



OPEN SDG CLUB SOUTH AFRICA **2020** SYMPOSIUM REPORT

**"Inclusive and Transformative Recovery:
Delivering on the SDGs Decade of Action"**



The Open SDG Club South Africa 2020
was hosted by African Monitor in partnership
with the Commission for Gender Equality
and members of South African working Group on SDGs



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List of acronyms and abbreviations

CAN	Community Action Network
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CGE	Commission for Gender Equality
CoGTA	Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CRAM	Coronavirus Rapid Mobile Survey
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DPME	Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
DStv	Digital Satellite Television
FBO	Faith-Based Organisations
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HLPF	High-level Political Forum
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IRP	Integrated Resource Plan
IUDF	Integrated Urban Development Framework
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
MTSF	Medium Term Strategic Framework
MSP	Multi-stakeholder Partnership
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NDP	National Development Plan
NDSF	National Development Stakeholders Forum
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NPC	National Planning Commission
QLFS	Quarterly Labour Force Survey
RISDP	Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan
SACONO	South African Congress of Non-profit Organisations
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADC-CNGO	SADC Council of Non-governmental Organisations
SAWG	South African Working Group
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UIF	Unemployment Fund
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WFTO	World Fair Trade Organization
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization





Foreword

by Archbishop Njongo Ndungane, Founder
and President of African Monitor

We hosted the Open SDG Club South Africa 2020 Symposium as South Africa was going through testing times in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. The impact and implications of Covid-19 have been enormous. It has reversed the progress made on reducing poverty in all its dimensions as millions have lost their jobs and livelihoods, gender-based violence (GBV) has increased, and we have witnessed communities experiencing shortages of food and necessities.

The Open SDG Club South Africa 2020 Symposium, themed 'Inclusive and transformative recovery: delivering on the SDGs Decade of Action, from concept to action', created a platform for various stakeholders to deliberate on the building blocks for an inclusive and transformative recovery guided by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

I wish to commend the partnership and collaboration shown during this symposium, mainly between the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME), Commission for Gender Equality (CGE), United Nations (UN) agencies, civil society and labour movements.

There are several lessons that we should learn from the Covid-19 crisis. The first is that we need to appreciate our interconnectedness, both on a national and global scale, as a healthcare crisis that emerged in one corner of the world spread across the globe within three months, impacting the lives of billions of people. The second lesson is that multi-stakeholder approaches and collaboration will enable us to mobilise the necessary resources needed to face the impact of Covid-19, as it is becoming clear that no government will be able to address the impact of Covid-19 on its own. The South African government has recognised social compacting in the reconstruction and recovery plan to address the impact of Covid-19, and we are encouraged by the government's plan to establish a National Development Stakeholders Forum (NDSF) as part of the national SDG coordination mechanism. The third lesson is that we need to appreciate the disproportional impact of Covid-19. As the UN Secretary-General reports: *"The poorest and the most vulnerable people are affected disproportionately by the pandemic"*. Therefore, the recovery plan should

prioritise their needs and should be guided by the principle of Leave No One Behind (LNOB).

I am encouraged by the statement made by the Secretary of Planning of the National Planning Commission (NPC), Mr Tshediso Matona, when he says that: *"South Africans should be challenged to recover not to the past but to a transformed and inclusive future"*, as well as by policy recommendations for course correction released by the commission. I am confident that South Africa will emerge stronger from this crisis if we address the misalignment between our ideal plans for inclusive growth and actual economic growth policies.

I also agree with former Public Protector Prof. Thuli Madonsela, who pointed out in the symposium that: *"As South Africa rebuilds its economy, ultimate human survival is at stake and the country must adopt the SDGs systems-thinking approach. You cannot deal with poverty without dealing with education, health, digital infrastructure, access to business and opportunities. Therefore, everything in our ecosystem either lifts us or pulls us down, including GBV."*

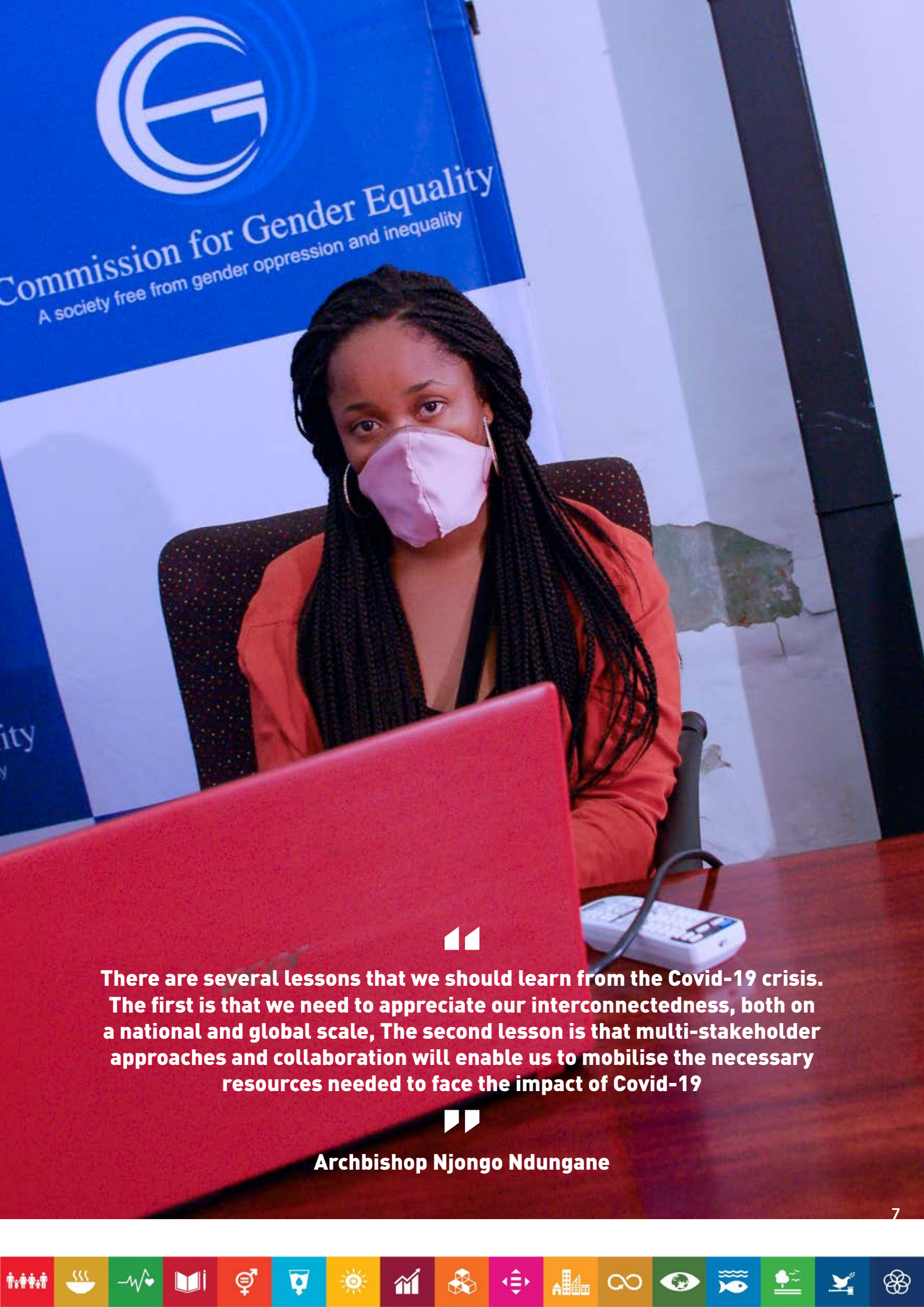
Furthermore, I would like to urge state and non-state actors to consider the Call for Action which emerged from this symposium's participants to shape inclusive and transformative programmes.

I hope that you will find this symposium report useful, as it provides insights from diverse stakeholders and contributes to a shared understanding of the challenges we continue to face in building a common cause.

I appreciate your continued support for African Monitor's work and, on behalf of the African Monitor Board, I offer warm congratulations to all who took part in the symposium.

Archbishop Njongo Ndungane





There are several lessons that we should learn from the Covid-19 crisis. The first is that we need to appreciate our interconnectedness, both on a national and global scale, The second lesson is that multi-stakeholder approaches and collaboration will enable us to mobilise the necessary resources needed to face the impact of Covid-19



Archbishop Njongo Ndungane







Foreword

by Ms Jamela Robertson, CEO of the Commission for Gender Equality

The Open SDG Club South Africa 2020 Symposium, hosted in November 2020, came at a time when the country was grappling with the impact of Covid-19. This was also a career-transitioning phase for me, as I had been newly appointed as the CEO of the CGE. It gives me great honour to pen this foreword.

The onset of Covid-19 has been declared a public health emergency of international concern and a global pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO). This global threat to health security underscores the urgent need to accelerate progress on achieving SDGs. The impact of the pandemic has exacerbated gender inequality and derailed hard-won progress in terms of women's empowerment across a number of goals, including these five: SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities).

South Africa has not been spared in the devastating impact of the pandemic; all sectors have been hard hit and women are the most impacted. The pandemic has cast a spotlight on how traditional gender roles have had an impact on the ability of women to stay active in the economy as workers and as job creators. As a country, this has provided us with an opportunity to pause, reset, and come up with an economic recovery plan. Before Covid-19, the country faced a spike in unemployment, deep-set corruption, and an overwhelmed educational and health system that has struggled to dust off apartheid legacy problems.

It is for these reasons that the theme of the Open SDG Club South Africa 2020 Symposium was aligned with the key message of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) 2020: that the 2030 Agenda should be placed at the heart of the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

When considering what needs to happen now, it becomes equally important that post-Covid recovery plans across all sectors take into consideration the reality that, overall, South Africa has gone backwards economically, and the economy had been shrinking even before the impact of Covid-19. The onset of the pandemic has resulted in the poorest being disproportionately affected. As the country plans to recover, the focus should be on getting the poorest back to viable livelihoods and placing gender at the centre of the recovery plan.

It is therefore essential that, while as a country we consider our long-term growth potential and resilience to future shocks in our post-Covid recovery plans, vivid in our minds must be the majority in our population, whose social conditions were laid bare by the pandemic, revealing the detrimental effects of patriarchy and the legacy of apartheid. Thus, the Open SDG South Africa is a vital initiative contributing to our collective efforts to LNOB in our pursuit of the SDGs.

Jamela Robertson



South Africa has not been spared in the devastating impact of the pandemic; all sectors have been hard hit and women are the most impacted



Ms Jamela Robertson





The Open SDG Club South Africa is a national SDGs club that was formed in 2019 by the African Monitor, the CGE and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), along with members of the South African Working Group (SAWG). The Open SDG Club South Africa was the adaption of Open SDG Club Berlin. The South African club has three components: The Open SDG Club multi-stakeholder dialogues, Open SDG Club community dialogues, and the symposium. Thematic working groups were constituted to lead the Open SDG Club multi-stakeholder dialogues to come to the symposium with set policy recommendations and solutions.

In 2020, the Open SDG Club South Africa Symposium was hosted in hybrid format from 24-27 November under the theme 'Inclusive and transformative recovery: delivering on the SDGs Decade of Action, from concept to action'. An online platform was complemented by community meetings from three satellite sites – in Gauteng, Free State and Western Cape – with the support of the CGE. The symposium presented an opportunity for civil society and other non-state actors in South Africa to review the SDGs and share perspectives on an open, inclusive and collaborative platform. Additionally, it was designed to showcase and encourage the transformative nature of the SDGs, especially ensuring engagement between civil society actors and decision-makers.

The theme of the Open SDG Club South Africa 2020 Symposium was aligned with a key message of the HLPF that the 2030 Agenda should be placed at the heart of recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. In the South African context, it was important to articulate how the SDGs could be at the centre of the country's Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, guided by the principle of LNOB. It was also important to identify the building blocks for an inclusive and transformative recovery.

The purpose of the symposium was to build a common vision; share transformative solutions and constructive advice on critical interventions to end poverty; reduce inequality and protect the environment, and formulate building blocks for an inclusive and transformative recovery. The specific objectives for the Open SDG Club South Africa 2020 Symposium were, therefore, to host multi-stakeholder dialogues to deliberate and propose key building blocks for an inclusive and transformative recovery guided by the SDGs; to review, validate and establish an NDSF on SDGs to strengthen the cabinet-approved national coordinating mechanism; and to propose key policy options and transformative solutions to achieve the SDGs.

The symposium brought together 36 panellists including prominent South Africans, among them the UN Resident Coordinator, the Secretary of Planning of the NPC, the CEO of the CGE, and representatives from national and international organisations. There were 210 registered participants and 36 participants from the satellite sites at the CGE offices.

The Open SDG Club hosted three community dialogues and four multi-stakeholder dialogues as forerunners to the symposium. During the symposium, there were four sessions which focused on a transformative and inclusive recovery, Multi-stakeholder Partnerships (MSPs) and a gender-responsive approach to the recovery plan.

These sessions were followed by three sessions under the SDG Lab, which included discussions on the principle of LNOB and the post-Covid-19 recovery; a climate-resilient recovery; and protecting and mitigating job losses due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The outcomes of these various sessions, as well as those of the Open SDG Club community dialogues, are presented below.





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Call for Action

A total of 246 participants from civil society, labour movements, Chapter 9 Institutions, think-thanks, regional and international activists met at the Open SDG Club South Africa 2020 Symposium in November 2020. As representatives of various Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), labour and academia, we call for inclusive and transformative recovery and accelerated action on the SDGs. We put forward the following recommendations.

1. We call for inclusive and transformative recovery that reaffirms commitment to the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and the principle of LNOB.

- SDGs must be placed at the centre of South Africa's Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, guided by the principle of LNOB.
- The government should consider an acceleration plan for the delivery of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development in line with the Decade of Action.
- Transform the government to be more democratic and accountable to citizens in a much wider and deeper way, including engaging meaningfully with communities on the ground.
- Leadership should be promoted at all levels, from grassroots to government. Communities should be empowered to be agents of their own betterment.
- Collaboration, multi-stakeholder approaches and social compacting should be supported to be more ambitious in achieving the SDGs.
- We must tackle corruption, which has depleted the capacity of the state to implement its programmes. The looting of Covid-19 funds indicates that the state's implementation capacity is being increasingly weakened by corruption.
- The green economy must be one of the focus areas of the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery plan.





2. We call on the government to fast-track the establishment of the NDSF to catalyse the delivery of the SDGs.

- We welcome the government's plan for institutionalising the NDSF as part of the SDG coordination mechanism.
- The NDSF should be anchored by SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals): 'Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development', which the UN sees as a crucial means to deliver all the SDGs (UN DESA 2015: 10); specifically targets 17.16 and 17.17 are aimed at improving and promoting MSPs.
- It should serve as a national platform for dialogue and collaborative action for state and non-state actors, including the private sector, civil society, and academia, on the implementation of the SDGs, Agenda 2063 and the Southern African Development Community Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (SADC-RISDP) by mobilising and sharing knowledge, expertise, technology, and financial resources.
- It should be guided by principles of citizen-centredness, inclusivity, reflective learning and active participation, and sustained action towards socio-economic transformation. It should empower and strengthen the agency of local communities and amplify grassroots voices.
- The government should provide an enabling environment where the advice of the NDSF is heard and equal partnerships and contributions are permitted, as well as institutionalised interactions between the government and the NDSF. The NDSF requires a strong formal institutional but independent structure, where the government is involved but not leading the structure.

3. We call for a gender-responsive approach to post-Covid-19 reconstruction and recovery.

- We note that the Covid-19 pandemic has had an enormously disproportional impact on women, who have lost their income and livelihoods and have been subjected to increased incidences of GBV.
- The South African government should place a gender lens over its Covid-19 recovery plans, as well as be informed by gender and sex-disaggregated data when considering robust investments and social policy and safety nets.
- Gender budgeting should take into consideration the differential impact of the pandemic and the fact that black women in the informal sector are excluded from the economic stimulus.
- We must align our work with the National Development Plan (NDP) and Agenda 2030 and develop indicators on how we can measure gender-responsive mechanisms.
- There should be a multi-stakeholder approach that allows all stakeholders to contribute to gender equality and the elimination of GBV. For example, instead of hosting a women's/men's parliament, we should be advocating for a gender parliament that will engage all stakeholders.
- Cabinet must be called upon to pass and adopt the national action plan on GBV, as well as domesticate the African Charter.
- GBV responders, particularly in rural areas, should have access to adequate resources and funding so that they are able to effectively respond to victims of violence.
- We should find sustainable solutions to address GBV in communities by enacting effective policies on economic empowerment for women and vulnerable groups so that there is a long-term downstream effect. An example would be the use of urban development as a way to create cities that are safe for women and curb GBV.





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WHO ARE YOU?





Section 1 Symposium

Framing the Open SDG Club South Africa 2020 Symposium by Ms Grace Kaimila-Kanjo, member of the African Monitor Board of Trustees

The Open SDG Club South Africa 2020 Symposium, under the theme of 'Inclusive and transformative recovery: delivering on the SDGs Decade of Action, from concept to action' was held while the nation was observing 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children, as well as mourning those who had lost their lives due to Covid-19. It was a challenging year as the pandemic wreaked havoc with lives and livelihoods. South Africa felt the pandemic in the economic and social sectors, where it reversed the country's progress on SDGs.

The South African government, like most African countries, responded with restrictive yet essential public health measures implemented under the national state of disaster. These included the lockdown, curfew, a ban on informal trading, religious and other social gatherings, suspension of school, and enforcement of mandatory social distancing. Given the socio-economic structure of South Africa and most African countries, characterised by a predominantly informal economy, most of these solutions deepened the suffering of the majority of citizens.

The Covid-19 lockdown resulted in increased unemployment and loss of income for many families dependent on the informal sector and subsistence farming. The poorest and most vulnerable were affected disproportionately. Women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities, refugees, migrants, informal settlements, and informal sector workers bore the burden of the pandemic because important public health measures were not friendly to these groups.

Five years have passed since the SDGs were adopted and most countries are not on track to deliver by 2030. The Covid-19 pandemic has worsened the situation, creating an urgent need to find solutions to balance the



*Ms Grace Kaimila-Kanjo, member of
the African Monitor Board of Trustees.*

meeting of SDGs while dealing with the Covid-19 crisis in South Africa.

While the crisis is affecting progress toward SDGs, it also makes their achievement more urgent and important. The crisis has made it clear that, going forward, marginalised people will have to be included and protected as much as possible as we forge a truly transformative recovery from Covid-19 and make inroads into achieving the SDGs. The question this raises is: How do we 'build back better' after Covid-19? The answer lies in putting forward an agenda that is inclusive and transformative, protecting vulnerable people and putting them first.



Therefore, the symposium discussions had to be aimed at putting in place critical and concrete strategies to 'build back better', provide transformative and constructive solutions and critical interventions to end poverty, reduce inequality and protect the environment, and formulate building blocks for an inclusive and transformative recovery. The impact of the pandemic has been enormous, but it has allowed us to look back on what we were doing wrong and has compelled us to come up with a strategy on how best to move forward.

The South African government has launched the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, which aims to direct immediate action towards economic recovery amid Covid-19, as well as to build and grow an economy that ensures sustainability, resilience and inclusion. The plan has nine priority areas: Strengthening energy security; employment-orientated strategic localisation, reindustrialisation and export promotion; food security; infrastructure investment and delivery that meets the NDP goals; support for tourism recovery and growth; green economy interventions; gender equality and economic inclusion of women and youth; public employment interventions; and macro-economic interventions. These are very important priorities, which is why one of the key messages from the HLPF 2020 was that the 2030 Agenda should be placed at the heart of the Covid-19 recovery so that it can be a 'building back better' agenda.

While the crisis is affecting progress toward SDGs, it also makes their achievement more urgent and important.

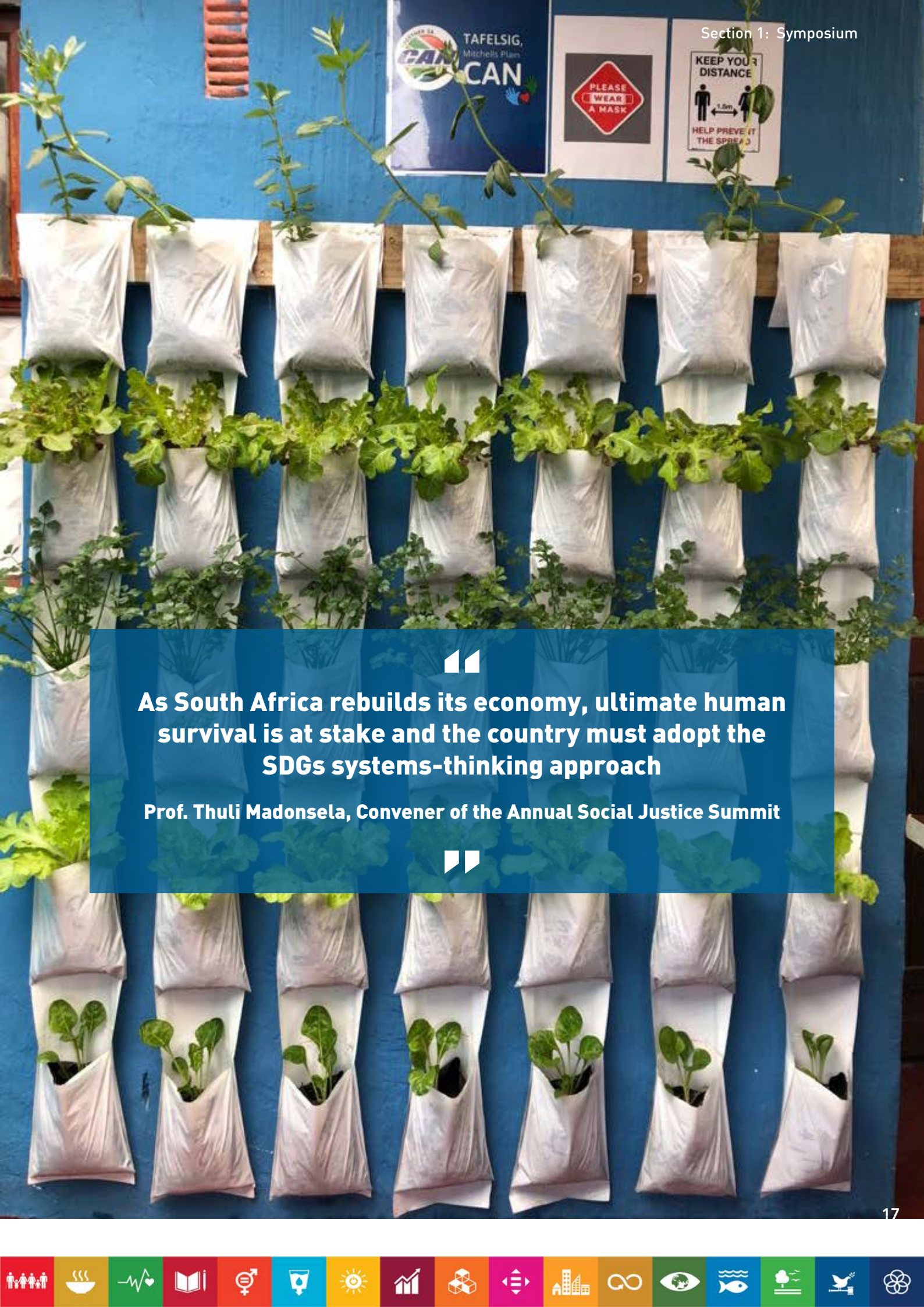
The symposium had to articulate how the SDGs could be at the centre of the country's recovery plan, guided by the principle of LNOB. Additionally, it was important that building blocks be put in place for an inclusive and transformative recovery guided by the SDGs and with a special focus on vulnerable groups such as women, youth, children, and persons with disabilities.

The Open SDG Club South Africa 2020 Symposium also had to provide the basis for a concrete plan of action on 1) The building blocks for an inclusive and transformative society; 2) Enhancing multi-stakeholder approaches to catalyse our progress on SDGs in South Africa, including the principles and modalities of the National Development Sector Forum; 3) A gender-responsive recovery plan; and policy discussion for accelerated delivery on the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.



Ms Joanie Fredericks





As South Africa rebuilds its economy, ultimate human survival is at stake and the country must adopt the SDGs systems-thinking approach

Prof. Thuli Madonsela, Convener of the Annual Social Justice Summit



Inclusive and transformative recovery: delivering on the SDGs Decade of Action, from concept to action

The Open SDG Club South Africa 2020 Symposium was opened by a high-level panel¹, which provided the conceptual and political overview for an inclusive and transformative recovery. The panel shared insights on practical steps for the effective implementation of South Africa's Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, policy options for better recovery, and youth and community responses to better recovery. Contributions from the panellists are discussed below. The session was moderated by Ms Namhla Mniki.



Ms Namhla Mniki, Convenor of the open SDG club South Africa

Conceptual and political overview for inclusive recovery, by Prof. Thuli Madonsela, Convener of the Annual Social Justice Summit

As South Africa rebuilds its economy, ultimate human survival is at stake and the country must adopt the SDGs systems-thinking approach. This approach came about when world leaders realised that poverty has push-pull determinants, and one cannot deal with poverty without dealing with education, health, digital infrastructure, and access to business and opportunities. Therefore, everything in our ecosystem, including GBV, either lifts us up or pulls us down. It is for this reason that South Africa needed to respond



Prof. Thuli Madonsela, Convener of the Annual Social Justice Summit

to the president's call to stop and reflect during the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children Campaign. This gave us time to reflect on what could have caused multiple femicides and trafficking, and how we could reset our agenda and 'build back better'.

Collaboration is one of the building blocks required for an inclusive recovery. This is important because we cannot develop consistently if we are leaving some of our people behind. In other words, we either rise together or fall together. This was understood by ancient Africans who collaborated well when dealing with difficult tasks. The collaboration between the Nelson Mandela and Imbumba foundations is a practical example of organisations working together to ensure that no one is left behind. Unfortunately, in South Africa, the bulk of our population is left behind because of the parasitic laws of the past. These laws left people without land and access to healthcare, education and infrastructure. Therefore, when we try to move forward, many people are left behind.

The idea of leaving no one behind presented by the SDGs is important because we need to help each other if we are to develop sustainably. Our ancient Africans called this *ubuntu*. The SDGs are also teaching us that we should not destroy the environment if we are to survive sustainably. Here, we can look at the example

¹ The high-level panel included the following speakers:

- Prof. Thuli Madonsela, Convener of the Annual Social Justice Summit
- Mr Tshediso Matona, Secretary of Planning of the NPC
- Ms Nardos Bekele-Thomas, Resident Coordinator of the UN and Resident Representative of the UNDP
- Ms Munnira Afrikana Katongole, youth activist
- Ms Tintswalo Makhubele, South African Congress of Non-profit Organisations (SACONO)



of how Native Americans preserve their environment. Key actions for an inclusive economy where all people play a role in its reactivation include a conscious impact planning process that ensures that everything is based on systems and a ground-up approach. The planning process should include a clear SDG plan for country, province and municipality that should be integrated into the NDP. If this is done, it will ensure that issues such as GBV and building cities that are safe for women and children will be part of the SDG agenda.

There is some misalignment between the people-centred development model and the actual development plan because the practical implementation of these strategies can prove difficult without foreign direct investment. However, if we are to ensure that no one is left behind, we should be able to reject certain types of foreign direct investment if they exclude the needs of the citizens. It is time that we create a blueprint vision for the country and measure ourselves against where we need to be. If South Africa wants to turn around, we need to allow our education system to prepare the youth to be job creators. Tangible things missing in the recovery plan are the idea of rebuilding the family fabric to be resilient to external factors and allowing communities to be agents of their betterment. The plan is also lacking around digitising rural areas, which will help to ensure that they are all connected.

Practical steps for inclusive recovery, by Mr Tshediso Matona, Secretary of Planning of the National Planning Commission

South Africa faces grave economic and social challenges, which are causing a toxic confluence of factors, namely falling investment, further diminishing tax revenues, debt service costs that crowd out all other spending and thus constrained resources for investment in development. The results are falling employment and rising poverty and inequality. However, there is hope that South Africa can defeat these challenges in the same way that it defeated parasitic apartheid.

The first practical step is for the government to put people first in planning, policies and, most importantly, our deeds. This will allow planning to translate into



Mr Tshediso Matona, Secretary of Planning of the National Planning Commission

action. The second practical step is leadership at the political level that is charismatic, servant and connected to the people on the ground. There is also a need for creating leadership at the grassroots level where the seeds of inclusivity and transformative recovery can be planted. Lastly, the third practical step is the mobilisation of people to become agents of their own betterment.

It is important to recognise and be proud of South Africa's social protection system. However, there are still many people who are deserving of grants but have fallen through the cracks. It is encouraging to know that the government has already started on the process of ensuring that all vulnerable groups are included. South Africans should be challenged not to recover to the past but to create a transformed and inclusive future.

There is indeed a misalignment between our ideal plans for inclusive growth and actual economic growth policies. This is mostly because of the bias towards relying on big business and foreign investment to create employment and grow the economy. However, research has shown that the formal sector is not able to produce the kind of employment needed by South Africa. Therefore, there is a strong need for a change in mindset at both the governmental and community level. The government should start looking at creating



South Africans should be challenged not to recover to the past but to create a transformed and inclusive future.

Mr Tshediso Matona, Secretary of Planning of the National Planning Commission



opportunities where people live, such as investing in infrastructure development in rural areas. The community also needs to change its mindset by making use of the local environment and infrastructure to create employment opportunities.

Policy options for inclusive and transformative recovery, by Ms Nardos Bekele-Thomas, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations and Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme

The high level of inequality in South Africa poses challenges for socio-economic development and this must be addressed. There is a need for urgency in addressing inequality in South Africa if the country is to deliver on the SDGs.

Based on international experiences, three policy options for an inclusive and transformative recovery are: Revisiting the education and science and technology policies and strategies; policy coherence and intergovernmental coordination; and, importantly, dialogue and engagement with people on the ground.

Firstly, in terms of education, science and technology policies and strategies, there has been progress on enrolment, completion rates and gender parity in the education sector. However, the structural and systematic problems in the South African education sector have not been addressed. Learning institutions are detached from government planning processes and continue to be money-capturing machines rather than producing the future workforce for South Africa. The planning commission needs to align the Education Sector Plan with the NDP. For example, the government should plan for how many doctors, engineers and teachers will be needed in the system and make higher

education institutions instruments of our development. This lack of planning forms part of the wastage and leakages in the system after corruption.

Cultivating youth entrepreneurship should be done through the education system. The youth should also be offered courses that will enable them to use their skills and intelligence to make a living. Business-solution centres in every district should train the youth to use their skills to become job creators and not job seekers. This will allow them to identify growth areas in their environment and make them participants in transformation.

The second issue is the problem of vertical and horizontal silos within the government and its partners. All government departments must work together horizontally and vertically to achieve the country's goals. It has been noted that the silo mentality does not only affect government departments but also other institutions including the UN. However, it is important to work hard to ensure that all plans work together to achieve national goals.

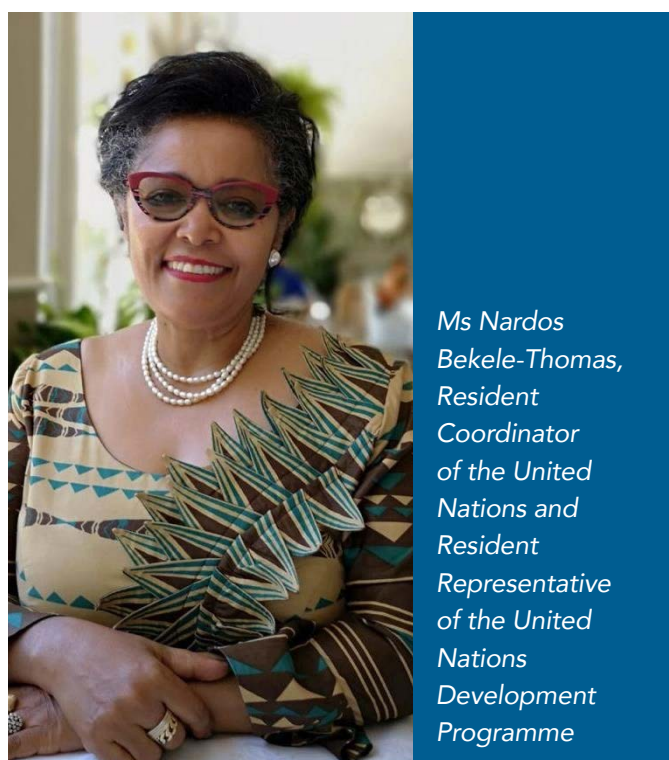
The third practical way to work towards inclusive and transformative recovery is to engage with people on the ground by hosting meetings and dialogues about their development right where they are. The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) has started reaching out to vulnerable people on the ground and this is highly encouraged.

Youth response to inclusive and transformative recovery, by Ms Munnira Afrikana Katongole, a youth activist

South African youth are creative and innovative, and the government must harness and cultivate their potential. The youth are ready and willing to contribute to their communities and achieve the SDGs. This can be seen in the number of youth volunteers during the pandemic. However, the youth are still excluded in most major decision-making processes. Young people are calling for a supportive, enabling environment, which will help them play an active role in economic development discourses. Young people are already taking ownership in their communities by cleaning the streets, supporting each other with schoolwork and volunteering to help vulnerable groups. However, an enabling environment is still lacking.

Community response to inclusive and transformative recovery, by Ms Tintswalo Makhubele, South African Congress of Non-profit Organisations

Covid-19 came as a huge disruption for women on farms, but they were quick to adapt and use the digital revolution to continue with their businesses. They started using phones to access the markets and deliver their products. In response to the health challenges caused by Covid-19, women used traditional medicines with garlic, ginger and mint to boost their immune systems, which resulted in none of them getting sick during this time. Traditional medicines from our elderly



community must be harnessed so that we reduce our reliance on pharmaceutical companies.

Women on farms learnt to be innovative and think on their feet because they had to apply for permits to supply their products during the lockdown. They also contributed to feeding vulnerable communities by donating their leftover vegetables to soup kitchens. The presence of the cooperatives worked to the advantage of the women during the pandemic and helped them to help others. It is sincerely hoped that similar organisations are formed around South Africa.

Covid-19 has made data a basic human right and we must call for the fall of data prices. This will enable women on farms to self-teach through Google and to continue to access markets from their phones.

Summary

The high-level panel discussion were instrumental in setting the scene for the symposium by highlighting how the pandemic has exacerbated pre-existing high levels of inequality in South Africa. These discussions also expressed the urgent need to create strategies that will ensure that, as South Africa recovers from Covid-19, it is an inclusive and transformative economy that is in line with the 2030 Agenda.

Summary of insights from the high-level panel:

1. South Africa must adopt the SDGs systems-thinking approach. The recovery plan should be guided by the principle of LNOB.
2. The need to promote collaboration among stakeholders is a key requirement for an inclusive recovery.
3. The government must put people first in planning, policies and, most importantly, implementation.
4. Key actions for an inclusive economy where all people play a role in its reactivation include a conscious impact planning process that ensures that everything is based on systems and a ground-up approach.
5. Build leadership at the political level that is charismatic, servant and connected to the people on the ground. There is also a need for creating leadership at the grassroots level where the seeds of inclusivity and transformative recovery can be planted. People must also be mobilised to become agents of their own betterment.
6. Revisit education, science and technology policies and strategies, and create alignment between education sector plans and the NDP; the education system has to produce the future workforce and it has to prepare the youth to be entrepreneurs and job creators.
7. Ensure policy coherence and intergovernmental coordination, and promote dialogue and engagement with people on the ground to inform the implementation of the SDGs.
8. Create a supportive and enabling environment for youth to become active citizens and play an active role in economic development discourses.



Community dialogue Tafelsig, Western Cape



Connecting local to national:

Conversation with Ms Joanie Fredericks from the Tafelsig Community Action Network

Ms Fredericks is a community leader and activist in the Tafelsig area in Cape Town. She leads the Tafelsig Community Action Network (CAN) group. The CAN initiative was set up to help communities respond to Covid-19. As a community leader, Ms Fredericks was able to start a number of projects in her community to help residents who had lost their jobs and livelihoods. These projects included running 22 feeding stations in the community, which were still active 10 months into the pandemic, establishing community household gardens and working towards creating a market for local produce, as well as using her reputation to register a business that creates employment for those who have lost their jobs.

In an interview, she highlighted that the Covid-19 pandemic has taught communities that they cannot wait for government to solve problems for them. This is because the unwillingness of people in power to listen to the grievances of the community is clear. Life-saving information on Covid-19 did not reach the people because it was not packaged in a form that they could understand, nor was it delivered by people with whom they could identify. The pandemic also exposed dependency syndrome amongst community leaders, as they were quick to seek partnerships with CANs from wealthy areas so that they could receive hand-outs.

In Ms Fredericks' view, the Covid-19 pandemic allowed South Africans to build relationships, thus counteracting the racial card that politicians play in order to divide people. Communities were able to create lively, workable and long-lasting relationships with fellow South Africans from other racial backgrounds that could stand the test of time.

In order to build inclusive and transformative societies, Ms Fredericks believes that communities should have a direct say in all discussions that concern them. The dialogue hosted by African Monitor in Tafelsig proved that communities have great suggestions for solving their problems and they should therefore be given the opportunity to voice their ideas. One way to empower communities is by allowing them to select non-political individuals, whom they can trust and hold accountable, to represent them in policy discussions.

Ms Fredericks also highlighted that communities should take ownership of their wellbeing by creating local committees that deal with local challenges. The pandemic has proved that communities are capable of solving their own problems, and it is time that community leaders realise their power and stop government from dictating to them. She shared an example of how the outreach work conducted by community leaders in Tafelsig reduced the number of horror stories reported in the area during the pandemic. Lastly, she emphasised the importance of building relationships and partnerships in building a just society. These relationships and partnerships are important, as they allow communities to draw from each other's strengths.

Ms Fredericks is determined to continue advocating for the basic human rights of her community, as well as creating more projects that are geared towards allowing the community to be self-sustaining, with government playing only a supportive role.



Team 1

Building blocks for an inclusive and transformative recovery²

As a follow-up to the high-level panel on an inclusive and transformative recovery, delivering on the SDGs Decade of Action, the session set out to explore what an inclusive and transformative post-Covid recovery in South Africa could be. The intention was also to devise building blocks, or policy options, that would ensure that vulnerable people on the ground were not left behind. The team provided insights into the impact Covid-19 has had on vulnerable communities and the building blocks needed for an inclusive recovery in South Africa.

South Africa has been facing development challenges since long before Covid-19, and as the country recovers, it will not entirely be from the Covid-19 impacts and implications. The country was already off-track in terms of the trajectory towards meeting all the targets, aspirations and goals set for Agenda 2030.

South Africa is off-track in terms of SDGs transformation and there is a need to change radically and deliberately, with a broader understanding that this change is for future generations.

From the perspective of government, the economy is central to changing the quality of life of the people and it needs to be clearer and more deliberate in structuring the economy to ensure transformation. Covid-19 has helped us understand systemic challenges that affect the livelihoods of vulnerable people, and not leaving the vulnerable behind must therefore be a priority.³

The team identified the following issues as building blocks for an inclusive recovery:

- 2 Dr Janet Munakamwe moderated a panel discussion with Ms Jamela Robertson, CEO of the CGE; Ms Stefanie Chetty, Director of Urban Policy Development and Management, CoGTA; Ms Zanele Matebula, COSATU; Mr Glenn Farred, Executive Director, SADC Council of Non-governmental Organisations (SADC-CNGO); Mr Oli Henman, Action for Sustainable Development; and Ms Riska Koopman, who was accompanied by community members from Tafesig, Katshehong and Kuruman.
- 3 Dr Kefiloe Masiteng, the Deputy Secretary of the DPME-NPC. One of her core responsibilities is the coordination of the NPC and the work done in South Africa in relation to sustainable development.
- 4 Ms Jamela Robertson, CEO of the CGE.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Prof. Thuli Madonsela, Convener of the Annual Social Justice Summit

a) Address systemic vulnerabilities

There is a need to understand systemic vulnerabilities in society, which have reinforced the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The compound vulnerability touches on many of the SDGs, including SDG 1, SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 8 and SDG 10. The need to profile vulnerable households and communities has to be reiterated.

Covid-19 exposed the gross inequalities in South Africa that continue to increase with a Gini coefficient of 0.7. Historically, disadvantaged individuals continue to suffer as transformation is still met with resistance and 'malicious' compliance⁴. This is proof that the country is leaving a lot of people behind and that little value is placed on women and children, as was seen in the explosion of GBV during the lockdown. The people on the ground did not feel cared for by the government, whose relief policies did not turn out as intended. Some people were ready to help others during the pandemic, but others thrived on stealing. There is still hope, but we must combat the issue of theft. It was recommended that our strategy of targeting the vulnerable population, women and children, must be strengthened if we are to make sure that we do not leave anyone behind. There is a need to use our resources to create livelihoods for people, as well as to use our land⁵.

b) Take the systems approach

A systems approach to economic recovery should be adopted, where development is seen as an ecosystem in which success is dependent on interlinked variables. There is, therefore, a need for an integrated solution. In the South African context, we must engage in inclusive and transformative development, as many citizens have been left behind because of previous apartheid laws. Some suggested ways to ensure inclusive development included: Clear planning at national, provincial and local level for how we aim to achieve the SDGs; measuring ourselves from where we should be and not where we are coming from; and creating enterprising communities where people become agents of foreign direct investment⁶.



c) Radical and transformative solutions

This is a moment to be radical in our solutions. The adoption of people-centric development models was suggested as an essential building block because it allows the needs of vulnerable communities to be considered in any policy or developmental plans. The use of these models would then allow communities the opportunity to hold government accountable, as well as for citizen-based monitoring. One suggested way to ensure that the needs of the people are included in development work was to strengthen social dialogues so that their voices are present in all discourses.

The fact that precarious workers and informal workers were left behind proves the need to find ways to ensure that they are included in the recovery plan. There is a need to align our interventions in the labour market with the decent work agenda and to ensure the provision of social security to all workers. Most importantly, strengthening the coalition between CSOs and trade unions was underscored, as well as establishing new solidarity networks and organising ⁷.

It was also agreed that measuring the care economy forms part of the country's success. Therefore, it was agreed that we need to identify ways to measure wellbeing that not only take Gross Domestic Product (GDP) into account, but also social impact and the wider impact on mental health.

d) Recovery at the local level

Recovery has to take place at micro and local levels. People should be supported to build back their lives and livelihoods. Solutions should tackle inequalities and focus on opening up economic opportunities, factors beyond the market that focus on social reproduction, mostly being the burden of women in communities. There was general agreement that there was a misalignment between the notion of putting people first and what happens when the government speaks about development. Therefore, there is a need for a total change in mindset from focusing on big businesses creating employment, to creating an environment that supports the people to create their own employment ⁸.

Taking into consideration the increased level of unemployment, it was agreed that it is important to support communities to use their skills, talents and resources, such as land, to create employment opportunities for themselves. One suggested way to support communities to achieve this was to create business development centres coupled with productivity

improvement centres in every district. Community development workers and productivity champions at these centres would ensure that government invests resources, so that enterprises in every district have someone to assist with their operational efficiencies. Community activists should play a leading role in these business development centres so that their communities are able to build the capacity to take the future into their own hands. Creating entrepreneurial economies would allow the South African economy to grow from within, which is important, since the government plans to increase local procurement. However, it was agreed that as the country strengthens localised township and rural economies, the capacity of local actors to produce goods and services should be increased while ensuring that counterfeit products do not flood the market. This will allow local businesses to compete in the market.

e) Social compacting and people-to-people solidarity

South Africa has to formulate a new social compact that lends the whole societal approach towards recovery. Partnership and collaboration were identified as being key. Therefore, social compacting, whereby government works with business and civil society, will assist the government to reach all the people at the grassroots level. This can be done by supporting businesses to be more ambitious in achieving the SDGs and treating civil society as a key partner that should receive support through small grants that reach the community level.

To conclude, the session highlighted how vulnerable groups such as women, children, youth, migrants, grassroots community members and informal workers bore the biggest burden of the pandemic due to socio-economic challenges that had been ignored for many years. A few building blocks that would ensure that no one would be left behind were discussed. These recommendations included: 1) Addressing vulnerabilities or loopholes in the current system, which still has traits of the apartheid system; 2) Adopting the systems approach suggested by the SDGs, where everyone works together to achieve the SDGs; 3) Radical and transformative solutions where people-centric models are adopted to ensure that the needs of vulnerable groups are addressed; 4) Recovery at the local level where communities are supported to rebuild their lives and livelihoods; and lastly 5) Social compacting, where government works with business and civil society to reach all the people at the grassroots level. All participants were determined to play their role to ensure an inclusive recovery.

⁷ Ms Zanele Matebula, COSATU

⁸ Mr Tshediso Matona, Secretary of Planning of the NPC



Connecting national to global:

Conversation with Mr Oli Henman –

Action for Sustainable Development

Oli Henman is the Global Coordinator for Action for Sustainable Development. The organisation was set up in 2015 by a group of networks that had been campaigning at national and global level for governments to deliver on ambitious SDGs.

As a global partner to the Open SDG Club South Africa, Mr Henman was approached to share some insights on global activism on SDGs and his views on the delivery of the SDGs Decade of Action. During the interview, Mr Henman highlighted that if countries amplify citizen action, increasing the ability of civil society to hold government to account through monitoring and strengthening existing coalitions and networks, the delivery of SDGs in the Decade of Action is still achievable. He believes that citizen action can be amplified by hosting platforms at key global events that profile real citizens who are making an impact on the ground. Civil society can monitor and hold government to account on its progress on SDGs every four years through the UN Voluntary National Review (VNR) report mechanism, and networks can be strengthened by building a collective voice that has the ability to maintain momentum and pressure on government. South Africa was commended for doing this well.

Mr Henman also shared insights on the collective position of CSOs on better recovery at the global level. These include: 1) Fighting inequalities, specifically around healthcare provisions, as this permeates other inequalities such as education, access to economic opportunities and health; 2) Defending the rights of activists and CSOs to speak out, as well as providing spaces for dialogues that are as open and inclusive as possible. Evidence has shown that it is becoming more difficult for CSOs to raise their voices in many countries, including Brazil; 3) Highlighting the connections between climate change and socioeconomic justice. Research has shown that economic and climate justice are connected and they should be dealt with in a manner that recognises this; 4) Rethinking the financing picture to one that makes resources available where they are most needed. Suggestions being pushed by the networks include the cancellation of debts for countries that are affected by climate change or the pandemic, and pushing for fair tax systems. This issue will also be discussed at forthcoming G7 and G20 events.

Mr Henman advised that the Open SDG Club South Africa could connect local activists by sharing events, research publications, stories and blogs on local work with Action for SD, so that it can amplify these stories and messages at international forums such as the UN HLPF and the General Assembly. In turn, Action for SDGs could identify key moments for joint messaging and make use of social media to create hashtags that could be used at the same time, as well as link national CSOs to local resident coordinators. This could help open doors to the international community.



Team 2

Enhancing multi-stakeholder approaches to catalyse the progress: A National Development Stakeholders Forum on SDGs⁹

In recognising that achieving the SDGs can only be attained through complementary action between all sectors of society, the 2030 Agenda commits to MSPs. These partnerships are seen as vehicles that will help drive innovative solutions and collaborative action. They will bring together various stakeholders who share a common problem, but who may have a different interest in it, to work on a solution and achieve a common cause.

In line with this thinking, the South African government also affirms the importance of, and the need for, MSPs in achieving its development agenda as outlined in the National Strategy for Sustainable Development and Action Plan (NSSD 1), the National Development Plan (NDP), as well as the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF). The government has thus committed to a multi-stakeholder approach, which *“has laid the foundation for building strong alliances and collaboration for the SDGs implementation between the governments and its social partners”*¹⁰.

The National Coordination Mechanism has been approved by the cabinet to strengthen the implementation of development policies and to review progress on the SDGs, the African Union’s Agenda 2063 and the SADC-RISDP.

To harness the benefits of the multi-stakeholder approach to achieve success in the implementation

of the development policies, the National Coordination Mechanism makes provision for the establishment of the National Development Stakeholders Forum (NDSF), a new feature of the coordinating mechanism. The NDSF was inspired by the need to coordinate the inputs and efforts of non-state actors in the SDGs. The aim was to create a link between government and non-governmental stakeholders, to build consensus and communicate as a unified South African voice, and to have a shared understanding and knowledge about the implementation of the SDGs and how to track their progress in South Africa.

The South African socio-economic and political environment provides an enabling environment for the NDSF to function, as the forum is being proposed at an opportune time to fill a gap, which currently does not have a multi-stakeholder platform on SDGs. The platform is also aligned to the whole-of-society approach, which is viewed as critical for moving the development agenda forward. The country is also seen as having a strong legislative and institutional environment for the platform to function. However, challenges exist that may pose a risk to the functioning of the proposed forum. These include political and governance complexities, the problem of representation and meaningful participation, and the Covid-19 pandemic, which has changed the socio-economic context considerably.

During the discussion, the proposed modalities for the NDSF were presented as follows:

Modalities

- Problem structure and objectives: The important problem the NDSF will have to address is the ‘Implementation challenge’, which comprises critical elements related to the coordination of efforts, the finding of a common purpose and shared understanding, the mobilisation of resources and the monitoring of progress on the SDGs in the country.
- Envisioned theory of change: To address the main problem, the NDSF is seen as providing a credible platform that can influence the government’s decision-making, which sets a model framework for government to engage with different sets of stakeholders.
- Functions of the NDSF: The NDSF will be a space for multi-stakeholder dialogue towards a shared understanding, common purpose and co-creation, to develop a common language and framework for development discourse in South Africa, to coordinate and drive action, and to provide oversight over the implementation of the SDGs in the country.

9 Dr Mthokozisi Tshuma, DPME; Dr Hannah Janetschek, German Council for Sustainable Development; Mr Felix Meyerhoff, The Global Forum for National SDG Advisory Bodies; Ms Yuri Ramkisson, Senior Researcher: Economic and Social Rights, Human rights Commission; Ms Rooks Moodley: Director Eastern Cape NGO Coalition; Mr Yared Tsegay, African Monitor; and Dr Dineo Seabe, post-doctoral researcher.



Governance

- The findings also included that the platform would function more effectively as a formal independent institutional structure, where the government is involved but not leading the process.
- It should comprise an Advisory Body supported by a Secretariat and Technical Sub-committees.
- It should be supported by, and be accountable to, a high-level government official with decision-making powers.
- Its membership should include representatives from government, business and CSOs (including NGOs, FBOs, youth organisations, gender groups), academia, Chapter Nine Institutions and development experts. The membership should ensure broad participation to ensure that affected communities are heard and their inputs considered in decision-making. And the selection of members should be a transparent process based on agreed criteria.

Principles

The proposed principles for the NDSF were presented as:

- Socio-economic transformation and maximum impact.
- Citizen-centredness, inclusivity and demographic diversity, including the consideration of gender inequality and the LNOB demographics.
- Active participation and engagement allow everyone to have a voice, equality of thinking, and to make a meaningful contribution.
- Collaborative leadership, co-creation and commitment.
- Participatory, reflexive and reflective learning: Evaluating the progress and change as required.
- Pragmatism, innovation, agility, flexibility and experimentation underpinned by evidence-based decision-making.
- Accountability, clean governance, credibility, openness and transparency.
- Overall, the discussion affirmed the need for the NDSF to achieve South Africa's development agenda through concerted efforts from all relevant stakeholders.

Overall, the discussion affirmed the need for the NDSF to achieve South Africa's development agenda through concerted efforts from all relevant stakeholders. The

discussion affirmed the findings and recommendations of the report but went further to emphasise the priority areas that should be focused on to ensure the success of the NDSF. The outcomes of the discussion enriched the proposed modalities and key principles for the NDSF.

The outcomes included the following points of agreement:

- The forum should be anchored by SDG 17: 'Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development' that the UN sees as a crucial means to deliver all the SDGs (UN DESA 2015: 10); specifically targets 17.16 and 17.17 are aimed at improving and promoting MSPs.
- It was affirmed that the overarching functions of the NDSF should be to 1) Provide a platform where ideas and information on avenues for resources mobilisation are shared and directed towards the achievement of the SDGs; 2) It should serve as a national platform of dialogue and collaborative action between non-state stakeholders on the implementation of the SDGs, Agenda 2063 and the SADC-RISDP; 3) It should act as a platform from which to monitor implementation to facilitate accountability and to ensure that real changes are taking place on the ground, including empowering citizens to monitor what is due to them and to hold the government to account.
- The government should provide an enabling environment where the advice of the NDSF is heard, where equal partnerships and contributions are permitted and institutionalised interactions between government and the NDSF are facilitated. This included the affirmation of the recommendation that the platform is a formal independent institutional structure.
- The NDSF should be guided by principles of citizen-centredness, inclusivity, reflective learning and active participation, and sustained action towards socio-economic transformation. In line with these principles, there was a strong view of empowering and strengthening the agency of local communities and amplifying their grassroots voices in the SDG implementation and monitoring process.



Team 3

A gender-responsive approach to post-Covid-19 reconstruction and recovery¹¹

The team had previously worked on policy recommendations for progress on SDG 5 and a gender-responsive recovery plan. Its first learning and dialogue took place on 28 October 2020 where panellists highlighted issues that affected women before and during the pandemic. The symposium was a continuation of this conversation meant to strengthen the policy recommendations.

The team was tasked with providing a critical analysis of the delivery of SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) in South Africa. Recommendations for a gender-responsive national recovery that does not leave anyone behind were also discussed during the session.

Critical analysis of the delivery of SDG 5 and SDG 16 in South Africa highlighted the fact that gender inequality still exists, and this has left women at the bottom of the pyramid. The evidence highlights the disparities in remuneration between men and women, with women receiving less pay for the same work. South African women are also not safe as a result of heightened GBV in the country.

It was agreed that South Africa is in fact in a gender civil war that is rooted in the economy. As a result, women have had to bear the heaviest burden of the pandemic caused by their loss of income as well as living in fear of being abused, killed or raped. Although the country has institutions that are designed to assist victims of abuse, these institutions lack sufficient resources to support women. It was also highlighted that government policies did not take GBV into account because when the country entered lockdown level 5, these institutions were not on the list of essential services. As a result, women were left exposed to violence and some lost their lives.

Policy recommendations for a gender-responsive recovery plan:

- Gender mainstreaming and integration grounded in sound gender analysis of the issues on the ground is one way to ensure that women are included in the recovery plan. The process will also allow the government to engage women as it develops policies, taking into consideration the needs of both women and children.
- The SDG framework indicators should be used to measure the well-being of women. Gender-disaggregated data should be adopted to assess the implications of recovery policies and plans for women and address them accordingly.
- Resources should be redirected to black women, given that for many years they have borne the burden of the economy and humanity. One way to do this would be to advocate for gender budgeting that takes into consideration the differential impact of the pandemic, and that black women in the informal sector are excluded from the economic stimulus. This includes ensuring that GBV responders, particularly in rural areas, receive adequate resources and funding so that they are able to effectively respond to victims of violence. Redirecting resources to women can reduce GBV because it empowers them to become economically independent.
- There should be equal pay for the same work. There is an economic war at the centre of the pandemic, and we need to make sure that gender does not determine one's level of pay.
- Cultural equity should be promoted through dialogues on what is gendered for South Africa. The conversation should be localised and should start at a community level. Everyone should be allowed to state what gender means to them and this should be followed by economic equity.
- Intersectionality should be avoided by having a gender parliament that recognises all gender formulations and acts as a voice of reason to parliament. Its work should be linked to the development goals and Agenda 2063 in terms of having a people-driven Africa. Additionally, there should be gender programmes that cater to all sectors of society, including young boys.
- There should be accountable solidarity, with the government enabling space for civil society to hold it accountable. Civil society should also establish its own monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The

11 Moderator, Ms Sixolile Ngcobo from the CGE; Dr Fikile Vilakazi, CSOs Response to Covid-19; Ms Rumbidzai Elizabeth Chidoori, Foundation for Human Rights (FHR); Ms Mpiwa Mangwiro, Sonke Gender Justice; Ms Corlett Letlojane, Executive Director, Human Rights Institute of South Africa (HURISA).



funding dispersed by the government for Covid-19 relief for civil society and GBV should be monitored to ensure that it reaches the intended beneficiaries.

- Government has a responsibility at a policy level to respect the voices of survivors of GBV. Survivors have the right to choose what the responses at the community level should be. The government should not continue with processes that are fragmented in terms of the voices of civil society. It should also take responsibility for listening to these voices so that its processes respond to the needs of the correct groups of people.
- Evidence-based research on GBV should be promoted by collecting data on gender trends and hotspots that truly reflect the state of GBV. This data should inform the most effective interventions.
- Collaboration amongst all citizens should be enabled in order to address the issue of GBV. This should include creating champions in communities to promote gender and social inclusion. The community, therefore, takes full responsibility for gender inclusion at a local level.

Gender mainstreaming and integration grounded in sound gender analysis of the issues on the ground is one way to ensure that women are included in the recovery plan.



Kuruman, Northern Cape



Gender-responsive approaches to the recovery plan:

Conversation with Ms Sixolile Ngcobo, Provincial Manager of the Commission for Gender Equality

Gender-responsive approaches to the recovery plan: Conversation with Ms Sixolile Ngcobo, Provincial Manager of the Commission for Gender Equality

Ms Ngcobo is a Gender and Sustainable Development Specialist and Provincial Manager at the CGE, a Chapter Nine Institution entrusted by the South African Constitution to promote respect, protection, development and attainment of gender equality in South Africa.

In an interview, Ms Ngcobo highlighted that at the CGE, SDGs work is monitored through the NDP, and CGE analysis of the NDP in 2013 revealed that South Africa's vehicle for delivering the SDGs is gender blind. The document makes no mention of gender analysis to frame women empowerment, gender and its related intersectional ties. Although there is a one-page narrative on women, the document lacks integration of gender issues in its analysis. A recent baseline study on SDGs and progress on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) conducted by the CGE showed that the NDP covers 74% of development targets with regards to SDGs, but gender considerations are still missing. Ms Ngcobo emphasised that although the country is doing well in terms of general development, people on the ground, particularly black women and girls, are not really benefiting because some communities still do not have access to water, electricity, tarred roads and economic activity. She believes that there is room for improvement in South Africa.

Ms Ngcobo believes that progress is slow in the implementation of a gender-responsive public service in South Africa. This can be substantiated by the fact that the government did not take into consideration the needs of abused women when the country went into lockdown. The government also excluded the informal sector, which is dominated by women, when it created the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan. It was only when the number of cases of GBV and femicide reported during Covid-19 increased that the government became more responsive to GBV, terming it 'a shadow pandemic', although GBV has been a problem in the country for many years. Ms Ngcobo also highlighted the point that although policies such as 40% public procurement for women-owned entities do exist, the recovery plan does not set aside these resources for women, nor does it provide for how this will be done. According to Ms Ngcobo, it is clear that although there are policies and frameworks that guide gender-responsiveness in the country, when it comes to making plans, they are not informed by these policies or frameworks.

In order to address these challenges, Ms Ngcobo suggested that investment in national gender statistical capacity that prioritises gender data should be central to the coverage, quality and timelines for gender equality and SDGs. Secondly, gender-specific indicators should be improved to meet the standards of the UN gender-specific indicators, so that we are able to plan, implement and evaluate our progress on the SDGs. Lastly, she quoted the words of the former Statistician-General who said "what gets measured gets done", and reiterated that the lack of gender indicators in our national planning processes shows that it is unlikely that they will be achieved. Therefore, she recommended that the coordination of national gender-responsive planning should be improved.

Ms Ngcobo suggested that the Open SDG Club South Africa Symposium should be hosted every year, as it is a good way to cultivate a common understanding and a shared cause in the delivery of the SDGs.





Section 2

Highlights of the Open SDG Lab dialogues

Event 1: Bringing the principle of Leave No One Behind into the post-Covid-19 Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan

This multi-stakeholder dialogue aimed to showcase alternative social and economic models that empower communities, ensure social and economic equality, and provide policy options for inclusive recovery that build the resilience of communities and their livelihoods. This was a follow up to the learning and dialogue series that had deliberated on who is being left behind in South Africa, why and where, as well as the need to empower communities by strengthening their voices and participation. The series also highlighted the need for enacting inclusive, catalytic and accountable strategies, policies and programmes.

It was evident in the learning and dialogue series that there is a need for alternative social and economic models that can accelerate inclusive economic recovery. Systemic vulnerabilities reinforced the impact of the pandemic, and challenges are essentially structural and unequal economic relationships.

The dialogue hosted on 26 November 2020 by African Monitor profiled five alternative approaches and models for inclusive recovery and development, namely: 1) the Abundant Africa initiative; 2) the Fairtrade model; 3) the Global Future Cities Programme; 4) the use of the SDG Assessment Tool; and 5) citizen-generated data.

All five initiatives illustrate examples of alternative approaches for people-centred development. For example, the Abundant Africa initiative empowers

communities to take agency and hold government accountable. The Fairtrade model allows entrepreneurs to target previously disadvantaged communities and develop their capacity to become economic actors and receive profits from enterprises. The Global Future Cities Programme empowers authorities to engage local communities and make use of the skills within their communities in the development process. The SDG Assessment Tool helps align government projects with all relevant SDGs, leading to the inclusion of communities; and the citizen-generated data initiative is pushing for the empowerment of vulnerable communities to produce their own disaggregated data. This data can be used for advocacy and campaigning for the inclusion of these vulnerable groups in government policies.

Placing communities at the centre of planning and implementation was identified as one of the strategies that would ensure that no one would be left behind. This can be done by crafting the alternative models and locating them within the communities, so that enterprises can use them to be competitive and sustainable. It was also agreed that communities are a valuable source of disaggregated data, as is seen in the case of India. Therefore, disaggregated data is useful in ensuring that no one is left behind and that the government is attending to everyone's needs. Lastly, government, CSOs and communities are encouraged to use the SDG Assessment Tool, since it helps with aligning projects to SDGs.





The discussion on a climate-resilient recovery plan has indicated that in its current form, South Africa's economic recovery plan is too reliant on fossil fuels and the expansion of natural gas will not help in reducing South Africa's carbon emissions to NDC level.



Event 2: South Africa's progress on climate action and opportunities for building climate resilience into the post-Covid-19 reconstruction and recovery

This multi-stakeholder dialogue focused on South African progress on climate action and critically reviewed the recovery plan in relation to opportunities for climate-resilient recovery.

The dialogue indicated that South Africa has not made much progress in terms of SDG 13 (Climate Action), as the country is currently behind in its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), as well as a required legislative environment. Coal development projects in the pipeline and the granting of oil and gas exploration licences are indicative of slow progress on implementing climate action. The dialogue indicated that the South African Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan has not adequately incorporated climate resilience.

Recommendations suggested at the event included radical policy change to ensure that the country can meet SDG 13 targets by 2030. Panellists highlighted that South Africa needs to enact the Climate Change Bill and must urgently shift away from its reliance on fossil fuels and its economic dependency on extractive industries such as mining. Moving towards renewable energy will help the country to meet its NDC targets. There is a need to review the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) 2019 and the Operation Phakisa Oceans Economy initiative, as well as ensure better coordination between national, provincial and local government levels on

climate action and the production of renewable energy. Businesses must be held accountable for taking climate action and industries must institute plans to reduce their carbon footprint.

The discussion on a climate-resilient recovery plan has indicated that in its current form, South Africa's economic recovery plan is too reliant on fossil fuels and the expansion of natural gas will not help in reducing South Africa's carbon emissions to NDC level. The recovery plan must put people first and pursue sustainable structural transformation, which entails shifting production towards high-value-added, higher-productivity and higher-skilled work. South Africa needs a just transition to a low-to-zero carbon energy system, where community ownership is guaranteed.

The green economy initiative contained in the recovery plan should be more ambitious, and the government should look to the decarbonisation of exports, considering that agriculture and steel are high-emitting industries. South Africa must consider exporting renewable energy to the Sub-Saharan region for foreign currency, instead of coal. The green economy should be complemented by the purple economy, internalising care costs not valued in our current economic system. Lastly, the government must move towards community consultation and involvement in the recovery process.





Placing communities at the centre of planning and implementation was identified as one of the strategies that would ensure that no one would be left behind.



Event 3: Policy options for protecting and mitigating job losses due to Covid-19

The dialogue focused on providing a critical analysis of the impact of Covid-19 on the progress of SDG 8 and policy options for protecting jobs and mitigating job losses through social protection schemes.

South Africa's progress towards achieving SDG 8 has regressed, with the economy having shed 2,2 million jobs in the second quarter of 2020 according to the latest Quarterly Labour Force Survey.¹² The lockdown regulations also resulted in 259 000 domestic workers losing their jobs, a year-on-year increase of 25%.

An August 2020 International Labour Organisation (ILO) report assessing the impact of Covid-19 on South Africa's economy and labour market projected that 1.485 million jobs are at immediate risk and 1.77 million jobs – including those of skilled workers – are at longer-term risk.¹³

South Africa has not made much progress towards achieving SDG 8 and Covid-19 has exacerbated the challenges the country faces. These challenges include the humanitarian crisis that has existed since the global financial crisis; gender dynamics associated with poverty that have seen women pushed to the periphery; youth unemployment at 70%; and a decline in GDP and industrial output.

Policy options for mitigating job losses and protecting jobs include viewing labour demand in the market as an output; improved economic governance between

fiscal policy management and trade policy to support local production – a strategic sector that is struggling in the South African economy.

- This includes focusing on labour-intensive sectors, such as agriculture, and breaking oligopolistic organised markets using a cooperative economy.
- Access to infrastructure would further require that the issues of land and financing be addressed; stabilising affected sectors of the economy and society such as women and the informal sector. For example, women's organisations demonstrated the capacity to hold and support communities during the pandemic; the voices of women should therefore be heard in decision-making so that they are not left behind.
- Intensifying the demand for local products and manufacturing to create more domestic jobs and encourage local entrepreneurship.
- Increasing the cost of retrenchment by increasing severance pay to ensure that companies only retrench as a last resort and not as a first preference.
- Amending Section 189 of the Labour Relations Act,¹⁴ which governs the process of retrenchment due to operational requirements, to compel companies to negotiate rather than consult with unions to arrive at a collective agreement.
- Strengthening bargaining councils, even with employees that are not members of trade unions, to secure better agreements from employers and employees.

12 Statistics South Africa. (2020). P0211 - Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS), Quarter 2:2020. Available at: <http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0211/P02112ndQuarter2020.pdf>

13 The term 'jobs at risk' is used as jobs may not be 'lost' permanently when an economic shock hits an economy.

14 Act 66 of 1995





Section 3

Community dialogues

Highlights of the Open SDG Club community dialogues

African Monitor, in partnership with the SAWG on the SDGs, conducted the Open SDG Club community dialogues in three provinces (Northern Cape, Gauteng and Western Cape) during October and November 2020. The community dialogues were conducted in the communities of Tafelsig (Western Cape), Kuruman (Northern Cape) and Katlehong (Gauteng). The aim was to gain an understanding of the impact of Covid-19 on these communities, their experiences with the national Covid-19 emergency response, and their understanding of the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan.

The communities were adversely impacted by Covid-19. Millions lost their income and livelihoods and faced increases in food prices and other necessities,

exclusion due to limited access to infrastructure services, and increased GBV. The negative impact was reinforced by existing vulnerabilities including high levels of poverty, limited access to water and sanitation facilities, crowded human settlements, immune-compromised populations, millions dependent on the informal sector, casual jobs and precarious employment, as well as the inability to practice social distancing or obtain fact-based information related to the virus.

The dialogues used the adapted version of the Citizens' Hearings methodology developed by African Monitor. This tailored approach allowed for the telling of the 'stories of the human face of the Covid-19 pandemic' through outcomes of Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and testimonies.



Community dialogue Tafelsig,
Western Cape





In the Northern Cape, those with livestock and farms spoke of the hardships they endured due to restrictions on movement. They could not visit their smallholdings regularly and this caused economic losses, which impacted their immediate survival as well as the future survival of their businesses.



Loss of income and livelihoods

The largest impact experienced at the grassroots level was the loss of income and livelihoods. According to early analysis based on the National Income Dynamics Study – Coronavirus Rapid Mobile Survey (NIDS- CRAM) data, 3 million jobs were shed between February and April 2020¹⁵. We have to be cautious when analysing these job losses, as many were framed as furloughed workers or temporary layoffs due to the lockdown restrictions placed on businesses. The loss of jobs and income brought onto families and households was a direct impact of the level 5 implementation of the closure of all non-essential businesses, as well as the restriction of movement of persons. In Tafelsig, many were employed in the formal economy and where their jobs were not categorised as essential, they suffered job losses.

One participant from Tafelsig noted: *“I had two jobs before Covid-19. I was doing upholstery for Spur across the Western Cape. Now I don’t have a job.”*

A similar experience was shared by a participant in Katlehong, Gauteng: *“I lost my job as a security guard during the lockdown as my company was not operating. The company promised us remuneration packages... we are still waiting.”*

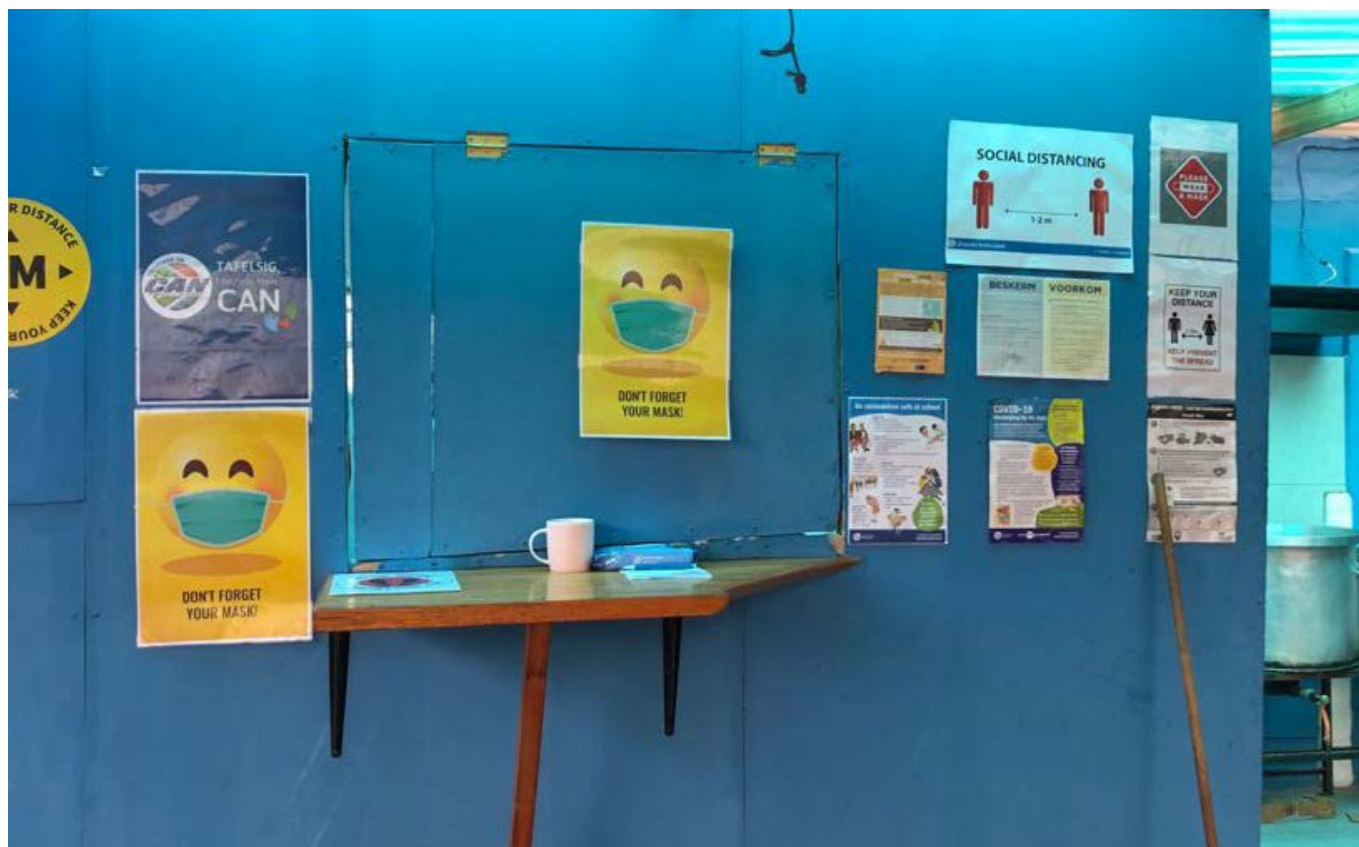
In the Gauteng community dialogue, the majority were employed in the informal sector. Losses were felt here too, with little to no access to formal channels for small business relief. The informal sector is largely occupied by women in the community, who suffered great economic losses. Small business owners who applied for relief schemes report that they are still awaiting feedback. Unsurprisingly, CRAM researchers found that: *“Job losses were disproportionately concentrated among the already disadvantaged groups in the labour market”*.

In the Northern Cape, those with livestock and farms spoke of the hardships they endured due to restrictions on movement. They could not visit their smallholdings regularly and this caused economic losses, which impacted their immediate survival as well as the future survival of their businesses.

One participant from Kuruman shared that: *“Local farmers in the villages were unable to go and look after their livestock due to lockdown”*.

15 14 Jain, R., Budlender, J., Zizzamia, R., & Bassier, I. (2020). The labour market and poverty impacts of Covid-19 in South Africa.





Food price hikes

The economic losses brought on by Covid-19 were exacerbated by food price hikes. Participants reported that this played a role in household stress and looming food insecurity. Food price increases were reported nationally despite the directive from the president: *“Regulations have been put in place to prohibit unjustified price hikes, to ensure shops maintain adequate stocks of basic goods and to prevent people from ‘panic buying’”*¹⁶.

Under the conditions of a global health pandemic, resources were stretched to their limits for most of the participants. A man from Kuruman said that the inaccessibility of supermarkets due to travel and movement restrictions forced people to purchase goods at grossly inflated prices: *“The relief grant is*

not enough. The shops based in the communities are expensive and sell staples like pap at inflated prices.” According to a report¹⁷ by Statistics South Africa, hunger has increased by nearly 3% since the start of the nationwide lockdown. According to Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice and Dignity (PMBEJD)¹⁸, the cost of the weighted household food basket increased sharply between March and April 2020 and continued on its upward trend. The highest food price spikes happened between these months, with a 5,8%, or R187.08, increase noted.

In our community citizen hearings, we found that both grant-receiving households and households with no grants experienced increased economic strain. Jain *et al* report that: *“Approximately 30% of those who were retrenched between February and April report no household-level grant protection at all.”*¹⁹

16 President Cyril Ramaphosa: Escalation of measures to combat coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic. Available at: <https://www.gov.za/speeches/president-cyril-ramaphosa-escalation-measures-combat-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic-23-mar>. Last accessed: 02 December 2020

17 Republic of South Africa. (2020). Results from Wave 2 survey on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on employment and income in South Africa. Statistics South Africa.

18 Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice and Dignity. (2020). Covid-19: Food prices continue to spike: women are getting increasingly concerned.

19 Jain, R., Budlender, J., Zizzamia, R., & Bassier, I. (2020). The labor market and poverty impacts of Covid-19 in South Africa.



Digital Divide – Education and work

Communities with limited access to infrastructural services such as Information and Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure, housing and community facilities, water and sanitation, as well as transport, have been adversely impacted by Covid-19. School closures impacted families significantly, especially lower-income families with no or little access to the internet, data, DSTv and electricity. A participant from Kuruman stated: *“Government promised programmes but didn’t deliver.”*

Participants felt that despite its intervention programmes, the Department of Basic Education failed learners, especially in the townships. These programmes were exclusionary in nature and not thought out well, as the majority of South Africa still exists in poverty with little to no access to the tools that are now a prerequisite for learning. A participant from Katlehong stated: *"When they tried having classes on the television, they were still on DSTv, which is a luxury for most people... These should've been done on SABC as well as the radio"* ²⁰.

This can be described as the Covid-19 digital divide, which continues to have a disproportionately negative impact on the already poor and marginalised. It impacted scholars, youth, employed and unemployed equally. Scholars and employees fell behind on schoolwork and deadlines due to a lack of access to data. The elderly and unemployed required smart phones and, at times, data to access Covid-19 relief grant applications. Low literacy rates within the poorest communities further compounded

the problem. According to a Katlehong participant: “*The UIF process is not friendly, especially to those with no access to smartphones.*”

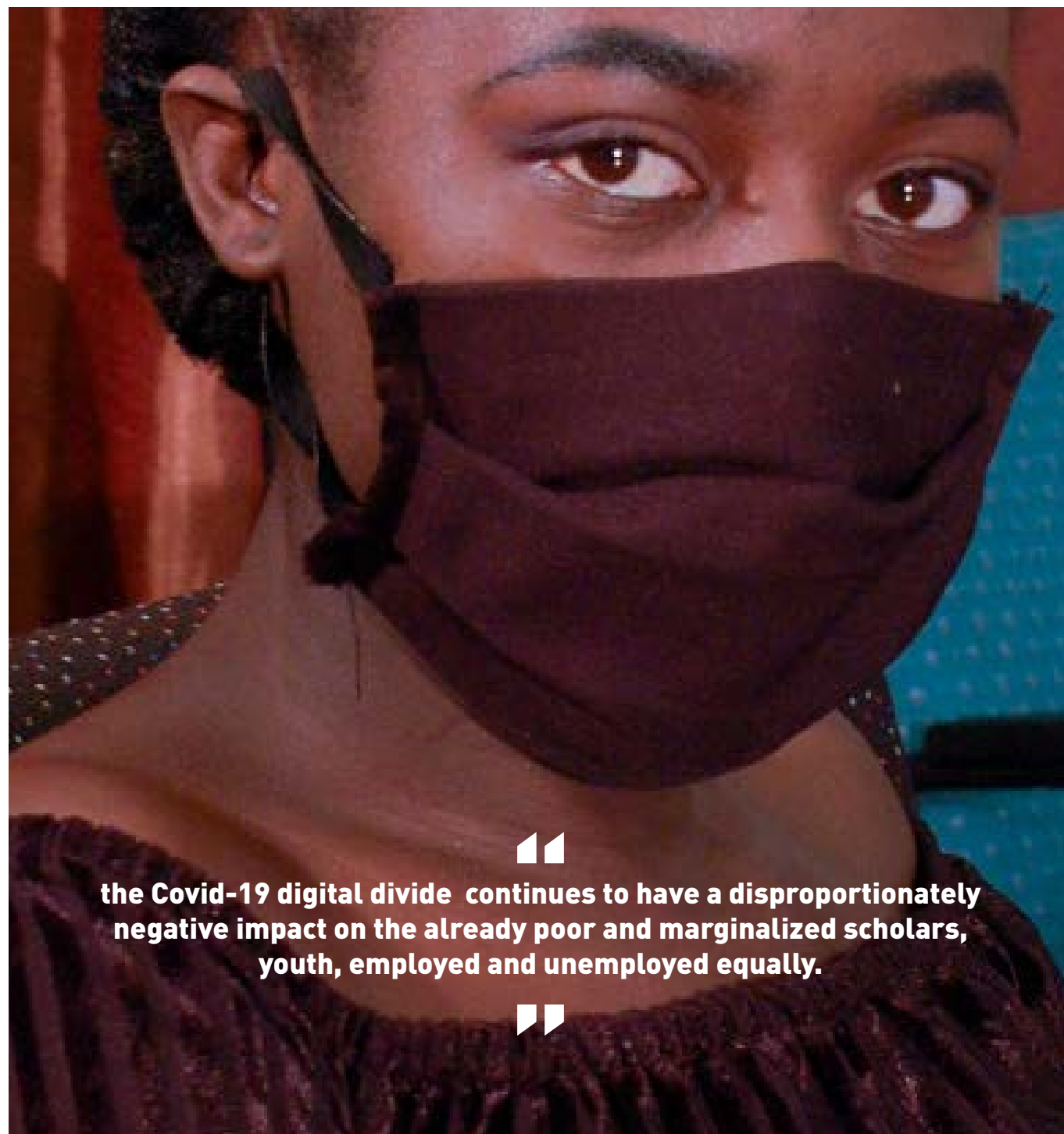
A participant from Tafelsig stated: *"I had to assist community members to understand and complete applications because they couldn't understand them."*

Jobs have been impacted in various ways by Covid-19. Ways of working have been altered, with employers required to implement social-distancing measures. For companies that can continue to operate remotely, this has been formalised mostly in work-from-home arrangements using popularised online meeting platforms such as Zoom. For this arrangement to be successful, workers need a laptop, Wi-Fi or some form of internet connectivity, electricity, as well as a space within the home in which to work. It is also worthwhile to note that tertiary education students were required to adopt the same working methodology.

Findings from the community dialogues indicated that impacts were felt disproportionately by poor and excluded community members, and those already operating outside the formal economy with few social safety nets, savings and assets. Poor and marginalised communities were left behind, a finding reinforced by the NIDS-CRAM data and early analysis. The impact of Covid-19 was particularly harsh on this segment of society, particularly for women operating in the informal

20 Digital Satellite Television (DSTv) is a direct broadcast paid satellite service in Sub-Saharan Africa. Currently, around 18.8 million people subscribe by paying a monthly fee ranging from R350-R1 200 for paid content. This contrasts with the free (apart from the annual licence fee) South African Broadcasting Corporation offering of 19 radio stations and five television broadcasts to the general public. Woza Matrics was aimed at assisting matrics during lockdown. However the choice to broadcast it largely via a paid-subscription channel indicates yet another policy implementation misalignment.





“
the Covid-19 digital divide continues to have a disproportionately negative impact on the already poor and marginalized scholars, youth, employed and unemployed equally.
”

economy and receiving grants. These communities were left to fend for themselves, with historic circumstances stacked against them.

Furthermore, women experienced an increase in unpaid care-work, as well as increased reliance on grants income. The stress of the situation cannot be discounted. Progress for both women and girl children was threatened by the ravaging impacts of Covid-19. People with disabilities felt particularly left behind. In Katlehong and Kuruman, disabled participants stated that when food parcels were being handed out, their impairments meant that by the time they reached the distribution points, no parcels were left.

The citizen hearings presented communities with a platform to reimagine their future, post-covid-19. This future is one where consultation, transparency and accountability take centre-stage in the renegotiation of the social contract and the resultant new relationship between state and citizens. The ineffectiveness of state machinery to deliver effectively on promises was also highlighted throughout this process. The growing digital divide stands to further deepen inequalities if left unaddressed. This speaks to the misalignment of policymaking and implementation in South Africa. At the best of times, the voice of the people is understood, and at the worst of times, it is merely heard.



Reality on the ground:

Conversation with Ms Lebogang Nkadimang from Kuruman

Ms Nkadimang, known as Pastor Lebo, is a community leader and activist in the Kuruman area of the Northern Cape. She is the National Coordinator for the Statistics SA civil society group, works as the chairperson for CSOs in her district, and is the co-chair for the Executive Mayor. Ms Nkadimang is also a project manager for a youth development organisation called Omang/Who Are You.

In an interview, Pastor Lebo pointed out that the Covid-19 pandemic exposed the many gaps that exist in South Africa's development work. Pastor Lebo has been involved in numerous activities in response to the Covid-19 crisis in her district. She attended Covid-19 training offered by the Department of Health, and trained communities in how to protect themselves from the virus. She also engaged with government and mining companies through weekly disaster stakeholder meetings for more CSOs to be trained in order to capacitate more community members. Furthermore, Pastor Lebo was involved in the distribution of food parcels, which allowed her to witness the outrageous conditions faced by these communities.

Pastor Lebo highlighted the following three key components for building a just and resilient society:

1) Taking a multi-sectoral approach to development work, where all stakeholders, including community members, are equally involved in the planning, budgeting and solution-making processes. In her view, communities continue to be excluded from planning processes on matters that affect them. For example, a number of households in their community were affected by the floods. The district municipality held private meetings with the mining companies to discuss this issue but no community or civil society organisations were invited to attend.

2) Transparency and accountability are another key component of a just recovery. This is because transparency opens the door to effective monitoring of public projects by civil society, thus improving implementation.

3) Lastly, Pastor Lebo recommended the 'Bantu Pele' principle where government puts human rights first as an important component of better recovery. Currently, healthcare centres and the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) facilities in the Northern Cape violate human rights, as people have to travel long distances to access services that are overburdened by the large population.

As a community leader and activist, Pastor Lebo hopes to continue upholding the human rights of the people in her community.





Conclusion

The Open SDG South Africa 2020 Symposium continued to build a platform for constructive dialogue to address the critical agenda of ensuring an inclusive and transformative recovery and delivering on the Decade of Action. The symposium provided an opportunity for dialogue between members of the NPC, the UN Resident Coordinator, the former Public Protector and Convener of the Social Forum, and more than 40 speakers over a period of four days.

This symposium continues to contribute to building a shared understanding and common cause towards the effective delivery of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. The specific objectives of the symposium were to deliberate and propose key building blocks for an inclusive and transformative recovery guided by the SDGs; and to review, validate and adopt an NDSF on SDGs to strengthen the cabinet-approved national

coordinating mechanism. Additionally, the objectives included proposing key gender-responsive policy options and transformative solutions to achieve the SDGs.

Reflecting on the symposium, its objectives were met. Concrete strategies and constructive solutions that will help South Africa 'build back better' to an inclusive and transformative economy were tabled. For example, the high-level panel and the follow-up session on building blocks for inclusive recovery held on 24 November 2020 clearly articulated the need for a change in mindset at all levels of society so that communities can take ownership of their livelihoods. This includes government providing infrastructure, such as business development centres, that will empower communities to use their skills and knowledge to become entrepreneurs.





Day two of the symposium focused on the NDSF on SDGs and the need for gender-responsive policies. The review of the NDSF structure highlighted the need for such a platform to be designed in a way that would ensure that it produces results for the people on the ground. Suggestions included that the structure should assist in addressing some of the challenges related to implementation (lack of a common language, coordination, collaboration, and participatory accountability), and that it be a formal, independent, and participatory structure to ensure its success.

Discussions on gender-responsive recovery policies highlighted that South African policies were still ignorant of the needs and rights of women, and this resulted in increased women's rights violations, especially during the hard lockdown. Some of the suggestions offered included gender mainstreaming and integration grounded on sound analysis of the issues on the ground. This was viewed as important, as it would enable the government to use gender-aggregated data to assess the implications of the recovery policies and plans on women and to address them accordingly. There was also a strong call for collaboration and cooperation amongst all members of society against GBV.

The SDG lab events held on 26 and 27 November provided critical interventions to end poverty,

reduce inequality and protect the environment, and to formulate building blocks for an inclusive and transformative recovery. For example, Event 1 on building the principle of LNOB into the post-Covid-19 Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, highlighted five alternative models to inclusive recovery and how these models could be adopted by communities.

Event 2 on South Africa's progress on SDG 13 and opportunities for building climate resilience in the post-Covid-19 reconstruction and recovery emphasised the need for radical policy changes and a move from fossil fuels to renewable energy in order to reduce carbon emissions.

Event 3 on policy options for creating improved employment opportunities for vulnerable and discriminated sectors in society, and protecting and mitigating job losses due to Covid-19, stressed the need for developing labour laws that support and protect informal workers. The group also stressed the need for solidarity amongst Africans as we rebuild the country.

The proceedings of the symposium, therefore, reverberated the call for action on an inclusive and transformative recovery and accelerated delivery on the Decade of Action.



Annexe 1: Open SDG Club South Africa 2020 Symposium speaker bios

OPENING SESSION

1. **Ms Namhla Mniki** is a founding member of Kajeno Bua Inc., a boutique consultancy organisation. She was the main host of the Open SDG Club South Africa 2020 Symposium led by the African Monitor.

2. **Ms Grace Kaimila-Kanjo** serves as the Chair of the Remuneration and Human Resources Committee of the African Monitor Board. She is the Director of Finance and Administration at the African Capacity Building Foundation. She is a seasoned development professional with over 30 years of technical work experience in international development and organisational development amassed through her work with international organisations and academia.



HIGH-LEVEL PANEL SPEAKERS

3. **Prof. Thuli Madonsela**, well known as South Africa's former Public Protector, wears a number of hats, which include being an advocate of the High Court of South Africa, the Law Trust Chair in Social Justice, a Law Professor at Stellenbosch University, where she conducts and coordinates social justice research and teaches Constitutional and Administrative Law. She is also the Convener of the Social Justice M-Plan, a Marshall Plan-like initiative aimed at catalysing progress towards ending poverty and reducing inequality by 2030, in line with the NDP and SDGs.

4. **Mr Tshediso Matona** has been the Secretary of Planning of the NPC in the Presidency, South African government, since September 2015. An economist by training and an experienced executive in the public sector, he has held several senior positions in government throughout his career. He served as a trade diplomat at the South African Embassy to the UN and World Trade Organisation (WTO) in Geneva, Switzerland, from 1996 to 1998.

5. **Ms Nardos Bekele-Thomas** has been the Resident Coordinator of the UN and Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in South Africa since 2018. She has held similar positions in Kenya and Benin. As a resident coordinator, she is responsible for high-level social, political and economic policy advisory services to the highest government authorities at national and local levels, as well as to key private sector and civil society actors.

6. **Ms Munnira Afrikana Katongole** is a youth activist and pan-Africanist who is currently stimulating her intellect and nurturing her influence through Nguvu Ya Fahari, the SADC Youth Forum, Extinction Rebellion, Girl Up and SAILA YPC on Womxn and Climate Change, as well as more intimate community and self-development projects.

7. **Ms Tintswalo Makhubele** is a dedicated community builder who aims to empower women through farming. She has received an international award in the Women Advancement Forum of the UN MDGs. She is also the Deputy Secretary of SACONO and a social entrepreneur who has expanded SACONO by partnering with strategic organisations, such as the University of South Africa (UNISA) short programmes for capacity-building of NPOs, cooperatives and youth, and Productivity SA strategic business support and mentorship.





SESSION 1 SPEAKERS

8. **Ms Riska Koopman** is currently working as an NGO consultant focusing on issues of gender, economic and tax justice. She has more than five years of experience in building, supporting and shaping activists' learning and civil society organisations/movements in sub-Saharan Africa, mostly focused on the economic and tax justice agenda, with an increasingly strong feminist lens.

9. **Ms Jamela Robertson** is the current CEO of the CGE. She has more than 20 years of experience working in the areas of gender and human rights, and she has served in the Gauteng Provincial Legislature since 2015. Her experience spans public and private institutions as well as community-based organisations serving various sectors, including education, health, and development programmes.

10. **Mr Glenn Farred** is the Executive Director of the SADC-CNGO, a regional umbrella body of NGOs operating in all SADC countries. He has nearly 30 years of experience in the developmental sector. He has worked on several international and continental development campaigns, such as the global call to action against poverty.

11. **Ms Stefanie Mills Chetty** is the Director for Urban Policy Development and Management at the National Department of CoGTA). She manages and supports provincial CoGTAs and municipalities to implement the Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF). She also coordinates international partnerships, such as the German Federal Ministry responsible for urban development in support of the urban development agenda (SDGs) and Safer City National Guidelines developed through UN-Habitat.

12. **Ms Zanele Matebula** is an international practitioner with more than 10 years of experience in the trade union movement. She is trained in Diversity and Change Management and is actively involved in Development Policy Advocacy in Africa and internationally. Her interests include climate-change campaigns, social protection, SDGs, trade, human rights, solidarity, and the Africa Continental Free Trade Area.

13. **Mr Oli Henman** is the Global Coordinator of Action for Sustainable Development. In his previous role at CIVICUS, he led key advocacy on the SDG negotiations, including leading roles in the Sustainable Development 2015 and Action/2015 projects. He has contributed regularly to policy developments on citizen participation in UN and EU decision-making.





SESSION 2 SPEAKERS

14. **Dr Dineo Seabe** is currently a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow and Lecturer at the Department of Economics at Stellenbosch University. She has been a member of the African Peer Review Mechanism's African Union Agenda 2063: SDGs Taskforce, and the UN Volunteers Southern Researchers Network Steering Committee. She is also the Founding Director of Edge Development Lab.

15. **Dr Mthokozisi Tshuma** is the Chief Sector Expert: Research, Partnership and Development at the NPC. He holds a PhD in Economics and has previously worked as the Deputy Director: Industrial Policy at the Department of Trade and Industry, and Operational Specialist: Revenue Forecasting and Analysis at the South African Revenue Services (SARS).

16. **Ms Rooks Moodley** originates from Pietermaritzburg where she was employed by the Olive Leaf Foundation as an Area Manager, based in Durban, for two years. She comes with a vast amount of expertise and skill relating to the non-profit sector. Mrs Moodley has a BA degree in Human and Social Studies from the University of South Africa and commenced her studies towards an honour's degree at the beginning of the year.

17. **Ms Yuri Ramkissoo** is a Senior Researcher at the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), heading the Economic and Social Rights (ESR) unit. She started at the SAHRC in 2008 as a Senior Researcher, Environmental Rights before taking over the ESR unit. She has an MSc (Environmental Science) and has a particular interest in the realisation of economic and social rights in the alleviation of poverty and inequality.

18. **Mr Yared Tsegay** is the Programmes Lead and Acting Director at African Monitor, as well as the co-chair of the South CSO working group on the New Development Bank (BRICS). He is a development economist with 20 years of experience in research and evidence-based advocacy, as well as campaigns working in a number of African countries to effect policy change on development finance.

19. **Dr Hannah Janetschek** is the coordinator for European and international affairs at the German Council for Sustainable Development. She coordinates international partnerships within the Global Forum for National SDG Advisory Bodies and also coordinates the council's working group on international relations and governance questions. She leads research in developing the SDG-NDC Connections tool, a textual analysis-based tool to identify linkages between national climate plans (NDCs) and the themes of the 17 goals of the 2030 Agenda





SESSION 3 SPEAKERS

20. **Dr Fikile Vilakazi** is an intellectual and social justice activist who works on sexuality, gender, LGBTIQ issues, gender diversity and gender non-conformity in the African continent and abroad. She currently works at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and belongs to Women of Vision South Africa and various feminist spaces in the country and internationally. Working with the African Union, she has organised many safe spaces for women.

21. **Ms Rumbidzai Elizabeth Chidoori** is an activist and feminist who is working for gender equality in Africa and the world. She currently works at the Foundation for Human Rights based in South Africa, and strongly believes that gender equality is critical for all our people if we want to build an inclusive, peaceful society.

22. **Ms Mpiwa Mangwiro** is an activist and feminist who is passionate about advocating for inclusive sustainable development and peace across the continent and the globe. She works at Sonke Gender Justice, which is part of the SA CSO working group on SDGs and has been working with African Monitor and other organisations regarding the implementation of the SDGs in South Africa.

23. **Ms Corlett Letlojane** is the Executive Director of the Human Rights Institute of South Africa (HURISA), one of the SAWGs on gender which has been advocating for women, peace and security and the role of civil society in building peace in communities. She is also part of Civil Society Coalition Resolution 13/25, which has been pushing South Africa to develop a national action plan to address peace and security in the country.





Event 1 speakers

SDG Lab events

24. **Mr Miles Giljam** is the Regional Policy Officer at Tearfund. He is currently working on the development of 'Abundant Africa', an African version of the Tearfund Restorative Economy report. See www.abundant.Africa for more details.

25. **Ms Musa Mpofu** is the Project Officer in Africa and Middle East chapter of the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO), working on a project that aims to promote sustainable lifestyles in domestic markets.

26. **Ms Shabari Shaily-Gerber** is the Programme Manager at the British High Commission, Pretoria, where she is steering the UK Government's R203 million Prosperity Fund Future Cities Programme in South Africa to provide technical assistance to local government. She is an architect and has more than a decade of experience in India, the UK and South Africa in delivering sustainable design and development projects. She is passionate about mainstreaming gender equality in urban transformation initiatives.

27. **Ms Sara Thabit Gonzalez** is an architect and urban planner at the headquarters of UN-Habitat in Nairobi, Kenya. She has extensive experience working with the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda implementation in various Latin American and South African countries and is currently working as a Sustainable Development Specialist in the Global Future Cities Programme.

28. **Ms Annie Namala** is an Indian social activist who has been working for Dalit rights. She is the Director of the Centre for Social Equity and Inclusion, and an international partner to African Monitor. She was appointed as a member of the National Advisory Council for the implementation of the Indian Right to Education Act in 2010.

29. **Mr Mothunye Mothiba** is the CEO of Productivity SA, a business development and consulting service. He has more than 20 years of experience in leadership and management positions in various sectors such as education, public administration in the labour market, and the gambling industry.





Event 2 speakers

SDG Lab events

30. **Mr Desmond D'sa** is Coordinator of the South Durban Community Environmental Alliance, an environmental justice organisation made up of 19 affiliate organisations. In 2014, he was awarded the Goldman Environmental Prize for the continued sustained fight for a decent living environment for the residents of the south Durban area.

31. **Ms Bongiwe Matsoha** is a researcher at Earthlife Africa. Her current research focuses on a just transition in South Africa and she has more than five years of experience in the sustainability sector. She previously worked as a sustainability analyst, gaining experience in carbon footprints, carbon tax, and carbon and water disclosure projects.

32. **Mr Gray Maguire** is the Green Economy Coordinator at the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning in the Western Cape government. He leads on the value addition from the ecological infrastructure investment framework field (EWIF). He is the founder of the Sustainable Infrastructure and Development Finance Facility (SIDAFF) and is a strong proponent of blended finance solutions and social and environmental crisis.

33. **Mr Glen Tyler-Davies** is the South African team leader for 350 Africa, a global organisation aiming to build a local grassroots climate movement to hold leaders accountable for science and justice. He is interested in climate finance as well as campaigning for divestment from fossil fuels, a tactic that is pioneered by 350 Africa in the fight to avert climate catastrophe.





Event 3 speakers

SDG Lab events

34. **Ms Phelisa Nkomo** is a development economist and social justice activist with experience rooted in community activism and economic justice. She has served on several boards with a depth of corporate governance principles, strategy development and risk management. She is currently working at the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa as a turnaround specialist.

35. **Dr Janet Munakamwe** works with mining-affected communities in South Africa and across the continent through the Wits Mining Institute and is also attached to the African Centre for Migration. She is a recipient of the ILO scholarship for trade unions and completed a PhD that focused on migrant workers in South Africa.

36. **Ms Lebogang Mulaisi** is the Labour Market Policy Coordinator for the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). She brings social policy and labour market policy together to organise the labour market in such a way that it recognises issues about social policy. She is a development and Labour economist by profession and advocates for vulnerable women in the informal sector and ensuring that the labour market policy can incorporate them.





Empower
Grassroot women
in Nigeria

Connect
People

from GS & GNV to
develop
projects

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AGENDA TO YOUTH
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#OECS

#CARIBBEAN

#WRITING LEGENDS

#BELEGENDARY

