

SPECIAL REPORT: GAUTENG PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT STATE OF THE PROVINCE

From pandemic to economic EMERGENCY MODE

Growing the economy and creating jobs will be Gauteng's top priorities over the next two years, working closely with municipalities and national government to accelerate service delivery and improve access to housing, electricity, water, sanitation, road maintenance, visible policing, quality education and health



BOLD PLAN
Gauteng Premier David Makhura

Premier David Makhura laid out a bold plan focusing on economic recovery following the harsh impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and the resultant economic trauma inflicted on the province.

WINNING THE BATTLE AGAINST COVID-19

"Winning the battle against this pandemic and containing the spread of the coronavirus became the number one priority of government and society in general. The Covid-19 pandemic is under control and the massive vaccination programme has broken the chain between infections, hospital admissions and death. Although many people continue to get infected with Sars-CoV-2, the evidence shows that most of those who are vaccinated are more protected from progressing to severe disease or death," he said.

Makhura said the public/private partnership formed to fight Covid-19 resulted in 5.3 million individuals getting vaccinated and more than 8.6 million vaccine doses having been administered in Gauteng.

"We know that Sars-CoV-2 is still out there infecting and reinfesting people. We also know that, armed with vaccines, masks, hand sanitisers, better ventilation, physical distancing and vigilance, we are winning the battle against this pandemic. In this context, we are boldly shifting our main focus and energies to tackle unemployment through economic recovery and reconstruction.

"The economy has been devastated and the democratic gains in the quality of lives of the people have been substantially eroded. After so much death and destruction of lives and livelihoods, it is time to rebuild, and do so with the greatest sense of urgency, single-mindedness and coordination demonstrated during our emergency response to Covid-19," he said.

TIME TO REBUILD

Lessons learnt from the pandemic included mobilisation of social compacting, promptly and decisively acting against crime and corruption in government and society, as well as interdepartmental and intergovernmental cooperation to avoid government working in silos.

"As we make the economy and jobs our number one priority over the next two years, we will also work closely with municipalities and the national government to urgently accelerate service delivery and improve access to housing, electricity, water, sanitation, road maintenance, visible policing, quality education and health," he said.

Gauteng is on a positive trajectory and all the surveys done by the Gauteng City Region Observatory since 2011 show that there was continuous investment and real improvements in the quality of life, infrastructure, basic services and governance in the pre-pandemic years.

Gauteng still contributes 35% to the country's GDP, and remains a leading player in the national economy and a critical contributor to the continental economy.

"The GGT2030, our current provincial plan of action, was introduced to cement our position nationally and on the continent by doubling the size of the Gauteng economy and the number of people employed.

"The GGT2030 prioritises the transformation, modernisation and reindustrialisation of the 10 high-growth sectors, which are linked to the roll-out of the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in the five corridors and the township economic revitalisation," he said.



FUTURE LEADERS
A strong focus on youth development is included in Gauteng's plans

Delivering quality education and sustainable employment opportunities is key to solving the youth unemployment crisis.

One of the most successful interventions in making a dent in youth unemployment has been the Gauteng Provincial Government's Tshepo 1 Million programme. An independent review conducted by the Mapungubwe Institute of Strategic Reflection (Mistra) has confirmed that, without Tshepo 1 Million, the situation could be worse.

Mistra has recommended that the Tshepo youth initiative should be taken through a compacting process across the war rooms, especially the jobs and economics war room.

This programme has been systematically streamlined to be more and more effective. Between 2017 and 2021, government partnered with Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator to create demand-driven learning, earning and entrepreneurship opportunities for 718 636 young people in Gauteng over the past five years.

A total of 102 047 of those who have been through the Tshepo pathway system have been placed into earning opportunities.

More than 60% of the beneficiaries have been young women and the Tshepo youth

THE YOUTH ARE OUR FUTURE

employment flagship programme has been the core inspiration for the Presidential Youth Employment intervention launched by President Cyril Ramaphosa in 2018.

Since 2019, provincial government departments have created 48 177 youth work opportunities, of which 45.6% were in the infrastructure sector. In municipalities, 30 192 total youth work opportunities have been created, of which 34.2% were in the infrastructure sector.

The Tshepo flagship programme is being reworked into a bigger and wider integrated youth development intervention to ensure that young people are partners with government to respond more effectively to the current youth unemployment emergency.

In preparation for this new phase of a rebooted Tshepo programme

and integrated initiatives, Makhura said he would appoint a civil society-led Youth Advisory Panel, which will be supported by the Youth Directorate in his office.

"Young people must be at the centre of helping government to respond to the current youth unemployment emergency," he said.

Despite the ravages of the pandemic, the education system has shown resilience and continued to make progress. Between 2014 and 2019, the national senior certificate results have improved by an average of 85% and, for the class of 2021, 44% of bachelor passes in the country were in Gauteng. Of the schools in the province, 130 achieved a 100% pass rate and the overall pass rate was 82.8%.

Gauteng has moved from 79% to 84% for the number of children

going from Grade 1 to finishing matric. The improvement is due to the focus on improving learning conditions in township schools.

Gauteng's focus on improving education outcomes begins with building capacity in early childhood development centres (ECD) and, to this end, 2 467 ECD practitioners have achieved a qualification at NQF Level 6.

The percentage of public schools offering Grade R increased to more than 95% in 2021 – this is an increase of 24 new Grade R sites and government has dedicated more resources to rolling out coding and robotics classes.

"The focus of government with all these interventions is to narrow the performance gap between learners from fee-paying schools and those from no-fee schools, to ensure all children in the province have opportunities for their future, which includes sustainable employment," Makhura said.

In preparation for this new phase of a rebooted Tshepo programme and integrated initiatives said, "I will soon appoint a civil-society led Youth Advisory Panel which will be supported by the Youth Directorate in the Office of the Premier.

Young people must be at the centre of helping government to respond to the current youth unemployment emergency."



SPECIAL
Tshwane SEZ

A WAR ROOM TO DRIVE THE ECONOMY

A Provincial War Room, in which government and industry leaders have joined forces to drive economic recovery, unlock growth in every sector, create sustainable jobs, and support small, medium and micro enterprise (SMME) development has been established.

"Through the war room, we are working with captains of industry on programmes that will unleash growth by matching public policy support and government action with consolidated commitments by sector leaders on investments and jobs," he said.

This has been done with a deliberate emphasis on creating jobs and economic opportunities for the people of Gauteng, especially the youth and women.

Makhura said the war room had initiated a programme of quarterly sector action labs with industry representatives focusing on problem-solving and social compacting platforms. In partnership with the Public-Private Growth Initiative, it will work with businesses, organised labour, SOEs and relevant national government departments to reignite the Gauteng economy.

BOOSTING THE ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

The roll-out of Special Economic Zones across the Gauteng City Region continues unabated and goes hand-in-hand with an increased focus on infrastructure development and maintenance.

● At the Tshwane Automotive SEZ, there are 12 component manufacturers already operating and 3 440 permanent jobs have been created.

● Ri billion has already been spent through the construction phase on SMMEs from Mamelodi township, using what is now recognised as a benchmark local contractor development system nationally.

● The first new Ford Ranger will soon be manufactured at the Tshwane Automotive SEZ.

● A commitment of R45 billion has been made towards the Vaal River SEZ. It will host the new Vaal River Smart City, Green Hydrogen Innovation Hub, cannabis hub, agrologistics, aerropolis, aerodrome, air freight and revitalised steel manufacturing sector.

● Work is continuing on the N12 Corridor development with the mining houses and other private sector partners to facilitate and speed up investments in solar farms, urban agriculture and green hydrogen, as well as the expansion of the Busmark manufacturing facility.

● The Gauteng Provincial Government, working in conjunction with the presidency, has established the project management office for the Lanseria Smart City development.

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

Investing in infrastructure will result in creating efficiencies in the economy and ensuring economic growth and employment creation," Makhura said.

"Our track record on maintenance has been dismal. Delays and costing projects are areas of big concern. Investing in infrastructure includes improving efficiencies, value for money and effecting the modernisation of the delivery of government services," he said.

"All our infrastructure projects must be delivered on time and at cost. The delivery of infrastructure requires a war room approach which will bring critical role players together in one room to deal with efficiencies and delivery, and create partnerships. Should any of the implementing agents fail to deliver on time and on budget, I will not hesitate to replace them with agencies that will deliver on time and on budget."

● In Partnership with The Gauteng Provincial Government

BUILDING AN ETHICAL STATE

Makhura said one of the Gauteng government's key priorities was building a capable, ethical and developmental state. A strong ethical culture is the foundation of clean governance, and this is created through institutionalising ethics and ethical leadership in government and society, he said.

In 2016, the Gauteng Provincial Government adopted the Gauteng City Region Integrity Management Policy Framework – underpinned by the Gauteng Anti-Corruption Strategy.

In line with the commitment to institutionalise integrity and fight corruption, Makhura appointed a civil society-led Gauteng Ethics Advisory Council in 2017 to help in building an ethical culture in Gauteng. The council is made up of highly respected persons with collective experience and expertise in the fields of finance, auditing, law, ethics and integrity.

In a first for South Africa, the premier and all MECs have undergone rigorous interviews by the State Security Agency as well as lifestyle audits, in accordance with the framework developed by President Cyril Ramaphosa in line with the commitment he made in his first state of the nation address.

This work I am reporting on has been a collaborative effort with the following independent institutions: The Gauteng Ethics Advisory Council, a Civil society-led formation; the Special Investigation Unit; The Public Service Commission; The Public Protector; The Auditor General's Office and the South African Human Rights Commission.

● We welcome the SIU's public acknowledgement of the GPGs swift implementation of its referrals regarding the Health and Infrastructure Development Departments investigations.

● The recommendations for disciplinary action are related to uncovered irregularities by the SIU's investigation into the awarding of contracts for the refurbishment of the Anglo Gold Ashanti Hospital.

● Between 2014 and 2019, Gauteng made the greatest progress on audit outcomes, managing to achieve 65% clean audits and 100% unqualified audits in two successive years.

● It pleases us to report that once again in the year under review the Auditor General has affirmed that there has been improvement in the Gauteng Provincial Government audit outcomes.

COMMITTED TO SAFER COMMUNITIES

The Gauteng Provincial Government has deployed Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Brigades in all wards, and has appointed 30 dedicated social workers to fight the heinous crimes against women and children.

● 610 safety volunteers have been recruited to participate in GBV Brigades, which play a critical role

in creating community awareness of Green Doors, Ikhaya-le-Themba and victims' empowerment centres at police stations.

● The number of Green Doors has been increased to 36 wards across the province and, since 2019, 1 151 GBV and crime victims have received support in shelters.

● The Floor Management Programme was implemented

within police stations to limit secondary victimisation and waiting times for those reporting GBV-related crimes.

● Through an awareness campaign, the Gauteng Provincial Government has reached 437 895 beneficiaries.

● This awareness programme has been extended to institutions of higher learning, reaching a total of

122 382 beneficiaries and, to protect children in schools, all new staff are vetted.

● The Gauteng Provincial Government has trained 221 community policing forum members and will in total train 1 000 people as part of the war room on fighting crime, specifically crimes against women and children.



SAFETY
Law Enforcement dedicated to Crime Prevention