

## **Y20 Medium Term Budget Agenda: GOOD Youth**

### **Foreword:**

South Africa as a youth is a bleak future. This is the reality. Choose any crisis from the list: A plummeting literacy rate amongst children, lack of working opportunities, regular crashes of water, electricity & sewage facilities, the most expensive cost of living in the country's history. This summarised list not only highlights the depressing dystopia that South African youth find themselves trapped in but also acknowledges governments failures in allowing this dystopia to become a reality.

If we are to solve the variety of issues facing our youth, the next three to five financial years will be crucial. We cannot accept a lost generation due to government failures. A prevention plan must be put in place. Our country is hosting this year's G20. We have a fading opportunity to ensure that plans for the whole country as a direct result of this monumental meeting meshes perfectly with our youth plans. We cannot let this opportunity go to waste.

GOOD firmly believes that for the current situation to be reversed we must focus on the sectors of Education and Industrialization which are both key principles of this G20. Without investing in these areas, we cannot achieve the economic growth required for our country to step out of the shadow of unemployment as well as poverty. The youth gathered at events like this one need hope. That hope can only be earned through implementation.

**GOOD proposes the following Agenda over a 3-5 year period:**

### **EDUCATION:**

- **Ensure structural upgrades at education facilities**

It is unacceptable that in 2025 we are still setting targets for facilities as basic as toilets. Thousands of students are taught outside every day due to a lack of capacity at schools. It is impossible for a child to be expected to enter the working field with a university education when they do not even have the support foundation of a school to begin with. GOOD proposes a nationwide oversight trip into these facilities starting from the most problematic. Unreliable data is often cited as a reason for these promises being pushed back. Let us ensure that this foundation is fixed before we begin to upgrade capacity on the ground.

- **Upscale all Technikons & create youth support structures**

We must continue to expand on the progress we have made with the various successful Technikons in the country. Studies show that South Africa increasingly relies on Technikons to produce high-skill labour and to contribute to economic growth by providing a steady supply of career-focused graduates. In addition, South African long-term plans are that of urbanisation and upscaling informal settlements. Skilled labour will always be needed to ensure this dream becomes a reality. This will lead to a variety of benefits ranging from; decreased unemployment, increase in skilled labour, more local recruitment & available contractors for SOE development amongst other positives.

Youth support structures are also vital in raising our education standards. These structures already exist in mainstream formats (counselling, funding, extracurricular activities) but we must create new structures to account for the new challenges faced by youth. One of these challenges is internet connectivity. GOOD proposes a two-part plan followed by a legal amendment to solve this problem.

As an organisation, we have personally tested the effectiveness of sponsoring Wi-Fi hubs (structures housing routers) in communities without reliable internet activity to a resounding success. This building with a connection served as a study centre, job application zone, meeting centre and more. The state has the funds or the capacity to partner with outside investors to ensure that these centres are replicated. Connecting as many of our citizens to the web as possible should be a priority with the wealth of free information readily available. The internet cannot be a privilege in this era.

To continue this momentum, a priority should be placed on creating an educational online library with which students or graduates can access vital documents and videos explaining a wide range of concepts. While online resources exist, they are often behind a paywall which is not feasible for the majority of our youth. In three to five years, we could feasibly and swiftly create an online portal with which school, university and Technikon students could all benefit equally from. This content could range from past papers for Matric students to practical demonstrations of electrical wiring for Technikon students. A website like this will be used and can eventually be expanded to include CV writing courses and much more. A vital yet achievable short-term task.

Any form of online self-education requires data. GOOD supports calls from the public, civil societies and other political organisations in the call to review our National Data Policy. Prices

are extremely high, and the monetisation practices can only be labelled as predatory. The concept of product that a customer paid for being on a countdown before being taken from their account is actively aiding in poverty creation. GOOD would use the next three to five years as a framework to work with other political organisation to ensure customer protection and allow youth across the country to no longer be hindered from educational material due to the price of accessing the internet.

## **INDUSTRIALISATION:**

- **Priority development of Ports and Rail**

Port and Rail are two sectors of the South African economy which are critically underutilized. Our mining capacity is hamstrung by the lack of the most efficient transport method in the form of rail. In addition, South African transport costs are extremely high due to the lack of alternatives such as functioning railway lines. Prioritising this sector will lead to economic growth, an increase in foreign investment and a higher standard of living for our citizens. Year one of five in our plan would consist of restructuring PRASA's rail section into two teams. One focused on Resource Rail and the other developing Commercial Rail. These teams would answer to an executive tasked with raising funds and answering to all respective authorities. Years two and three would consist of identifying sites for both teams as well as preparing the land for tracks. Concluding in the final two years being used to build these rail sites at priority areas or metros. With this process, we will be able to create vital jobs as well as garnering vital experience in what it will take to connect this country through rail.

Ports are perhaps the most time sensitive investment. With 2025 seeing multiple global conflicts, shipping lanes have become a more vital resource. Due to our geographical position, we are currently seen as the safest alternative route and this should have resulted with a large economic upswing in this sector. Due to a lack of port capacity as well as transport being slow due to the lack of significant rail, our ports have had to stagger ships for days to handle the demand. Within five years we have the capacity to change this. PRASA's revitalisation project must place a heavy focus in making sure that we have the infrastructure in place to handle the increase in demand as well as create a service environment for these ships that is so smooth they are willing to conduct more trade through our ports. If this is successful, this will result in the sector booming with more jobs created than ever before as well as the rand strengthening due to our investment-based country thriving with more global trade. We must bring South Africa up to the global standard in port infrastructure.

### **Healthcare infrastructure investment:**

South Africa has announced that it is planning to switch our healthcare system to that of an NHI, a decision GOOD wholeheartedly supports in principle. This method of healthcare while desperately needed, cannot be implemented with our current healthcare infrastructure. GOOD implores the country to spend the first of our five-year plan on identifying underfunded or unequipped hospitals which urgently need revitalisation projects. Once this is complete, let us spend the next four years building new hospitals and clinics, identifying young and unemployed qualified doctors who will be needed to handle the massive increase in demand as well as ensuring that through oversight that the construction plans stick to schedule. The withdrawal of United States funding to many of our NGO's and clinics has also resulted in some communities having no healthcare support at all. Ensuring that these areas are not forgotten but rather prioritised must also be a top priority.

### **Conclusion:**

GOOD's agenda is a direct response to areas which only need investment as well as oversight to thrive. Our South African youth need an economy that is growing as well as one with opportunities. By strengthening our industrial capacity we strengthen our economy. By improving our education structures we build opportunity. This future is a reality if we have the courage to invest in our country rapidly. Swift implementation supported by reliable data will shift the public's current disinterest in the political structure to one of curiosity as we show concrete evidence of work being done for our citizens in a timely manner. In five years' time, this country must have a culture of opportunity rather than one of despair.