

Tel : +27 12 341 9638 / 9651
Fax : +27 12 341 5938

Private Bag X08 | Arcadia | 0007
523 Stanza Bopape Street | 5th Floor | Provisus Building | Arcadia



PanSALB
PAN SOUTH AFRICAN LANGUAGE BOARD

PRESS STATEMENT

EMBARGOED UNTIL 21 MARCH 2024

20 MARCH 2024, PRETORIA

PanSALB REPORT FINDS NATIONAL DEPARTMENTS & ENTITIES NON-COMPLIANT WITH THE USE OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT 12 OF 2012

The Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB) has published a report that presents a rigorous evaluation of how the Use of Official Languages Act 12 of 2012 (UOLA) has been operationalised across various government departments and entities. The UOLA Act mandates governmental departments and entities to actively promote the use and development of all official languages. The report is a comprehensive audit of the execution of language policies, the alignment of these policies with the overarching national objectives, and the effectiveness of their implementation and resource allocation. The comprehensive assessment reveals a diverse spectrum of adherence to UOLA across 22 national departments and 18 public entities, highlighting a pressing need for widespread improvements in policy and planning, compliance, accessibility of language services, capacity building, public awareness, and monitoring and evaluation. In terms of compliance with the act, a select few departments or entities showcase high performance, suggesting robust legal structures and effective review processes. However, a majority underperform, struggling with legal compliance and accountability. The average score falls below the moderate performance threshold, underscoring a prevalent issue of substandard compliance measures. In terms of language policy and planning analysis, the report found that only a single entity nearly achieved the ideal approach, while a significant portion demonstrated moderate implementation. Alarming, several entities fall into the poor implementation category, necessitating an urgent overhaul of language policy and planning. The collective average performance hovers just above moderate, signalling a concerning gap between policy formulation and its practical execution.

The accessibility of language services is notably deficient, with only two entities reaching moderate implementation levels and none excelling. The majority rank poorly, indicating a significant deficit in providing accessible language services. The overall average performance is substantially low, calling for immediate action to improve service accessibility. Capacity-building efforts are universally poor, with all entities failing to achieve even a moderate level of implementation. This highlights a critical lack of staff and resource support, an issue that requires immediate and comprehensive action to address. Public awareness and engagement efforts are largely inadequate, with most entities rated as poor. A few entities manage moderate implementation, but none excel. The general deficiency in engagement initiatives points to a need for robust public awareness campaigns and outreach programs. Finally, monitoring and evaluation practices are predominantly subpar, with most entities falling into the poor category. A handful of entities manage a moderate level of implementation, but none exhibit excellence. The average performance indicates an overarching need for improved monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

In summary, the findings highlight a critical need for comprehensive improvements across all aspects of language policy implementation. The disparate levels of performance call for targeted interventions, capacity building, and a concerted effort to enhance the operationalisation of language services, ensuring that all official languages are given the prominence and application they warrant in public service delivery.

END

Released on behalf of PanSALB:

Ntombentle Huluhulu
Head: Marketing and Communication
Mobile: 061 581 5216