

A! POLICY NEWSLETTER

February 2023



Our first newsletter for the year looks at the [State of the Nation Address](#) (SONA) as well as life after SONA. With the much anticipated 2024 National Elections looming, 2023 will be an interesting year for our country's political landscape. One legislation that will have a great impact on the outcome of the 2024 National Elections is the Electoral Amendment Bill. The National Assembly passed the Bill on 23 February 2023. This comes after two extensions granted by the Constitutional Court for Parliament to finalise the Bill.

One of the aims of the Bill is to amend the Electoral Act, of 1998, so that the Act enables independent candidates to contest elections in the National Assembly and Provincial Legislatures, however, there have been concerns that the bill in its current format will disadvantage independent candidates. Read the [Bill](#)

For the year 2023 A! Policy will focus on two campaigns: one that focuses on the IDP and another that focuses on whom young people want as their representatives in Parliament. The focus areas will come with a lot of activities as well the training of 9 policy champions. We hope you can join us in amplifying the youth voice and getting young people to participate in various public participation Activities

State of the Nation Address (SONA)

The State of the Nation Address is an opportunity for the president to outline the country's priorities for the year. In 2023 the President delivered his 7th SONA since taking office. There was a lot of anticipation for the 2023 SONA largely due to the persistent energy crisis.

Three key takeaways from SONA 2023:

1 Energy Crisis

The President has declared a national state of disaster as well as introduced a new ministerial position "Minister of Electricity". "This new Minister will assume full responsibility for overseeing all aspects of the electricity crisis response. The Minister will be responsible for driving the various actions being coordinated by the National Energy Crisis Committee to end load shedding as a matter of urgency"

2 Small Business

Treasury is working on making adjustments to the bounce-back loan scheme to continue helping small businesses and facilitate job creation. The President said that "the Department of Small Business Development will work with National Treasury on how the scheme can be strengthened to assist small and medium enterprises and businesses in the informal sector"





3 Reducing unemployment

To reduce unemployment, the President has announced that:

- The Social Employment Fund was recruiting 50,000 participants in its next phase of undertaking work for the common good.
- The National Youth Service would create a further 36,000 opportunities through non-profit and community-based organisations.

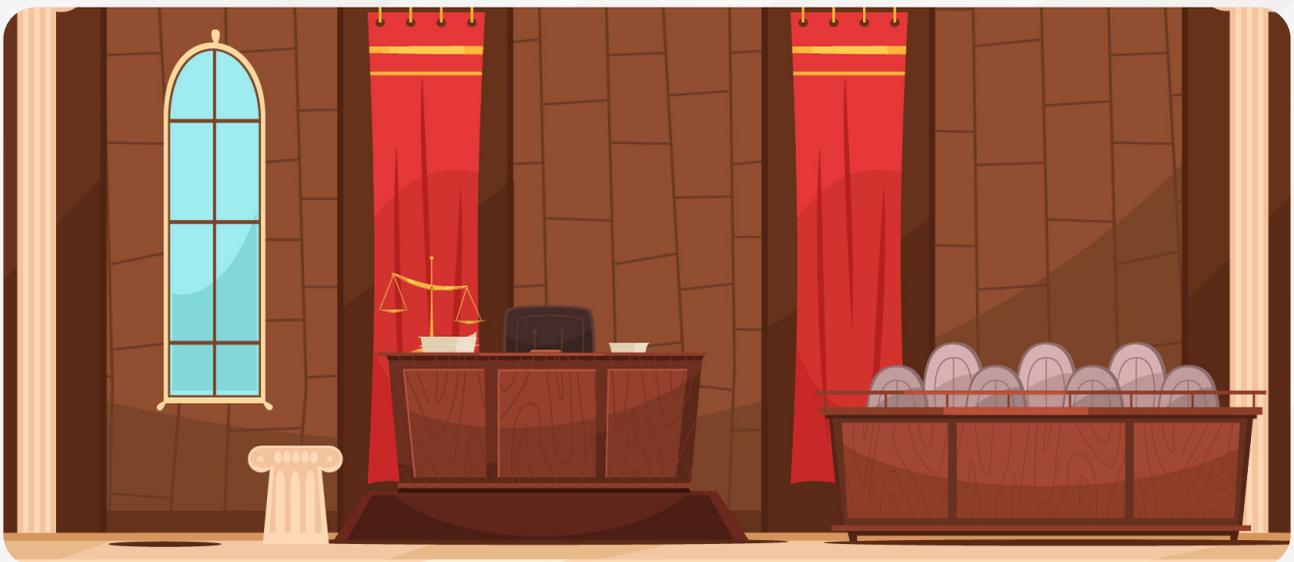
Life after SONA?

The following parliamentary activities will take place in Parliament after SONA 2023:

- Parliamentary Committees discuss the implications and impact of SONA on their sectors
- The Minister of Finance allocates the budget in line with the priorities outlines in SONA
- Legislature conducts oversight over the Executive to ensure that government delivers on the priorities set out in SONA and checks that allocated funds are spent accordingly.

How can you engage Parliament throughout the year?

- Watch & attend parliamentary meetings, hearings & sectoral event
- Respond to requests for written submissions
- Proactively contact MPs & Committees
- Submit a Petition
- Visit a Parliamentary Constituency Office



Engaging Government Policies at a Local Level

Local government in South Africa is developmental in nature as outlined in the Constitution. Therefore, it makes sense for local municipalities to use “integrated development planning” to plan future development in their municipality. An Integrated Development Plan (IDP) is an approach to planning that involves the entire municipality and its citizens in finding the best solutions to achieve good long-term development.

The IDP is a five-year plan required in terms of the Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000. This legislation states that an IDP is the fundamental planning tool that informs all planning, development and decisions in the municipality

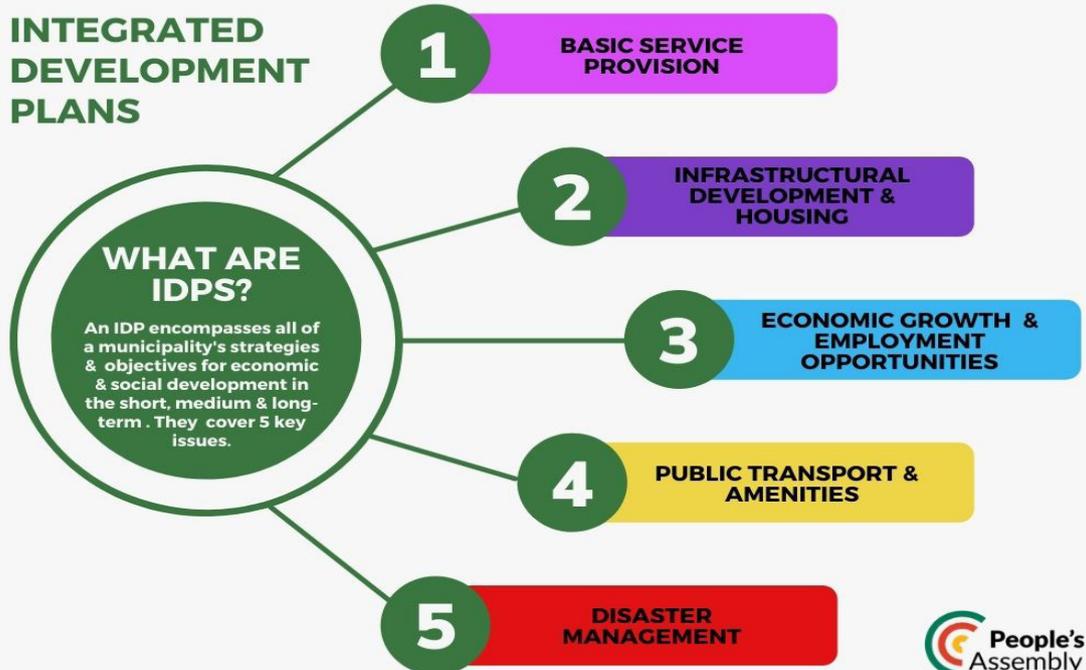
Why is an IDP necessary?

- To ensure that there is the effective allocation and use of scarce resources
- To place attention and focus on the most important needs in the community (participation by the community is essential to identify the most important needs)

How can you participate?

- Attending IDP Meetings/consultations
- Make inputs and comments on the IDP

For additional reading on the IDP, you can visit this People’s Assembly [Blog](#). Be on the lookout for the campaign we’re going to launch that focuses on the IDP.



National Youth Policy

We connected with the Department of Women Youth and Persons with Disabilities to learn a bit about the National Youth Policy (NYP). This is what Emmanuelle Kganakga the Director: Youth Legislation and Policy had to say:

1 What is the NYP?

The National Youth Policy (NYP), is a cross-sectoral policy developed for and with young people in South Africa, aimed at improving the quality of lives of young people at local, provincial and national levels. It provides a framework for addressing developmental challenges in the country, by setting an aspirational vision of South African youth by 2030. It outlines the context within which all youth-oriented programmes should be located. The policy was approved by Cabinet on 21 October 2020 and was launched on 05 March 2021 in a hybrid setting. In September 2022, Cabinet approved the monitoring and evaluation framework to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the NYP. This allows for continued accountability on the implementation of the policy and the generation of evidence for future policy development.

2 How does it serve young people?

The policy brings forth interventions for state entities, civil society, the private sector and youth to contribute to youth development efforts including improving access to economic opportunities, amplifying access to quality and relevant skills; strengthening of social cohesion, quality skills and integration into society.



3 What are the department's plans for 2023 to ensure that young people are aware of the NYP and can access it?

The NYP2030 is available online for download on the NYDA website and on www.gov.za (Government website). To improve access and understanding, the policy has been translated into all official languages and also into braille. A short infographic version is also available. In 2023, the DWYPD plans to continue with policy advocacy including distribution, radio and TV discussions, policy briefs, workshop presentations etc. There will be continuous popularization of the NYP. There will also be strategic engagements across three spheres including lobbying and advocating for implementation.

Update on key legislation in 2023?

2023 set to be a big legislative year and legislating will take up a significant chunk of the parliamentary programme. Please visit this [LINK](#) to read PMG's Blog on what to expect

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