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# POLICY BRIEF

GPL Research Unit Magazine | December 2025

IMPACT OF NON-AVAILABILITY AND LIMITED ACCESS  
TO SPORT, ARTS, CULTURE AND RECREATION  
FACILITIES ON SPORTS DEVELOPMENT IN THE  
COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE GAUTENG CITY REGION

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# EDITORIAL NOTE

DR. SIMPHIWE NGWANE  
Editor-in-Chief



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What is it to be human through a post-colonial lens? It goes without saying that the human condition is complex and multivalent, and to correct the past of the human condition requires deliberate interventions. In a recent book titled *Decolonising the Human* Dr. William Mporu and Prof. Melissa Steyn (2021) contend that, “The work of decoloniality in Africa, therefore, becomes a search for completeness through the recovery, restoration and recognition of the equal belonging of black people to the world” (2021: 2). This Policy Brief delves into the multifaceted aspect of the human condition. Each article engages the idea of the “post-colonial human” in various vantage points.

**Ms. Shikwane** explores the consequence of the unavailability and lack-of-access of sporting facilities in previously disadvantaged areas and how that inadvertently impacts the future of diversity. Homing in on policy gaps that govern which strata of government manages and maintains sporting facilities, Ms. Shikwane highlights the misnomers and blind spots that impede the country’s ability to have a black Chad le Clos or Indian Penelope Heyns.


**Mr. Nene** performs a vivisection into the failure of Gauteng Metropolitan municipality’s ability to fully utilize the Urban Sustainable Development Grant (USDG). He unpacks how the delivery of basic services falls within the ambit of local government, and how their failure of utilizing the USDG gravely impacts the realisation of a better life for the people of Gauteng. A nuanced policy analysis is foregrounded to drive the point home.

**Dr. Nenweli** offers a contemporary perspective on the subaltern state of schooling in Gauteng. She foregrounds infrastructure challenges that have the potential to impede learners’ abilities to excel academically and ultimately overcome socio-economic hurdles and break the historical barriers that heavily loom over black bodies. Through Dr. Nenweli’s pithy analysis, she highlights shortcomings that require the Education Portfolio Committee’s concerted efforts.

**Mr. Makhura** explores the proliferation of independent schools in Gauteng and foregrounds “red flags” that organs of state need to pay attention to. Through a meticulous policy analysis, Mr. Makhura embosses the gaps and shortcomings that require Executive attention, as the right to education is secured in the Constitution, but it seems the regulatory rigamarole is still in need of “dotting the I’s and crossing the t’s”.

**Ms. Gwebani** offers fascinating provocations about the impact of climate change to human settlements. Weaving an intricate narrative about the impact of building on wetlands, and the inadvertent impact of unmaintained stormwater drainage on the built environment. She foregrounds the importance of policymakers paying attention to the ripple effects of climate change.

Lastly, **Ms. Mginindo** offers forays into human trafficking. She links the rise in unemployment and opportunistic elements to the steady rise in human trafficking in Gauteng, narrowing on Soweto as a special focus. Moreover, she highlights shortcomings in the South African Policing Services’ (SAPS) reporting when it comes to such matters that often go under reported.

As you see, the human condition is explored through various entry points in this issue. I invite you to engage and cogitate on these pieces as expeditions into the post-colonial human condition. **Makwande!** 

DR. SIMPHIWE NGWANE  
Editor-in-Chief

# EDITORIAL TEAM

The Research Unit Editorial Team of the Gauteng Provincial Legislature serves as a vital support function, providing comprehensive research and analysis to inform the decision-making processes of the Legislature. By conducting in-depth studies on various topics related to the province's governance, policy, and development, the unit empowers Legislators to make informed decisions that align with the needs and aspirations of the people of Gauteng.



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## Nota Bene:

The articles represent the opinions of the authors and are not necessarily the views of the Gauteng Provincial Legislature. Please share your comments, queries and any other feedback on the articles published in this issue via email to the author.



# IMPACT OF NON-AVAILABILITY AND LIMITED ACCESS TO SPORT, ARTS, CULTURE AND RECREATION FACILITIES ON SPORTS DEVELOPMENT IN THE COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE GAUTENG CITY REGION

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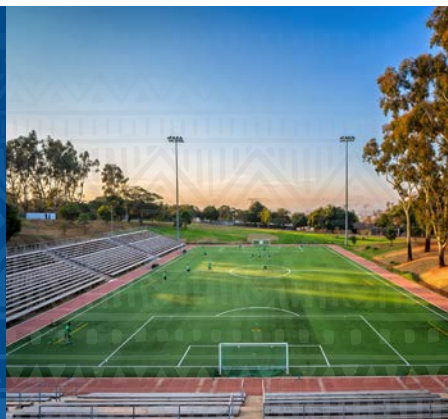


## INTRODUCTION

Access to sport, arts, culture and recreation is quite essential for development and it is arguably one of the key facets and catalysts for social and personal change. South Africa faces numerous challenges on the construction, joint use, fair access, and upkeep of sports and recreational facilities. This has far-reaching consequences for transforming and developing the sport and recreation ecosystem. According to the White Paper for Sports and Recreation (2012), if the building of sports and recreation facilities is neglected, it will have serious consequences for the building of a better South Africa, especially for the development of young people<sup>1</sup>. The National Sports and Recreation Plan (NSRP, Draft 20) purports that facilities are one of the strategic enablers for sports. Therefore, it is important to ensure that adequate and well-maintained facilities support South African sport and recreation as it forms the foundation for the entire sport and recreation system. Within this context, facilities encompass the provision of the equipment as well as the provision of basic services required for the facility to be fully functional<sup>2</sup>.



**There is a need for decentralization of infrastructure development from municipalities as well as the Department of Infrastructure Development (DID) particularly for small projects such as multi-purpose sports facilities.**



The aim of this article, therefore, is to highlight the challenges in the development, access and maintenance of sports facilities across the Gauteng province and the impact they have on sports development in communities. The article argues that there is a need for decentralization of infrastructure development from municipalities as well as the Department of Infrastructure Development (DID) particularly for small projects such as multi-purpose sports facilities. This should be the responsibility of the Department of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation noting its in-depth understanding of the landscape. This can be achieved through partnerships with the private sector where funding is a challenge.

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<sup>1</sup> White paper for Sports and Recreation, 2012

<sup>2</sup> National Sports and Recreation Plan, Draft 20

## BACKGROUND AND CHALLENGES

Prior to 2003, the development of sport and recreation facilities was the responsibility of Sport and Recreation South Africa (SRSA) under the programme: Building for Sport and Recreation Programme (BSRP). A Cabinet decision taken in 2003 required that all infrastructure funds allocated by national departments be incorporated into the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) from 2005. This new arrangement shifted the responsibilities of SRSA from infrastructure development to policy formulation, advocacy and monitoring the performances of municipalities in the provision of relevant sector infrastructure. SRSA lost momentum in addressing the backlog in sports and recreation facilities. What is noted to date is that due to competing priorities in municipalities, MIG funds are then reprioritised to the delivery of basic services rather than building sports facilities<sup>3</sup>. In Gauteng, the Department of Infrastructure Development (DID) is responsible for all infrastructure development projects and shortcomings have been identified, specifically the delivery timelines that have been excessively lengthy regardless of project scope and budget.

Research conducted by the Norms and Standards for Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Provision and Management in 2010 revealed that planning, provision and management of facilities occurs in a fragmented manner in municipalities. Furthermore, findings noted that there was lack of alignment of local approaches of facility planning and provision to provincial and national priorities and goals. In addition, facilities were inequitably distributed in most areas, especially when comparing previously disadvantaged communities, townships, and rural areas where most functional facilities are found in former white areas than in townships; and that is the case for school infrastructure. Where there are facilities in townships, many are found to be in poor condition due to vandalism, lack of maintenance, lack of security and ineffective management<sup>4</sup>.

There are different dynamics associated with the misalignment of government programmes and the availability of facilities. Firstly, there is no linkage between the programmes that the GDSACR implements in communities, and the availability of facilities. For example, the Department is implementing the learn-to-swim programme across the province to address the issue of drowning in black communities. However, there are no swimming pools in these communities where these interventions are targeted.

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<sup>3</sup> MIG use for sport and recreation infrastructure: inputs by Treasury, COGTA, SALGA and SRSA, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Norms and Standards for Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Provision and Management: An Active and Winning Nation Volume 2 - Technical Specifications.



Where the facilities are available, they are not operational due to lack of maintenance and upkeep. When concerns are raised regarding the state and maintenance of facilities, the provincial government reiterates that this responsibility lies with municipalities. While municipalities in turn counter this by maintaining that they lack the necessary funds to carry out the maintenance of these facilities.



***Secondly, the disproportionate nature of facilities across the province leads to many black children being excluded from some of the elite sports such as swimming, canoeing, golf, and cricket, amongst others, due to non-availability of facilities for these in their communities.***

As a result, those who are really interested, must travel considerable distances to access them and often have to join existing clubs in affluent neighbourhoods. This however is not sustainable, and many families cannot afford this. Desai (2010) argues that although the sport of swimming in South Africa, for instance, continues to claim global dominance in terms of competitiveness, it is still primarily regarded as a 'white' sport as it remains dominated by swimmers from white communities, especially at the highest level of competition. This is a consequence of sport infrastructure being historically concentrated in the recreational and residential areas of white communities during apartheid<sup>5</sup>.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### ***Public-Private Partnerships***

One potential solution to address the challenges faced by the provincial department and municipalities in developing and maintaining multi-purpose sports facilities is to explore public-private partnerships. During the 2020 State of the Province Address (SOPA), former Premier of the Gauteng Province, Honourable David Makhura announced that the province would be expanding sporting infrastructure in schools and communities by building 40 multi-purpose sports facilities over the next 5 years<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Desai A, editor. The race to transform: Sport in post-apartheid South Africa. Cape Town, South Africa: HSRC Press; 2010.

<sup>6</sup> Gauteng State of the Province Address by Premier David Makhura 25 February 2020.

This has not been achieved to date. As a result, the goalposts have been shifted from the fifth to the sixth legislature, and different reasons have been provided each time. On the other hand, the Gauteng Sports Confederation has managed to build over 15 multipurpose sports facilities of this nature in previously disadvantaged communities in one financial year, with five more approved for funding whose construction was to begin in October 2024<sup>7</sup>. This information was revealed during the stakeholder engagement session that the Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation Committee had with key stakeholders of the GDSACR on 13 November 2024.

### ***Improvement in IGR implementation***

Another solution is to ensure proper implementation of the intergovernmental relations (IGR) policy where there is alignment between the programmes that are implemented within the different spheres of government. In most cases, provincial government introduces programmes and municipalities do the same which results in duplication of services across the board. There should be consistent alignment between the province and local government initiatives to realize joint implementation of programmes.

## CONCLUSION

Transformation in sports will remain a dream or just a statement of intent if there are no sports facilities. The transformation charter in South African Sport stresses the need to ensure that individuals from all backgrounds have increased access to sporting opportunities and availability of facilities for the basis of transformation. This calls for all spheres of government to work together to ensure that this is made possible through the implementation of the IGR policy. Moreover, the skills and capacities of the private sector and other parties should be harnessed not only in the development of sports facilities but also in running sports efficiently.<sup>8</sup>

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# HOW GAUTENG METROS STRUGGLE TO UTILISE THE URBAN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GRANT (USDG): CITY OF TSHWANE, CITY OF JOHANNESBURG & CITY OF EKURHULENI

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“ The lack of planning coupled with ineffective Project Management Skills in the areas of Engineering, Finance, and Supply Chain Management has exposed the inefficiencies of grant expenditure by metros.



South Africa's three spheres of government consist of national, provincial and local government. The functions and powers of the levels of government find expression in the country's constitution. Local government, in particular, is known as a grassroots level authority because it is closest to the people. Generally, local government is designed to deliver basic services to communities. It comprises of clearly defined objects that guides its core mandate<sup>1</sup>.

Service delivery to communities is achieved with municipal expenditure, which is based on operating and capital expenditures. Variations in expenditures are dependent on the performance of municipalities. For instance, Gauteng metros, i.e., City of Tshwane (CoT), City of Johannesburg (CoJ) and City of Ekurhuleni (CoE) are struggling to spend their conditional grants, particularly the Urban Sustainable Development Grant (USDG). USDG came into effect in 2011 and replaced the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) for these cities. It is known as a fiscal instrument to support existing programmes<sup>2</sup>.



This article aims to discuss the failure of Gauteng metros to utilise their grant expenditure and its implications on the province's ability to fund new and existing municipal infrastructure.

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<sup>1</sup> To provide democratic and accountable government for local communities.  
To ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner.  
To promote social and economic development.  
To promote a safe and healthy environment, and  
To encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government.

<sup>2</sup> Parliamentary Monitoring Group| 2016| Urban Settlements Development Grant; Expanded Public Works Programme (Social Sector) | DPME evaluation|

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING

The delivery of basic services relies on local government that is adequately funded. For instance, various revenue streams support expenditure assigned to local government and decentralised local government in general. Municipal finance comprises of their own revenue, which is generated from rates and tariffs, supplemented by intergovernmental fiscal transfers, depicted as infrastructure grants, equitable share and other transfers. National Treasury further provides funding to supplement the capital revenue of the metros for the implementation of infrastructure projects that promote equitable, integrated, productive, inclusive and sustainable urban development. The metros utilise this grant to fund municipal bulk infrastructure such as water treatment plants (notable in the City of Tshwane), rehabilitation of roads, energy, solid waste, to mention but a few. Conditional grants are allocated for project preparations, urban settlement developments, upgrading of informal settlements, public transport as well as neighbourhood development.

## INEFFICIENCIES IN METROS' GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS

However, lack of planning coupled with ineffective project management skills in the areas of engineering, finance, and supply chain management has exposed the inefficiencies of grant expenditure by metros<sup>5</sup>. Failure to instil sound financial management and accounting practices is catastrophic for municipal performance. This is despite having a fully-fledged comprehensive system of governance and regulation in existence that informs the operation of municipal expenditure.

This comprehensive system of governance and regulation occurs as part of the general system of cooperative governance, involving national and provincial governments as well as internal municipal control mechanisms. To be precise, this encompasses the internal audit committees that flag the imminence of poor expenditure by the end of the financial year or so. One can go as far as to make mention of the incapacitated municipal public accounts committees to exercise their oversight function in relation to municipal expenditure.

Municipal finance in relation to expenditure management has worsened over the years, despite government efforts to ensure that municipal spending adheres to municipal finance management act (MFMA)<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Gauteng COGTA| 2023| Consolidated Report on the state of Gauteng municipalities|



## WEAK FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

When it comes to expenditure guidelines in relation to the above-mentioned grants, two key national departments lead the way. Firstly, National Treasury, which is responsible for the design of fiscal instruments and compliance with fiscal legislation. Second being the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), which is responsible for monitoring service delivery and the functioning of municipal systems, as well as the grants under its control. COGTA's function also intersects with other national departments such as Energy, Water Affairs, and Transport, which are also tasked to oversee the governance and regulation of grants and their framework.

### **Section 155(6) of the Constitution states that the provincial legislature must-**

- a) *Provide for the monitoring and support of local government in the province; and*
- b) *Promote the development of local government capacity to enable municipalities to perform their functions and manage their own affairs.*<sup>7</sup>

These interventions by the respective government departments have not yielded any positive outcomes since their inception. This has been flagged by the Gauteng Provincial Treasury (GPT) during the 2nd quarter of the 2024/25 financial year (FY). Provincial Treasury reported that Gauteng metros failed to spend more than half of the R3 709 billion USDG. As such, the expenditure trend shows that the three metropolitans risked losing more than R2, 4 billion (Johannesburg risks forfeiting R1, 2 billion; Tshwane risks forfeiting R635 million; and finally, Ekurhuleni risks forfeiting R607 million)<sup>8</sup>. This also has a ripple effect which is notable on the negative audit outcomes from the Gauteng metros.

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<sup>6</sup> MFMA Circular No. 80| Municipal Finance Management Act No. 56 of 2003|

<sup>7</sup> Constitution of the Republic of South Africa| 1996|

<sup>8</sup> [www.nationaltreasury.gov.za](http://www.nationaltreasury.gov.za).

Consequently, the Gauteng metros received letters from National Treasury proposing to stop a portion of the allocations of grants due to poor expenditure (below 40%). The letters said that Treasury intends to invoke a section of the Division of Revenue Act (no. 24 of 2024) which allows for it to either fully or partially stop the transfer of the grant allocations to a municipality if it anticipates that the municipality would substantially underspend the funding. A major concern had been the under-spending of budgets and non-achievement of targets. One can argue that this has serious implications on service delivery for metros in question, particularly in the City of Tshwane's long outstanding water crisis infrastructure.



## CONCLUSION

Poor expenditure in municipalities has remained one of the hurdles that hinder service delivery. National and provincial departments, including the provincial legislatures should intensify the governance systems that require prudent financial spending by the metros. The metropolitan municipalities should be understood as investment hubs considering their massive budget allocations. The failure of metros to spend budgets should be viewed as a flagrant disregard towards achieving the Gauteng City Region initiative objectives. Since the metros conceded on challenges that include delays in procurement processes, disruptions on site by local labourers, political interference as well as lengthy land acquisition processes and capital planning. Perhaps the metros should develop turnaround strategies to enhance expenditure management.<sup>98</sup>

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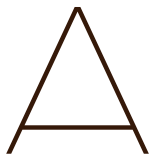
# OBSERVATIONS ON MODERN AGE INFRASTRUCTURAL CHALLENGES TO GAUTENG'S SCHOOL SAFETY, SECURITY, AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

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Although some South African public schools have exceptional infrastructure, others lack basic services such as water, electricity, sanitation, and sporting facilities, among others. Apartheid policies<sup>1</sup> have left a legacy of huge school infrastructure backlogs in what were previously black areas. While provision in previously white schools seem fairly overly resourced, with schools provided with well-equipped laboratories, libraries, and good sporting fields, amongst others. The National Department of Basic Education has established policies and funding norms that intend to make provision of resources in various areas more equitable<sup>2</sup>. Hence, the government desires to make sure that schools with good infrastructure facilities do not deteriorate and that all school infrastructure continues to be maintained, improved and is up to date. However, this is not happening in some public schools, particularly in townships and rural schools as an example. The purpose of this article is to explore the infrastructure challenges in public schools in Gauteng and their impact on learners' academic performance.

## IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

School infrastructure plays a significant role in improving teaching and learning. A solid school infrastructure increases opportunities to learn, promotes a positive learning environment, improves overall school quality, influences the educational experience, and results in better educational outcomes. However, there is a growing concern regarding the inadequate infrastructure in South African public schools leading to threatening environments for teachers and learners. Challenges related to physical infrastructure, such as aging infrastructure, poor school buildings and sports grounds conditions, and hazardous infrastructure, among others. These remain a problem in schools and have a harmful impact on the provision of teaching and learning. Physical infrastructure safety, such as safe buildings, adequate ablution facilities, and enough shelter space for work and play, amongst others, is important since physical facilities play fundamental roles in the realisation of educational goals and objectives by meeting the physical and emotional needs of both teachers and learners<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Bantu Education Act No. 47 of 1953

<sup>2</sup> <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/183018365366>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329402892>

Thus, adequate safe physical infrastructure is critical to boosting educational outcomes. However, several schools in Gauteng townships such as Fochiville, Eldoradopark, Kagiso, Soweto, and rural schools situated in Hammanskraal, Zithobeni, Sokhulum, have become death traps rather than centres of teaching and learning. This is due to a lack of safety in schools as a result of dilapidated infrastructure that may contribute to lower academic achievement among learners if not addressed.

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...the then Minister of Education, Honourable Angie Motshekga, published a lawfully binding Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure



IMAGE: [www.polity.org.za](http://www.polity.org.za)

## MINIMUM UNIFORM NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

In 2013, the then Minister of Education, Honourable Angie Motshekga, published a lawfully binding Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure. Minimum Norms and Standards are regulations that outline the infrastructural conditions that make a school a school. They stipulate the basic level of infrastructure that every school must meet to function properly, and they apply to all public schools in South Africa. According to the Minimum Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure, every school must have water, electricity, internet, working toilets, safe classrooms with a maximum of 40 learners, security, and subsequently, libraries, laboratories and sports facilities<sup>4</sup>. This is of utmost importance because it suggests that all learners in South Africa, regardless of race and class, will be able to learn in environments with adequate infrastructure facilities.

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<sup>4</sup> Department of Basic Education. 2023. Regulations relating to minimum uniform norms and standards for public school infrastructure. Government Gazette, No 37081. South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996). [www.gpwonline.co.za](http://www.gpwonline.co.za)



Lack or insufficient availability of these infrastructure components imply that the school is at risk of providing poor-quality teaching and learning and will ultimately realize a decrease in academic achievement. For instance, although the 2024 matric results improved compared to the previous academic years. That said, there are some pockets of schools that have performed below 60%, while others have performed even lower than 40%. The reasons might be attributed to poor quality teaching and learning due to inadequate school infrastructure facilities.



## POOR SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES

In Gauteng poor school building conditions are still a considerable challenge. Dilapidated school infrastructure can still be found, especially in the township and rural parts of the province. The province, being an economic hub of the country is experiencing huge migration and immigration of people from other provinces and countries. The 2024 Stats SA Mid-term report shows that the province has about 15.9 million people.<sup>5</sup> This then puts strain on the limited financial, material and physical resources including availability of schools to accommodate many learners. In townships and rural areas, the Gauteng Department of Education has made provision of mobile classrooms to some schools to address overcrowding.

Though it is a good initiative to ensure that teaching and learning do take place, however, mobile classrooms are not supposed to serve as a permanent solution. Some schools are already experiencing safety and security issues because of this interim solution. For instance, during the January 2025 school readiness campaign conducted by Gauteng Provincial Legislature at schools in Eldoradopark and Soweto to explore the overall provision of service delivery by the Department, it was observed that mobile classrooms are not conducive to teaching and learning.

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<sup>5</sup> The Stats SA's 2024 Mid-term Population Estimate report: 2024 Mid-year population estimates | Statistics South Africa.

This is because during rainy days and the winter season, the classrooms are extremely cold while during summer, they are tremendously hot. Nancefield Primary for example, illustrates that due to lack of scholar transport, learners are not allowed to take their books home during rainy days because they get wet. It was also observed that the maintenance of mobile classrooms does not take place. Steve Bikoville Secondary demonstrates that teachers and learners are not safe at school premises as there are snakes and cats that hide beneath the mobile classrooms. The school indicated that there was once an incident where learners were infected by ticks that were carried by the cats. This therefore suggests that there is a need for an urgent intervention as this poses health risks to learners and staff.

## INSUFFICIENT SAFETY AND SECURITY

Safety and security are another serious issue that is experienced by a majority of schools in the province. Most of the no-fee paying schools such as Thusong Primary, Nancefield Primary, Zithobeni Secondary, and Steve Bikoville Secondary, are experiencing break-ins that often occur due to lack of adequate security, and they do not have financial resources to strengthen school security. These schools rely on the services of four scholar patrollers who were appointed by the Department. One can argue that four scholar patrollers are not enough as only two males work the night shift, while two females work during the day, but none of them patrol the schools' property over the weekend. The scholar patrollers do not even have equipment to protect themselves when criminals enter the school premises to carry out vandalism. This suggests that schools need to enhance their relationships with law enforcement agencies in order to tighten up their security system.

## WATER AND ELECTRICITY CHALLENGES

The provision of water and electricity are other challenges that some of the schools are facing. For instance, the principal of Mahlenga Secondary indicated that they are not receiving services from municipalities. They do everything from the coffers of the school and parents are less participating in fundraising for the school as majority of them are unemployed. Further, the school has challenges with electricity and network, they are on and off, especially during the rainy days as the cables are old and need to be changed. This makes it difficult for the school principal to make telephone communication with the district regarding school

related issues. Due to connectivity issues, the smartboards have not yet been used. It was further elaborated that the school does not have money to service the borehole and to replace water filters, thus their water turns brown, and it is unhealthy for consumption, therefore they rely on the tankers to delivery water.

At Rethabile Primary School, it was found that the school is not connected to the municipal bulk water services, so they depend on borehole water which has low water pressure, hence the water is insufficient. They then also rely on water tankers that do not deliver water on a daily basis; thus, they resort to storing water in containers and buckets. Therefore, there is a need to increase the capacity of the pressure pump so that the school can have sufficient water.

## SHORTAGE OF ABLUTION AND SPORTING FACILITIES

Insufficient ablution facilities and lack of sporting facilities are one more challenge that some public schools face. Some of the school visited such as Thusong Primary and Kokosi Primary mentioned that the toilets are not enough for the number of the learners they have. At Steve Bikoville Secondary School, it was found that the 20 chemical toilets are not in good state as they have defects and have not been emptied for quite some time because the contract of the previous service provider ended. This then poses health hazards to both educators and learners because of the bad smell from the toilets.

Shortage of sporting facilities such as sports fields for different sporting codes was also mentioned. At Kokosi Primary, Thusong Primary and Steve Bikoville Secondary it was observed that the school yards are small to erect the sporting facilities. They depend on community sports fields while at Mahlenga Secondary and Zithobeni Secondary their yards are big enough, but the Department is not supporting in establishing the sport grounds, thus learners only participate in athletics. Absence of sporting facilities mean that learners are denied opportunities to take part in sports that will improve their fitness and subsequent academic performance.

Educational facilities such as adequate learning and teaching materials, smart boards, computers, furniture, etc. And infrastructure like sufficient classrooms, ablution facilities, water, and electricity, amongst others are facilities to support the learning process to run well,

specifically in achieving learning objectives. This article maintains that physical and digital school infrastructure facilities influence teaching and learning activities, for instance, the condition of the classroom which is part of the school building when in good state will promote the continuity of learning.

This implies that learners will feel comfortable, stimulated and participate in the learning process. However, if the infrastructure facilities supplied are not sufficient, then ultimately learners will become less enthusiastic and less interested, thus it can affect the activity of learners in following the learning process.

Based on the above infrastructure challenges experienced by some of the public schools located in township and rural parts of the province, it shows that the provision of school infrastructure facilities is not in line with the minimum norms and standards for public school infrastructure regulations. This, therefore, exposes safety and security as well as health risks to both educators and learners, and it may not enable the provision of opportunities to learn as well as quality teaching and learning in the classrooms. Accordingly, there is an urgent need to address school infrastructure if the Department aspires to maintain the wellbeing of the personnel and learners to improve learners' academic performance.■

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# THE EMERGENCE OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS: SUCCESS AND PIT FALLS

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Traditionally, the provision of education has always been seen as the mainstay of government to render. In more developed countries, this offering is offered until tertiary level. For instance, while Finland has some private schools, they are mostly faith-based, Steiner, Montessori, or university-run, and are funded by the government, not by tuition fees, and must follow the national curriculum. This similarly applies to Algeria with very limited access to private education.

According to the 2019 Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) General Household Survey, approximately 6.5% (110 000) of learners in South Africa attended independent schools. Whilst the Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa reported that more than 210 000 learners are enrolled in independent schools. While this number may reflect a relatively small percentage of the country's learners, the sector has seen steady growth over the past decade due to growing privatisation and commercialisation of education.



***Families turn to independent schools due to growing concerns over the quality of education made available to their children in often under-resourced and poorly performing public schooling sector.***

This rise in enrollments at independent schools is due in part to the growth in low and middle-fee independent schools that market themselves as an alternative for working-class and middle-income families. These families turn to independent schools due to growing concerns over the quality of education made available to their children in often under-resourced and poorly performing public schooling sector. Notably, in 2023, the Gauteng Department of Education reported that there are now 800 independent schools in Gauteng, serving 11% of the province's learners. According to the Department, this represented a doubling of independent schools in the past five years, almost all of which are low fee.

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<sup>1</sup> Independent Schools Association of South Africa, 2025, learner enrollment

<sup>2</sup> Independent Schools Association of South Africa, 2025, learner enrollment

## GIVING EFFECT TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT

This rise in enrolments in the independent schools' sector necessitates a strong regulatory framework to ensure minimum standards within the sector. This includes safety standards, labour rights, and fundamentally, the protection of the constitutional rights of learners in independent schools. Due to the growth in demand for better alternatives, many schools that purport to be independent schools are operating without the necessary legal accreditation. Many market themselves as registered, often using vague language to imply legitimacy, relying on parents' lack of knowledge, in the hope that no further questions will be asked. However, they either go silent or can't provide the necessary documentation when pressed for crucial details like registration numbers. Even more worrying is that some of these schools are filling up with children, while parents remain unaware that the institutions they trust are not legal and are riddled with lack of compliance.

An important facet in the independent school saga pertains to regulations and the extent to which a government department can enforce these laws and regulations. The Constitution of South Africa and the Schools Act (no. 84 of 1996) lists a few responsibilities that both the state and independent schools have towards learners applying to or attending independent schools. Taken as a whole, these responsibilities seek to ensure that all independent schools meet minimum standards, and that the rights of learners who choose to attend independent schools are protected. Accordingly, provincial and national education departments must monitor independent schools to ensure compliance with all statutory and regulatory requirements. Unfortunately, the current laws only empower the Department to issue a notice for closure in the event of non-compliance to regulations with little to no emphasis on what should be done should a "school" continue to operate illegally. In this regard, the Department is not empowered any further. This gap in legislation has resulted in the mushrooming of many illegal schools, some opening in factories, others in industrial areas because of the sheer desperation for those running those schools and those seeking alternatives.



## THE UNANTICIPATED RISE OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

The proliferation in the independent school sector was further exacerbated in 2020 due to the disruptions brought about by the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. While high and middle-income schools were able to move to online schooling relatively smoothly, most public schools lagged behind, resulting in a loss of most of the academic year for learners in public schools. This was because of difficulties in access to online learning, because either learners' did not have electronic devices, or they did not have the necessary connection to wireless internet services and data. When learners did return to school, rotations in attendance became necessary to enforce the social distancing regulations to minimize the spread of the pandemic, which further impacted teaching and learning in public schools. In that year, over 12 000 students wrote the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) examinations, achieving a 98.82% pass rate. This is compared to 578 468 learners in public schools who wrote the National Senior Certificate (NSC) exam, with a 76.2% pass rate in the 2020 Matric year. While the pass rate has seen a steady increase as demonstrated by the 2024 pass rate of 87.3%, this remains relatively low when compared to independent schools (Education, 2024).

One has observed that independent schools are marketed to parents as low-fee schools. These schools claim to provide a viable counterpart to public schools, which are often overcrowded and are widely reported as being dysfunctional. Perhaps the resultant malfunction of state schools is a contributory factor to the over emergence of and proliferation of independent schools. While there is a need to express parental choice, underpinned by the desire to provide the best opportunities for one's child and have them educated in accordance with parental beliefs. There is also a need to ensure that this education is provided within the ambits of the regulatory framework of education in South Africa. The notion of education as a public good that is widely entrenched as a fundamental right, which subsequently obliges the state to provide equal access to quality education. In the context of a public education crisis as demonstrated by unsafe schooling environment in some parts of the country, overcrowding, and lack of adequate teacher and content support. Not only in South Africa, but also in other countries, proponents of a market solution argue that private education, through the provision of low-fee schools or voucher systems or charter schools, provides choices to parents, promotes accountability, produces greater cost efficiencies and provides even better-quality education than public schools.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> School Choice Empowers Families and Creates Greater Student Outcomes | Issues

Increasingly, however, there is a growing number of studies that negate the premise that increasing privatisation is the solution to educational quality (Morales, 2017). On the other hand, there is an emergent body of evidence that suggests there are negative effects of privatisation on the right to education, access to quality education, equity and teaching, and that it increases inequality in society. There is also a concern that for-profit corporations favour the interests of shareholders rather than the rights of learners. Furthermore, there is a huge social cost to the growth of independent schooling: middle-class flight from the public sector, and with it, the professional and financial resources that accompany such flight.

## CONCLUSION

While the constitution recognises the right to choose and the South African Schools Act of 1996 amplifies this right and states that the curriculum should not be inferior to that offered by the state, there has been little done to ensure that those that seek to operate private institutions especially within the ambit of compulsory schooling, do so within the law and comply with the requirements. This suggests that there is a need for tighter regulations to ensure that those that operate outside the ambit of the law are held to account. The current regulations do not necessarily cover the entire ground and quite frankly leave a lot of room to manoeuvre. While the tightening of laws is the prize, the state cannot also abandon its public mandate to provide education and that this mandate must be enhanced through the improvement of our public schools for them to be fit for purpose.<sup>66</sup>

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# ADDRESSING THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

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Climate change has a negative impact on human settlements, which arises from several climate change related causes, such as changes in sea and dam levels. These changes have impact on water resources, causing extreme weather events, food insecurity, and health risks.



The potential impacts of climate change on water supply in Johannesburg have been outlined above, along with other impacts that are attributable to changes in temperature, precipitation, drought and floods. Therefore, the impacts for Johannesburg could include:

- 1. An increase in the demand for water supply.**
- 2. Greater stress on future supply of water.**
- 3. A decrease in surface water.**
- 4. Water shortages.**
- 5. A possible water supply increase in the Vaal River due to high rainfall.**
- 6. The contamination of water supply through sewerage.**
- 7. A decrease in runoff.**
- 8. An increase in water tariffs; and**
- 9. Water-related health problems.<sup>1</sup>**

Data shows that Gauteng has an estimated 625 informal settlements. These informal settlements are at most times built in wetlands, low-lying areas and are easily affected by floods. Informal settlements in Johannesburg will be more susceptible to climate change and may become breeding grounds for diseases.<sup>2</sup>

Dams that supply water to households dries up during drought seasons, which leads to poor sanitation in human settlements and leads to food shortage. Temperature changes on the other hand, lead to various sicknesses. It has been noted that, in Gauteng, there has been an infestation of flies during the summer period, which has been reported across the whole of South Africa. According to Dr. Gerhard Verdoorn, the high rainfall in Gauteng combined with extreme heat led to a surge in the fly population.<sup>3</sup>

The purpose of this article is to highlight the impact that climate change has on human settlement. This article will further highlight the risk areas that need urgent attention to minimise the impact of climate. It will also seek to identify policy gaps and possible recommendations that might alleviate the impact of climate change on human settlement.

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<sup>1</sup> 6 potential climate change impacts for Johannesburg. WITS ETD. <https://wiredspace.wits.ac.za/server/api/core/bitstreams/ecf98d5d-d260-4421-b77b-41e45e7436ce/content>

<sup>2</sup> [https://thehda.co.za/pdf/uploads/multimedia/HDA\\_Informal\\_settlements\\_status\\_Gauteng.pdf](https://thehda.co.za/pdf/uploads/multimedia/HDA_Informal_settlements_status_Gauteng.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.farmersweekly.co.za/agri-news/south-africa/fly-outbreaks-in-south-africa-due-to-unhygienic-conditions/>

## CLIMATE CHANGE RISKS AND CONSEQUENCES FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Van Niekerk and Le Roux (2017) argue that the future climate of southern Africa is generally expected to be characterised by increased temperatures and changes in rainfall.<sup>4</sup> The projected climate changes will expose people and the built environment to hazards such as severe weather events, drought, water shortages, floods, sea-level rise, heat waves, vector-borne diseases, coastal erosion, storm surges, cyclones and sinkhole formations. These events are likely to cause injury and death to many people and severe damage to the built environment, which would have knock-on effects on economic development and negatively impact service delivery and sustainable development in the areas of greatest need.<sup>5</sup>

These events have already started happening in South Africa, take for instance, the recent KwaZulu-Natal floods that have left many people destitute, some missing, and sadly some passed away.<sup>6</sup> Gauteng has recently faced water shortages, which meant that people had dry taps.

Climate change results in general warming which results in fewer cold days and nights, and an increase in hot days and nights. This has a consequence on human settlements in the form of intensified heat island effect, increased energy demand for cooling, and declining air quality in cities.

Extreme weather means that we will experience more heat waves and droughts. This leads to increased risk of heat-related mortality, especially for the elderly, chronically sick, very young and poor. Extreme weather also leads to a reduction in quality of life for people without appropriate housing and increased risk of wildfires. The recent wildfires in Los Angeles (USA) are an indication of the impact that climate change can have on human settlement; Cape Town (RSA) has also been battling wildfires. These are not only destructive to the residential areas and business areas but also have long-lasting impact on the air quality, which becomes a health hazard.

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<sup>4</sup> Van Niekerk, W & Le Roux A, 2017. Human Settlements, Climate Risk and Vulnerability: A Handbook for Southern Africa, CSIR: Untitled

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## CONCLUSION / RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Policymakers should prioritise and manage urbanisation challenges by planning settlements systematically, investing in infrastructure and basic services, monitoring long-term risk and vulnerability factors.
2. Create rainwater storage and flood retention areas; plan to harvest water and conserve energy; comply with building codes and zoning restrictions.
3. Significant financial resources, investment in institutional capacity, and technological support are required to build and implement strategies that will deal with climate change at both a national and local government level.
4. Municipalities need to always ensure their drainage systems and stormwater channels are up to standard. Disaster management units in municipalities and in the Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) provincial department on the other hand, need to always be well resourced and well capacitated to deal with any type of disaster that might arise.
5. Scholars offer varied techniques and mechanisms to help policymakers formulate policies directed at managing a number of risks. Case in point being, McBean and Alibade (2009) explain that disaster risk reduction refers to the development and application of policies, strategies, and practices that minimize vulnerabilities. It includes measures taken to protect livelihoods and assets of communities and individuals from the adverse impact of hazards.
6. Efforts taken to reduce disasters under this framework may include disaster education, information and strengthening early warning systems; the development of standardised methods for communities, building codes, emergency management plans. In addition, the development of strategies and technologies to reduce the impact of extreme events on the built environment; promotion of risk-wise behaviour. Lastly, identification of vulnerable sectors of society including groups and infrastructure and produce plans that address their special needs.<sup>7</sup>
7. With all the discussions in this article, integrating climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction can prove useful in responding to current and future climate change. There is a need for an integrated approach for vulnerable cities, informal settlements and coastal communities seeking to enhance their adaptive capacity and build resilience against a rapidly changing climate.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Gordon McBean, G & Idowu Ajibade, 2009. Climate change, related hazards and human settlements, Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability, Volume 1, Issue 2:179-186: Climate change, related hazards and human settlements - ScienceDirect

# THE SCOURGE OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING: SOWETO CITIZENS' PERSPECTIVES

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Human trafficking is a surreptitious crime, a grave violation of human rights, and it is a global scourge that has no age barrier. Each year, thousands of children, women, and men become trapped in the hands of traffickers, in their countries of origin and abroad (Jefferey, 2019). This implies that trafficking globally, continues to negatively affect the welfare and safety of citizens. It disturbs world economies, as source countries lose part of their labour supply and destination countries deal with the costs of illegal immigration. One can argue that human trafficking can no longer be ignored, and this is evident by several media reports that demonstrate human trafficking as a growing challenge. The aim of this article, therefore, is to explore the scourge of human trafficking and further examine how high unemployment rate exacerbates human trafficking as a criminal activity in South African townships, particularly in Soweto.

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***Traffickers use brutality, fraudulent job agencies, and fake promises of job and study opportunities to scheme, coerce and trick their victims.***

## GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

Roughly 1 million people are predicted to be trafficked each year globally. From these victims, between 20 000 and 50 000 are trafficked into one of the primary destinations for sex-trafficking trade (Leonard, A., Wooditch, A, C., & Steverson, 2024). Traffickers use brutality, fraudulent job agencies, and fake promises of job and study opportunities to scheme, coerce and trick their victims. The organised networks dealing with this profitable crime, target people with poor literacy, lower education levels, those who are poverty-stricken, children who are abused at home and individuals who seek to improve their lives.



## SOUTH AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

The crime of human trafficking has been more pronounced in Sub-Saharan Africa, with South Africa considered as one of the epicentres of human trafficking in Africa (Mugari & Obioha, 2021; Bello & Olutola, 2018). The United States Department of State (2022) posits that South Africa is a source, transit and destination region for human trafficking and accounts for most victims and offenders. A research report on the scope of South African human trafficking by the United State Agency for International Development indicates that in South Africa, young girls are more endangered to human trafficking, followed by older females (USAID, 2017). The report further demonstrates that syndicates of human trafficking working in South Africa mainly come from Nigeria, with information suggesting that others are from Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, amongst others.

Moreover, human trafficking appears at a moderately higher rate for girls than boys, with 55.5% of all trafficked South Africans being female, and 44.5% being male.<sup>1</sup> 250 000 people are estimated to have fallen victims to human trafficking in South Africa alone. This initiates a grave offence of civil liberties and dignity. Human trafficking is a great cause of concern as Gauteng is facing a rise in kidnapping cases annually. And the increase is mainly connected with the rising levels of organised criminal acts in the country, such as human trafficking itself (Habanyane, 2024). There were 2 499 kidnapping cases during the third quarter of 2024/25 FY in Gauteng.<sup>2</sup>

## SOWETO PERSPECTIVE

Soweto appears to be a hub of this kind of criminal activity. For instance, in April 2023 2 boys between the age of 5 and 6 years were killed in Soweto and their bodies were found mutilated with some body parts missing (Ntwaagae, 2023). Moreover, more than 10 girls in 2024 between the age of 12-18 were recruited under false pretences for modelling jobs that were said to be available, others were promised that they will be offered call centre jobs but instead they were allegedly used for pornography (Khomola, 2024).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.unitedway.org.za/anti-human-trafficking-programme> & <https://international.la-croix.com/news/world/scourge-of-human-trafficking-in-south-africa-is-not-often-discussed/15634>

<sup>2</sup> Police Recorded Crime statistics Gauteng Third Quarter of 2024/2025 Financial year (October 2024–December 2024)



***The proliferation of traditional healers who mix traditional medicines with human organs to create luck and wealth charms could also explain the high prevalence of trafficking for organ harvesting.***

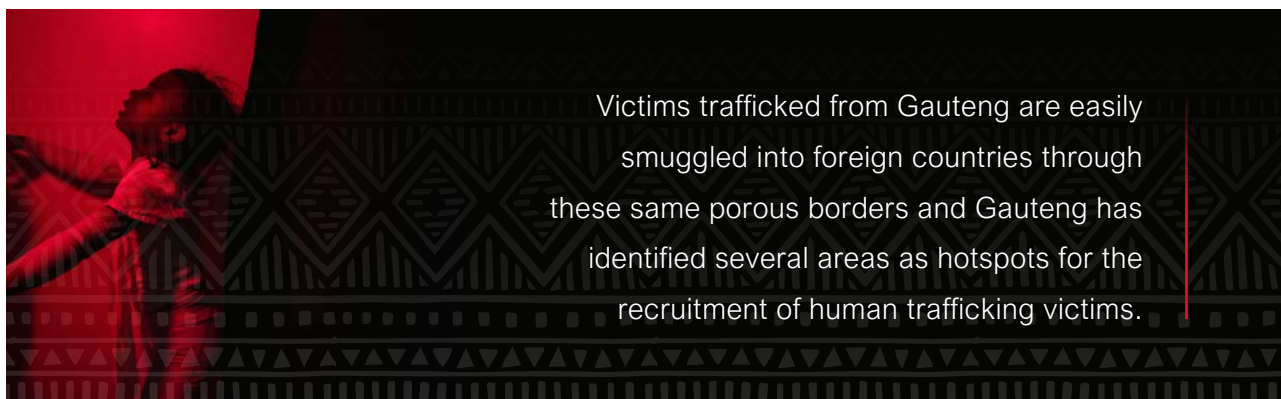
According to Soweto residents, several girls and women have gone missing with no trace, and it is believed that human trafficking for organ harvesting is the most prevalent form of human trafficking in Soweto (Mginindo, A., Emeka, E. O., & Ishmael Mugari, 2024). This suggests that this phenomenon (i.e. organ harvesting) was considered more prevalent than other forms of trafficking such as trafficking for forced labour and sexual exploitation. This somewhat growing trend can be explained by the high unemployment and poverty levels that characterise Soweto. To escape poverty, victims are easily deceived to donate their organs under the pretence that this will change their misfortunes (Mginindo et al., 2024).

The proliferation of traditional healers who mix traditional medicines with human organs to create luck and wealth charms could also explain the high prevalence of trafficking for organ harvesting. Given the misguided belief that human organs can make powerful charms, poor individuals might be more willing to part with some of their organs but unknowingly could be forced or deceived and thus their organs harvested (Yesufu, 2020).

Trafficking of women and young girls for prostitution appears as the second most prevalent form of human trafficking (Mginindo et al, 2024). Sex trafficking is fuelled by several interrelated and complex factors such as, high rates of unemployment, demand for commercial sex work, and the fact that Gauteng is an economic hub that attracts people from different nationalities, making it a hotspot for human trafficking activities (Mginindo et al., 2024).

Smuggling of people for use as drug carriers is considered as the third most prevalent form of human trafficking. This practice involves exploiting vulnerable individuals often under coercion or through deceit to transport illegal drugs across borders. This phenomenon is not surprising in Soweto as the illicit-drug related crime is among the leading crimes in the area, hence syndicates target vulnerable individuals, including school learners to move drugs (Lebakeng, 2023). A vast number of victims find themselves falling prey to human trafficking due to false promises of employment or solvency, only to find themselves trapped in the web of trafficking and becoming drug carriers.

## ANYONE CAN BE A VICTIM OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING



High unemployment rate was considered as the major contributory factor to human trafficking in Soweto (Ntwaagae, 2023; Mginindo et al., 2024). Poverty-stricken families or families in desperate conditions are more presumably to take risky employment offers. Given the high number of foreign nationals in Soweto, most of the foreigners are pushed by high unemployment levels in their home countries, forcing them to migrate to South Africa where some involve themselves in criminal activities for survival (Sambo & Spies, 2020; SADC Secretariat, 2016). Porous borders ranked second as a contributory factor to human trafficking (Mginindo et al., 2024; Roper, M., Warria, A., Frankel, P., & Van der Watt, M., Makhubele, J., & Marx, S. 2020; Masweneng, 2018).

Victims trafficked from Gauteng are easily smuggled into foreign countries through these same porous borders and Gauteng has identified several areas as hotspots for the recruitment of human trafficking victims (UNODC, 2022). This is concerning as there are integrated command centres in Gauteng that operate cameras even in the Central Business District (CBD) as one of the measures to combat crime in the city. However, with such initiatives in place, Gauteng is still regarded as a leading province when it comes to human trafficking. This raises questions on whether the criminal justice systems in place are effective to combat this crime.

Human trafficking seems to be one of the significant problems in Soweto. Consequently, the Gauteng Department of Community Safety's responsibility to ensure that all people feel safe in the province (GDCS, 2024), is yet to be realised. Therefore, without the will to combat this kind of crime, the battle will remain impossible to win.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to deal with human trafficking, there is need for a multi-pronged approach that incorporates the government, the legislature, law enforcement and citizens. The Provincial government needs to come up with sound policy measures which are anchored in addressing high unemployment levels, public awareness and a multi-agency response. Given the finding that unemployment is the major contributor to human trafficking, the government should prioritise employment creation, especially among the youth population.

Law enforcement agencies need to frequently conduct awareness campaigns in communities as this crime needs to be treated like any other crime. This also means that SAPS needs to continually provide statistics with regards to trafficking as a criminal activity so that people can be alert. Moreover, to address the issue of human trafficking, the South African Defence Force (SANDF) needs to be more active in managing borders in order to prevent and detect illegal crossing.

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