



ABOUT THE NATIONAL BUSINESS INITIATIVE (NBI)

The NBI is an independent voluntary movement of companies working towards economic and social transformation in South Africa through responsible collective business action. We were launched in 1995 by former President Nelson Mandela, initially to support the new democratic Government.

Our role is to build a South African business community that plays a meaningful, trusted and action-orientated role in the achievement of a sustainable, equitable and inclusive society.

The NBI has a long-established role of impact through collective action with member companies. Our membership includes a significant proportion of the country's leading listed companies, a number of major state-owned enterprises and a variety of medium-sized firms. We work with our members around the role and contribution of business in and to society.

South Africa continues to face major challenges underpinned by the fact that we are the most unequal society in the world, with 55% of our population living in poverty, and escalating unemployment levels. Additionally, climate change threatens to further exacerbate these pressing economic and social issues. Understanding this complexity is important for business so that it can develop long-term strategies in a changing world, and meaningfully contribute to transforming our society.

Business is faced with challenges related to its own transformation agenda that demand answers to the way its practices address societal issues. Operating in South Africa, as well as in other emerging economies, means confronting issues such as inequality, poverty, skills development, supply chain support, SME development, gender issues, and establishing a robust human rights culture in companies and in their relationships with stakeholders. In essence, the overarching issue is how companies support inclusive economic transformation.

Responding to the complexity of these issues and finding simple, practical and impactful means of addressing them requires companies to be informed, agile, able to address new risks proactively and initiate action that will have meaningful results.

The NBI's work aims to support companies to achieve this. Our work is strongly influenced by the local and international guidance provided by the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our SDGs/NDP Programmes are cross cutting as are elements of the Transformation Programme. We position our work areas to address key economic issues for business (each impacting critical SDGs). Our commitment to focus not only on what business does, but also how it does it and on the values base and level of maturity that inform company action is a key underpinning of strategy. We work in a forward looking, trend identification and innovative way to actively link local action to global trends. Finally, our implementation track record is built on our ability to bridge between Government and business.

The NBI delivers these outcomes by working through three mechanisms: thought leadership, capacity building and collective action via the following focus areas:

1. **Social Transformation** (which includes):
 - a. Enabling economic inclusion:
 - i. Reducing Barriers for Entrepreneurs and SMEs within township economies; and
 - ii. Youth Employability/Skills Development.
 - b. Activation of Bold and Transformative Leadership, the creation of a culture of Inclusion and the Gender Pay Gap; and
 - c. Ethical Leadership and Anti-Corruption.
2. **Environmental Sustainability** (which includes):
 - a. Transition Risk/Just Transition Programme;
 - b. Water;
 - c. Climate Change; and
 - d. Energy.
3. Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
4. Building the capacity of the State through TAMDEV (Technical Assistance Mentorship and Development).
5. Support to Business Government processes.

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