

LIMPOPO POWERING AHEAD

Limpopo, a combination of three previous homelands (Gazankulu, Lebowa and Venda) and a portion of the old Transvaal Administration, is a developing region. Considering its rich natural resources, the province has a high potential for development and excellent investment opportunities with socio-economic conditions being driven by primary production in agriculture and mining. The population has grown from 4.58 million in 1996 to 5.79 million in 2016, with the majority still living in areas that are classified as rural.

Over the past 25 years, governance and administration have had to deal with a major transition from the apartheid period to a democratic dispensation. To address these challenges, the province, has established various governance and administrative structures, reviewed the legislation and policies, as well as developed strategies, systems and processes for effective and responsive provincial governance and service delivery.

Economic development has been built on three main pillars: agriculture, mining and tourism. The growth in mining between 1995 and 2016 has been remarkable, moving from 16.5 percent to 25 percent, as compared to the diminishing share of agriculture that moved from 4 percent to 2.3 percent and manufacturing from 5 percent to 2.6 percent.

EMPLOYMENT CREATION

Employment creation has received special attention through labour intensive agricultural initiatives, through the mining sector, development of small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs), as well as the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). Worth noting is employment opportunities that have been created through the development of Medupi Power Station. Unemployment in Limpopo has been reduced from 30.1 percent in 2008 to 19.3 percent in 2018: Q2, far less than the current national average of 27.2 percent but nevertheless, the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality are still evident.

