

## **Public accountability and the right to social services**

**By Karabo Rasheane**

Human rights, the inherent and inalienable entitlements of every individual, stand as an unwavering pillar demanding universal access and utmost respect. Yet, in the tapestry of South Africa's history, this fundamental truth lay veiled under the oppressive grasp of apartheid until 1994, when the nation emerged, emancipated, from nearly five decades of darkness (1948-1994). The formal end of apartheid, though a triumph, could not immediately erase the lingering imprints of segregation and racial inequality that had scarred the years preceding this watershed moment.

In the present day, human rights have made significant strides towards acceptance, with an evolving ethos of respect and dignity among the populace. Still, we must never allow the passage of time to erode the memory of those valiant heroes who selflessly fought for the birth of our beloved rainbow nation. Their sacrifices, both of the living and the fallen, stand as a testament to the indomitable spirit of unity that continues to propel our nation forward. Our journey towards a truly inclusive and developed home for all has no endpoint, for we confront a myriad of challenges that beckon our resolve.

Central to the very fabric of democracy is the notion of public accountability, holding government officials and agencies answerable for their actions on behalf of the citizenry. However, in South Africa, the concept of public accountability remains shrouded in an elusive mist, lacking a standardized yardstick for its evaluation. The persistent absence of such accountability has allowed egregious abuses of power to fester unchecked, casting a shadow of uncertainty over the future of our cherished nation.

Moreover, the social services designed to bolster the welfare of both children and adults fall distressingly short of fulfilling their intended purpose. Although social grants offer some relief, they prove ineffectual in keeping pace with the relentless escalation of living costs in our inflation-stricken nation. The grants, though a lifeline for many, are but a temporary remedy in the face of entrenched poverty. To strike at the roots of this systemic issue, we must cultivate a

landscape of opportunities by sowing the seeds of stable employment across all strata of society. This transformation will not only lessen the burden of growing taxes but also empower individuals to seize control of their destinies, thereby fostering a more equitable and harmonious society.

With a burgeoning population, lack of public accountability, and numerous incomplete projects, an increasing number of people find their grant requests denied, forcing them to seek financial support elsewhere. The paramount issue facing South Africa is the pressing need for job opportunities to alleviate the suffocating effects of rampant unemployment and poverty. Presently, the country's unemployment rate stands at a staggering 42.4%, a distressing figure that provides little solace to its citizens. Despite claims of job creation initiatives since 2011, the rates of unemployment persistently surge in a nation plagued by corruption, where job creation takes a backseat in the hierarchy of priorities.

As the unemployment rate continues to soar and more individuals rely on social grants for survival, taxpayers will be burdened with deeper financial obligations, potentially leading to increased taxes. This escalating unemployment crisis pushes the country into dire straits, with taxes reaching unbearable heights and a growing number of people plunging into poverty due to the scarcity of employment opportunities.

The absence of accountability exacerbates the situation, leaving no clear pathway for resolution. Even if attempts were made to address these issues, the path to rectification appears arduous, though not insurmountable. It would necessitate considerable hard work and collective effort from the community to make a meaningful impact. Initiatives focused on job creation and aiding the less fortunate must be pursued. Small-scale fundraising events can be organized to bridge the gaps left by incomplete government projects, with the community coming together to amplify the impact of these endeavors.

By fostering a spirit of collaboration and shared responsibility, we can achieve more significant results, albeit on a smaller scale. While the challenges are formidable, collective determination and support can carve a path toward progress. The task of addressing unemployment and poverty

calls for a united front, where every individual plays a part in uplifting their community and fostering a brighter future for South Africa.

In conclusion, the urgent need for job opportunities in the face of escalating unemployment and poverty cannot be overstated. With a landscape marred by incomplete projects and lacking public accountability, it is imperative for the community to unite and actively participate in job creation initiatives. By doing so, we can ameliorate the burden on taxpayers and pave the way for a more prosperous and equitable society. Together, through hard work and cooperation, we can build a stronger foundation and strive towards a future where unemployment and poverty are no longer insurmountable obstacles.

There is no one to hold accountable for most of the things going wrong, so there is really no set way to fix it. Even if it was attempted to be corrected, it would be quite difficult to do it. Not impossible, just would require a lot of hard work and community working together to help each other. A few job creation projects and helping the unfortunate where possible. A small fundraising event in which the money is used to attempt to cover up the holes left by the incomplete projects from the government. With the community we could get more done, not as big; but it could be something.