- **The legalisation of illegal immigrants:** participants are supportive of measures aimed at providing legal status to those foreign nationals that came to the country with legitimate claims for asylum. Some also believe that illegal immigrants that make significant contributions to the economy must be provided amnesty.
- **The impact on the economy:** participants believe that illegal immigrants often take jobs that should be reserved for South African citizens and that employers that employ illegal immigrants should be held to account.
- **Public resources:** the high number of illegal immigrants in the country places severe strain on the state's limited resources such as healthcare and education. Participants believe that foreign nationals should not be entitled to the same level of free services as citizens.

Jobs and the economy

- **Ideology:** Participants support economic policies that reduce the interference of government and allow for maximum growth in the private sector. Economic growth must be sustainable and provide mechanisms for the economic empowerment of those that need it.
- **Government regulation:** bureaucratic red tape and high levels of taxation are seen as detrimental to economic growth. The government must also take a stronger stance against labour unions.
- **Education:** education is seen as a crucial aspect of address unemployment and poverty. The quality of education must be increased, but the curriculum must also be diversified to provide options for artisan training.
- **SMME support:** increased support for SMMEs through financial and non-financial mechanisms has the potential to have a significant impact on economic growth.
- **Economic infrastructure:** the government must invest more in the maintenance and expansion of economic infrastructure to stimulate economic growth.
- **Natural resources and the environment:** South Africa's sensitivity to climate change must be taken into account when developing progressive, sustainable economic development strategies. The benefit derived from the country's natural resources must mostly be reserved for the citizens of the country.
- **Healthcare:** more funds must be invested in healthcare, including training and resources.
- **State-owned entities:** participants are unanimously displeased with the management of SOEs and the subsequent burden it places on South Africa's economy. Participants want political interference in the management of SOEs to be eliminated.

The political system

- **Leadership:** The underlying sentiment amongst participants is that South Africa suffers from a lack of political leadership. There is minimal trust in political leadership, and participants expect leaders to act in self-interest rather than in the public interest.
- **Existing options:** as is to be expected from the participants in this experiment, there is a high level of disillusionment with the current political options. The general feeling is that parties are too attached to political ideology and the interests of the party itself. As a result, no party can offer pragmatic solutions to the challenges facing the country.
- **Electoral reform:** participants believe the electoral system allows politicians to act with impunity, as constituents have little direct control over who is elected. There is support for electoral reform that will increase the accountability of public officeholders.
- **The public service:** participants argue that reducing political interference in public service is critical. The policy of cadre deployment, protecting incompetent and corrupt officials and lack of proper financial management debilitates the state's ability to govern effectively.
- **The role of politicians:** finally, participants believe that political leaders must lead by example and be held to a higher standard of accountability. Politicians must be elected to serve their constituents, not the interests of their party or their economic interests.

Redress

- **Participants acknowledge the impact of the country's oppressive past** on unequal development along racial lines. However, participants also believe that the ANC has failed in providing redress by enriching themselves and their cronies.
- **Economic empowerment:** participants are supportive of economic empowerment mechanisms, but believe that the current systems are only enriching a select few. Economic empowerment measures must be aimed at creating economic self-sufficiency and reserved for those that still require assistance.
- **The role of education:** unequal access to education is also deemed to be compacting factor of inequality. Educational reform is required to ensure a progressive increase in access to quality education.
- **Race relations:** race relations is seen as a topic that is used as a tool of division by politicians. However, participants argue that more must be done to improve racial relations, as improved relations may improve national unity.
- **Land reform:** participants are divided in their views on land reform, with some being supportive of aggressive land reform, some suggesting measured land reform and some being opposed to land reform. However, participants agree that policy certainty on land reform is crucial.
- **Housing:** the pace of the government's attempts at addressing the housing shortage is too slow, and the process is subjected to corruption. Alternative mechanisms at tackling the housing shortage must be developed.

Additional insights

It is clear from the analysis of the six themes that there is a great deal of overlap between themes, with interlinkages between numerous issues. When considering the dataset in its totality, three common threads permeate the majority of responses. These are discussed below.

The role of political leadership

Leadership failure is central to the woes faced by South Africa today. Corruption and crime are allowed to flourish by leaders that are implicated in the same. Economic policy decisions are not made in pursuit of long-term, sustainable economic growth, but rather based on populist demands. Illegal immigrants may enter the country freely as leaders are too weak to stand up against illegal immigration. The pace of social justice and redress is minimal due to leaders that are too busy enriching themselves or participating in petty political squabbles.

> ***South Africa requires visionary, committed, courageous and ethical leadership****; leadership that understands the importance of making decisions that are unpopular in the short-term but necessary for the long-term prosperity of the nation. The country needs servant leaders that are driven a desire to improve the lives of all their constituents, regardless of political affiliation or patronage.*

The importance of economic growth

Many of the challenges discussed by participants are symptoms of a system that neglects the most vulnerable members of society. The root causes of those symptoms are inequality, poverty and unemployment, which can most effectively be addressed by sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth.

The role of government should not be to police economic actors, but rather to provide the environment in which all

business ventures have the prospect of achieving success. Only once all South Africans are on a more equitable economic footing can the country hope to address the lack of access to quality services, gender inequality, high levels of crime, unemployment, poverty and social justice.

Access to quality education

Education is deemed to be a prominent factor in all the themes discussed. Improved education is seen as a vehicle that can increase employability, stimulate economic growth, reduce crime, teach people the evils of corruption and ensure the progressive realisation of social justice and redress.

Education should not be used merely as a political tool, but as a vehicle for empowering a nation. It must be used to transfer marketable skills and teach people the importance of ethical behaviour.

Support for Mashaba's core values

In addition to serving as a platform to give ordinary South Africans a prominent voice in the project to fix their country, Herman Mashaba also sought to use the experiment to gauge whether there were a significant number of South Africans who shared his personal value-set. If he were going to start a new political party, he wanted to ensure that it would have broad appeal. Mashaba's values can be defined as follows:

- ***Non-racialism:*** *South Africa must be a country for all its people, where someone's destiny is not determined by the colour of their skin.*
- ***Free-market economy:*** *Our government must not interfere in the economy and rather give the private sector the room they need to flourish.*
- ***Social Justice:*** *We must address the painful legacy of our past and reduce inequality to ensure that all our people have access to quality services through a pro-poor plan of action.*
- ***Rule of Law:*** *No country can flourish without the rule of law. We must tackle crime, corruption and illegal immigration head-on.*
- ***Electoral Reform:*** *Ordinary South Africans must have a direct say in selecting their public representatives. Instead of a party-list system, we need to elect those who serve us directly.*

This section discusses support for these core values, as determined through analysis of the submissions received.

Non-racialism

Non-racialism

"South Africa must be a country for all its people, where someone's destiny is not determined by the colour of their skin."

Throughout the submissions from participants, there is overwhelming support for non-racialism within South Africa. Many users emphasised that they would pledge their support to a movement that does not have race as its core focus. Participants want to see that all races are equally catered for and that the party does not use populism as a tool to gain support.

Participants across race groups are cognisant about the challenges faced by black South Africans, and that white South Africans are still enjoying the benefits of a discriminatory system. However, it is also common for participants to argue that empowering black South Africans does not need to happen at the expense of white South Africans. The best possible outcome will be achieved through the upliftment at all, even though interventions may be required to address the causes of inequality.

Even though many called for non-racialism, some users presented conservative views. Negative views regarding the exclusion of racial groups were picked up, which included the exclusion of both white and black.

Free-market economy

Free-market Economy

"Our government must not interfere in the economy and rather give the private sector the room they need to flourish."

Participants are overwhelmingly supportive of a market-based economy where government interference is reduced. However, the dangers of an entirely free-market economy are noted, with general consensus that government should limit its regulation of the economy to preventing harm. At the moment, economic policy is used to drive political agendas that are not beneficial to the

country as a whole, but rather to a small sub-section of the population.

Furthermore, many policy instruments are well-intentioned but corrupted through implementation and political interference. Participants lament the adherence to political ideology in policy-setting. They want to see solution-driven policies informed by evidence and the realities of the country.

In essence: participants are in favour of a free-market economy where the private sector can flourish without overbearing government interference. However, due to the country's legacy of unequal development and resource distribution, there have to be interventions put into place to ensure that economic empowerment opportunities are provided to those that still need it.

Participants called for cooperation between political parties, markets, and economic experts to implement policies that will improve the economy.

Social justice

Social Justice

"We must address the painful legacy of our past, and reduce inequality to ensure that all our people have access to quality services through a pro-poor plan of action."

As mentioned in the discussion of non-racialism, participants agree that many South Africans were afforded unequal opportunities for development due to the country's past of racially discriminatory policies. As such, participants believe that government does have to implement interventionist policies to ensure more equitable distribution of opportunities.

However, participants believe that the measures taken by the ANC-government since the fall of Apartheid have not contributed to reducing inequality along racial lines. Most critically, the education system and the provision of basic services have failed in empowering those parts of the population that were adversely affected by Apartheid-legislation.

It is thus necessary for a more pragmatic approach to social justice. The focus should shift away from "vanity projects," such as renaming towns and roads, to programmes that truly affect social change. Improving the education system is seen as key. The country requires political leaders that are willing to make decisions that might be unpopular in the short-term but will benefit the country in the long-term.

The rule of law

Rule of Law

"No country can flourish without the rule of law. We must tackle crime, corruption and illegal immigration head-on.

Participants are unanimous in their support for improving the rule of law. There is a general disappointment with the fact that crime, corruption and illegal immigration have been allowed to reach the levels that it has. Participants believe that we cannot hope to achieve progress without a return to the rule of law.

Some participants believe that legislative reform is required to improve the rule of law, while others believe that the solution lies with the enforcement of existing legislation. However, it is clear that criminal behaviour must be treated more harshly and that criminals, rather than innocent citizens, must live in fear.

Electoral reform

Electoral Reform

"Ordinary South Africans must have a direct say in selecting their public representatives. Instead of a party-list system, we need to elect those who serve us directly."

The support for electoral reform was a surprising outcome identified in the Interim Report. This support of electoral reform was echoed in the submissions analysed for this report. Fundamentally, participants believe that the current electoral systems do not promote accountability and that politicians are beholden to their political parties rather than the constituents that they are meant to serve.

As such, there is significant support for electoral reform that ensures direct representation rather than the current system of a party-list system. Many participants are especially interested in changes that allow the direct election of the President of the Republic.

Concluding Remarks

The People's Dialogue signifies a unique approach to politics in South Africa. Political leaders predominantly assume that they know what is best for the people they intend to serve.

However, TPD decided to deviate from that assumption and afford ordinary South Africans a voice in addressing the challenges facing their country.

The message coming from the people has been clear. Dialogue is important, but only if it is linked to action, and providing a political alternative to the system that has failed us so fundamentally.

South Africans clearly hold an inherent distrust of our current political system and parties. In 2019, 53% of our voting-age population did not vote. This is not because there are not serious problems in our country, but because most people in South Africa do not believe our political establishment will improve their lives.

The summary and suggestions made in this report serves as a solid foundation for Herman Mashaba to build a policy agenda for a new political party. Because of the inclusion of the voices of South Africans, this party should stand apart in being the only party driven from the outset by engagement with those it wishes to serve.