

BRAND *South Africa*

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR
2025 TO 2030



“

As we embark on this five-year journey, I am confident that by working together as government, civil society, business, and our people, we can achieve the strategic objectives laid out in this plan and elevate South Africa to its rightful place as a leading global nation.

”

Khumbudzo Ntshavheni, MP
Minister in the Presidency



TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY STATEMENT 4

MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY MINISTER..... 5

ACCOUNTING AUTHORITY STATEMENT..... 6

ACCOUNTING OFFICER STATEMENT..... 7

OFFICIAL SIGN OFF 9

PART A: OUR MANDATE..... 10

1. CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATE 11

2. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY MANDATES 11

 2.1. Legislative Mandate..... 12

 2.2. Policy Mandate..... 12

3. INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AND STRATEGIES GOVERNING THE FIVE-YEAR PLANNING PERIOD 14

4. RELEVANT COURT RULINGS..... 21

PART B: OUR STRATEGIC FOCUS..... 22

1. VISION 23

2. MISSION..... 23

3. VALUES 23

4. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS..... 24

 4.1. External Environment Analysis..... 24

 4.2. Internal Environment Analysis..... 30

PART C: MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE..... 34

1. INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE INFORMATION..... 35

 1.1. Impact Statement..... 35

 1.2. Measuring Our Outcomes..... 35

 1.3. Explanation of Planned Performance Over the Five-Year Period 37

2. KEY RISKS AND MITIGATIONS..... 38

3. PUBLIC ENTITIES..... 49

PART D: TECHNICAL INDICATOR DESCRIPTIONS 40

ANNEXURES TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN 46

ANNEXURE A: DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT MODEL..... 46

ANNEXURE B: ABBREVIATIONS 46



EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY STATEMENT

As the Government of National Unity embarks on its ambitious journey to reshape and revitalise our nation, Brand South Africa's Strategic Plan for the 2025 to 2030 period needs to serve as an anchor to the South Africa Nation Brand. This plan reflects our collective commitment to reposition South Africa as a globally admired, competitive, and cohesive nation. At its core is the guiding principle that nation-building is a responsibility shared by every citizen, institution, and sector.

At the essence of this strategic plan lies the simple, yet massive, task of promoting South Africa's unique strengths, opportunities (investments, tourism, culture, and others), resilience, diversity, and unwavering belief in democracy. We are reminded of President Nelson Mandela's powerful words when he launched our new brand 30 years ago: "We shall build a society in which all South Africans, Black and White, can walk tall, assured of their right to human dignity."

Repositioning the South African nation brand is critical to addressing our socio-economic challenges, enhancing global competitiveness, and unlocking investment opportunities. The Government of National Unity remains committed to fostering unity, peace, and prosperity through inclusive growth and leveraging partnerships to secure sustainable development. This strategy is designed to ultimately deliver an improved nation brand positioning and reputation for South Africa.

Central to our strategy is the adoption of a central idea, a key element for successful place brand strategies. This 'central idea' is essential for creating a unified and compelling narrative that

resonates with both South Africans and the world. Brand South Africa must work with the broader government communication and information system to champion this approach, ensuring that all stakeholders align around a singular, coherent message that highlights our strengths, values, and aspirations.

The Play Your Part Programme is pivotal in this journey. Through its focus on nation brand advocacy and active citizenship, this initiative will not only inspire patriotism but will harness societal goodwill, creating a sense of ownership among South Africans. By addressing the disablers of our nation brand, such as crime, gender-based violence, and inequality, Play Your Part will encourage citizens to contribute positively toward our shared national identity.

As we embark on this five-year journey, I am confident that by working together as government, civil society, business, and our people, we can achieve the strategic objectives laid out in this plan and elevate South Africa to its rightful place as a leading global nation.

Ms Khumbudzo Ntshavheni, MP
Minister in The Presidency



MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY MINISTER

As we embark on the next phase of Brand South Africa's journey, this five-year strategic plan reflects our collective responsibility to foster a nation brand that resonates not only locally but also globally. Our task is to enhance South Africa's image as a destination of choice for investment, trade, and opportunity, while building pride and unity among our people.

Nation branding, as noted by thought leader Jan Steenkamp, requires strategic management of perceptions to advance specific, meaningful narratives. For us, this means continuing to nurture our core identity, grounded in Ubuntu, while actively managing our global reputation to position South Africa competitively on the world stage.

Brand South Africa's efforts must remain focused on strengthening South Africa's competitiveness by addressing critical questions: Are we achieving top-of-mind awareness as an investment destination? Are our efforts translating into improved nation brand equity?

We must encourage awareness that nation branding is a shared responsibility. The Play Your Part initiative plays a vital role in promoting active citizenship and will require collaboration with the Government Communication and Information Services (GCIS), Media Development and Diversity Agency, and civil society to amplify our message domestically and internationally.

Furthermore, we must intensify efforts with universities and industry bodies to promote South Africa's economic capabilities and stimulate investment in productive sectors. It is crucial to

communicate our initiatives widely through media and opinion pieces to ensure every citizen and institution understands their role in nation-building.

Looking ahead, we must continue to work closely with The Presidency, particularly with the Policy and Research Services Branch, to coordinate and implement the Country Investment Strategy effectively. This collaborative approach will ensure that we fight for and sustain our space in promoting South Africa's nation brand.

Let us press forward with resolve, managing perceptions, building equity, and championing the unique narrative of South Africa - a nation that leads with its values and competes with confidence in the global arena.

Mr Kenny Morolong, MP

Deputy Minister in The Presidency



ACCOUNTING AUTHORITY STATEMENT

I present the Brand South Africa Strategic Plan with renewed optimism. The significant contributor to this optimism is the newly formed Government of National Unity (GNU), as it is clear to us as the Board of Trustees that the GNU's aspirations prioritise the positioning of the country as a competitive destination for investment. The work of Brand South Africa in positioning the country as a competitive investment destination is backed by the government's commitment to stability and unity, which enables the work of showcasing the country's diverse features and promoting national pride and social cohesion.

South Africa's investment-friendly regulatory environment and the strides that have been made in collaborations aimed at enhancing infrastructure development in transportation, energy, and information and communication technology (ICT), demonstrate the nation's ability to respond to challenges with agility. Brand South Africa's Strategic Plan is focused on showcasing the nation brand's competitive advantages such as the strategic location on the continent, the highly skilled and diverse workforce and the robust technology, renewable energy, and manufacturing sector strategies. Key Messaging for the next five years will centre on narrating the country brand's united and stable investment climate, the unique position on the continent, which enables South Africa to facilitate the unlocking of growth potential through South Africa. It will be important for the organisation to be extremely targeted in its approach, as global investment forums and the use of social media campaigns targeting investment communities in key markets.

Going forward, collaborations will be of paramount importance, in order to derive value from shared resources, with the public sector, civil society and the private sector as far as the international business community. By implementing this strategy successfully, Brand South Africa will effectively position the country as a competitive destination for investment, leveraging the GNU's aspirations.

As a board, we are committed to ensuring the provision of robust governance and leadership, fostering effective stakeholder engagement and partnerships, advocating for adequate funding and resource allocation and providing necessary guidance on resource allocation, and utilising insights-driven decision-making approaches. It is our every intention to steer this ship in a manner that will maintain the clean audit status that has been achieved by Brand South Africa in the past two financial years. Alongside the issue of exploring partnerships that will enhance resources, the next five years present an opportunity to strengthen institutional capacity, and I do not doubt that the successful implementation of the strategic plan is within reach.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'IPSA'.

Ms Ipeleng Selele

Board Chairperson

BRAND SOUTH AFRICA



ACCOUNTING OFFICER STATEMENT

As we reflect on the past years, I am reminded of an important African proverb, “Knowledge is like a garden; if it is not cultivated, it cannot be harvested.” That is the journey that we went through as a country and as a nation brand custodian. It is evident that our nation brand has emerged strong, especially in areas of sports, creative arts, tourism, exports, and talent. This has been characterised by the improved number of collaborations, fostering new connections, and experiencing top-of-mind awareness in a crowded global space. Brand South Africa has certainly upweighted its strategic focus and has done a remarkable job promoting the nation brand through an inclusive approach. It has been incredible to see how our organisation has evolved to meet the changing needs and expectations of our stakeholders, businesses, and communities.

This strategic plan builds on the progress that we as an organisation made in the sixth administration. The plan is based on critical elements, which include achieving investment excellence perceptions, enhanced public, and private stakeholder collaborations, evolving our internal culture, and enabling critical operations in a cost-efficient manner given the challenges faced by the budget fiscus. Our efforts will be intentional and be intensified in changing our narrative, image and, ultimately, perceptions. This means supporting priorities of the seventh administration focusing on initiatives that will stimulate our economy, attract foreign direct investment (FDI), and positively shape our reputation. Shifting economic conditions have presented new challenges that have prompted us to shift the way we do things. The five-year strategic plan is a culmination of key

learnings, risks, gaps, and opportunities coming from an evolving global era.

Our vision is to be the custodian of a nation brand that inspires its people and is admired globally. Our mission is to strengthen and elevate South Africa’s nation brand to enhance its global attractiveness and competitiveness, while inspiring a shared sense of pride, patriotism, and in alignment with the nation brand values among all South Africans. Everything we do as an organisation reflects the values and principles of our mission. We can be the best when we work with and through different stakeholders and collaborate with our citizens towards achieving a common goal. After all, it has been academically and practically proven that a sustainable brand is built inside out.

Looking at our programmes, Play Your Part will be an important and strategic vehicle that will encourage every citizen to contribute to a positive social change whilst addressing our socio-economic challenges. We will lean on our expat communities to be our voice of reason in the global space. Strategic programmes, such as mobilising Team South Africa, will be critical, as this will demonstrate one of our shining advantages: public and private collaborations.

At our core, we are a fearless force for change. We are inspired by this common purpose and supported by a shared foundation, shared goals, and shared principles that unite us as an organisation and a nation. Our commitment to contributing to a more sustainable tomorrow is a key element driving our organisation’s actions and ambitions. Having a clear vision of where we would

like to be by and beyond 2030 is crucial for our success, our country, and is important for defining the relevant steps that will help us achieve our goals. On this journey, we navigate continuous change and new challenges, but our determination to progress along it remains resilient.

As we look ahead, we expect challenges and risks as predicted by the World Bank, World Economic Forum Risk Report, and Ipsos Risks and Global Trends Report. We commit to working tirelessly to maintain our growth as a nation brand and expand our horizon to new territories. The implementation of our strategy comes under the supervision of the highest governance bodies, our Minister in The Presidency and our Board of Trustees, and entity oversight of the GCIS.

With strong, collaborative teams and highly dedicated employees on board, we are preparing for the road ahead and are keen to derive further learnings from the changes and challenges that inevitably lie ahead of us in this dynamic sector. Ours is a simple call to action, to our people and to the world: Grow with South Africa.



Mr. Neville Matjie
Chief Executive Officer
BRAND SOUTH AFRICA



OFFICIAL SIGN OFF

It is hereby certified that this Strategic Plan for 2025 to 2030:

- 1) Was developed by the management of Brand South Africa, under the guidance of the Board of Trustees and the Minister in The Presidency.
- 2) Takes into account the relevant policies, legislation, and other mandates for which Brand South Africa is responsible.
- 3) Accurately reflects the impact and outcomes which Brand South Africa will endeavour to achieve over the period 2025 to 2030.



Mr Vumani Sibiyi
Acting Chief Financial Office
Date: 06 March 2025



Mr Neville Matjie
Chief Executive Officer
Date: 06 March 2025

Approved by:



Ms Ipeleng Selele
Board Chairperson
(Accounting Authority)
Date: 14 March 2025



Mr Kenny Morolong, MP
Deputy Minister in The Presidency
(Executive Authority)
Date: 25 April 2025



Ms Khumbudzo Ntshavheni, MP
Minister in The Presidency
(Executive Authority)
Date: 25 April 2025

PART A: OUR MANDATE



Inspiring new ways

1. CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATE

The **Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996** (the Constitution) serves as the supreme law of South Africa, establishing the framework for a democratic state founded on dignity, equality, and freedom. The Constitution underpins Brand South Africa's efforts to create a unified, inclusive, and globally competitive nation brand. Brand South Africa's activities are driven by the principles enshrined in the Constitution, specifically:

- **Section 1:** Emphasises the values of equality and non-racialism, which Brand South Africa aims to reflect and promote through its work in positioning South Africa as a cohesive and inclusive nation.
- **Section 10:** Enshrines the right to human dignity, directly aligning with Brand South Africa's mandate to foster pride, unity, and positive nationhood that enables all South Africans to thrive.
- **Section 16:** The right to freedom of expression, including freedom of the press and other media, is crucial to Brand South Africa's role in shaping a transparent, inclusive, and positive narrative for South Africa.
- **Section 41:** Promotes cooperative governance and mandates collaboration among all spheres of government, crucial for nation branding.
- **Section 195:** Promotes principles of democratic governance, including responsiveness, transparency, and accountability, which are reflected in Brand South Africa's approach to managing the country's reputation and image.

By promoting a positive nation brand, Brand South Africa plays a key role in the vision of the Constitution to build a united, non-racial, and non-sexist society, where all South Africans can participate in a thriving economy and engage as active citizens.

2. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY MANDATES

Where the Constitution provides the broad context to the mandate of Brand South Africa, specific legislative and policy mandates are discussed below.

LEGISLATIVE MANDATE

In terms of the **Trust Property Control Act (No. 57 of 1988)**, Brand South Africa is established as a trust with: "The primary object to develop and implement proactive and coordinated marketing, communication, and reputation management strategies for South Africa".

The Trust Deed guides the organisation to achieve this through:

- 1) Developing and articulating a South African nation brand identity that will advance South Africa's long-term positive reputation and global competitiveness.
- 2) Build individual and institutional nation brand alignment in South Africa to contribute towards pride and patriotism among South Africans.
- 3) Seek to build awareness and the image of the brand in other countries.
- 4) Seek the involvement and cooperation of various government departments, public entities, the private sector, the non-governmental sector, and civil society in achieving this objective.

The **Public Finance Management Act (No. 1 of 1999, as amended) (PFMA)**, together with its regulations, lists Brand South Africa as a Schedule 3A National Public Entity, which is accountable to the Minister in The Presidency and to Parliament. All prescripts and regulations arising from the PFMA are applicable to its governance and operations.

The **Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act (No. 13 of 2005, as amended)** establishes a framework for National Government, provincial governments, and local governments to promote and facilitate intergovernmental relations and, through its regulations, aims to localise and synergise objectives, targets, and directives in relation to the 52 district and metropolitan spaces (intergovernmental relations impact zones).

Further to the above, various legislation directs the governance and control environment and the institutional arrangements of Brand South Africa; and it is recognised that Brand South Africa must comply with all national and provincial legislation and regulations and all municipal bylaws applicable to its functions or the areas in which it operates.

2.2 POLICY MANDATE

Where the legislation defines the scope of the mandate and regulates how Brand South Africa must operate, various policy and strategy frameworks give effect to how the mandate should be implemented and have a direct bearing on the priorities and focus areas for the 2025 to 2030 period, notably:

Global and Regional Policy Alignment

Brand South Africa's work is shaped by international and regional frameworks that promote sustainable development, economic integration, and positive global positioning:

- 1) **United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development:** The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are integral to Brand South Africa's role in fostering sustainable development. The SDGs emphasise promoting inclusive growth, reducing inequalities, enhancing social cohesion, and fostering partnerships, which are all key objectives of Brand South Africa's work in creating a positive national narrative and aligning South Africa with global sustainable development priorities.
- 2) **African Union Agenda 2063:** The African Union Agenda 2063 envisions a prosperous and integrated Africa driven by its citizens. Brand South Africa aligns its mandate with Agenda 2063's focus on the continent's social and economic transformation, promoting the vision of an Africa that is integrated, peaceful, and influential on the global stage. By positioning South Africa as a leading player within Africa's development, Brand South Africa advances regional branding and integration efforts.
- 3) **Southern African Development Community (SADC) Vision 2050 and Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020-2030:** The SADC Vision 2050 and RISDP provide a roadmap for regional development, with emphasis on industrialisation, economic diversification, and human capital development. Brand South Africa contributes to these objectives by promoting regional cohesion, driving economic development, and positioning South Africa as a key player in regional integration and trade.

National Development Framework

At a national level, Brand South Africa responds to South Africa's long-term development goals:

- 1) **National Development Plan (NDP) Vision 2030:** The NDP Vision 2030 serves as South Africa's blueprint for eliminating poverty, reducing inequality, and boosting employment. Brand South Africa's contribution to the NDP includes promoting a cohesive and united society through positive nation branding and advocacy, enhancing South Africa's reputation globally, and encouraging both local and international confidence in the country's potential as a destination for investment, tourism, and cultural exchange.
- 2) **GNU Priorities for 2024-2029:** Following the 2024 elections, the GNU laid out its foundational principles and priorities for the seventh administration. These priorities include rapid and inclusive economic growth, social justice, investment in people, local government stabilisation, strengthening state capacity, enhancing law enforcement and national security, enhancing social cohesion, and advancing a foreign policy rooted in human rights, international cooperation and advancing South Africa's interests.
- 3) **The Cabinet Lekgotla Resolutions of August 2024** reflect the GNU's commitment to aligning public sector efforts with South Africa's broader developmental goals. The Lekgotla prioritised several key areas of relevance to Brand South Africa:
 - a) Targeted interventions to stimulate economic development, especially through investment attraction and market diversification.
 - b) Emphasising the need for active citizenship, the Lekgotla reiterated the importance of interventions that foster unity and pride.
 - c) A critical focus is on enhancing governance frameworks to ensure transparency and efficiency across public entities.
 - d) The resolutions highlight the importance of integrating green technologies and sustainability efforts in all sectors.
- 4) Informed by the Indlulamithi Scenarios 2035 processes and the evaluative reviews conducted on the NDP, 30 years of Democracy, and the 2019 to 2024

period, the **Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) 2024-2029** aligns with the GNU priorities and integrates them into the government planning system. The MTDP 2024-2029 serves as the bridge between the long-term aspirations of the NDP and the actionable, immediate interventions required to address the country's socio-economic challenges.

Brand South Africa plays a pivotal role in advancing the goals of the NDP through its direct contribution to two MTDP priorities and their related outcomes as follows:

a) Priority 1: Inclusive growth and job creation

- **Promote South Africa's nation brand as a favourable investment destination and trade partner:** Brand South Africa will intensify its efforts to position the country as an attractive investment hub and reliable trade partner in key global markets. This aligns with the priority of driving rapid and inclusive economic growth by boosting fixed capital investment and promoting industrialisation.

b) Priority 2: Reduce poverty and tackle the high cost of living

- **Promote South Africa's identity in accordance with constitutional values:** Brand South Africa will reinforce the nation's identity, emphasising constitutional values, such as non-racialism, non-sexism, social justice, and human dignity. This contributes to the emphasis on social cohesion, nation-building, and upholding democratic principles.
- **Promote nation brand advocacy:** By advocating for the nation brand, Brand South Africa will support the broader efforts to foster national unity and pride, essential for building a cohesive society that embraces diversity.

- 5) **South Africa Country Investment Strategy:** Led by the Department of Trade, Industry, and Competition (**the dtic**), this strategy positions South Africa as an attractive destination for FDI. Brand South Africa's nation branding aligns with these efforts by promoting the country's economic potential, showcasing opportunities for investment in priority sectors, and contributing to sustainable development in line with national priorities.

- 6) **Climate change and disaster management strategies:** South Africa is increasingly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, including droughts, floods, and extreme weather events. These environmental risks impact national infrastructure, food security, and economic stability, making it essential for all sectors to adopt climate-resilient strategies. Brand South Africa aligns its nation branding efforts with the government's environmental agenda:

- a) Brand South Africa plays a critical role in communicating the nation's leadership in sustainable energy, showcasing these efforts in international forums.
- b) By promoting green technologies and circular economy initiatives, Brand South Africa supports the national agenda to attract CleanTech investments.
- c) Brand South Africa integrates messaging around disaster management efforts into the nation brand, positioning South Africa as a nation that is both prepared and resilient in the face of climate risks.

South Africa's leadership within BRICS and the African Union provides an opportunity to promote regional climate action. Brand South Africa ensures that these efforts are integrated into its messaging, reinforcing the nation's role as a key player in advancing sustainable development across Africa.

Sectoral Policy Alignment

Brand South Africa's work is further informed by several key sectoral policies and frameworks:

- 1) **Economic Diplomacy Strategic Framework:** The Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) focuses on enhancing South Africa's global footprint through economic diplomacy. Brand South Africa's strategic messaging supports DIRCO's goals by positioning South Africa as a preferred partner for economic opportunities and showcasing the country's role as a regional leader in trade, investment, and diplomatic relations.
- 2) **National Investment Promotion and Facilitation Strategy:** The dtic leads the promotion of FDI through this strategy, focusing on key sectors for economic

growth and diversification. Brand South Africa collaborates with entities like Invest SA to align nation branding efforts with the investment pipeline and targeting sectors, such as advanced manufacturing, green economy, services, and resource-based industries.

- 3) **Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act (Act No. 53 of 2003) and Policy Framework:** The Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) Act provides the legislative foundation for economic transformation and inclusion in South Africa. Brand South Africa's nation branding work is deeply aligned with these principles, emphasising economic empowerment and social justice in its messaging.
- 4) **Social Cohesion and Nation-Building Strategy:** Developed by the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, this strategy underscores the importance of building a unified, cohesive society. Brand South Africa contributes to this effort through campaigns that foster national pride, active citizenship, and social cohesion.
- 5) **Integrated Marketing and Communications Policy for Government:** Led by the GCIS, this policy ensures coordinated and consistent messaging across government entities. Brand South Africa's branding efforts are aligned with this policy to support a unified narrative for South Africa.

3. INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AND STRATEGIES GOVERNING THE FIVE-YEAR PLANNING PERIOD

In addition to its alignment with global and national developmental policy, institutional policies and strategies direct the focus and priorities of Brand South Africa over the 2025 to 2030 period:

Minister's Delivery Agreement Commitments 2025

To be included when available.

Nation Brand Strategy

At the heart of our mandate statement lies the concept of 'nation brand,' a term that encapsulates the collective image and reputation of a country as perceived both domestically and internationally. To effectively execute on our mandate, we must gain a thorough understanding of the concept of 'nation brand.'

The concept of 'nation brand,' as articulated by Simon Anholt, refers to the unique, multidimensional amalgamation of attributes that collectively define a nation's identity and reputation in the global arena. This composite construct encompasses not only economic and cultural differentiation but also elements, such as governance, tourism, people, environmental sustainability, technological innovation, and public diplomacy. By integrating these diverse attributes, a nation brand aims to present a coherent and compelling image, articulating a unified message to both domestic and international audiences.

Brand South Africa showcases the value proposition of each dimension of the Nation Brand Hexagon and underpins it with substantive reasons to believe.

The Anholt - GfK Roper Nation Brand Hexagon

Investment potential and attractiveness to outsiders



Figure 1: Brand South Africa brand key and positioning platform

Nation branding has emerged as a critical discipline focused on understanding and enhancing the reputational standings of nations in an increasingly competitive global environment. Central to this field is the Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brand Hexagon, a framework developed by Simon Anholt that identifies six fundamental elements that collectively shape a nation's reputation. These six elements encompass:

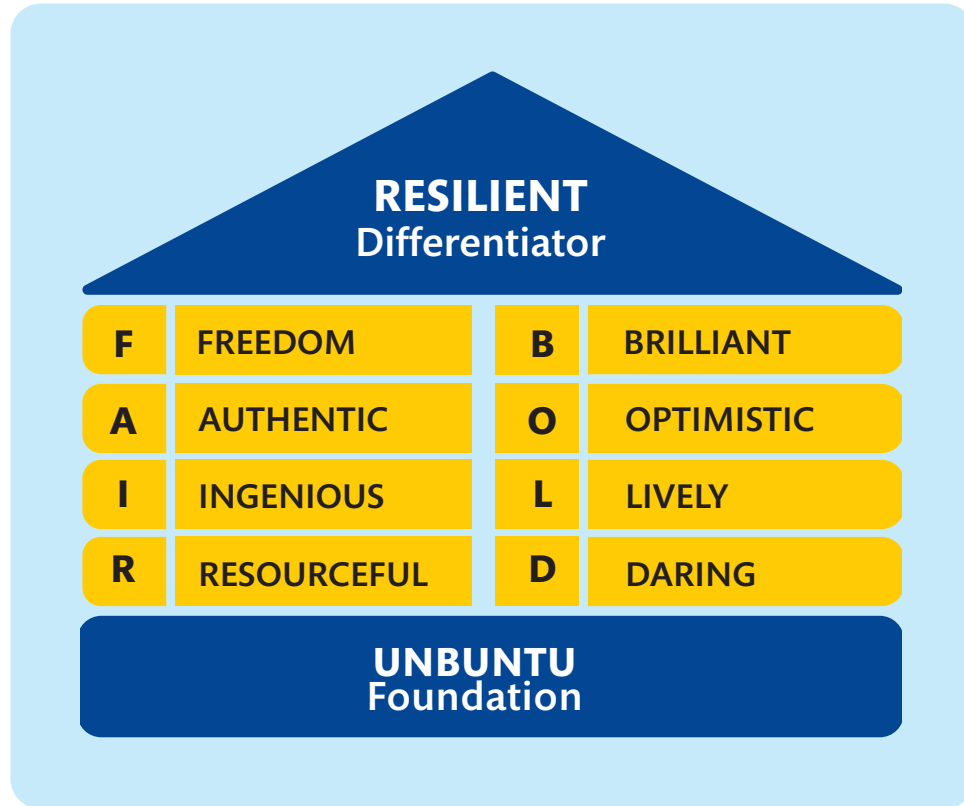
- 1) **Investment and Immigration:** The attractiveness of the nation for foreign direct investment and the perceived quality of life for potential immigrants.
- 2) **Exports:** The quality and innovation of goods and services produced by the nation, which contribute to its economic standing and global competitiveness.
- 3) **People:** The character and behaviours of the nation's citizens, including their hospitality, education and skills levels, and global engagement.
- 4) **Tourism:** The nation's appeal as a travel destination, reflecting its cultural, historical, and natural attractions.
- 5) **Culture and Heritage:** The unique cultural attributes, artistic contributions, and historical narratives that define the nation's identity.
- 6) **Governance:** The effectiveness, transparency, and stability of governmental institutions, which influence trust and credibility on the global stage.

Building a nation brand is a complex and multifaceted process that necessitates a collective national effort. The reputation of a nation brand is shaped by a diverse array of activities driven by citizens, businesses, universities, civil society, and government institutions.

The Nation Brand Strategy aims to transform the country's image both domestically and internationally through a cohesive vision, purpose, and promise. It is crucial for the public and private sectors, media, and civil society to play an integral role in ensuring alignment in promoting the nation brand to global audiences, as this significantly influences how the world perceives South Africa.

Central to its brand strategy and messaging approach, the key elements of Brand South Africa are as follows:

Figure 2: Brand South Africa brand key and positioning platform



Brand South Africa's Nation Brand Positioning Strategy, as articulated through the Nation Brand Key, establishes a compelling and unified narrative grounded in the foundational principle of Ubuntu. This strategy, meticulously crafted, is designed to consistently project a cohesive and aspirational image of South Africa to both domestic and international audiences. The Nation Brand Key encapsulates the essence of the country's core values, dynamic personality, and distinct competitive advantages, serving as a blueprint to shape perceptions, foster national pride, and enhance South Africa's global standing:

- 1) **Who South Africa Is:** At the core of the brand's positioning is a nation that thrives on its resilience, its key differentiator. South Africa's ability to withstand socio-economic and political challenges positions it as a competitive and adaptable nation on the global stage. The nation boasts a rich endowment of natural resources, diverse industries, robust infrastructure, and world-class legal and financial systems. The brand further reinforces its commitment to transparency and governance, positioning itself as a trustworthy and reliable partner in the global economy. The brand's resilient character emphasises its capacity to recover from adversity and turn challenges into opportunities.
- 2) **Who South Africans Are:** South Africans are characterised by the values encapsulated in the FAIR and BOLD pillars, which serve as powerful acronyms defining the nation's core identity:
 - a) **FAIR:** South Africa is a nation committed to Freedom, Authenticity, Ingenuity, and Resourcefulness. These traits underscore the country's fair, just, and inclusive approach to governance and development. The South African spirit is one of openness, diversity, and resourcefulness, where innovation and creative problem-solving are encouraged.
 - b) **BOLD:** South Africans are also characterised by Brilliance, Optimism, Liveliness, and being Daring. These attributes reflect the vibrancy and energy of its people, who are courageous in their pursuits and confident in their abilities. South Africa's boldness is seen in its global contributions to arts, culture, science, global governance, and sport - exemplifying a nation that continuously pushes boundaries and embraces its cultural and intellectual diversity.
- 3) **The Nation Brand Promise:** The foundation of the brand is ubuntu - a principle that encapsulates the spirit of togetherness, community, and shared humanity. The Nation Brand Promise is built on the alignment of this value across all messaging, ensuring that communications reflect South Africa's core strengths and ambitions. This promise fosters trust, confidence, and pride, promoting South Africa as a nation that champions equality, transparency, and democracy. Through ubuntu, South Africa cultivates a sense of national unity and positions itself as a leader in advocating for human rights and social justice globally.

Brand South Africa recognises that nation branding is a collective endeavour, not confined to government alone. It involves the active participation of citizens, businesses, universities, civil society, and government institutions. This holistic approach ensures that the brand reflects the nation's true diversity and strengths. By fostering national pride, encouraging active citizenship, and promoting positive narratives, it highlights South Africa's successes and future potential, creating a unified and aspirational image that resonates both locally and globally.

Nation Brand Advocacy Framework

The strategic intent of Play Your Part stems from the country's blueprint, the NDP, which was adopted by the Cabinet in 2012. It is a long-term vision and plan and serves as a blueprint for the work that needs to be done to achieve a prosperous society for our country.

It is for this reason that Brand South Africa saw it befitting to launch a nationwide movement called Play Your Part, to encourage all South Africans to contribute to a positive social change in their respective communities and the country at large. This movement was created to:

- 1) Inspire South Africans to live the brand and to rally behind the nation brand (advocacy role) at home and internationally.
- 2) Empower, through collaborating with like-minded initiatives that contribute towards the NDP goals.
- 3) Celebrate active citizenship in South Africa.
- 4) Encourage all South Africans to use some of their time, money, skills, or goods to contribute to a better future for all.

The Play Your Part Programme is a central pillar in promoting active citizenship and social cohesion. It encourages all South Africans to contribute positively to the nation-building process by addressing nation brand disablers, such as crime, gender-based violence (GBV), inequality, and unemployment. By fostering pride in the country's achievements and values, this programme aims to unify the country and enhance both domestic and international perceptions of South Africa.

Brand South Africa has launched the Global South African Programme in the conviction that South Africans based abroad are a priceless resource for our country

as we strive to position ourselves as global players in an increasingly competitive world. The strategic intent of the programme is to galvanise these South Africans to be advocates for the country, to celebrate achievements and stories of these South Africans as a tool in nation brand promotion, to deal with the challenge of misinformation, and to ensure message alignment by all South Africans in key international markets.

As Brand South Africa we believe that South Africans living or travelling abroad will very often be the first point of contact and reference for people overseas, whose perceptions and decisions have a profound impact on the attractiveness and competitiveness of our country. These Global South Africans can show the world what South Africans are made of, why we are worth investing in and partnering with, and how we can help find creative solutions to the gamut of the world's problems, from poverty to climate change to violent conflict.

Stakeholder Engagement and Communication Framework

Brand South Africa is mandated to engage key stakeholders across government, the private sector, civil society, and international partners to ensure cohesive and strategic communication. The Stakeholder Engagement and Communication Framework focuses on delivering targeted, impactful messaging that reflects the brand promise and strengthens South Africa's image across all sectors. The strategy includes:

- 1) **International advocacy and partnerships:** Collaborating closely with DIRCO, Invest SA, GCIS, and other key partners to align international positioning and communication.
- 2) **Domestic engagements:** Working with government agencies, businesses, media, and community leaders to build consensus on the nation brand narrative.

Brand South Africa is mandated to engage key stakeholders across government, the private sector, civil society, and international partners to ensure cohesive and strategic communication. The Stakeholder Engagement and Communication Framework plays a pivotal role in building relationships that promote the nation brand while supporting the strategic objectives of South Africa's global competitiveness and reputation management.

This framework is guided by principles of inclusivity, targeted communication, and mutual benefit. It emphasises a systematic approach to engaging stakeholders through collaborative partnerships, ensuring that the nation brand message is unified and consistently communicated across all sectors. The strategy includes the following key components:

1) Stakeholder identification and prioritisation:

A five-step engagement planning process is used to ensure that engagement plans remain relevant and targeted over time. Stakeholders are mapped based on their influence and interest in relation to Brand South Africa’s strategic objectives. This process allows for the identification of key stakeholders who will play a crucial role in advancing the goals of the nation brand.

Key stakeholders include:

- a) Government departments (e.g., DIRCO, GCIS, Invest SA)
- b) Private sector organisations (e.g., BBC, Business Unity South Africa, Business Leadership South Africa)
- c) Civil society groups (e.g., non-government organisations, youth formations, faith-based organisations)
- d) International partners (e.g., Global South Africans, South African missions, South African foreign multinationals, international South African business associations)

Stakeholders are prioritised according to their level of interest and influence, ensuring that engagement efforts are focused on those who can significantly impact the success of Brand South Africa’s initiatives.

2) Stakeholder engagement process:

The engagement process is systematic and includes the following steps:

- a) **Identification of strategic issues:** Strategic issues are identified through environmental analysis and nation brand performance assessments. Stakeholders are then mapped based on their alignment with these issues.
- b) **Engagement and feedback:** Stakeholders are engaged through regular meetings, feedback sessions, and strategic initiatives. The

aim is to foster collaboration, align messaging, and gather valuable insights for nation brand management.

- c) **Concept development and implementation:** Concepts for collaborative initiatives are developed with input from key stakeholders. These initiatives are implemented in line with Brand South Africa’s governance framework, ensuring that all projects align with the nation brand’s objectives.
- d) **Documentation and reporting:** Each engagement activity is documented, and results are shared with stakeholders for joint review and assessment of new opportunities.

International partnerships are crucial for aligning South Africa’s global positioning with its strategic objectives. Brand South Africa collaborates closely with the DIRCO, Invest SA, GCIS, and other key partners to ensure that South Africa’s image is consistent and competitive internationally. These partnerships focus on:

- a) Advocating for South Africa’s interests in global platforms.
- b) Promoting South Africa as a preferred destination for investment and tourism.
- c) Engaging the Global South Africans Programme to extend South Africa’s reach and influence abroad.
- d) Coordinating a Team South Africa approach for the implementation of activities at strategic platforms.

Domestically, Brand South Africa works with government agencies, businesses, media, and community leaders to build consensus on the nation brand narrative. The framework encourages joint initiatives and shared messaging platforms to create a unified voice for the nation brand. Key actions include:

- a) Promoting the Play Your Part Programme to encourage active citizenship and societal goodwill.
- b) Coordinating with local government and provincial agencies to align regional and national branding efforts.
- c) Engaging with civil society to ensure that the nation brand reflects the values of inclusion, social cohesion, and pride.

3) **Monitoring and Evaluation:**

To ensure the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement, a robust monitoring and evaluation process is in place. This includes regular assessments of the impact of stakeholder relations, feedback loops to improve future engagements, an annual stakeholder audit, and quarterly reviews of progress against the annual performance plan.

Research and Insights Strategy

Brand South Africa is committed to delivering impactful research and insights on the nation's global reputation, competitiveness, and domestic perceptions. These insights are vital to shaping the organisation's branding activities, aligning messaging, and influencing policy decisions. The research not only highlights South Africa's successes but also addresses key brand disablers (challenges), such as crime and safety, poor economic performance, corruption, and mismanagement, offering evidence-based analysis on how these issues are being managed across various sectors. This ensures that the nation brand narrative remains comprehensive, transparent, and reflective of the country's reality.

The research strategy is designed to systematically collect, analyse, and disseminate information that supports Brand South Africa's annual performance objectives. The key components include:

- 1) **Global reputation monitoring:** Annually assessing South Africa's global reputation and brand strength in key strategic markets through the Global Reputation Study is critical for maintaining a clear understanding of the country's international standing. Tracking performance across prominent global indices, such as the World Competitiveness Index, Global Innovation Index, and Edelman Trust Barometer, provides a comprehensive and evidence-based view of South Africa's reputation and competitiveness. These assessments not only benchmark the nation's progress against global peers but also offer actionable insights that inform policy decisions, enhance international positioning, and shape strategic interventions to improve the country's appeal for trade, investment, and diplomacy.
- 2) **Domestic perception research:** Annually measuring domestic sentiments across the constructs of National Pride, Social Cohesion, and Active

Citizenship is crucial for assessing progress in nation-building and identifying key areas of national concern. This study provides critical insights that inform decision-making, internal strategies, and external communications, ensuring that public sentiment is systematically captured and rigorously analysed. The findings also guide the enhancement of programs aimed at fostering national pride, strengthening social cohesion, and promoting active citizenship, aligning Brand South Africa's efforts with the nation's broader developmental objectives.

- 3) **Strategic dissemination and messaging:** Leveraging research findings to craft consistent, data-driven messaging is critical for maintaining a cohesive narrative that aligns with South Africa's Nation Brand Strategy. By showcasing the country's strengths while transparently addressing challenges, Brand South Africa ensures the promotion of an authentic and balanced national image. This approach reinforces the nation's credibility and trustworthiness, supporting Brand South Africa's mission to enhance the country's global reputation and foster pride and confidence domestically. Through strategic dissemination, the nation brand narrative remains impactful, engaging key stakeholders locally and internationally, and positioning South Africa as a strong, resilient, and forward-looking nation.

This strategy ensures that Brand South Africa's branding efforts are underpinned by rigorous research, enabling informed decisions, and fostering a cohesive national narrative that enhances the country's reputation and competitiveness.

Human Capital Management Strategy

Brand South Africa's Human Capital Management Strategy aims to enhance staff capacity, promote a high-performance culture, and ensure the organisation is equipped with the skills and talent necessary to deliver on its mandate. Recognising that nation branding is a dynamic and multifaceted task, the strategy focuses on continuous professional development, employee wellness, and aligning human capital practices with organisational objectives.

Key components of the strategy include:

- 1) **Workforce development and capacity building:**
 - a) Establishing ongoing skills development programmes that focus

on areas such as strategic communication, brand management, stakeholder engagement, and governance.

- b) Identifying and nurturing future leaders within the organisation through targeted leadership training programmes, ensuring a robust talent pipeline for key roles.
- c) Implementing a performance-based rewards system that incentivises high performance and aligns individual contributions with the organisation's strategic goals.

2) Employee Engagement and Retention:

- a) Promoting a healthy and productive work environment by implementing wellness initiatives that address mental, physical, and emotional well-being.
- b) Ensuring a workplace that values diversity and fosters inclusivity by implementing policies that promote equal opportunities for all staff members, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities.

3) Strategic workforce planning:

- a) Developing and maintaining a succession plan to ensure leadership continuity and prevent talent gaps.
- b) Implementing retention strategies that focus on creating a positive work environment, competitive compensation, and opportunities for professional growth.

By implementing these key components, Brand South Africa will continue to build a resilient, motivated, and skilled workforce capable of driving the organisation's strategy over the 2025 to 2030 period.

Digital Technology and Cybersecurity Framework

Brand South Africa's Digital Technology and Cybersecurity Framework is designed to support the organisation's mandate by leveraging digital tools to enhance communication, collaboration, and data security. In an increasingly digital world, the framework ensures that Brand South Africa remains at the forefront of digital innovation while safeguarding its assets and operations from cyber threats.

Key components of the framework include:

1) Digital transformation and communication:

- a) Expanding the organisation's use of digital platforms, including social media, mobile applications, and online content hubs, to engage with stakeholders and promote the nation brand globally.
- b) Utilising data analytics tools to track the effectiveness of branding campaigns, monitor sentiment, and generate insights to inform decision-making.

2) Cybersecurity and data protection:

- a) Implementing robust cybersecurity measures, including firewalls, encryption, and intrusion detection systems, to protect sensitive data and ensure operational continuity.
- b) Ensuring compliance with relevant data protection legislation, such as the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA), to safeguard personal and organisational data.

3) Information technology (IT) governance and risk management:

- a) Establishing clear IT governance structures that define roles, responsibilities, and decision-making authority related to technology management.
- b) Developing a cybersecurity risk management strategy that identifies potential threats, implements mitigation measures, and prepares contingency plans for incident response.

Governance Framework

Brand South Africa's Governance Framework is designed to ensure transparency, accountability, and ethical management of the organisation's operations. This framework adheres to the principles of good governance, as outlined in the PFMA and the King IV Code on Corporate Governance, 2016 (King IV). King IV promotes a governance model that emphasises ethical leadership, sustainability, and integrated thinking.

Key components of the framework include:

1) Governance structures and compliance:

- a) The Brand South Africa Board, in line with King IV principles, is responsible for providing strategic oversight, ensuring compliance with governance regulations, and approving the organisation's strategic plans and policies. The Board acts in a manner that balances performance with compliance, ensuring long-term value creation.
- b) The Audit and Risk Committee oversees financial management, internal controls, and risk management processes, ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory requirements as well as King IV's recommendations on risk and opportunity governance.

2) Financial management and accountability:

- a) Brand South Africa is committed to maintaining unqualified audit outcomes by adhering to strict financial controls, accurate financial reporting, and compliance with the PFMA and King IV's guidance on transparent financial management.
- b) Regular financial reviews, based on King IV's recommendations for good governance, ensure that budgets are managed effectively and that funds are allocated to achieve the organisation's strategic objectives.

3) Ethics and integrity:

- a) Brand South Africa has established a Code of Conduct, in line with King IV's emphasis on ethical leadership, setting out the ethical standards and principles that guide the behaviour of staff, ensuring integrity in all organisational activities.
- b) Whistleblower protection mechanism is in place, supporting King IV's focus on transparency and accountability, to encourage staff and stakeholders to report any unethical or unlawful behaviour without fear of retaliation.

4) Risk management:

- a) A comprehensive risk management framework, aligned with King IV's guidance on integrated risk management, has been implemented to identify, assess, and mitigate risks that could impact the organisation's ability to achieve its objectives.
- b) Brand South Africa has developed crisis management protocols to address unforeseen events and ensure business continuity, following King IV's recommendation for preparedness and resilience.

By integrating King IV principles into its governance practices, Brand South Africa ensures that its leadership adheres to best practices in corporate governance, encourages ethical decision-making, and maintains the trust of its stakeholders.

4. RELEVANT COURT RULINGS

There are no court judgments or rulings which have a bearing on the mandate and/or core operations of Brand South Africa.



PART B:
OUR STRATEGIC FOCUS



Inspiring new ways

In giving effect to the legislative and policy mandate outlined in Part A, the Five-Year Strategic Plan 2025 to 2030 articulates Brand South Africa’s strategic focus, namely its vision, mission, and values, as follows:

1. VISION

To be the custodian of a nation brand that inspires its people and is admired globally.

2. MISSION

To strengthen and elevate South Africa’s national brand to enhance its global attractiveness and competitiveness while inspiring a shared sense of pride, patriotism, and alignment with the nation’s brand values among all South Africans.

3. VALUES

Brand South Africa subscribes to the following organisational values, which are in line with the Batho Pele principles:

Value		What it Means in Practice
D	Determination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are hungry to succeed, regardless of the challenges. We keep our eye on the objective; we stay focused and persevere. We remain driven and keep going at it. We always show a positive attitude and are motivated to achieve results. We work together as a team, we collaborate, and we communicate clearly. We always remember the goal because we have the same vision.
I	Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We do the right thing regardless of whether it is popular or not. We mean what we say, and we do what we say. We consistently act with honesty, trust worthiness and ethically. We consistently treat all people with respect and fulfil our promises and commitments to internal and external stakeholders. We are always honest, accountable, and truthful and we never accept bribes. We always stick to the rules.
D	Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are open-minded about our differences. We always try to find a way of working with the differences. We are accommodating and tolerant of diversity. We appreciate diversity. We learn from each other’s strengths and integrate them into Brand South Africa to create a harmonious unity. We accept and tolerate people from various cultures and demographics for who they are.
I	Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We always find new ways of doing things, so that we can achieve better results. We stay ahead of the curve by being proactive and pre-emptive. We have a constant desire to improve. No idea is too big or impossible. We are willing to adapt and adopt new thinking and are proactively developing new ideas.
C	Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We collaborate efficiently and effectively with enough patience and understanding to achieve a common goal. We communicate clearly and adhere to set rules. We have a can-do and resilient attitude. We understand the task at hand and take responsibility and accountability for our actions.
U	Ubuntu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We show compassion, humanity, and humility. We are all in this together and we function as one. We are willing to reach out, uplift and show interest in our environment and country. We do this in a humble, motivating, warm, and kind spirit.

4. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

4.1. EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS

The global context in which Brand South Africa operates is complex and dynamic, characterised by significant geopolitical, economic, and social shifts that influence nation branding efforts. South Africa's strategic positioning as a stable democracy and leader in economic diplomacy provides both challenges and opportunities in enhancing the nation brand.

An Environment of Global Flux

The global landscape in 2024 is marked by a profound state of flux, shaped by ongoing geopolitical conflicts, economic disruptions, and political volatility. The enduring Russia-Ukraine conflict continues to escalate international tensions, disrupting global energy markets, straining grain supplies, and undermining economic stability. Global inflation remains elevated, with rates hovering between 6.5% and 7%, creating significant challenges for both advanced and emerging economies, including South Africa, which faces rising costs and supply chain disruptions that influence domestic economic performance and international perceptions of stability.

Within the African context, political uncertainty remains a pressing concern, particularly in light of recent coups in Niger, Gabon, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Guinea Conakry. While South Africa has consistently condemned unconstitutional changes in governance, reaffirming its commitment to democratic principles, the region's volatility complicates the broader narrative around governance on the continent. This instability poses a challenge for Brand South Africa as it seeks to project a stable and democratic leadership role within a continent still grappling with governance issues.

Despite these challenges, South Africa's proactive role on the global stage, exemplified by hosting the BRICS Summit in 2023 and its successful advocacy for the inclusion of the African Union in the G20, underscores the country's influence in shaping global governance, particularly from an African perspective. South Africa's leadership in promoting partnerships within Africa and the Global South, coupled with its continued engagement in multilateral platforms like BRICS and the G20, solidifies its role as a key advocate for equitable global governance.

The peaceful elections in May 2024 led to the formation of a GNU, supported by 11 political parties. This transition was internationally praised and reinforced South Africa's image as a mature democracy committed to addressing pressing socio-economic challenges, focusing on economic growth, social justice, and stability.

Economic Trends and Opportunities

South Africa's economy, while still facing headwinds from global disruptions, is showing signs of resilience. The International Monetary Fund revised its 2024 growth forecast for South Africa upward to 1.8%, driven by successful government interventions in energy security and logistics. These interventions have been further strengthened by the success of the fifth South Africa Investment Conference, which secured over R350 billion in investment pledges, reinforcing investor confidence.

South Africa's leadership in green energy and sustainability also presents significant opportunities. Collaborations with international partners like the Netherlands, Denmark, and Germany have facilitated the creation of a Green Hydrogen Fund and other key green energy projects. These initiatives align with the global push toward sustainability and the Just Energy Transition, positioning South Africa as a leader in renewable energy technologies and green investment.

The Finance, Real Estate, and Business Services Sector continues to be the largest contributor to GDP at 20.97%, reflecting the country's strong business environment. Additionally, according to the Ernest & Young Africa Attractiveness Report 2023, South Africa is the second-largest recipient of clean technology (CleanTech) FDI in Africa, with 207 projects worth \$36 billion and over 25,000 jobs created. This is complemented by South Africa's growing role in advancing the green-circular economy across the African continent, particularly through initiatives that leverage the African Continental Free Trade Area.

1) South Africa's leadership in Africa and the Global South

South Africa's leadership role in BRICS+ and its upcoming G20 Presidency in 2025 under the theme: "Solidarity, Equality, and Sustainable Development", is a pivotal opportunity to advance Africa's strategic interests on the global stage. By championing the priorities of BRICS+ and amplifying the voices of Africa and the Global South, South Africa will strengthen its role in fostering inclusive multilateralism and promoting sustainable economic growth.

South Africa's leadership extends to driving the continent's green energy transition, positioning the country as a key destination for green investment. Through BRICS+ partnerships, South Africa plays a critical role in unlocking Africa's growth potential by fostering strategic value chains in local beneficiation, particularly in sectors like electric vehicle battery manufacturing, which require significant mineral resources.

2) **Strategic integration within BRICS+:** Driving economic growth and cooperation

The recent expansion of BRICS+ to include countries like Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the UAE further enhances the bloc's global influence. Representing 46% of the world's population and 35.6% of global GDP, BRICS+ is now positioned as a major player in the global economy. South Africa's role within this expanded bloc allows for greater trade integration and economic cooperation, particularly in addressing trade imbalances and diversifying exports from a reliance on mineral resources to more manufactured and agricultural goods.

By leveraging its position within BRICS+, South Africa is committed to strengthening trade relations and fostering a more equitable trading environment, promoting inclusive economic growth that benefits both Africa and the broader Global South.

3) **Energy security and economic stability**

South Africa's recent progress in energy security, with Eskom achieving over 180 days of uninterrupted power supply by late 2024, has been a major driver of economic confidence. This achievement has revitalised key sectors, such as manufacturing and finance, contributing to GDP growth of 0.4% in quarter two 2024. Eskom's improved energy availability factor, rising from 55.18% in 2023 to 63% in 2024, reflects the country's progress in addressing one of its most critical economic challenges.

The availability of reliable electricity has fostered an enabling environment for economic growth, social stability, and increased foreign investment, positioning South Africa as a resilient economy capable of weathering global disruptions. The formation of the GNU in May 2024, praised internationally for its peaceful elections, further strengthens South Africa's reputation as a mature democracy, enhancing investor confidence and opening opportunities for future development.

4) **Strategic outlook**

Brand South Africa recognises that the nation's leadership within BRICS+, the African Union, and the upcoming G20 Presidency provides a unique opportunity to advance Africa's development agenda on the global stage. By aligning our nation brand efforts with South Africa's strategic economic and diplomatic objectives, we are well-positioned to foster economic resilience, drive sustainable development, and enhance the country's leadership in transforming both the African and global economic landscapes. Brand South Africa is committed to promoting the nation as a credible and influential partner in fostering inclusive growth and advancing equitable global governance, reinforcing South Africa's leadership within the Global South.

Social Dynamics and Nation Brand Performance

National pride, active citizenship, and social cohesion are fundamental pillars of South Africa's identity and critical to its nation branding efforts. In 2023, national pride demonstrated stability, scoring 70.4, reflecting a positive trajectory post-pandemic despite ongoing political, social, and economic uncertainties. Active citizenship has shown a promising upward trend, rising to 64.1 in 2023, signalling increased public participation and a renewed focus on community engagement and collective responsibility across provinces. Social cohesion, though slower to recover, remains a vital construct in the national narrative, with a score of 62.8, reflecting the ongoing challenges posed by social inequalities, GBV, xenophobia, and crime. These issues, while persistent, underscore the importance of continuing efforts to strengthen the nation's social fabric and enhance the overall perception of South Africa's nation brand.

Brand South Africa's ongoing efforts to enhance the nation brand's image focus on reinforcing positive narratives and mitigating disablers. The "Play Your Part" Programme continues to be a driving force in promoting social cohesion, national pride, and active citizenship throughout the country.

Political and International Relations Focus

South Africa's diplomatic efforts are reflected in its strong relations with the United States of America (USA) and the European Union, while also expanding its influence

through BRICS+ and partnerships in the Global South. The country's successful mediation in conflicts like Ethiopia's Tigray and its role in supporting peace efforts in the Israel-Palestine conflict have improved its international standing.

South Africa's strategic neutrality and emphasis on global partnerships have improved its performance in the Global Soft Power Index, with a 2.5-point increase and a notable improvement in international relations. While challenges remain, including global economic slowdowns, rising geopolitical tensions, and increased international polarisation, South Africa continues to position itself as a key player in a multipolar world.

South Africa has solidified its role as a regional leader in peacekeeping, with a long history of contributions to United Nations missions and its current leadership of the SADC mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The deployment of 2,900 members of the South African National Defence Force for the SADC mission, backed by a R2 billion budget, highlights South Africa's proactive commitment to ensuring regional stability and security. These efforts, combined with its support for global peacekeeping reforms, further reinforce South Africa's position as a key player in advancing peace and security across Africa.

Nation Brand Rankings and Reputation

Brand South Africa is ranked number 52 globally in Brand Strength for 2024, and it is number 2 in Africa, with an improved score of 64.2 and an A+ rating. Within the BRICS+ grouping, South Africa is positioned at number 7 with a brand value of R3.97 trillion. The country's strong rankings reflect improvements in various global indices:

- 1) Open Budget Index (2023): Ranked 4th out of 125 countries, demonstrating high budget transparency and accountability.
- 2) Press Freedom Index (2024): Ranked 38th out of 180 countries, remaining a leader in press freedom, despite facing economic and security challenges.
- 3) Ibrahim Index of African Governance (2022): Held 6th place out of 54 African nations, with improvements in rule of law, safety, and economic opportunity.
- 4) Gender Gap Index (2024): Improved to 18th out of 146 countries, showing progress in gender equality, particularly in political empowerment.

These rankings reflect South Africa's resilience and progress in governance, human development, and global competitiveness, despite facing challenges.

Tourism, Trade, and Market Perceptions

South Africa's potential as a tourism destination is an important aspect of the nation brand. In 2023, international tourist arrivals grew to 8.5 million, contributing to 7.6% of GDP. This reflects a 48.9% increase in tourism compared to the previous year. Key source markets include Zimbabwe, the USA, the United Kingdom, and Germany, with Africa remaining the largest market.

While perceptions of South Africa are generally positive in Africa and the Middle East, there are opportunities for improvement in Asia, Europe, and the Americas. Enhanced messaging around safety, tourism potential, and cultural diversity is critical to further elevate South Africa's image and reputation internationally.



PESTEL Analysis

Factor	Global Context	South African Context
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Global geopolitical shifts, including increasing nationalism, protectionist policies, and tensions between global powers (e.g., USA-China, Brexit), are influencing international cooperation and trade. ▪ Growing importance of multilateral organisations (e.g., United Nations, African Union) is affecting global policymaking and international alliances. ▪ Regional conflicts, migration, and foreign policy decisions shape global alliances and nation branding, especially for emerging markets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Political stability and policy consistency issues impact perceptions of South Africa as a stable and reliable partner for trade and investment. ▪ Government and stakeholder coordination is necessary for cohesive national brand messaging, involving collaboration across departments (e.g., DIRCO, dtic, GCIS). ▪ South Africa’s leadership in regional initiatives, like the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, affects its positioning as a continental leader and impacts nation brand perception.
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Global economic volatility, including downturns, inflation, and currency fluctuations, affects international trade, investment, and tourism patterns, influencing how nations are perceived. ▪ The global shift towards sustainable development creates opportunities for countries to invest in renewable energy, green technologies, and eco-friendly initiatives. ▪ Global supply chain disruptions, protectionism, and investment shifts between regions impact economic competitiveness and branding strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ South Africa faces slow economic growth, high unemployment, and rising poverty levels, affecting both domestic confidence and international brand perceptions. ▪ Limited financial resources for national branding and international promotion efforts impact Brand South Africa’s ability to compete with larger, better-funded nation branding initiatives. ▪ South Africa’s infrastructure (ports, airports, transport) plays a critical role in positioning the country as an efficient business and tourism destination.
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Global social movements for gender equality, anti-racism, social justice, and human rights influence public perception and shape the global narrative. ▪ Increased social media use, digital connectivity, and online communities allow for rapid information sharing, influencing nation branding efforts. ▪ Global demographic changes, such as ageing populations in developed countries and youth bulges in emerging economies, drive new social and economic dynamics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ South Africa contends with social challenges, including GBV, crime, xenophobia, and racial tensions, affecting its global reputation and brand strength. ▪ Fostering social cohesion, unity, and national pride through programmes like Play Your Part is critical to counter negative narratives and build trust. ▪ South Africa’s cultural diversity and rich heritage are major assets for brand-building but require careful positioning to avoid misrepresentation or stereotyping.

Factor	Global Context	South African Context
Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Technological advancements in big data, social media, and digital platforms allow nations to enhance engagement and deliver targeted nation branding messages. ▪ Emphasis on data privacy, cybersecurity, and ethical use of information affects global communication strategies and branding. ▪ Development of smart cities, technology hubs, and innovation ecosystems enhances a country's reputation as a forward-thinking, technology-savvy nation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ South Africa invests in digital technology, but challenges around connectivity, cybersecurity, and data analytics hinder full brand promotion potential. ▪ The push towards digital public services (e.g., e-visas, online trade facilitation) can improve perceptions of efficiency and openness to investment. ▪ Digital tools, social media, and mobile platforms are crucial for promoting South Africa's image and ensuring real-time engagement with global audiences.
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Global emphasis on combating climate change and promoting sustainability puts pressure on countries to adopt green policies and sustainable practices. ▪ Growing demand for sustainable travel and ecotourism creates opportunities for countries to promote responsible tourism experiences that align with global values. ▪ Environmental risks like natural disasters, pollution, and water scarcity require proactive management to maintain positive perceptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ South Africa's diverse landscapes, wildlife, and environmental assets offer opportunities for eco-branding but require sustainable management and protection. ▪ The Just Energy Transition offers South Africa the chance to position itself as a leader in green energy and sustainability practices, improving brand perception. ▪ Urbanisation, waste management, and infrastructure development impact local environments and environmental challenges.
Legal / Regulatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Navigating trade agreements, World Trade Organisation rules, and international compliance is necessary for maintaining global market credibility. ▪ Global adherence to labour standards, human rights laws, and ethical business practices influences perceptions of countries as ethical and fair destinations. ▪ Strong intellectual property protection and innovation laws enhance a nation's attractiveness for investment, research and development, and business ventures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brand South Africa plays a role in advocating for legal reforms that enhance South Africa's reputation and competitiveness, especially in investment, trade, and business regulations. ▪ Addressing crime, corruption, and rule of law issues is crucial for improving the country's brand and fostering a trustworthy business environment.

Nation Brand SWOT Anal

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unique cultural heritage: South Africa's rich history and vibrant demography are key assets for building a distinctive nation brand. ▪ Natural attractiveness: The country's diverse landscapes, wildlife, and biodiversity make it a premier destination for tourism and eco-branding. ▪ Resilience of people and economy: Despite challenges, South Africa has a growing middle class, a diverse economy, and a strategic geographical position in Africa. ▪ Global leadership: The country's leadership in international forums like BRICS, the G20, and the African Union highlights its influence in economic diplomacy. ▪ Hosting global events: South Africa has a strong track record in hosting successful international events, contributing to its positive global image. ▪ Established nation brand identity: Brand South Africa has developed a clear and distinct identity, supported by a strong institutional framework and strategic relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nation brand disablers: Issues like crime, corruption, and inequality continue to damage South Africa's brand perception. ▪ Infrastructure challenges: Energy sector instability and sustainability challenges undermine economic performance and attractiveness. ▪ Perception of inefficiency: Criticism of the effectiveness of nation branding initiatives impacts South Africa's global standing. ▪ Limited resources: Limited funding for large-scale international promotion hinders Brand South Africa's ability to compete with better-funded nation branding efforts globally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Investment potential: South Africa's growing technology and entrepreneurial ecosystem offers significant investment opportunities, particularly in green technology and innovation. ▪ Continental leadership: By leveraging its ties across Africa, South Africa can position itself as a regional innovation hub and key driver of Africa's growth. ▪ Global partnerships: Opportunities exist to enhance South Africa's brand by forming partnerships with countries and businesses in emerging sectors like green energy. ▪ Tourism growth: The significant increase in tourism creates opportunities for promoting South Africa's natural and cultural attractions globally. ▪ Digital engagement: Expanding digital platforms and real-time engagement tools offer opportunities to reach global audiences more effectively and drive positive narratives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brand competition: South Africa faces competition from other African nations and emerging economies in attracting investment and tourism. ▪ Negative media coverage: Crime, corruption, and social unrest contribute to negative global perceptions of South Africa. ▪ Social cohesion challenges: Xenophobia, racial tensions, and social unrest threaten national unity and weaken the external image of the country.

Key Opportunities for the Nation Brand

Aligned with the MTDP and government priorities, Brand South Africa will focus on leveraging the following key opportunities over the 2025–2030 period:

- 1) **Leverage continental leadership:** South Africa can position itself as a leader in the African Union, BRICS, and the Global South, using these platforms to expand influence and strengthen the nation brand.
- 2) **Promote green technology and sustainability:** South Africa's focus on green energy, including projects like the Green Hydrogen Fund, aligns with global sustainability trends, presenting a key opportunity for branding around environmental leadership.
- 3) **Attract investment through stability and diplomacy:** Following peaceful elections and its leadership in global diplomacy, South Africa is well-positioned to attract foreign investment, particularly in sectors such as finance, green energy, and technology.
- 4) **Capitalise on tourism growth:** With a 48.9% increase in tourism in 2023/24, there is a significant opportunity to further promote South Africa's diverse tourism offerings, including ecotourism and cultural heritage.
- 5) **Increase digital engagement:** By expanding the use of digital platforms and real-time engagement tools, Brand South Africa can reach global audiences more effectively and proactively counter negative narratives through timely communication.

4.2. INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS

This section provides a detailed examination of the internal environment shaping Brand South Africa's ability to fulfil its mandate. It reflects on the organisation's core positioning, signature programmes, and the enabling factors supporting its operations.

Positioning of Brand South Africa

Reclaiming Custodianship of the Nation Brand:

Brand South Africa has reaffirmed its position as the custodian of the nation brand, tasked with developing and coordinating a singular, cohesive strategy to project South Africa's strengths globally. As part of its custodianship, Brand South Africa plays a central role in shaping the country's international identity, driving consistent messaging across government departments, public entities, and private sector partners.

Through its strategic involvement in inter-ministerial committees, Brand South Africa ensures that the nation brand messaging remains aligned with government priorities, especially in key areas such as economic diplomacy, investment promotion, and tourism. The organisation collaborates closely with DIRCO, GCIS, and The Presidency to ensure unified communication, especially during trade missions, state visits, and high-level international engagements.

Nation Branding and Global Positioning:

Brand South Africa's core mandate is to develop and maintain a cohesive national brand that enhances South Africa's global reputation. In 2023, South Africa's brand strength improved to a score of 64.2, ranking it 2nd in Africa, largely due to the country's leadership in global forums such as BRICS and the African Union. These engagements have positioned South Africa as a major diplomatic player, with key global events such as the BRICS Summit helping to bolster the nation's profile.

Despite these achievements, international perceptions around safety, governance, and crime remain significant challenges. Brand South Africa is addressing these concerns through targeted international media campaigns and partnerships that drive positive messaging and enhance South Africa's global image.

Brand South Africa Signature Programmes

Research and Analytics and Insights:

Research is the foundation of Brand South Africa's operations, ensuring that all nation branding efforts are informed by robust data and insights. In 2024, the Research and Insights Division utilised the Global Reputation Study and tracked key global indexes, such as the World Competitiveness Index, Global Innovation Index, Edelman Trust Barometer, Press Freedom Index, and the Human Development Index. These tools provided critical data on South Africa's global standing, enabling the refinement

of branding strategies and communication efforts. The insights gained from these indexes also helped identify priority markets for tourism, trade, and investment, ensuring that Brand South Africa's efforts are strategically focused and responsive to global trends.

Although progress has been made in utilising analytics, gaps remain in integrating data across all programmes. Investing in human resources, modern tools and systems will allow for real-time tracking of campaign performance, ensuring that Brand South Africa remains agile in responding to global trends.

Play Your Part Programme:

The Play Your Part Programme remains a cornerstone of Brand South Africa's domestic and international advocacy efforts, promoting active citizenship and social cohesion. In 2024, the programme's initiatives, including the Play Your Part Academy and Ignite, engaged over 500 students, and supported 1,000 small businesses. The Academy provided small and medium enterprise growth courses, while Ignite masterclasses focused on entrepreneurship and youth empowerment, reaching 2.15 million people online by mid-2024. The programme has been strategically utilised by Brand South Africa to mobilise South Africans to rally behind the nation brand, be it in sports, creative arts, business and domestically. Play Your Part is further utilised as a call-to-action movement to address the country's socio-economic challenges. Brand South Africa has collaborated with the South African Police Service, foundations in the space of GBV, those promoting entrepreneurship and intra-Africa relations. It is also pleasing to note that certain government departments have adopted Play Your Part messaging and are using it as a call to action. Some of these departments include Health, Home Affairs and Water.

Additionally, advocacy campaigns, such as This is Who We Are and Study in South Africa, promoted the nation's cultural and educational assets. While successful, there are opportunities to expand and position the programme as a strategic South African way of addressing the nation brand challenges and celebrating the achievements across different spectrums of stakeholders and the general public.

Global South Africans Programme:

The Global South Africans (GSA) Programme is a vital part of Brand South Africa's strategy for promoting the nation abroad. By mobilising influential South Africans living overseas, the GSA network amplifies South Africa's investment and tourism

potential in key markets. In 2024, the programme facilitated strategic business engagements in the USA, Europe, and other regions, contributing to the nation brand's growth. The GSA network also plays a key role in aligning the global diaspora with South Africa's development agenda.

Enabling Environment

Funding, Resource Allocation, and Financial Performance:

Brand South Africa has successfully managed its resources, achieving budget surpluses despite declining financial support. The 2024/25 budget of R229.4 million reflects a real-term decline of 9% over the past five years, limiting the organisation's capacity to scale its international campaigns. To address these constraints, Brand South Africa is actively exploring public-private partnerships and alternative funding models to secure sustainable resources for the future.

Human Capital Management and Organisational Capacity:

Brand South Africa's Human Capital Strategy is structured around people, process, and technology. While there are significant challenges, such as a 33% vacancy rate and high staff turnover, the organisation received approval to fill vacant positions and is in the process of implementing the recruitment plan. There is a serious need for the organisation to fill the vacant executive positions to ensure stability, maintain leadership, ensure operational efficiency, safeguarding morale, and maintain external confidence.

Brand South Africa further prioritises empowering its workforce through training and development, capacity-building, and internship programmes. The review of structures, culture, changes in the succession plan will assist in maintaining consistency and direction, guide decisions and actions, which will ultimately fuel the workforce and help reach its potential, as the ultimate goal is to build a motivated and high-performing organisation.

The organisation takes employment equity, diversity, and inclusion seriously and has put plans in place to close the gaps in achieving targets for Coloured male, females and Indian female and White male, female populations in leadership roles, requiring targeted recruitment and employment equity plans. The organisation has 3.5% representation of persons with disability.



Processes and Technology–Digital Transformation:

Brand South Africa has made strides in digitising its operations through the migration of its Enterprise Resource Planning System to the Cloud, improving operational efficiency and data security. However, there is still a need for more robust Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems and digital engagement tools to enhance stakeholder engagement and data analysis capabilities. Upgrading these systems is essential to achieving real-time performance tracking and increasing the global reach of branding campaigns.

Governance and Compliance:

Following the reconstitution of the Board in 2024, Brand South Africa has improved its governance structures. The organisation is committed to adhering to the POPIA and strengthening its whistleblower protections and compliance mechanisms. Governance reviews are conducted regularly to ensure that Brand South Africa maintains high standards of accountability and transparency across all its operations.

Stakeholder Management and Strategic Partnerships:

Stakeholder engagement is central to Brand South Africa’s mission, with strong relationships developed across government, civil society, and business sectors. In 2024, the organisation leveraged global platforms, such as the South Africa Investment Conference, to attract FDI and strengthen the country’s global presence. Moving forward, formalising engagement processes and aligning partnerships more closely with the Nation Brand Strategy will be key to ensuring sustained impact.



Internal SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research-driven strategy that enables data-informed branding initiatives and effective decision-making. ▪ Proven impact of established programmes like Play Your Part Academy, Ignite masterclasses, and the Nation Brand Forum in engaging stakeholders. ▪ High-quality personnel with expertise in nation branding. ▪ Consistently prudent financial management, achieving budget surpluses despite fiscal constraints. ▪ Credibility and respect from stakeholders, fostering cooperation across government, business, and civil society. ▪ Well-established strategic relationships that enhance operational capabilities and branding efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Significant staff vacancies, with a vacancy rate of around 33%, is impacting operational efficiency and programme delivery. ▪ Fragmented digital systems and infrastructure is limiting the ability to fully leverage data and engage with global audiences. ▪ Gaps in leadership diversity, particularly underrepresentation of Coloured, Indian populations, and persons with disabilities in senior roles. ▪ Limited resources, including insufficient funding and personnel, constrain the scaling of programmes to meet rising demands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continued technological modernisation, including investment in advanced CRM systems and digital tools, to improve stakeholder engagement and operational efficiency. ▪ Expanding strategic partnerships with global media, governments, and private sector stakeholders to further enhance South Africa’s global narrative and attract foreign direct investment and tourism. ▪ Elevating Brand South Africa’s role in intergovernmental structures to ensure consistent, unified nation brand messaging. ▪ Revitalising internal culture by strengthening values and fostering engagement to create a cohesive and high-performing organisational environment. ▪ Expanding research capabilities, with a focus on producing more customised, nation-specific insights to improve nation branding strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing budget constraints that limit programme reach and diminish opportunities for international brand campaigns. ▪ Governance and operational fragmentation, including misalignment in policy execution, risks undermining both stakeholder trust and organisational performance. ▪ Challenges in creating a cohesive internal culture and addressing morale issues, which could negatively impact productivity, communication, and strategic alignment within the organisation.

PART C: MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE



Inspiring new ways

In the context of the hierarchy of performance information utilised to construct this Five-Year Strategic Plan for 2025 to 2030, through the “Theory of Change” Logic Model, and where the mandate, vision and mission describe the longer-term strategic focus of the organisation; the next level in the hierarchy is to describe the impact and the outcomes (results areas) necessary to deliver against the desired strategic focus.

1. INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

1.1. IMPACT STATEMENT

Informed by the legislative and policy mandates and the strategic focus, the impact statement of Brand South Africa is:

South Africa’s nation brand is enhanced in order to improve the country’s domestic and global attractiveness and competitiveness.

1.2. MEASURING OUR OUTCOMES

Aligned to its mandate and strategic focus and towards its impact, four outcomes will direct the effort and focus of Brand South Africa over the period to 2030:

1) **Enhanced positioning and communication of the nation brand internationally, regionally, and locally**

Brand South Africa will work to boost the visibility and perception of the nation brand by creating a cohesive and attractive image across all platforms. The aim is to highlight South Africa’s strengths, including its innovation, opportunities, and cultural richness, while improving the nation brand reputation score and global rankings. These efforts will promote international interest, positioning South Africa as a preferred destination for tourism, trade, investment, and talent attraction.

2) **Aligned nation brand execution and experience domestically and internationally**

Ensuring a consistent and unified nation brand experience requires coordinated messaging and collaboration across sectors. This outcome focuses on distributing the Nation Brand Toolkit to stakeholders, forming a Nation

Brand Council to steer strategy, and mobilising resources for brand-building initiatives. By securing support from public and private sector partners, Brand South Africa will ensure that all messaging and activities are aligned to deliver a seamless and impactful representation of South Africa at home and abroad.

3) **Enhanced nation brand advocacy**

Building national pride and unity is crucial to the nation brand’s success. This outcome aims to drive active citizenship and advocacy by aligning all government interventions with Brand South Africa’s strategy. Through programmes like Play Your Part, Brand South Africa will inspire South Africans to celebrate and promote the country’s values, strengths, and opportunities. The goal is to promote a positive narrative that strengthens social cohesion both within South Africa and beyond its borders.

4) **Enhanced reputation of Brand South Africa as an entity**

For Brand South Africa to effectively lead the promotion of the nation brand, it must establish a strong and trustworthy organisational reputation. This involves conducting stakeholder perception audits, fostering a positive internal climate, and upholding good corporate governance. Achieving clean audits, ensuring transparent operations, and building strong stakeholder relationships will cement Brand South Africa’s role as a trusted and influential leader in promoting the nation brand.

Progress towards the outcomes will be tracked and assessed as follows:

Outcome	Outcome Indicators	Baseline (2024)	Five-Year Target (2030)
MTDP Priority 1: Inclusive growth and job creation			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote South Africa’s nation brand as a favourable investment destination and trade partner. 			
1. Enhanced positioning and communication of the nation brand internationally, regionally, and locally	Nation Brand Perception Score	45%	Achieve a 55% score
	Brand Value Score	43.7 ranking	Attain position #38
	Nation Brand Association	68%	75%
2. Aligned nation brand execution and experience domestically and internationally	Toolkit adoption level	New indicator	Achieve 50% adoption of the toolkit by beneficiaries of training
	Team South Africa’s collaborations formalised with strategic business associations	New indicator	Formalised collaborations with 8 strategic business associations
MTDP Priority 2: Reduce poverty and tackle the high cost of living			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote South Africa’s identity in accordance with constitutional values; and Promote nation brand advocacy. 			
3. Enhanced nation brand advocacy	Domestic Perception Study (Nation Brand Advocacy)	64.1% in active citizenship (2023)	15% Growth for Active Citizenship Index (target of 75% by year five)
		70.4% in National pride (2023)	5% Growth for National Pride Index
		62.8 % in social cohesion (2023)	5% Growth for Social Cohesion Index
	Global South Africans Nation Brand Advocacy rate	2,000 subscriptions	50% growth rate in subscription numbers
		10 official Global South Africans onboarded	50 additional ambassadors to be onboarded (10x ambassadors onboarded annually)
MTDP Priority 3: Build a capable, ethical, and developmental state			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the governance and performance of public entities. 			
4. Enhanced reputation of Brand South Africa as an entity	External audit outcome	Unqualified audit	Unqualified audit outcome each year
	Stakeholder Equity Survey	To be determined at end-2024/25	Achieve a 50% rating in measurable stakeholder satisfaction, brand equity, and professionalism
	Organisational Climate Survey	70% (2017)	Improve by 20%

1.3. EXPLANATION OF PLANNED PERFORMANCE OVER THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD

Enhanced Positioning and Communication of the Nation Brand Internationally, Regionally, and Locally

Brand South Africa will enhance the nation's image by communicating a cohesive narrative that highlights South Africa's strengths, particularly focusing on diversifying associations beyond traditional sectors like mining towards technology, manufacturing, and sustainability. The strategy will be guided by data-driven insights from perception surveys and market research to tailor messaging that is both relevant and impactful. Efforts to elevate the Nation Brand Perception Score and improve global rankings will be supported by strategic partnerships with global and local media outlets. This will help shape positive narratives and reinforce South Africa's image as a dynamic, inclusive, and competitive economy.

The enhanced positioning will contribute to the MTDP's goals and will ensure visibility for women, youth, and persons with disabilities. Unified communication through the Nation Brand Toolkit will enable stakeholders to deliver consistent and aligned messages.

Aligned nation brand Execution and Experience Domestically and Internationally

To achieve a unified nation brand experience, Brand South Africa will distribute and implement the Nation Brand Toolkit across stakeholders, with regular training to ensure adoption. A focused effort will be made to develop a cohesive corporate identity, aligned with the broader country brand, ensuring that all brand-building initiatives reinforce a unified image. Resource mobilisation is another critical enabler, leveraging public-private partnerships to secure commitments for brand-building initiatives. By actively engaging with stakeholders through communication strategies and structured messaging, Brand South Africa aims to align all partners and platforms to a singular brand experience, driving social cohesion and promoting South Africa's position in key sectors. Another useful tactic is the utilisation of independent

third-party endorsers: external friends of South Africa's word of mouth, who will share positive messaging about South Africa to promote favourable perceptions about the country. This includes international journalists or media who have had positive experiences in or about South Africa

Establishing a Nation Brand Council by 2026 will provide strategic oversight, ensuring that all messaging from various government programmes, campaigns, and stakeholder engagements is aligned and consistent. Resource mobilisation will be a priority, securing commitments from public and private partners to support brand-building initiatives. The outcome directly enhances the credibility and reach of Brand South Africa's mandate, helping to build greater social cohesion and economic transformation through unified brand messaging.

Enhanced Nation Brand Advocacy

The promotion of active citizenship is key to creating a strong nation brand. Through the Play Your Part Programme and ambassador programmes, Brand South Africa will encourage greater participation in nation-building activities. The strategy will leverage insight-driven programmes by co-designing campaigns with youth, women, and persons with disabilities to amplify their voices and contributions.

A dedicated focus on differentiating Brand South Africa's unique role from related entities like South African Tourism will ensure that its mandate as the custodian of the nation brand narrative is well-understood. The Nation Brand Toolkit will be used as an enabler to support stakeholders in developing aligned and consistent advocacy messages, fostering pride and active participation within all communities.

Annual perception studies will track progress and inform advocacy efforts to ensure that messaging resonates with citizens and promotes active participation. Ambassador programmes for Play Your Part, Global South Africans, and Team South Africa will expand representation, with a focus on engaging youth, women, and persons with disabilities. This will ensure that every segment of society feels empowered to promote and shape South Africa's narrative. Alignment with government interventions will strengthen the programme's impact, amplifying positive stories about the country and increasing pride and unity across communities.

Enhanced Reputation of Brand South Africa as an Entity

For Brand South Africa to lead the nation brand successfully, it must be seen as a model of transparency, accountability, and professionalism. Enablers such as internal culture-building initiatives and regular stakeholder equity audits will support the development of a high-performance work environment and positive relationships with partners. By building a culture of continuous improvement through staff development programmes and maintaining strong corporate governance with clean audits, Brand South Africa will ensure that its operations are aligned with best practices.

Differentiating its mandate clearly from other entities will help Brand South Africa

solidify its role as the manager of South Africa’s overall brand reputation. This outcome will be supported by stakeholder engagement frameworks that maintain transparency, build trust, and establish Brand South Africa as an influential leader in promoting the nation brand.

A focus on building a positive organisational culture will improve employee morale and capacity, while transparent governance practices will ensure clean audits and responsible financial management. The outcome will enhance Brand South Africa’s reputation as a trusted and impactful leader in nation branding, thereby ensuring effective delivery on its mandate and contributing to a positive national and international image for South Africa.

2. KEY RISKS AND MITIGATIONS

The risks to the achievement of the outcomes are identified as follows:

Outcome	Key Risks	Risk Mitigations
1. Enhanced positioning and communication of the nation brand internationally, regionally, and locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited resources for international marketing and communication: Budget constraints may hinder large-scale campaigns needed to position the nation brand globally. ▪ Negative international perceptions and geopolitical challenges: Unforeseen international events or geopolitical tensions could damage South Africa's image and impact perception scores. ▪ Fragmented messaging across platforms: Inconsistent narratives and a lack of alignment in messaging among stakeholders can dilute the intended image and communication of the nation brand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus on high-impact, cost-effective campaigns in key markets and leverage public-private partnerships to supplement funding. ▪ Collaboration with strategic and influential stakeholders/thought leaders to achieve reach, influence, and impact. ▪ Establish proactive media monitoring, rapid response teams, and robust crisis communication plans to address and manage negative narratives effectively. ▪ Distribute the Nation Brand Toolkit widely and provide training for stakeholders to ensure alignment and consistent communication across all platforms.
2. Aligned nation brand execution and experience domestically and internationally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delayed formation of the Nation Brand Council: Slow progress in establishing the council could impact the coordination of brand activities and policy alignment. ▪ Low adoption of the Nation Brand Toolkit: Limited buy-in or engagement from stakeholders might result in inconsistent usage of the toolkit, affecting a uniform brand experience. ▪ Challenges in resource mobilisation: Securing adequate external funding and stakeholder commitments for brand-building initiatives may be difficult. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a clear project plan with timelines, milestones, and accountability structures to ensure the timely establishment of the Nation Brand Council. ▪ Increase stakeholder awareness of the toolkit's benefits, run training sessions, and build a community of practice for its use, providing regular support and feedback mechanisms. ▪ Build strong relationships with potential partners early on to secure commitments and create incentives for co-funding of nation branding initiatives.

Outcome	Key Risks	Risk Mitigations
3. Enhanced nation brand advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low participation in advocacy programmes: Limited public awareness or interest in initiatives like the Play Your Part Programme may hinder active citizenship and advocacy efforts. ▪ Incoherent messaging: amongst Global South Africans in key international markets. ▪ Insufficient engagement with youth, women, and persons with disabilities: If these key demographics are not adequately engaged, the advocacy programmes may fail to be inclusive or resonate broadly. ▪ Government alignment issues: Lack of collaboration or alignment across government departments may affect advocacy efforts and reduce the overall impact of nation-building activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop targeted campaigns to raise awareness and create incentives (e.g., recognition, awards) for participation in advocacy programmes. ▪ Onboarding of Global South African champion ambassadors in key markets to ensure that South Africans in the diaspora are mobilised and are aligned in terms of messaging. ▪ Co-create and co-design initiatives with corporate partners, youth, women, and persons with disabilities to ensure representation and relevance, leveraging ambassadors from these groups for greater impact. ▪ Establish formal interdepartmental forums for collaboration, ensuring all relevant departments understand and are engaged in aligning their activities with Brand South Africa’s strategy.
4. Enhanced reputation of Brand South Africa as an entity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organisational culture and staff morale challenges: Low staff morale or organisational inefficiencies could affect the overall performance and effectiveness of Brand South Africa. ▪ Stakeholder perception and engagement gaps: Lack of strong relationships and clear communication with stakeholders may result in reduced trust and support for Brand South Africa’s activities. ▪ Governance and compliance failures: Poor financial management or governance issues may lead to qualified audits, affecting Brand South Africa’s reputation and ability to lead on the nation brand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement comprehensive staff training, engagement activities, and wellness programmes to enhance skills, morale, and a cohesive work culture. ▪ Engage stakeholders regularly through consultation forums, provide transparent reporting, and build trust through effective communication of goals and achievements. ▪ Maintain high standards for financial management and governance through continuous oversight, internal controls, and alignment with best practices to achieve clean audit outcomes consistently.

6. PUBLIC ENTITIES

Brand South Africa does not have any public entities.

PART D: MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE



Inspiring new ways

Indicator 1.1	Nation Brand Perception Score
Definition	Measuring the overall improved perception of South Africa
Source of data	Primary Research – Global Reputation Study
Method of calculation or assessment	Analysis of study results
Assumptions	Not applicable
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	Not applicable
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	Not applicable
Desired performance	Reach the desired planned target
Indicator responsibility	Chief Marketing Officer

Indicator 1.2	Brand Value Score
Definition	Reflects South Africa’s ranking among global brands based on value
Source of data	Brand Finance Global Index
Method of calculation or assessment	Analysis of study results
Assumptions	Not applicable
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	Not applicable
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	Not applicable
Desired performance	Reach the desired planned target
Indicator responsibility	Chief Marketing Officer

Indicator 1.3	Nation Brand Association
Definition	Tracks the alignment between public associations with South Africa and the brand's core values
Source of data	Primary Research – Global Reputation Study
Method of calculation or assessment	Analysis of study results
Assumptions	Not applicable
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	Not applicable
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	Not applicable
Desired performance	Reach the desired planned target
Indicator responsibility	Chief Marketing Officer

Indicator 2.1	Toolkit adoption level
Definition	This refers to the percentage of trained Public Sector entities and Brand South Africa, civil society and private sector strategic partners that have downloaded the toolkit
Source of data	Toolkit Registration Report
Method of calculation or assessment	Simple count
Assumptions	Assumes that stakeholders have seen the activities promoting the Nation Brand Toolkit and they want to align with the nation brand messaging and identity (logo)
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	Not applicable
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	Not applicable
Desired performance	Performance is higher than the planned target
Indicator responsibility	Chief Marketing Officer

Indicator 2.2	Team South Africa's collaborations formalised with strategic business associations and media bodies
Definition	This refers to the number of Strategic Business associations and media bodies with a formal partnership agreement with Brand South Africa. The list of Strategic Business associations to be outlined in the APP annually.
Source of data	Formal partnership agreements
Method of calculation or assessment	Simple count
Assumptions	Strategic business associations and media bodies remain in existence and are willing to partner with Brand South Africa
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	Not applicable
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	Not applicable
Desired performance	Performance is higher than the planned target
Indicator responsibility	Chief Marketing Officer

Indicator 3.1	Domestic Perception Study (Nation Brand Advocacy)
Definition	Perception survey tracking changes amongst South Africans concerning socio-political mindsets and perception of the Nation's Brand
Source of data	Primary research -Domestic perception study
Method of calculation or assessment	Simple count
Assumptions	Not applicable
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	Not applicable
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	Not applicable
Desired performance	Reach the desired planned target
Indicator responsibility	Chief Marketing Officer



Indicator 3.2	Global South Africans Nation Brand Advocacy rate
Definition	Global South Africans' level of engagement with the programme through programme-related activities, events, and digital platforms
Source of data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Global South Africans networking portal database ▪ Event and activation-related registers, as well as exit reports ▪ Global South Africans' digital and social media campaign reports
Method of calculation or assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Count the existing subscribers to the Global South Africans web-based networking platform ▪ Count the number of ambassadors onboarded annually
Assumptions	All targets to be based on 2023 refined baselines
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	Not applicable
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	Not applicable
Desired performance	Performance is higher than the planned target
Indicator responsibility	Chief Marketing Officer

Indicator 4.1	External audit outcome
Definition	<p>Pursuant to sound corporate governance and internal control environment, the external audit report is used as it is an independent assurance report, and it covers the following corporate governance areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Financial management ▪ Compliance with relevant laws and regulations ▪ Performance information
Source of data	Signed external audit report issued by the Auditor-General
Method of calculation or assessment	Audit opinion expressed in the signed external audit report
Assumptions	Not applicable
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	Not applicable
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	Not applicable
Desired performance	Performance as per the planned target
Indicator responsibility	Chief Financial Officer

Indicator 4.2	Stakeholder Equity Survey
Definition	This refers to the percentage rating achieved through a Stakeholder Equity Survey measuring stakeholders' overall satisfaction with Brand South Africa's support and programme
Source of data	Stakeholder Equity Survey Report
Method of calculation or assessment	Analysis of survey results
Assumptions	Stakeholders are willing to participate in a survey
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	Not applicable
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	Not applicable
Desired performance	Performance is higher than the planned target
Indicator responsibility	Chief Marketing Officer

Indicator 4.3	Organisational Climate Survey
Definition	Evaluates employee satisfaction and organisational culture
Source of data	Organisational Climate Survey Report
Method of calculation or assessment	Analysis of survey results
Assumptions	Not applicable
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	Not applicable
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	Not applicable
Desired performance	Performance is higher than the planned target
Indicator responsibility	Head of Corporate Services

ANNEXURES TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

ANNEXURE A: DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Not applicable to Brand South Africa.

ANNEXURE B: ABBREVIATIONS

B-BBEE	Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment
Brexit	Britain's Exit (from the European Union)
BRICS+	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the United Arab Emirates
CleanTech	Clean Technology Sector
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
DIRCO	The Department of International Relations and Cooperation
dtic	Department of Trade, Industry and Competition
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
G20	Group of Twenty
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GCIS	Government Communication and Information Services
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNU	Government of National Unity
GSA	Global South Africans
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IT	Information Technology
MTDP	Medium-Term Development Plan 2024-2029
NDP	National Development Plan, Vision 2030
PFMA	Public Financial Management Act (No.1 of 1999, as amended)
POPIA	Protection of Personal Information Act
RISDP	Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan
SADC	South African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal (United Nations, 2015)
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
SMME	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprise
The Constitution	Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
USA	United States of America



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