

## The enormous challenges we still face as a country



As the years pass by, we have witnessed most of the key challenges we face in South Africa become worse day by day. For instance, through the years we have witnessed the decline in South African education, which is one of the most important areas of concern in this country. Without an educated population, a country cannot progress not only in terms of economic development but also because of political development (Mobius, 2017).

Education falls under the top 3 issues South Africa is facing. In a new Pew Research Centre survey, South Africans said that education should be considered as the most important priority (29%), followed by energy (18%), and government effectiveness (17%) (BusinessTech, 2015).

As a result of the gap in education, unemployment rises. I know you might question why I started with Education and not Unemployment, but as much as unemployment roots from limited job creation and corruption that happens in the country, education is one of the driving factors of employment. Hence, the less educated a country is, the less are the job opportunities for the population. Also, unemployment is widely accepted as the undoubted root of many to follow. The results of the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) for the second quarter of 2019 released by Statistics South Africa indicate that the official unemployment rate increased by 1,4 percentage points to 29,0% compared to the first quarter of 2019. The number of unemployed persons increased by 455 000 to 6,7 million in Q2: 2019 compared to Q1: 2019, resulting in an increase of 476 000 in the labour force (Stats SA, 2019).

With unemployment at such a high rate, to me it is no surprise that crime is a major consequential issue.

The general crime level as estimated in the past years has been declining during the past five years but increased in 2016/17 and 2017/18. Household crimes increased by 5% to a total of 1,5 million incidences of crime while individual crime also increased by 5% to a total of 1,6 incidences, affecting 1,4 million individuals aged 16 and above. Housebreakings or burglaries was the most dominant (54%) crime category among crimes measured by the Victims of Crime Survey (VOCS). An estimated total of 830 thousand incidences of housebreaking occurred in 2017/18, affecting 4,25% of South African households. Then, to close off the top 3, we have corruption. South Africa ranked 73rd out of 180 countries that participated in a Transparency International (TI) survey - which ranks participating countries according to their perceived levels of corruption in the public sector (Phakgadi, 2019). It is evident that our country is driven by corruption in almost all corners of the nation, from Public schools and health facilities, Police stations, all the way up to the highest office, leaving a long trace of destruction in almost all state institutions. This obviously leads to inefficiency in services, hence our country's basic services are on the verge of collapsing (News24, 2019).

There are numerous other challenges we face as a country besides the three that are mentioned. As the young people of South Africa, we may be ignorant to some of these issues but the truth is, it is upon us to repair the destructed, to be effective future leaders who advocate for the greatness of this country, who would turn all of this around!

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