2022-2032 | INTERNATIONAL DECADE OF
Indigenous Languages

PanSALB
PAN SOUTH AFRICAN LANGUAGE BOARD

MULTILINGUALISM

CONFERENCE REPORT

MULTILINGUALISM

CONFERENCE REPORT

16-17 November 2023

DATE
16-17 NOVEMBER 2023

TIME
07:45-17:30 &
07:45-13:00

VENUE
BIRCHWOOD HOTEL &
OR TAMBO CONFERENCE CENTRE

SCRIBES
DR MICHAL-MARÉ LINDEN AND MR OLIVER MAASDORP

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2023 PanSALB Conference on the Promotion of Multilingualism (Multilingualism Conference) was held on 16 and 17 November. This was the second conference of this nature by PanSALB. The 2023 conference aimed to continue the previous year's efforts through progress presentations and discussions in thematic commissions that would devise new recommendations and milestones for the furtherance of multilingualism during 2024. All recommendations made are noted in this report, key of which were the continuation of current efforts, which had produced results in the year since the previous conference, a need for better cooperation between entities, the prioritisation of national terminology projects, specifically the revitalisation of the National Term Bank and Terminology Policy, the extrapolation of mother tongue use to assessment and in higher grades and tertiary studies, and the enforcement, by PanSALB, and earnest implementation, by organs of state, of the Use of Official Languages Act.

THADISO

Khonferense ya PanSALB ya 2023 ya Thotloetso ya Bopuontsi (Khonferense ya Bopuontsi) e ne e tshwerwe ka la 16 le 17 Ngwanaitseele. E ne e le khonferense ya bobedi ya mofuta ono, e e tshwerweng ke PanSALB. Khonferense ya 2023 e ne e ikaeletse go tsweletsa maiteko a ngwaga o o fetileng ka go rebola ditlhagiso tse di tsweledisitsweng tsa dipuisano tsa merero ya dikhomišene tse di neng di tlaa tla ka dikatlanegiso tse dintšhwa le tema e e kgathilweng mo go tsweledisiseng bopuontsi mo ngwageng wa 2024 pele. Dikatlanegiso tsotlhe tse di dirilweng di tseilwe tsia mo pegelong e, mme tse di neng di le kwa setlhoeng e ne e le go tsweletsa maiteko a gajaana, ao a ntshitseng dipholo mo ngwageng morago ga khonferense e e fetileng jaaka tlhokego ya tokafatso ya tirisano magareng ga ditheo, go baya diporojeke tsa mareo a bosetšhaba kwa pele, bogolosegolo tlhabololo ya Polokelo le Pholisi ya Mareo a Bosetšhaba, konotelo ya tiriso ya puo ya ga mme mo go tlhatlhobeng mephato e e kwa godingwana le mo dithutong tse dikgolwane, le gore PanSALB e gagamaletse ditheo, le gore ditheo tsa puso di diragatse Molao wa Tiriso ya Dipuo tsa Semmuso ka botshepegi.

IKULUMO ERHUNYEZIWEKO

IKhonferensi ye-PanSALB yango-2023mayelana nokuthuthukiswa koBuliminengi (IKhonferensi yoBuliminengi) ibanjwe mhlana amalanga a-16 ukuya ka-17 kuSinyikhaba. Le bekuyikhonferensi yesibili yalelihlobo. Ikhonferensi yango-2023 yayinqophe ukuragelaphambili ngemizamo yomnyaka odlulileko ngokwethula iragelophambili ngokusebenzisa izethulo nemikhulumiswano ngeragelophambili kanye nemikhulumiswano yamakhomitjhini aneenhloko ezenze iimphakamiso ezitja zokuthuthukisa ubuliminengi ngo-2024.Zoke iimphakamiso ezenziweko zitloliwe kilo mbiko, okuqakatheke khulu kizo kube kuragela phambili kwemizamo, ekukhiqizeni imiphumela emnyakeni kusukela ekhonferensini edlulileko, Isidingo sokubambisana okungcono phakathi kweenhlangano, ukubekwa phambili kwamaphrojekthi wetheminoloji yenarha yoke, khulu khulu ukuvuselelwa kweBhanga yamaThemu yeNarha yoke kanye nomthethokambiso weTheminoloji, ukwelulwa kokusetjenziswa kwelimi lokubelethwa ukuhlola nemabangeni aphezulu neemfundweni zefundo ephakamileko, nokobana i-PanSALB, iinhlangano zombuso zincame zisebenzise umThetho wokuSetjenziswa kwamaLimi asemThethweni.

NKATSAKANYO

Khoniferense ya PanSALB ya 2023 ya Ntlakuso wa Vutindziminyingi yi khomiwile hi siku ra 16 na 17 Hukuri. Leyi a ku ri khoniferense ya vumbirhi ya PanSALB. Khoniferense ya 2023 a yi kongomisiwile eka ku yisa emahlweni matshalatshala ma lembe leri hundzeke hi miandlalo na mivulavurisano ya tikhomixini leyi a yi nyika switsundzuxo swintshwa na leswi fikeleriweke eka ku yisa vutindziminyingi emahlweni hi 2024. Swibumabumelo hinkwaswo swi tekeriwile enhlokweni eka xiviko lexi, swa nkoka swa kona a ku ri ku yisa emahlweni

matshalatshala lama tswaleke mihandzu elembeni kusukela eka khoniferense leyi hundzeke, xidingo xa ntirhisano wo antswa exikarhi ka tindzawulo, ku tekeriwa enhlokweni tiphurojeke ta matheme ta rixaka, hi ku kongoma ku pfuxelela Bangi ya Matheme ya Rixaka, na Pholisi ya Matheme, ku hetisisa makungu mo tirhisiwa ka ririmi ra manana eka swiyenge swa dyondzo swa le henhla na tiyunivhesiti, na ku va HATAD yi sindzisaa na ku endla swiyenge swa mfumo, ku tirhisiwa ka Nawu wa Ku tirhisiwa ka Tindzimi ta Ximfumo.

SIFINYETO SENGCUNGUTSELA YEBULWIMINYENTI

Ingcungcutsela yeBhodi Leyengamele Tilwimi Velonkhe yanga-2023 yekukhutsata Bulwimininyenti (Ingcungcutsela Yebulwiminyenti) yabanjwa mhlatingu-16 na-17 Lweti 2023. Lena bekuyingcungcutsela yesibili yaloluhlobo kuBhodi Leyengamele Tilwimi Velonkhe. Ingcungcutsela yanga-2023 beyihlose kuchubeka nemitamo yemnyaka lodlulile ngekwetfula inchubekelaphambili kanye netingcoco ngemakhomishana lanetihloko letitawusungula tincomo letinsha kanye netinyatselo letibalulekile tekuchubekisela phambili bulwiminyenti ngemnyaka wanga- 2024. Tonkhe tincomo letentiwa tiphawulwe kulombiko, lokubalulekile kuto kuchubeka kwemitamo yanyalo, levete imiphumela kolomnya kusukela engcungcutseleni ledlulile, sidzingo sekubambisana lokuncono phakatsi kwetinhlangano, kubeka embili emaphrojekthi avelonkhe emathemu, ikakhulukati kuvuselelwa kweNational Term Bank kanye neNchubomgomo Yemathemu, kwelulwa kwekusetjentiswa kweluwimi lwasekhaya kute kuhlolwe ngalo futsi emabangeni lasetulu nasetikhungweni temfundvo lephakeme, kanye nekuphocelelwa, yiBhodi Leyengamele Tilwimi Velonkhe, kanye nekutimisela, kwetinhlaka tembuso, weMtsetfo Wekusetjentiswa Kwetilwimi Letisemtsetfweni.

KGUTSUFATSO YA BAPHETHAHATSI

Seboka sa PanSALB sa 2023 sa Phahamiso ya Botemengata (Seboka sa Botemengata) se ne se tshwerwe ka la 16 le la 17 Pudungwana 2023. E ne e le seboka sa bobedi sa mofuta ona sa PanSALB. Maikemisetso a seboka sa 2023 e ne e le ho tswela pele ka maiteko a selemo se fetileng ka ho etsa dipuo le ho ba le dipuisano tsa kgatelopele ka hara dikhomishene tsa meokotaba e fapaneng moo ho neng ho etswa dikgothaletso tse ntjha le mekgahlelo ya tswelopele ya botemengata ka 2024. Dikgothaletso tsohle tse entsweng di kentswe tlalehong ena, mme tse ka sehloohong e ne e le ho tswela pele ka maiteko a ha jwale, a hlahisitseng sephetho selemo kamora seboka se fetileng, tlhokeho ya tshebedisano e ntlafetseng pakeng tsa ditheo, ho beha pele diprojeke tsa naha tsa mareo, haholoholo ntjhafatso ya *National Term Bank* le Leano la Mareo, ho atoloswa ha tshebediso ya puo ya letswele ho lekola le dikereiting tse phahameng le dithutong tse phahameng, le ho kenngwa tshebetsong ke PanSALB, le ho phethahatswa e le ka nnete ke mekgatlo ya mmuso, Molao wa Tshebediso ya Dipuo tsa Semmuso.

ISISHWANKATHO

Ingqungquthela yonyaka wezi-2023 yePanSALB yokuthuthukiswa kobulimining (Ingqungquthela Yobuliminingi) yabanjwa mhla ziyi-16 kanye ne-17 kuLwezi. Lena bekuyingqungquthela yesibili yaloluhlobo yePanSALB. Ingqungquthela yonyaka wezi-2023 yayihlose ukuqhubeka nemizamo yonyaka odlule ngokusebenzisa izethulo zenqubekela phambili kanye nezingxoxo kumakhomishini azobhala izincomo ezintsha kanye nezinto ezibalulekile zokuqhubekisela phambili ubulimining onyakeni wezi-2024. Zonke izincomo ezenziwe ziphawuliwe kulo mbiko, okuseqhulwini ukubhekwa kwemizamo eyayikhiqizwe imiphumela yengqungquthela yangonyaka odlule, isidingo sokubambisana okungcono phakathi kwezinhlangano, ukubekwa phambili kwamaphrojekthi amagama kazwelonke, ikakhulukazi ukuvuselelwa kweBhange Lamatemu likaZwelonke kanye nenqubomgomo yamaTemu, ukusetshenziswa kolimi lwebele ukuhlola nasemazingeni aphezulu kanye nasezikhungweni zemfundo ephakeme ngokuphoqwa yiPanSALB, ukuthi konke lokhu kwenziwa ngobuqotho futhi kwenziwa amahhovisi oMbuso ezoMthetho Wokusetshenziswa Kwezilimi Ezisemthethweni.

UITVOERENDE OPSOMMING

Die 2023 PanSAT Konferensie oor die Bevordering van Meertaligheid (Meertaligheidskonferensie) is gehou op 16 en 17 November. Hierdie is die tweede konferensie van hierdie aard gehou deur PanSAT. Die 2023 konferensie het ten doel gehad om voort te bou op die vorige jaar se pogings deur middel van vorderingsvoorleggings en besprekings in tematiese kommissies wat nuwe aanbevelings en mylpale vir die bevordering van meertaligheid gedurende 2024 daar sou stel. Alle aanbevelings gemaak by dié konferensie word in hierdie verslag bevat. Die belangrike aanbevelings sluit in die voortsetting van huidige pogings wat resultate opgelewer het sedert die vorige konferensie; die belangrikheid van verbeterde samewerking onder instellings; die prioritisering van nasionale terminologie projekte- met spesifieke verwysing na die herlewing van die Nasionale Termbank en die daarstelling van 'n beleid op terminologie, die ekstrapolasie van moedertaalgebruik in assessering, hoër grade en tersiêre studies, en die toepassing van die Wet op die Gebruik van Amptelike Tale (UOLA) deur PanSAT en die implementering daarvan deur staatsorgane.

MANWELEDZO

Khonferentsi ya PanSALB ya ṅwaha wa 2023 ya Nyaluso ya Vhukonanyambonnzhi (Khonferentsi ya Vhukonanyambonnzhi) yo farwa nga ḽa 16 na ḽa 17 Lara. Iyi yo vha i khonferentsi ya vhuvhili ya lushaka ulu ya PanSALB. Khonferentsi ya ṅwaha wa 2023 yo vha yo pika u isa phanḓa na zwe zwa vha zwi tshi khou itwa ṅwaha wo fhelaho nga kha mvelaphanḓa dza makumedzwa na nyambedzano kha khomishini dzo yaho nga u fhambana dzine dza ḓo bveledzisa themendelo ntswa na zwipikwa zwa mvelaphanḓa ya vhukonanyambonnzhi kha ṅwaha wa 2024. Themendelo dzoṱhe dze dza itwa dzo dzhielwa nṱha kha uyu muvhigo, tshipikwa tshihulwane hu u itela u isa phanḓa na zwine zwa khou itwa u itela u bveledzisa mvelele kha ṅwaha u bva tsha khonferentsi yo fhiraho, ṱhoḓea ya vhukonani vhukati ha zwiimiswa, u dzhiela nṱha thandela dza themino ḽodzhi ya lushaka, nga maanḓa u vusuludzwa ha Bannga ya Mathemo ya Lushaka na Mbekanyamaitele ya Themino ḽodzhi, u lavhelesa u shumiswa ha luambo lwa ḓamuni u ita ndingo kha pfhunzo dza nṱha na kha ngudo dza magudedzi a nṱha, na mveledziso nga PanSALB, na mveledziso nga zwiimiswa zwa muvhuso, kha Mulayo wa u Shumiswa ha Nyambo dza Tshiofisi.

ISISHWANKATHELO

INkomfa yokuKhuthaza ukuSetyenziswa kweeLwimi eziNinzi yePanSALB yonyaka 2023 ibibanjwe ngomhla 16 nowe17 kweyeNkanga. Le ibiyinkomfa yesibini elolu hlobo yePanSALB. Inkomfa yonyaka 2023 ibijoliswe ekuqhubeleni phambili iinzame zonyaka ophelileyo ngokuthi kunikwe ingxelo ngenkqubela eyenziweyo ze kwenziwa neengxoxo kwiikomishini ebezimiselwe ukuba zenze iziphakamiso ezitsha ngokuhanjiselwa phambili kokusetyenziswa kweelwimi ezininzi kunyaka 2024. Zonke ke iziphakamiso ezenziweyo zichaziwe kule ngxelo, apho okuphambili kuzo ikukuqhuba nemizamo emiyo, mizamo leyo ethe yeza neziphumo ezincomekayo susela kwinkomfa yanyakenye, yabonisa nesidingo sokuphuculwa kwentsebenziswano phakathi kwamaqumrhu achaphazelekayo, ukubekwa phambili kweeprojekthi zesigama zesizwe, ingakumbi ukuvuselelwa koVimba weSigama weSizwe noMgaqonkqubo wezeSigama, ukomelezwa kokusetyenziswa kolwimi lwebele nakwiimvavanyo ezikolweni ukuya kwinqanaba lemfundo enomsila, nokomelezwa kwePanSALB ukuba inyanzelise uthotyelomthetho ngamaqumrhu karhulumente nokuthotyelwa koMthetho iUse of Official Languages Act.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACALAN	African Academy of Languages
AI	Artificial Intelligence
CoPAL	Community of Practice for the Teaching and Learning of African Languages
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoJ&CD	Department of Justice and Constitutional Development
DSAC	Department of Sport, Arts and Culture
EHL	PanSALB Executive Head: Languages
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
HLT	Human Language Technology
IALL	Incremental Introduction of African Languages
IDIL	International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022-2032)
LHR	Linguistic Human Rights
LoLT/A	Language of Learning and Teaching / and Assessment
MTBBE	Mother Tongue-Based Bilingual Education
NECT	National Education Collaboration Trust
NLB	National Language Body
NLS	National Language Service
NLU	National Lexicography Units
PanSALB	Pan South African Language Board
PLC	Provincial Language Committee
SADiLaR	South African Centre for Digital Language Resources
SALPC	South African Language Practitioners' Council
SANEF	South African National Editors Forum
SASL	South African Sign Language
SATI	South African Translators' Institute
SCM	Supply Chain Management
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UOLA	Use of Official Languages Act 12 of 2012
USAf	Universities South Africa

1. BACKGROUND

In 2022, the first Multilingualism Conference was held at Emperor's Palace, Johannesburg on 16 and 17 November. The conference aimed to review the progress made in the furtherance of multilingualism in South Africa since the advent of democracy. It sought to take account of what had been done and what still needed to be done to advance multilingualism in the country. This was primarily done through discussion in commissions on Translation and Interpreting, Language in Education, Status Planning and Linguistic Human Rights, Lexicography and Terminology Development, Forensic Linguistics, and Human Language Technologies (HLT). Additionally, there were three addresses, one by Prof. Kwesi Prah, one by a delegate of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), and one by a delegate of the Department of Sports, Art and Culture (DSAC).

The 2023 conference aimed to continue the previous year's efforts through progress presentations and discussions in thematic commissions that would devise new recommendations and milestones for the furtherance of multilingualism during 2024. The 2023 Conference on the Promotion of Multilingualism (Multilingualism Conference) was held on 16 and 17 November 2023 at Birchwood Hotel and OR Tambo Conference Venue. A government conference format was arranged for. Key progress presentations on the recommendations made at the 2022 conference were requested from DSAC, DHET, the Department of Basic Education (DBE), PanSALB, and South African Centre for Digital Language Resources (SADiLaR). Thereafter, attendees were coordinated to split into commissions to dissect the achievements, note new challenges, and propose new plans of action. Commissions were chaired by experts on the topics of:

1.1 Translation and Interpreting,
1.2 Language in Education,
1.3 Language Status Planning, Forensic Linguistics, and Linguistic Human Rights,
1.4 Lexicography and Terminology Development, and
1.5 Human Language Technology

Chairs for these commissions, as well as the resource people to support them were specifically selected for their expertise and involvement in these topics as part of their careers. For further details, please see section 2.1.11. Following these commission discussions, recommendations were tabled by each commission for implementation between December 2023 and November 2024.

It was agreed that the targeted stakeholders would be similar to those of the previous year's conference to ensure continuity, reliability, and completeness of engagements and outcomes. A total of 150 attendees were invited and included PanSALB Board and staff members, Chairpersons of PanSALB National Language Bodies (NLBs) and Provincial Language Committees (PLCs) and Editors-in-Chief of National Lexicography Units (NLUs), members of national and Gauteng provincial government departments, academics from higher education institutions (HEIs), and members of various non-profit and non-governmental organisations that had an interest in language.

2 . REPORT ON PROCEEDINGS

2.1 DAY 1

2.1.1 Opening and welcome by PanSALB Chief Executive Officer Mr Lance Schultz

Mr Schultz began by welcome all dignitaries present and noted that, while some speakers that had been anticipated could not make it, their absence would not lessen the impact of what was intended to be achieved over the course of the conference. The CEO then indicated his pleasure in welcoming all to the second annual multilingualism conference where experts from various fields would deliberate on pertinent issues related to the promotion, preservation, and development of South African indigenous languages. He explained that 16 November marked the International Day of Tolerance as declared by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). He also added that it was a day that reminded all to "reflect on our differences and to find space to allow each other to exist harmoniously". Mr Schultz further emphasised that there was a link between social cohesion and the protection and promotion of languages, making the work of language stakeholders so important. He emphasised that language connected human beings and that it was "a fundamental part of human interaction and communication" used for thoughts, feelings, ideas, and processing the world around us.

The CEO explained that the purpose of the day's activities was to place emphasis on linguistic diversity and the importance of celebrating it in the South African context. He further indicated that through the Multilingualism Conference, PanSALB wished to achieve the facilitation of dialogue that would lead to the enhancement of social cohesion and mutual understanding, and that through presentations from key stakeholders the successes and challenges would be illuminated and ideas for the improvement of interventions would be exchanged. He also acknowledged that there was a tendency in conferences to discuss matters but then fail to implement the recommendations and he expressed that PanSALB had been intentional and focused by ensuring that the comments from the previous conference resonated in the programme of the current conference and resonated with the body of work PanSALB had done over the past year. He informed delegates that over the course of the two days, the conference would be deliberating on various aspects that were key to the advancement of the language mandate in South Africa. Mr Schultz explained that at the 2022 inaugural conference PanSALB sought to review that progress that was made in the furtherance of multilingualism in South Africa since the advent of democracy in the country, and note what still needed to be done to advance multilingualism in the country. The CEO indicated that the aims of the conference were to provide progress reports on the achievements since the previous conference and to present resolutions and devise new strategies for further improvement.

Mr Schultz noted some of PanSALB's key achievements in the past year had been advised by the previous conference. Key among these was that PanSALB needed to increase scalability in terms of its work done in relation to the promotion of multilingualism. He added that to achieve this aim a functional social compacting was required. He emphasised the importance of promoting and preserving linguistic diversity and the need to support multilingualism- and language in education initiatives. This was because it was through the intellectualisation of languages that the potential of learners could be unlocked, regardless of their linguistic background and them being exposed to new global opportunities and perspectives. Mr Schultz also emphasised that lexicography and terminology development were crucial areas of language development as these resources were essential for effective communication across different domains and for the development of specific fields such as medicine, law, and engineering. He reported that PanSALB had partnered with the University of Cape Town to run a pilot project that aimed to make STEM subjects more accessible to mechanical engineering students struggled with the language in which these subjects were taught. He added that PanSALB was also working closely with universities to monitor the implementation of the Language Policy Framework for Public Higher Education Institutions.

Mr Schultz emphasised that for languages to survive they needed to be agile and represented in the digital space as that was the direction in which society was moving. He reported that PanSALB has also partnered with SADiLaR and Wikipedia for the SWiP project to create a digital repository for indigenous languages. Under this project authorship courses would be presented in various parts of the country in the coming months. He further commented that HLT had emerged as a critical field of research and development that could be used for language translation, speech recognition, and other applications that would make communication across languages much more accessible and efficient. The CEO also highlighted that PanSALB was committed to safeguarding the linguistic human rights (LHR) of every South African through the PanSALB LHR Division. PanSALB had been engaging the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DoJ&CD) to professionalise court interpreters and remained committed to monitoring both the public and private sector's compliance with laws and regulations to ensure that no one was denied the right to use the language of their choice. PanSALB had also coordinated various advocacy initiatives to ensure that SASL maintained parity of esteem with other languages. While Dr Maepa would speak to these initiatives, the CEO noted that in the long term PanSALB aimed to establish an NLU for SASL.

Mr Schultz concluded that language was a fundamental aspect of human life and that all should promote and support multilingualism. He expressed his hope that the two-day conference would be fruitful and that the engagements would contribute significantly to streamlining the country's response to the decline in the use of indigenous languages in critical domains.

2.1.2 Word from the Board by PanSALB Board Chairperson Professor Lolie Makhubu-Badenhorst

Professor Makhubu-Badenhorst began by indicating that PanSALB had a constitutional mandate, that the Board was serving on the Forum for Institutions Supporting Democracy, and that they were further established by an Act that was currently undergoing the process of being amended to include SASL as an official language. She also

said that despite the challenges that PanSALB faced, the organisation had continued to carry its mandate. The Board Chairperson explained that there was a period of about five years where there was no Board and that the then-CEO served as both the CEO and the Board, which was highly irregular. During this period, language activists complained to the government and a free and fair process was undertaken to appoint the current Board. Professor Makhubu-Badenhorst emphasised that PanSALB continued to set the national agenda and the tone for language, and also indicated that PanSALB was participating in the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022-2032) (IDIL) as declared by UNESCO.

The Board Chairperson highlighted the challenges experienced at Board level over their five-year term, which included:

- A high turnover of chairpersons
- Court cases against the Board
- Negative sentiment when the Board started their term in 2019
- Changes of Board membership: some members had to be released by the Minister due to their behaviour and this was an embarrassing and sad moment for the Board
- The loss of a board member, the late Dr John Mbuli
- The loss of the then-CEO, the late Dr Bongumenzi Mpongose
- Lawsuits that were widely publicised in the media
- Negative sentiments on social media which led to the Board leadership being summoned to Parliament to account on some allegations, which were not true. The Board was able to give facts and dispel distorted allegations, and the Board was eventually commended for their work
- Changes in leadership of DSAC when Minister Nathi Mthethwa was replaced by Minister Zizi Kodwa

She also noted challenges at an organisational level, which included:

- Instability which resulted in low staff morale
- The loss of staff members, including the passing on of the North-West Senior Provincial Manager
- Challenges in getting systems right, for example, SCM challenges which were an indictment for the Board eadership
- Breach of protocol, which included allegations levelled against the Board being taken to Parliament directly
- Further work to be done on PanSALB's internal language policy and its implementation
- No access to organisational policies

She then reported the achievements at Board level, which included:

- The appointment of new members to the Board
- The increased visibility of PanSALB and the Board's participation in various structures, because of Mr Schultz's leadership
- The isiXhosa mechanical engineering glossary that was launched with the assistance of Professor Langa Khumalo of SADiLaR
- PanSALB's increased participation in various language-related structures and platforms

- PanSALB's participation in the programme for IDIL, which was led by the CEO
- PanSALB's close relations with strategic partners, such as SADiLaR and the Community of Practice for the Teaching and Learning of African Languages (CoPAL), which is under Universities South Africa (USAf)
- Stability in the entity and the reduction of staffing turnover and demand
- The development of a new organogram
- The last speaker of the N/uu language being honoured with an honorary doctorate
- The development of the talking N/uu dictionary with Ouma Katrina
- Partnering with the National Institute for the Deaf to launch an SASL dictionary
- SASL being promulgated as an official language
- PanSALB obtaining a clean audit in the previous financial year

She further noted achievements at an organisational level, which included:

- The appointment of Dr Mpungose as CEO, who unfortunately passed on, and then the current CEO Mr Schultz
- Mr Schultz's performance as CEO
- The appointment of the current CFO Mr Tebogo Matabane
- The appointment of the EHL Mr Julius Dantile
- The appointment of the Senior Manager: LHR Mr Jeffery Nkuna
- The appointment of the Company Secretary Advocate Karabo Sibanyoni
- The appointment of new staff at Head Office and the provincial offices, because of the strategic leadership provided by the Board
- The development of policies for the entity
- Improved operations, other than SCM
- Recognition locally and internationally
- Several signed Memoranda of Agreement and Memoranda of Understanding with various institutions
- Improved compliance in terms of the UOLA
- Offering advice on language matters, and the participation and hosting of events such as International Mother Language Day, International Translation Day, International Dictionary Day, and the Multilingualism Conference.

Professor Makhubu-Badenhorst explained that the prospects for the future seemed positive. She expressed the hope that young intellectuals would also be appointed to the incoming Board. She gestured to the establishment of South African Language Practitioners' Council (SALPC), chaired by Professor Monwabisi Ralarala, who would work closely with the Board to support the work of language practitioners in South Africa. She also praised the DHET for allocating funds to universities to align their language policies toward the implementation of multilingualism. She commented that she hoped to see the establishment of an in-house publishing house at PanSALB, which could be a target of the new Board in their new term. The Chairperson thanked her predecessors, her Deputy Chairperson, members of the Board, PanSALB CEO, PanSALB CFO, PanSALB EHL, PanSALB Institutional Planning and Governance Manager, PanSALB LHR Senior Manager, PanSALB Senior Provincial Managers, and PanSALB staff for the work done to advance the mandate of the Board. The Chairperson also acknowledged the PanSALB structures. The Chairperson expressed her hope that the new board would be people of calibre to continue the work of the Board. She concluded by emphasising that PanSALB would continue to carry its constitutional mandate and that the baton would be passed on to the incoming Board to continue the work done to advance multilingualism.

2.1.3 Reflection on achieving the recommendations of the 2022 Conference on the Promotion of Multilingualism by PanSALB Executive Head: Languages Mr Julius Dantile

In reflecting on the achievement of the recommendation of the 2022 Multilingualism Conference, Mr Dantile presented a preliminary report on PanSALB's evaluation of national government departments' compliance with the Use of Official Languages Act 12 of 2012 (UOLA). He explained that the UOLA was a legislative milestone in South Africa's journey towards linguistic inclusivity through the determination that at least two to three of the country's official languages must be used by each organ of state. Mr Dantile reported that PanSALB had undertaken a compliance assessment in the 2022/23 financial year, the objectives of which were to evaluate the degree of compliance with the UOLA across national departments, to analyse strategies employed to champion linguistic diversity and the allocation of resources toward language development and use by national departments, and to focus on identifying gaps in language policy implementation and proposing actionable recommendations to improve language enforcement.

Mr Dantile briefly explained that the conceptual framework for language policy implementation was based on status planning, corpus planning, acquisition planning, and prestige planning. The methodology used in the evaluation was a hybrid policy implementation model, combining diagnostic and interventional approaches, to produce integrated and extensive results. Data collection was from the annual UOLA compliance reports submitted by the national departments to the PanSALB in terms of section 9(2) of the UOLA. Mr Dantile noted that the reports should have undergone some audit processes, ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the information presented, and that there should be, going forward, a standardised reporting structure to allow for comparability across different departments and time periods, aiding in evaluating progress and identifying trends. He explained that the analysis of the data involved frequency scoring on a Likert scale to determine the level of compliance for each department within the four pillars of language policy and planning. Each pillar was evaluated independently, with scores aggregated to formulate a comprehensive overview. This approach allowed for a detailed assessment of each department's overall compliance, highlighting strengths and areas requiring improvement.

Mr Dantile reported the following findings:

- 22 out of 42 national departments submitted reports in response to PanSALB's request.
- This had increased from the previous year from 12, which more than a 90% increase in terms of

submission, but still indicated that only 50% of national departments were compliant.

- In terms of **policy and planning performance** (which involved assessing language policy existence, alignment with national priorities, implementation quality, and budget allocation for language policies), one entity achieved an excellent score (95%), indicating near-ideal policy and planning practices, several departments fell into the moderate range (51-80%), showing fair alignment and implementation that needed improvement, and multiple departments scored poorly (0-50%), highlighting critical areas for policy and planning development. The **average score across national departments was 54.05%, placing collective performance just above moderate, suggesting that awareness and efforts were present, execution and practical application varied significantly.**
- In terms of compliance analysis (which assessed legal compliance, accountability structures, and effectiveness of periodic reviews), there were no high performers (over 73%). Medium performers (33-60%) exhibited a basic level of compliance but a lack of consistency, and low performers (below 33%) indicated significant challenges in meeting compliance standards. The overall average compliance score was approximately 35.87%, suggesting that, on average, there was major underperformance in compliance, necessitating improvements in legal structures and accountability measures.
- In terms of **accessibility** (which assessed language options availability, signage, and public communication), two departments were in the moderate implementation category (51-80%), indicating a fair provision of services but lacking in comprehensive accessibility, but the majority fell within the poor implementation category (0-50%), underlining significant gaps in service provision. **The average performance score of 40.24%** across national departments **indicating a general shortfall in accessible language services, calling for a substantial improvement in multilingual communication and public information dissemination.**
- In terms of capacity building performance (which assessed the effectiveness of staff training and resource provision for language services), analysis revealed a universal deficiency in capacity building: no entity achieved moderate or excellent implementation levels and scores ranged from 20% to 40%, indicating **a widespread lack of adequate training and resources for staff. The average score of approximately 25.71% underscored a significant need for investment in training programs and resource allocation, and highlighting an urgent need for comprehensive capacity-building strategies.**
- In terms of **awareness and engagement** (which assessed in public awareness and engagement, focusing on campaigns, feedback mechanisms, and community outreach), several departments scored in the moderate implementation range (51-80%), indicating some effectiveness in public engagement, but with room for improvement. The majority, however, were categorised as poor implementers (0-50%), reflecting inadequate public awareness efforts and engagement strategies. The **collective average performance score of 35.56% suggesting a prevalent deficiency in engaging the public effectively, and highlighting the need for robust strategies in public communication and community involvement.**
- In terms of **monitoring and evaluation** (which assessed key performance metrics, data collection practices, and annual reporting), a few departments showed reasonable implementation, but most fell under the poor category, indicating substandard practices in monitoring and evaluation. The **combined average performance score of approximately 37.14% pointed to an overarching need for enhanced monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure accountability and effective language policy management.**

Mr Dantile proposed the following recommendations and action plan:

- The establishment of dedicated language units by the organs of state in compliance with the UOLA
- A focus on capacity building through training programs and resource development, especially for staff in language units

- A call for a review and revision of language policies to align with the recent Constitutional Amendment that officialised SASL
- The need for public awareness campaigns to elevate the prestige of all official languages and the use of media platforms to celebrate linguistic diversity
- The need to encourage the integration of technology to facilitate multilingual services
- An **emphasis on the importance of partnerships with academic institutions, language boards, and civil society organisations**

2.1.4 PanSALB's progress in promoting South African Sign Language including its officialisation and standardisation by Gauteng Senior Provincial Manager Dr Sally Maepa

Dr Maepa outlined PanSALB's various efforts to promote SASL. She reported that they had hosted the inaugural SASL Indaba on 9 and 10 March 2023, which aimed at discussing the standardisation of SASL and mapping a way forward. It was attended by approximately 125 attendees that were randomly split into four standardised commissions that discussed standardisation processes, the development of terminology, the development of teaching and learning resources, and the other resources required. Following the Indaba, a public report, which is available on the PanSALB website, was drafted which noted the following findings:

- There was a misconception of the scientific process of standardisation by many people
- A bottom-up process was proposed for the standardisation of SASL, and that it should be led by Deaf persons and experts in SASL
- Natural standardisation was already taking place in deaf communities
- Research should be conducted before SASL is standardised
- PanSALB should lead, facilitate, or coordinate the process but the final decision should lie with the Deaf community in collaboration with linguistic experts and other language stakeholders
- There was a need for resources to be freely available and centrally hosted

Following this, a research report on standardisation had been drafted. The preliminary findings of the report indicated that:

- It was premature to initiate any formal standardisation processes for SASL
- Further research into SASL variation, and its lexicon and grammar was needed
- There was a need for a SASL monolingual dictionary and thesaurus
- A SASL NLU was needed
- Commonly used words should be identified and prioritised for dictionary-making, education, and interpreter training
- It was more democratic to perceive the standardisation process as creating a standard variety (not language) that is equal (not superior) to other variants
- The variety should be used exclusively in formal, professional, and public domains
- The standardised variety should not be taught as the "correct" form of the language
- A descriptive approach would be more democratic and mitigate later risks of restandardisation demands

Dr Maepa also reported that the officialisation of SASL by the President of the Republic of South Africa, Honourable Cyril Ramaphosa had taken place at a signing ceremony on 19 July 2023. However, the Bill still needed to be enacted; further engagements were taking place between PanSALB, DoJ&CD, and DSAC. The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities were also working very closely with Deaf stakeholders to plan for the implementation of SASL as an official language.

Dr Maepa also reported that PanSALB had held many trainings and workshops related to SASL, which included basic SASL training for frontline workers in Gauteng, the Western Cape, the North-West and Mpumalanga, and parents of Deaf children in all nine provinces, and SASL Charter and Deaf culture training for government

departments in all nine provinces. She also commented that PanSALB had assisted with the remedying of multiple LHR complaints, many of which took place in schools, as well as one that was currently being negotiated with the SABC regarding the reduced hours of SASL interpreting on SABC news broadcasts.

2.1.5 PanSALB's progress in promoting the Khoe and San Languages by Northern Cape Senior Provincial Manager Mr Boichoko Moremi

Mr Moremi outlined PanSALB's progress in promoting the Khoe and San Languages. He reported that PanSALB's flagship project of the current financial year was the launch of a community language school pilot. In this project, PanSALB had introduced two schools in each of the four identified provinces: the Northern Cape, Gauteng, the Western Cape, and the Eastern Cape. These community schools taught the basics of Nama, which was a Khoe language. Mr Moremi indicated that the purpose of this project was to preserve the Khoe and San languages and save them from extinction and to also contribute to the promotion of multilingualism. Plans to expand the schools to cover other Khoe and San languages were underway.

Mr Moremi noted the dire status quo regarding the Khoe and San languages. Primarily, there are no public pre-schools, primary schools, secondary schools, or tertiary institutions where the Khoe and San languages were taught. There was also a high level of illiteracy in the Khoe and San communities, no redress or transformation taking place with regard to the Khoe and San languages, and a high level of underdevelopment in regard to the Khoe and San languages. The community schools and other efforts over the past five years hoped to address this.

2.1.6 Preliminary report on the language resource audit at tertiary education institutions by SADiLaR Executive Director Professor Langa Khumalo

Professor Khumalo reported that SADiLaR had conducted a language resource audit at tertiary education institutions. They had drafted a report but because it had not yet been approved for public consumption, he could not present the final findings. Instead, he presented some key general trends they had observed. He explained that the Language Policy Framework for Higher Education Institutions (2020 ≈ 2024) formed the basis for the audit and that it emanated from engagements between the USAf CEO and CoPAL. He further indicated that SADiLaR and USAf had been hosting the Vice Chancellors' Colloquium series which aimed to unpack the policy framework and its philosophical underpinnings and import, to identify resources required for its implementation, and to devise a shared framework for its successful implementation. Professor Khumalo indicated that the purpose of the language resource audit was to develop and strengthen indigenous languages as languages of scholarship, teaching, learning, and communication at South African public HEIs, in particular, universities as per Government Gazette, No. 43860:3. He further explained that the language resource audit regarded language as a vehicle for teaching and learning (to structure, to contrast, to compare, to define, to describe, to argue, to evaluate, etc.), and that language as a variable contributed significantly to study success and that the language resource audit's imperative was to improve epistemic access and address attrition. Professor Khumalo indicated that the language resource audit derived its mandate from the first colloquium and aimed to:

- identify resources already available at HEIs that could support the implementation of the framework,
- identify and define the range of resources still required to successfully implement the framework, and
- identify milestones and make recommendations for the implementation of the framework.

He explained that the audit employed a mixed method approach which consisted of two questionnaires administered to staff and students which covered the themes of institutional information, language services, teaching and learning, language of communication and administration, and student life/co-curricular activities as based on the clauses of the framework. Institutional information focussed on the status quo in terms of language policies, language policy implementation plans, language monitoring, regional languages, official languages of universities in specific regions, strengths and weaknesses, and priority areas that need to be addressed. Language services focused on language

services already rendered by institutions and those urgently required. Teaching and learning (and scholarship) focussed on the readiness and (language) flexibility of institutions to include, develop, nurture, and encourage the use of indigenous languages in their teaching and learning endeavours, as well as to provide support to students for whom English was not a home language. Language of communication and administration focussed on the possibility of all official internal institutional communication being conveyed in at least two official languages other than English, including written communication and ceremonies, as a way of cultivating a culture of multilingualism. Student life/co-curricular activities focussed on the possibility of multilingualism in matters outside the curriculum.

Professor Khumalo highlighted the following key trends:

- **Language services are available** at institutions; however, they are in a few selected languages only. Further, staff and students are generally not aware of these language services. There are also financial restraints that prevent the expansion of the services. Because **students seek language services and resources in relation to their studies, Professor Khumalo advised that they should be integrated into teaching and learning activities.**
- **Both staff and students envision a multilingual pedagogical landscape.** However, while there are recognised multilingual resources, they are few and far between. There was a need for raising awareness in terms of resources, services, and pedagogical planning. Financial constraints and a lack of expertise were also evident. **Areas that need urgent attention included terminology development; the creation and maintenance of resource banks, multilingual glossaries, and multilingual exam papers; academic language ability development and support; the use of some codeswitching in the classroom; and the proper implementation of language policies to facilitate student success.**
- **The language of communication and administration requires alignment with the ethos of multilingualism.**
  This would include multilingual approaches to **signage, marketing, and general communication.** Ways to incorporate languages other than their official languages in institutional communication should be explored. The predominant role of English in communication was acknowledged while the value of the need for inclusivity was highlighted.
- Students found **being multilingual was an asset and not a liability,** and the significance of linguistic diversity was emphasised in relation to communicating clearly, building relationships, enhancing social interaction and cross-cultural connections, and broadening perspectives.

Professor Khumalo concluded his presentation by indicating that the preliminary findings from the audit suggested that **expertise and support was required in terms of language policy planning and management, as well as resource management.** He also suggested that a top-down vs. bottom-up approach be looked at so that there was co-ownership and co-responsibility of the framework's implementation. He commented that the internal communication at universities was not good and often done along hierarchical lines where managers spoke to "normal" staff and students, but not the other way around. He argued that staff needed to become multilingual in the official languages of institutions, at least at a conversational level. He remarked that internal and external funding needed to be sought to support resource development, and that this development should take on a collaborative approach, internally between faculties and departments and externally between institutions. Additionally, institutions should perhaps set aside a certain percentage of their annual budgets for language development and advancement while a further possibility was ringfencing part of the University Capacity Development Programme grants. He argued that a central, national entity should be established so that universities could access products and services, including resources and expertise. The entity would also be responsible for monitoring the use of products and services as well as universities' implementation and report to DHET on matters like language policy implementation and planning. This would enhance benchmarking and create opportunities for further support and guidance to different institutions. Both staff and students indicated that English was prioritised and that other languages were not adequately accommodated which suggested a basis for both staff and students arguing the need for more language

courses and resources in other official South African languages. Many responses, in particular from students, expressed a desire for the inclusion of SASL in different domains of higher education.

2.1.7 Progress in implementing the Language Policy Framework for Public Higher Education Institutions, 2020 by Deputy Director: University Research Support and Policy Development at the Department of Higher Education and Training Dr Idah Makukule

Dr Makukule explained that the Language Policy Framework for Public Higher Education Institutions was a policy instrument that the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation gazetted in October 2020, for HEIs to implement. The policy provided a framework for the development and strengthening of indigenous African languages as languages of scholarship, teaching, learning, and communication at South African public HEIs. Dr Makukule reported that DHET was actively working with universities to establish mechanisms and processes for policy implementation in 2024. She explained that the department had established of a review panel to evaluate plans submitted by universities, and that they were aligned with the overarching policy goals. An advisory board comprising language policy experts and senior managers from universities had also been established to oversee policy implementation, and this would enable DHET to leverage expertise in both language policy and institutional management. Dr Makukule further explained that there would be a three-year implementation cycle, and that during this period there would be continued monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the policy to assess the impact and recommendations for the next phase of funding.

Dr Makukule noted that there had been progress since November 2022, the significant achievements being:

- the provision of infrastructure and resource support by DHET
- that universities had worked on language development plans in 2023 which had to align to the Policy Framework to access the funds,
- that universities had submitted these plans
- in the current financial year (01 April 2023), DHET had committed R70.2 million to support the implementation of the Language Policy Framework at universities over the next three years (2024-2027). Each university was eligible for a maximum of R2.5 million over the 3-year period and the allocation would start in 2024.

Dr Makukule commented that their main challenges in relation to the progress in implementing the Language Policy Framework for Public Higher Education Institutions was ensuring the sustainability of funding support for HEIs under the current fiscal constraints.

In concluding her presentation, Dr Makukule indicated that the recommendations from the 2022 multilingualism conference had been taken into consideration and formed part of the planning, resource allocation, and collaboration with the department's key stakeholder to ensure a collaborative approach in the implementation process of the framework.

2.1.8 Progress in implementing the departmental action plan on the International Decade of Indigenous Languages, National Language Forum, and alignment of the UOLA with the amended section 6 of the Constitution by Chief Director: National Language Services at the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture Ms Lisa Combrinck

Ms Combrink began by explaining that DSAC had in 2021 relaunched the National Language Forum with a new name, the National Language Stakeholder Engagement Forum in line with the UOLA requirements that all national departments, public entities, and public enterprises develop language policies, establish language units, and participate in intergovernmental forums on the use of official languages. She explained that the intention of the National Language Stakeholder Engagement Forum was promoting general coordination, cooperation, and consultation between all spheres of government on the use of official languages for government purposes and it was held annually in the third quarter. She explained further that in 2022, the department had launched the International

Decade of Indigenous Languages in line with the declaration made by UNESCO that 2019 was the International Year of Indigenous Languages and subsequently the period 2022-2032 was the International Decade of Indigenous Languages. In line with this, a highlight for the department was that the Minister recently approved DSAC's designation to become the focal point for updating and inputting information on South African languages as part of UNESCO's "World Atlas of Languages" project, which was attached to IDIL. They would be working with stakeholders in this regard. They had also been approved as the focal point for The African Academy of Languages's (ACALAN) African Languages Week project, which would promote cross-border cooperation.

Ms Combrinck reported that since IDIL was launched, the department had developed its action plan which was set to assist in monitoring the progress of implementing the milestones of the decade. The milestones were:

- the development of a functional National Terminology Register and a National Term Bank,
- strengthening partnerships with language research networks,
- prioritising the development of SASL toward officialisation,
- archiving South African languages, and
- streamlining roles through partnerships between government departments.

She explained that all the subunits of the National Language Service (NLS) played a part in implementing these milestones. Each financial year had its deliverables which were derived from the milestones. She commented that there had been no challenges experienced with the implementation of the milestones and all the sub-units were still within their set timeframe.

Ms Combrinck went on to explain that the Language Planning and Development sub-unit would endeavour to deliver partnerships with all spheres of government and relevant stakeholders which would be done through hosting the stakeholder engagement forum. The sub-unit would also prioritise the development of SASL toward officialisation, which would be done by meeting with Deaf organisations to understand their needs. The Language Technology sub-unit would strive to archive South African languages and prioritise the development of SASL toward officialisation, which would be done through capturing oral histories with knowledge keepers in the Northern, Western, and Eastern Capes as well as the development of a SASL dictionary and digital SASL interpreting system. The sub-unit would also create the interoperable corpus sharing framework app (ISFA) for SASL and build a SASL interface app in Sesotho and Setswana using the SASL place name corpus. The Terminology Coordination sub-unit would reconfigure the National Terminology Register which would form the basis of a National Term Bank and Languages Archive through the application of the National Terminology Policy. The Translation and Editing sub-unit would deliver the review of the Translation and Editing Administration Guidelines and strengthen partnerships with language research networks through the analysis of different sections of the previous version. DSAC would also partner with institutions of higher learning in terms of funding research projects that would strengthen multilingualism in order to achieve this deliverable.

Ms Combrinck explained that, apart from the milestones noted, the department was engaged in activities to support IDIL. The department had collaborated with the University of Pretoria in hosting a forum on 22-23 September 2023 under the theme "The methodology of African languages in teacher education programmes in South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda". Its central aim was to explore the status quo of the teaching methodology used for African language modules in teacher education programmes in Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda. DSAC had also collaborated with the Tshwane University of Technology in organising the ALASA Conference on 26-29 September 2023. DSAC had further collaborated with PanSALB in organising the SASL Charter Workshop on 22 September 2023. The department had developed an action plan for the development and implementation of SASL. Consultative meetings with legal services regarding the amendment of the UOLA had been conducted and the submission to amend the UOLA had been approved. The department had arranged meetings with Statistics South Africa, South African Revenue Service, and the Departments of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development and Forestry, Fisheries and Environment to share best practices, advise one another, and check where the department could collaborate with them.

In terms of the National Language Stakeholder Engagement Forum, Ms Combrinck reported that the third forum had been held on 19 and 20 October 2023. The forum provided a platform for stakeholders to discuss language matters which were of national importance, such as the development of the National Terminology Policy and the amendment of the UOLA in line with the Constitutional 18th Amendment Act 3 of 2023 to accommodate SASL as an official language of South Africa. During the forum, it was evident that language stakeholders were beginning to understand the significance of meeting together to discuss language matters. The process of establishing a steering committee for the National Terminology Policy development was initialised and nominations for ten people were received during the forum, which had been approved by DSAC. The forum recommended that there should be a language summit which would allow various stakeholders to express their views on the direction that languages should take with regard to transforming the society of South Africa. It also recommended the establishment of a social media page for the National Language Stakeholder Engagement Forum. General challenges reported during the forum were mainly around the struggle to establish language units because of financial constraints. Ms Combrinck committed DSAC to encouraging language stakeholders to attend and participate in the National Language Stakeholder Engagement Forum.

Finally, Ms Combrinck indicated that on 19 July 2023, President Cyril Ramaphosa had signed the Constitutional 18th Amendment Bill into law which recognised SASL as one of the now twelve official languages of South Africa. She further indicated that after the signing, the department sought approval to start the process of amending the UOLA to align it with Section 6 of the Constitution and approval had been granted. DSAC had put together a team of NLS and Legal Service officials to start the process of amending the Act.

In concluding, Ms Combrinck commented that the promotion of indigenous languages was important on a global and local level. This was because it would foster a new world order that was inclusive and egalitarian. She expressed that there was perception that multilingualism equated to multilateralism and that monolingualism equated to unilateralism, and so it was important that South Africa played its part in deepening democracy on a local and, more importantly, global levels, through language, especially given the rise in visible conflict and oppression. Referencing Professor Thabo Ditsele's argument that South Africa should expect "a potjiekos for Mzansi", she suggested that this potjiekos was also for the world.

2.1.9 Preparations for expanding MTBBE from the Eastern Cape to all provinces and the progress made in implementing Incremental Introduction of African Languages to former Model C schools by Deputy Director-General: Special Projects at the Department of Basic Education Dr Naledi Mbude-Mehana

Dr Mbude-Mehana began by explaining that, for the time being, education in a students' mother tongue was limited to English and Afrikaans learners in the basic education sector. The Mother Tongue-Based Bilingual Education (MTBBE) strategy was about extending mother tongue education to all children in the system and to promote African languages as languages of learning, teaching, and assessment (LoLTA) beyond Grade 3. In 2013, DBE had announced plans to strengthen the teaching of African languages through the Incremental Introduction of African Languages (IIAL) strategy and it was through this that DBE was solidifying the mandate of developing and promoting the previously marginalised official African languages as enshrined in the Constitution and other legislative frameworks.

Dr Mbude-Mehana reported that the Minister of Basic Education would make an announcement on 21 February 2024 on the extension of MTTBE beyond Grade 3. The extension would involve status planning, corpus planning, prestige planning, and acquisition planning. By the end of the 2023/2024 financial year, system preparation for the grade 4 rollout would be concluded, with the grade 4 rollout in mathematics, natural sciences, and technology, and grade 5 rollout in mathematics, natural sciences, and technology done in 2023 already. The grade 6 rollout in mathematics, natural sciences, and technology would be done in 2027 and sector performance, monitoring, and evaluation would be done in 2028. She reported further that the department was in their tenth year of IIAL implementation and that the department would be conducting research that would track where these learners go

after school, for instance which HEI or college they attend, and their choice of work. The social cohesion that IIAL offered would also be researched to generate arguments about the need for multilingualism across the nation. She presented evidence that IIAL and MTBBE were already effective in encouraging student success.

Dr Mbude-Mehana further also commented on their role in language infrastructure. She reported that DBE had established a Language Unit funded by the Old Mutual Foundation as well as a "Language-ing" task team comprising officials from DBE, National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT), DSAC and the Old Mutual Foundation. This task team had committees and sub-committees to drive specific activities. Further, an internal "language-ing" structure had been established comprised of Deputy Directors-General, Chief Directors, Directors, and all officials whose roles intersected. An external structure had also been established comprised of DBE officials, academics from HEIs, members of NGOs, language practitioners, and partners on language and literacy.

Dr Mbude-Mehana explained that considerations by DBE in order to advance and promote mother tongue education included incentivising or penalising HEIs for their enthusiasm or reluctance respectively to provide the basic education sector with teachers who were trained to teach in indigenous Home Languages in the foundation phase and bi/multilingually beyond Grade 3. She also commented that, by establishing a language transformation unit nationally, the DBE was devoting resources to initiatives to enhance the language proficiencies of learners.

In her concluding remarks Dr Mbude-Mehana emphasised that due to the embedded nature of language acquisition, any change in language competency must target the early grades. This underlined the importance of having multilingualism in the foundation phase of the school system. She also urged all to act, rather than spend further time researching and debating.

2.1.10 Words of support

On behalf of the United Nations in South Africa by Mr Tafirenyika Masimba

Mr Masimba indicated that the United Nations (UN) in South Africa strongly supported the objectives of the conference and was fully committed to multilingualism. He expressed that the UN believed that multilingualism was an important factor in harmonious communication among peoples and a facilitator of multilateral diplomacy. He also said that by promoting dialogue, tolerance, and understanding, multilateralism ensured the effective participation of people in the UN's work as well as greater transparency and efficiencies for better outcomes. Mr Masimba confirmed that the UN General Assembly recognised multilateralism as one of the organisation's core values and that the UN's mandates also called for the mainstreaming of multilingualism throughout the UN Secretariat. It was against this background that the United Nations Secretary General Mr Antonio Guitterez had included multilingualism among his priorities. Mr Masimba affirmed that over the past decades the UN continued to play a critical role in global campaigns to save indigenous languages around the world. In so doing the UN was guided by various instruments adopted by member states. These mechanisms were designed to promote linguistic diversity and to recognise the central role indigenous languages played as part of our cultural inheritance. Within the UN system itself the mandate to preserve local or indigenous languages fell under the authority of UNESCO.

Mr Masimba explained that UNESCO worked with partners including indigenous communities and governments on projects, research, and initiatives specifically designed to raise awareness and to revitalise indigenous language and that the UN actively promoted the use of all UN official languages on an equal footing to guarantee that all stakeholders could participate in the work of the UN. In order to ensure that the goals and actions of the UN were understood by the widest possible public, non-official languages were also in use in the UN. He reported that in countries where the UN served, most of its work was translated into as many local languages as possible. In South Africa, the UN had translated a number of its publications into all the country's official languages, including documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr Masimba explained that the UN also worked with several partners from the government, civil society, private

sector, and universities to promote multilingualism and had also started to cultivate a mutually beneficial partnership with PanSALB as part of the UN's mandate to promote multilingualism. The UN recognised that just as in other undertakings of this nature, resources were required to ensure that indigenous languages were preserved and embraced as part of our rich cultural inheritance. Mr Masimba further indicated that the UN had supported indigenous communities with resources and technical support for their projects and these projects helped the UN to document, teach, and strengthen the use of local languages in ways that were appropriate and culturally acceptable. The UN also assumed the responsibility to support research on local languages including data collection, in order to identify gaps and expand on successes so that strategies and policies were developed that were better suited to the needs of indigenous communities. Mr Masimba appealed to all to do everything in their power to protect and to promote linguistic diversity. He stressed that the UN believed that such an approach would strengthen collective cultural heritage.

2.1.11 Introduction of commissions and their guidelines by Chairperson of PanSALB Core Mandate Committee Dr Dolly Dlavane

Attendees were then divided into commissions, which were constituted thematically. The table below details the themes, purposes, guidance and reporting teams, and questions posed to attendees for each commission.

Commission	Purpose	Team
Commission 1 Translation and Interpreting	*Given the recent appointment of SALPC, moves will now be made to regulate language practice in South Africa. This commission discusses how this can be done to ensure quality language facilitation services while drawing on PanSALB's presentations on their progress in assuring quality in public communications and promoting SASL.*	**Chair:** Dr Rea Mabule **Resource persons:** Ms Mapula Gaffane & Ms Thelma Kotze **Rapporteur:** Ms Joyce Madiba **Scribe:** Ms Charity Kgwadi & Mr Celby Malema
Questions 1. In what ways has the delayed establishment of SALPC affected language practice in South Africa? 2. What would be regarded as priority areas the Council must tackle, and how? 3. How do we determine what "quality" is in language facilitation services and who determines such quality?		
Commission 2 Language in Education	*In light of the presentations made by DBE and DHET, this commission focuses on policy for MTBBE, both for schools and universities, and indigenous African languages as languages of learning, teaching, and assessment for inclusive and equal education.*	**Chair:** Dr Sello Galane **Resource person:** Mr Zola Wababa **Rapporteur:** Dr Xolisa Tshongolo **Scribe:** Mr Pius Mtileni & Mr Thama Mudau

Questions

1. It has long been accepted that indigenous African languages are needed as the "language of teaching and learning" (LOLT), but assessment has been excluded in this argument. Why and how do we include indigenous African languages in assessment?
2. How can teachers effectively assess the language proficiency and content knowledge of multilingual learners in a way that considers their linguistic diversity?
3. What strategies can be employed to effectively manage and address the different language abilities and needs of students in a multilingual classroom or lecture hall to encourage the active participation of all students?

How can progressive language policies be actively implemented at schools and universities?

Commission 3 Status Planning, Forensic Linguistics, and Linguistic Human Rights	*Following the presentation by PanSALB regarding their progress in ensuring UOLA compliance and the presentation by DASC on IDIL, the National Language Forum and the alignment of the UOLA with the amended section 6 of the Constitution (i.e., the recent officialisation of South African Sign Language), this commission aims to discuss and find solutions to governmental non-compliance with language prescripts, and discuss its classification as a LHR violation.*	**Chair:** Mr Cornelus Lourens **Resource person:** Mr Jeffrey Nkuna **Rapporteur:** Dr Nomfundo Mali **Scribe:** Ms Joyce Ngcobo & Ms Mamokhele Letsabo

Questions

1. What is the Constitutional and legislative framework in which language rights and LHR must be actualised in South Africa?
2. What is a linguistic human right and which LHR are recognised.
3. What is the difference between a language right and a linguistic human right?

3.1 Which language rights does a South African citizen have vis a vis a non-citizen?

4. What is meant with forensic linguistic rights, and does it constitute a separate linguistic right?

4.1 How can the promotion of forensic linguistic rights assist in the promotion of language/ linguistic rights in general?

5. What are the reasons why the government fails to comply with both constitutional and legislative prescripts regarding languages?

5.1 Can this governmental non-compliance be classified as a LHR violation?

6. Which language legislative amendments are proposed to promote linguistic justice in South Africa?
7. How does PanSALB better enforce compliance with language legislation?

7.1 How does PanSALB build on current momentum, if any?

7.2 What kind of leverage can PanSALB and or the National Language Forum offer in ensuring compliance and the implementation of progressive language policies?

Commission 4 Lexicography and Terminology Development	*This commission considers lexicographical and terminological materials and products and their classification as public goods, particularly in light of the preliminary report on SADiLaR's language resource audit for HEIs and DSAC's presentation on IDIL.*	**Chair:** Prof. Dion Nkomo **Resource persons:** Ms Susan Njeyiyana & Dr Hatu Machaba **Rapporteur:** Ms Nikiwe Matebula **Scribe:** Ms Fundi Mokoena & Mr Anthony Maila
Questions 1. What does SADiLaR's language resource audit for HEIs reveal about the current state of lexicographical and terminological materials and products? 2. What is meant by "public goods" and can we define lexicographical and terminological materials and products as public goods? Would classifying lexicographical and terminological materials and products as public goods enhance public access to these products and encourage further production and development? 3. To what extent has terminology development been able to enhance lexicographic production? 4. How do we ensure that terminology developers and other quality assurance stakeholders play their roles in a coordinated manner?		
Commission 5 Human Language Technology	*The aim of this commission is to explore recent developments in HLT that will assist with language practice, while considering how to improve access to HLT and the National Term Bank, particularly in light of the preliminary report on SADiLaR's language resource audit for HEIs.*	**Chair:** Ms Ilana Wilken **Resource persons:** Mr Tshikani Mabasa & Prof. Langa Khumalo **Rapporteur:** Mr Willie Manana **Scribe:** Ms Mickey Moretsi & Ms Euane Jonker
Questions 1. To what extent have we advanced in HLT? What are the areas of achievement and gaps for language practice in government institutions; basic and higher education teaching, learning and assessment; research; and communication? 2. Which areas of language practice are currently neglected by HLT and what kinds of technology could assist in these areas? 3. Have we been able to successfully leverage HLT innovations to create better conditions for the development of our languages? How can we improve?		

2.2 DAY 2

2.2.1 Opening remarks and reflections on Day 1 proceedings by PanSALB CEO Mr Lance Schultz

Mr Schultz opened the final day of the conference by reflecting on the proceedings so far. He commented that the deliberations had begun with an emphasis on the International Day of Tolerance, the theme of which for 2023 was "Tolerance is respect, acceptance, and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression, and ways of being human". Attention was drawn to the need to reflect on differences and find ways to exist harmoniously, with special attention given to the relationship between language and social cohesion.

Mr Schultz commented that Professor Makhubu-Badenhorst's presentation on the Board's challenges and successes had confirmed how, under the Board's strategic direction, PanSALB had undergone a process of transformation resulting the preservation of threatened languages, the promotion of marginalised languages, and the officialisation of SASL. The CEO also remarked that Mr Dantile's presentation had showcased PanSALB's diligent work to enforce UOLA compliance despite non-compliance that was sometimes wilful and sometimes borne out of ignorance. He added that the increase in reporting by government departments was hopefully a sign of ongoing improvement which should be further fast-tracked by language audits conducted by PanSALB. He further noted the huge undertakings by Dr Maepa and Mr Moremi to promote SASL and the Khoe and San languages respectively, commenting that it was among these groups of language users that the effects of language marginalisation on the identity, livelihoods, and wellbeing of individuals was most evident.

The CEO then highlighted that, as shown by the presentations by Professor Khumalo, Dr Makukule, Dr Mbude-Mehana, and Ms Combrinck, progress on implementing the 2022 conference recommendations had been made. However, there were many areas for growth including better cohesion between language stakeholders, the capacitation of academics and teachers, policy creation and implementation, language resource management, and action rather than discussion. He also highlighted a key message of Ms Combrinck's presentation that related directly to the theme of the International Day of Tolerance which was that the promotion of Indigenous Languages, at a global level and local level, would foster a new world order that is inclusive and egalitarian, and that would deepen democracy.

He concluded by saying that it was encouraging that language stakeholders had taken note of the recommendations of the 2022 conference and have made bold moves to implement them. There was clear progress in the short year that had passed. However, there was still much to be done and that the deliberations of the commissions, as presented that day today, would provide a refinement of the way forward and new milestones for the upcoming year.

2.2.2 Words of support

On behalf of ILAF by Ms Siki Dlanga

Ms Dlanga began by reciting an isiXhosa poem. She commented that that often when indigenous languages are spoken of, they are represented as "lost", however, these languages had gone nowhere, they just needed to be looked for. She explained that PanSALB and others could do this "looking" through the creation of language resources or promotion of multilingualism. She remarked that diversity was impossible without multilingualism. She said that she thought that South Africa had only one indigenous language that was differentiated by different tones, rhythms, clicks, and colours. She explained that it was a privilege to work with South African languages to inspire pride and unity and unlock new imaginations. She concluded by stressing that multilingualism without plurilingualism was dead.

On behalf of South African National Editors Forum by Executive Director Mr Reggie Moalusi

Mr Moalusi started by highlighting that one of their major successes of the year was the indigenous languages in media seminar held by South African National Editors Forum (SANEF), PanSALB, and the UN. He noted there was a lot of work to be done for community media to prevent the public's exclusion from information in a language they understand. He commented that there were challenges for all forms of media including Artificial Intelligence (AI) and a decline in revenue. He stressed that the work PanSALB did was very important. He welcomed the continued partnership between SANEF and PanSALB and invited others to join them. This would uphold democracy in South Africa and change the lives of a wide variety people, especially those that were currently marginalised. He remarked that sometimes their work made them unliked, but it was necessary work to ensure the public remained a priority. He expressed that he looked forward to hearing further progress reports at the 2024 conference.

2.2.3 Report on findings of Commission 1 (Translation and Interpreting) by Rapporteur Ms Joyce Madiba

Ms Madiba began the presentation by describing the discussions the commission had. She explained that the delay in establishing SALPC had affected language practice in South Africa in many ways. Some of these most obvious ways included the existence of language predators, who were not qualified but offered language services to unsuspecting customers, the delay in the creation of job opportunities for language practitioners, the lack of work experience opportunities, and the exploitation of language practitioners. She reported that the commission had identified five key areas for SALPC to focus on:

1. The grading of language practitioners
2. Recognising prior learning
3. Ensuring skills transfer through mentorship
4. Regulating membership
5. Drafting practice policies and codes of conduct

She further commented that in ensuring quality language services, SALPC would have to describe what was meant by "quality" in consultation with the public, especially language stakeholders, academics, and language practitioners.

She noted that successes in translation and interpreting that the commission had identified, including:

- The establishment of SALPC
- The appointment of the SALPC Board
- Language practitioners obtaining higher qualifications
- Improved access to communication
- Better access to justice through court interpreting
- More bursary schemes for language practice studies

She reported that a number of challenges had been identified by the commission that included:

- Members of the public being exploited by language practitioners who were either unqualified or charged exorbitant rates because the industry was unregulated
- African languages receiving minimal budget from government
- A lack of resources (books, learning material, tools of trade, dictionaries, spelling checkers)
- The concern that AI would replace language practitioners.
- Authors being exploited by members of the public and employees who demanded cheap services that language practitioners eventually agreed to because they were desperate for work
- Insufficient employment opportunities
- A lack of language units in government departments and public entities
- Court interpreters being expected to know more than one language but being paid for monolingual work
- Too few professional SASL interpreters

The commission put forward the following recommendations:

- Government should provide resources for African languages
- Remuneration for language practitioners should be increased
- Good performance should be awarded
- Language chancers should be got rid of
- Training should be provided on a regular basis
- The public and private sector should provide work integrated learning opportunities to language practice students
- All government departments should appoint professional language practitioners
- Chief editors should be appointed for each language

The floor was opened for questions and comments. Clarification regarding the role of SALPC in relation to the South African Translators' Institute (SATI) as well as what would happen to language practitioners that had significant experience, but no relevant qualification was requested. It was also suggested that SAPLC should come up with the definition of "quality" through public submissions. They would then deliberate on the submissions and confirm the best definition. In response, it was explained that SATI would not be done away with but rather that SALPC would work closely with SATI. SALPC had already requested a meeting with SATI to establish how they would work together. Additionally, SALPC would recognise prior learning for language practitioners who were experienced but did not have qualifications. Further, SALPC committees had already been established and they would work on the definition of "quality" as experts.

Concern was raised about the fact that the anthem of the African Union was sung in English instead of Kiswahili. In response, Mr Schultz explained that **South Africa did not have jurisdiction to translate the anthem or charter, but PanSALB could engage the African Union about this matter.** He committed to raising the matter through the relevant government departments in line with protocol.

Correction was given regarding the organogram of language services at Parliament: Parliament had a language practitioner, senior language practitioner, and a control language practitioner. The language practitioner mainly translated, and the senior language practitioner checked translations (quality assurance). The control language practitioner typically did not understand all languages, which could lead them to assessing a language practitioner or senior language practitioner on one language instead of the two that they used in their work.

2.2.4 Report on findings of Commission 2 (Language in Education) by Rapporteur Dr Xolisa Tshongolo

Dr Tshongolo commenced his presentation by noting the successes the commission had identified, which included:

- Some universities now allow exam answers in African languages
- Trans-language teaching was practiced by teachers, even though it is not fully accepted
- There were initiatives for developing terminology from education content
- There was teacher and parent collaboration to motivate policy implementation

There were a number of challenges identified, including:

- A lack of teacher training in both content and language
- Inadequate methodologies for teaching African languages after Grade 3
- Insufficient material and equipment for deaf schools
- The editing and proofreading of teaching and learning materials still required a cultural and standardised lexicon which still need to be done in conjunction with the Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Rights Commission and Khoe and San NLB
- Learners failed not due to a lack of understanding, but because they struggled to articulate answers in the language of assessment
- There was an inconsistency between the language of learning and the language of assessment which distorted the true reflection of a learner's understanding
- A lack of developed language terminology matching content which hampered effective assessment

The commission made the following recommendations:

- Methodologies for African language teaching at secondary and tertiary level should be produced by adapting teaching and assessment methodologies used in the foundation phase
- Policies should be aligned to explicitly support assessments in indigenous African languages, thereby dispelling misconceptions
- Comprehensive language training for teachers and assessors to enhance proficiency in African languages should be implemented
- Comprehensive language training for teachers and assessors to enhance proficiency in African languages should be implemented
- Consistency in the language of learning and assessment should be ensured to provide an accurate reflection of a learner's understanding
- Universities should be encouraged to provide training for teachers in both content and language proficiency in pre-service training
- The acceptance and formalisation of trans-language teaching approaches in educational governance structures in universities and schools should be advocated for
- Terminology in African languages that aligns with subject content must be developed and standardised
- Progressive and additive language policies should be emphasised
- The development of African languages in education must be advocated for
- HLT and information and communications technology should be leveraged for language development
- A central repository for new terminology should be developed by DSAC to ensure the continuous standardisation of these terms and use by schools and universities in seamless articulation
- PanSALB's should develop an app for African language development to accessed by both universities and schools
- PanSALB should establish a mechanism for disseminating the resolutions formulated during this conference. While resolutions were made last year, there is a lack of clarity regarding their implementation status
- Governing bodies should be workshopped on school language policies
- A central monitoring system for language diversity should be established

- Participation in the robust discussions on information and communications technology, scheduled for Wednesdays and Fridays, should be promoted

The floor was opened for questions and comments. The chairperson of the commission Dr Galane expanded on the directives of the commission to be taken to DBE. The first was that LoLT had to become LoLTA. This would be useful for the curriculum strengthening that would begin in March 2024. The second was that the term "progressive policies" had general connotations and so "transformative policies" would be more accurate and relevant to the South African jurisprudence of transformative constitutional democracy, which would also make the directive more binding and legal. Thirdly, in terms of training SGBs, this training should bring on board all language stakeholders.

2.2.5 Report on findings of Commission 3 (Linguistic Human Rights) by Rapporteur Dr Nomfundo Mali

Dr Mali reported on the successes in the field, which included:

- The existence of legislation on language rights matters, which could be used to enforce compliance with language legislation
- The existence of a PanSALB LHR unit to investigate and resolve alleged LHR violations
- Stakeholder engagement with other Chapter 9 institutions in the form of the Forum for Institutions Supporting Democracy
- Provincial stakeholder collaborations and engagement, promotion, and protection of LHR matters
- The review of PanSALB's internal language policy and structure Norms and Rules as well as the creation of LHR standard operating procedures
- The successful resolution of LHR cases
- The amendment of the PanSALB Act, which was in progress
- Good working relationships with the national and provincial language forums
- Progressing working relations with academics on forensic linguistics matters as well as ALASA

The challenges that the commission noted included:

- Government failed to comply with both constitutional and legislative prescripts regarding languages due to the lack of knowledge, lack of capacity and ignorance, and lack of punitive/enforcement measures
- A lack of awareness about LHR by the public and in particular by the most vulnerable
- Non-classification of governmental non-compliance as a LHR violation
- PanSALB not being seen as enforcing compliance with language legislation
- Having English as the main language used during court proceedings
- The gap for Forensic Linguistics in the judiciary system
- Inadequate training/professionalisation of interpreters including specialisation and court interpreting
- Inadequate language competency/training for court officials (judiciary)
- Lack of interface between forensic linguists and legal practitioners including the linguistic interpretation of legislation

The recommendations in response to these challenges included:

- PanSALB should embark on LHR initiatives to educate and ensure compliance with language prescripts
- The acceleration of the amendment of the PanSALB Act that would strengthen PanSALB's powers to enforce compliance by government
- Non-compliance with legislation should be classified as a LHR violation
- A review of the National Language Unit stationed in DSAC and its move to the Presidency under the Minister of Coordination
- A language commissioner should be appointed like in Canada that directs and coordinates language legislation
- The regionalisation of official languages that would ensure compliance with UOLA especially in the judiciary

- Courts should appoint people who can speak indigenous languages
- Court proceedings should be conducted in indigenous languages (regional languages) and then interpretation offered in English for the benefit of those who could not understand

The floor was opened for questions and comments. Comments from the floor included the dire need for language units in national departments to ensure that communication, policies, and legislation be translated into all languages so that those who did not understand English could grasp the content of this important information.

Additionally, in terms of the positioning of the NLS, it was emphasised that units in the Presidency did not have any more power than another organ of state; in fact, they had lower budgets and fewer functions, like Government Communication and Information Systems and the Department of Women, Youth, and People with Disabilities. Ms Combrinck, speaking to the suggestions regarding the NLS's placement explained that, ideally, there should be a national office that appoints language practitioners to all national departments. That was the idea with GCIS, however, this has not happened. The reality was that there were some super departments, and the rest were just satellites. Where power and funding resided needed to be interrogated. The NLS acknowledged that they would not resist moving, but, like PanSALB and other constitutional bodies, it was a complicated matter. Additionally, if languages were associated with intellectual power, it was not clear if that power resided with universities; it was unclear at the time if the voice of language, culture, and thinking resided anywhere. This indicated a failure of government officials to organise themselves as a critical mass, as well as the failure of higher authorities. It was emphasised that languages were not just a technical exercise related to terminology and translation, but also included literature, publishing, libraries, and the development of book writing. If the NLS had to move somewhere, all these activities would have to go too. Mr Dantile added that the question of a centralised NLS was resolved by the UOLA that required each department to have its own language unit. It was compliance by those units that became a challenge. Resources and infrastructure's efficiency and framing could be explored.

In addition, PanSALB were asked to report back at the next conference on the LHR cases they dealt with between November 2023 and November 2024. It was suggested that PanSALB also produce a score card for government departments in relation to their compliance with UOLA. PanSALB were also requested to promote the conduct of legal cases in indigenous languages. In response, Mr Dantile explained that an LHR report for the previous financial year was available on the PanSALB website. He also confirmed that a scorecard system would be used in their analysis of government department's UOLA compliance. Additionally, PanSALB would subpoena the government departments that had not complied with the UOLA in the next financial year. He added that PanSALB had been assisting departments to submit their reports, thus PanSALB aimed not to be punitive but transformative and empowering. PanSALB was therefore studying these issues deeply to build on their work in ensuring compliance. He stressed that government departments still had a legal requirement to submit their reports.

2.2.6 Report on findings of Commission 4 (Lexicography and terminology development) by Rapporteur Ms Nikiwe Matebula

Ms Matebula reported that there had been successes in lexicography and terminology development, which included:

- A significant number of dictionaries had been produced in official languages in line with the mandate of the NLUs
- Terminology lists in different fields had been developed and this terminology had been verified and authenticated by the relevant NLBs; the lists were available on DSAC's website
- The National Terminology Register and National Term Bank were being managed by DSAC
- International Dictionary Day celebrations were held annually to raise awareness on the availability and importance of dictionaries.

However, there were many challenges, which included:

- Inaccessibility and limited use of terminology lists and dictionaries as public goods
- Ideally, dictionaries were public goods but the underfunding of NLUs had led to the sale of the dictionaries (and dictionaries were expensive)
- Languages Practitioners were considered to be terminologists
- The National Term Bank was not fully functional and copyright was being misused. No one held the copyright of a language as it belonged to the linguistic community that used it.
- The duplication of terminology development projects
- Terminology developers using different methodologies in terminology development
- The publication of terminology without being verified and authenticated
- No progress in HLT as it required translation memories which were not shared
- A lack of technological skills to ensure that dictionaries existed on a digital platform

The commission recommended that, in response to these challenges:

- Terminology lists and dictionaries be popularised within HEIs for students and language practitioners
- PanSALB establish an inhouse publishing house
- Terminologists, lexicographers, and language practitioners be differentiated. Universities must develop a terminology qualification rather than offer only modules as they did at present
- A functional National Term Bank that is online, viable, and attractive to sponsors be made accessible
- Terminology coordination and collaboration among different stakeholders
- Quality assurance
- PanSALB should identify non-compliance with verification and authentication processes and ensure that corrective measures are taken
- A National Terminology Register would ensure that all available terminology is registered while working on long term solutions
- A National Terminology Policy be adopted because without policy it would be difficult to regulate terminology. DSAC was undertaking a consultative process to ensure that the process was informed by users
- Collaboration between DSAC and SADiLaR on similar projects to avoid duplication
- Collaboration between DSAC and NLUs to ensure that authenticated terminology leads to the compilation of dictionaries

The floor was opened for questions and comments. An elaboration on the point that dictionaries should become public goods was offered: the products of NLUs were never intended to be for sale, but financial constraints meant that this had to become the current practice. Sponsors for these dictionaries were suggested as a way to break this. These dictionaries should be for free because they were produced with taxpayers' money. It was explained that the National Library of South Africa's Act required published books to be deposited with them; the same could be done for terminology. Additionally, it was requested that PanSALB design an app for terminology because the overreliance on technology created by developers in other countries undermined the potential of South African developers.

3.2.7 Report on findings of Commission 5 (Human Language Technology) by Rapporteur Mr Willie Manana

Mr Manana reported that there had been two audits done on the available software, one in 2017/18 and one in 2022/23 (as part of the Language Resources Audit for Higher Education Institutions). Mr Manana noted that progress had been made in HLT in the following ways, all of which were started after the first HLT audit was conducted:

- The University of KwaZulu-Natal had developed a term bank and spelling checker, and there was a grammar checker in development
- North-West University, the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the University of the Western Cape and Rhodes University had contributed to BAQONDE Polokelo, which was a repository of multilingual resources
- Stellenbosch University had produced a bilingual term bank

- Mother tongue, machine-aided systems like Autshumato (v7), CTexT, and OmegaT had been created
- AwezaMed and Ngiyaqonda! had been developed specifically for the medical and education domains respectively
- Open Resource Term Bank was an online multilingual and multidisciplinary term bank, developed by the University of Pretoria, UNISA, and the University of Cape Town, and resurrected by Masakhane. The first 1000 terms were available
- Masakhane was a grassroots, natural language processing community that was doing work with language technology in Africa. They had a good network which enabled them to produce work rapidly. However, they were not accountable to anyone
- Lelapa.ai, which used AI for HLT solutions, had been created
- SWiP had been launched by SADiLaR, Wikipedia, and PanSALB, to educate language stakeholders on writing in indigenous languages online and to promote all of South Africa's indigenous languages online, starting with isiNdebele
- The University of Cape Town had human capacity in HLT

  This meant that the fields of translation (through mother tongue system technologies), terminology (through terminology banks), interpreting (through systems that assisted with spoken languages), and transcribing (through the Hansard system in the courts) had been covered by HLT. However, there were still areas that needed advancement, including developing an interpreting system for SASL, developing SASL visual dictionaries, and the existence of sufficient data that was readily available for consumption. There was also a general need to focus on implementing technology, rather than just creating it, and digitising existing resources for better accessibility and compatibility with the modern tools of trade.

The major challenge identified was the under-resourcing of HLT, which included a lack of data and a central repository, a lack of software, a lack of sufficiently skilled people, and a lack of funding besides the funding offered by DSAC. The possible impact of this was the diminishment of a language's status, the reduction in a language's application and uptake, and eventually, the extinction of the language.

The commission made the following recommendations:

- HEIs should work collaboratively in the development of data sets to avoid duplication
- Data creation was important for growing terminology banks
- Data should be shared with SADiLaR so that information could be centralised and made accessible to everyone
    - Data could be sent to DSAC, who would convert and format it and send it to SADiLaR. The aim would be that all work developed within government be made accessible free of charge in all official languages
    - DSAC would share the software and PanSALB would do quality assurance
- The mining/harvesting of data sets (for example, from courts where there are recordings of trials which were interpreted and transcribed) should be conducted
- Data management was crucial in ensuring that languages are preserved

The floor was opened for questions and comments. It was clarified that SADiLaR and BAQONDE were working together but they could not be merged. BAQONDE was funded by the African Union and Erasmus Plus and comprised four local academic institutions supported by European universities. Polokelo was a repository created by BAQONDE. SADiLaR belonged to the country, even though it was housed at North-West University. It was further clarified that BAQONDE had requested SADiLaR to host Polokelo and had requested all universities to assist with feeding the repository.

Concerns were raised about AI (such as ChatGPT) and its use in education to the point that students were no longer producing their own, original work. It was stressed that training against AI needed to be offered to lecturers, teachers, and others. Chair of the commission Ms Ilana Wilken also explained that ChatGPT was only as good as it was fed. She was not aware of training that was being offered or projects that were underway to assist lecturers in identifying the dishonest use of ChatGPT, but it was something that the CSIR were looking into. It was also explained that ChatGPT only somewhat corresponded with trustworthy academic resources; students needed to know their content to identify when ChatGPT had misunderstood the question or had provided the wrong information. It was not PanSALB's duty to establish what to do with ChatGPT since it was an international piece of software.

It was requested that DSAC provide proper timelines and an indication of responsibility regarding the sharing of translation memories; this should be reported on at the next conference. Mr Tshikani Mabasa of DSAC's HLT sub-unit responded that they had developed Autshumato, which had been upgraded to Omega T. As DSAC were training language practitioners on Omega T, these language practitioners were developing translation memories. DSAC would collect these translation memories and place them in a central repository. The challenge was where these memories would be housed, and which government department would manage them. DSAC had started discussing the issue with SADiLaR because SADiLaR housed everything else DSAC had developed. Therefore, even if the memories were collected, they first needed to clarify where they would be housed and who would manage them. Thereafter timelines could be established. Mr Mabasa expressed that he hoped this discussion would not take longer than six months. He also encouraged language practitioners to share the memories they had because an unwillingness to share was not the problem of DSAC alone; language units needed to be willing to share.

2.2.8 Recommendations towards the furtherance of multilingualism in South Africa by PanSALB Executive Head: Languages Mr Julius Dantile

Mr Dantile addressed each challenge and recommendation offered by the commissions, providing a way forward and who would be responsible for it. They were presented in no particular order.

Challenge	Way forward	Responsibility
There is a lack of resources for translation and interpreting	Mr Dantile agreed that resource availability should be increased and further proposed that PanSALB should **identify what was available as language resources for all organs of state and monitor their availability**. This responsibility should be extended to all organs of state at all levels of government. He noted that local government was particularly untouched by PanSALB. SALPC also had a huge responsibility around these issues, as well as the private sector, who were often quick to respond to recommendations from PanSALB.	PanSALB Organs of state (public services) Private sector PanSALB SALPC
"Threat" of AI and translation/interpreting jobs Lack of technological skills to host online dictionaries, produce HLT	Mr Dantile noted that the **training of language practitioners, teachers, and students in technology-use** was vital to make new technology useful. This should be done from school level: **computer literacy must become compulsory at school level in South Africa**.	DSAC SADiLaR CSIR DBE DHET

Exploitation of authors and a lack of jobs for authors and translators (influenced by a lack of departmental language units)	Mr Dantile agreed that there is a need to **get rid of language chancers**, which would now happen with the formulation of SALPC. Because **practitioners would have to be registered with SALPC to be accredited**, there would be better ways of regulating the industry. DSAC, National Library of South Africa, and publishers also had a responsibility to ensure that it is **not only translations from English into an indigenous language that were done but that original work was published in indigenous languages**.	SALPC PanSALB DSAC Publishers' Associations
Low pay for language practitioners (court interpreters)	Mr Dantile explained that currently freelancing pays better than full-time language practitioner positions because the industry was unregulated. There was a need to **increase remuneration via regulation** which would be done by SALPC. There were other ways to encourage language practitioners, including **awarding good performance (a best interpreter award) through money prizes**, as well as **training provided on regular basis to upskill and thus promote** language practitioners. There was also a need for all organs of state to **provide opportunities for work integrated learning** for current language practice students and **internships** for recent language graduates. PanSALB had implemented both, although students and graduates did not have major access to translation processes.	SALPC All organs of state Universities
Lack of teacher training in both content and language [beyond Grade 4]	Mr Dantile stressed that HEIs needed to offer comprehensive training and realise that the quality of their "product" determined the quality of their future students. The **focus of teacher training must be on content (vocabulary, grammar, syntax, punctuation) and proficiency (fluency in multiple registers) in language**. This also needed to be **extended to language practice students and language practitioners**, particularly through the National School of Government's Continuous Professional Development modules. PanSALB and other language stakeholders also needed to assist with designing courses for translators, interpreters, subtitlers, transcribers, and so forth, to build translation memories and the National Term Bank.	HEIs National School of Government

Inadequate methodologies for teaching African languages beyond Grade 3	**Teaching and assessment methodologies used in the Foundation phase should be extrapolated**. These methodologies must be authentic to indigenous languages. Mr Dantile explained that the African way was to start addressing the issue by the subject, not the description, which was the inverse of what European thinking did.	DBE HEIs DHET
Insufficient material and equipment for Deaf schools	Mr Dantile explained that this challenge could not be accepted at face value since SASL had been an official language in education since 2012. The broad recommendation to ensure the availability of SASL learning and teaching material including basic infrastructure should be extended into **assessing which SASL materials were lacking and what needed to be done to fill any gaps**. **A measure needed to be developed to assess this**.	DBE PanSALB
Government's failure to comply with language legislation, non-compliance by the organs of state	Mr Dantile agreed that **awareness campaigns about UOLA compliance** had had success in increasing compliance. **Subpoenaing non-compliant departments** was an alternative method, which PanSALB committed to do before the 2024 Multilingualism Conference. Mr Dantile stressed that compliance was the concern of all organs of state, since the legislation existed and so compliance should not have to be forced. The obligation lay with both the monitor and also those being monitored. This obligation was constitutional. This suggested that non-compliance could be labelled as a LHR violation. He welcomed the proposal to take non-compliant government departments to the Constitutional Court.	PanSALB Organs of state Provincial and local governments
Dominance of English in judiciary system / gap for Forensic Linguistics	Mr Dantile reported that PanSALB were in talks with the Office of the Chief Justice on these issues and they were negotiating around the unconstitutional decision to make English the only language of record in courts. There was a need to have at least three languages as part of their language policy to comply with the UOLA.	Courts DoJ&CD Office of the Chief Justice
Lack of Mother Tongue in Assessment	Mr Dantile confirmed that **policies were to be aligned to allow assessments, as well as teaching and learning, in students' mother tongues** and that **additive and progressive policies must be advocated for**. **NPOs and civil organisations should become partners** in this matter.	DBE UMALUSI NPOs Civil organisations

Inaccessibility of terminology lists and dictionaries	These should be classified as public goods since South Africans have paid for them through their tax money. **This matter needed further debate**.	DSAC PanSALB HEI
Underfunding of NLUs has led to the sale of the dictionaries	This could be cheapened through in-house publication by PanSALB. Mr Dantile reported that they were **already exploring the creation of a PanSALB publishing house** with DSAC and the National Library.	DSAC PanSALB NLSA
Language practitioners are considered to be terminologists	Mr Dantile agreed that there was a need to **differentiate between terminologists, lexicographers, and language practitioners**. This would allow specialisation and mastery of *a* skill, since these were separate skills.	HEIs, SALPC, PanSALB
Term bank is not fully functional, and copyright is being misused	A **functional term bank that is online, viable, and attractive to sponsors was needed**. **Translation memories also needed to clearly specify the context of each term**. This would assist with the development of mobile applications.	DSAC
Duplication of projects No progress in HLT, no distribution of translation memories	Mr Dantile stressed that **collaboration, especially for terminology development, was critical**.	All language stakeholders
Terminology developers use different methodologies	Mr Dantile agreed that quality assurance was needed.	PanSALB DSAC
Publication of terminology without being verified and authenticated	PanSALB was to identify the non-compliance and ensure that corrective measures are taken.	PanSALB

Mr Dantile advised that the following actions be taken by PanSALB before the 2024 conference. PanSALB:

- would advise specific national departments on the recommendations tabled at the conference,
- would make recommendations (which were gazetted and thus binding) to specific organs of state based on the recommendations tabled at the conference,
- would publish an annual LHR case report on their website (some were already available),
- would subpoena the organs of state that were non-compliant, and they would appear before PanSALB to provide the required information,
- would recommend that the non-compliant organs of state appear before the Equality Court on the account of committing LHR violations, and
- would publish the 2023 Multilingualism Conference Public Report on PanSALB's website. Attendees were encouraged to hold those mentioned in the report accountable throughout the year leading up to the 2024 conference.

In concluding, Mr Dantile encouraged attendees to take the following steps to assist with the promotion of multilingualism:

- Securing nomination to serve on a NLB or PLC or an NLU Board of Directors. It was stressed that individuals should be nominated by an organisation to which they belonged.
- Distributing hard and soft copies of the various Orthography Rules developed by the NLBs. Soft copies were available on the PanSALB website. The website was available in all eleven written official languages.
- Critically look at and challenge the NLBs on their Orthography Rules.
- Request training in HLT from DSAC
- Get involved in the following PanSALB events:
    - SWIP authorship workshop
    - SASL Indaba on 1 and 2 September 2024
    - International Mother Language Day on 21 February 2023,
    - Multilingualism Awards on 29 February 2024,
    - Linguistic human rights public lecture, in March 2024 at DUT

2.2.9 Closing remarks by Board member Dr Nomakhosazana Rasana

Preceded by a praise poet, Dr Rasana thanked all for attending and making valuable contributions to the discussions of the conference. She commented that there was still a long road further in implementing multilingualism and stressed that collaboration was the only way to success. She urged all in attendance to go out and implement the resolutions of the conference so that there would be progress to report on at the 2024 conference. She concluded by extending her blessings on everyone in attendance. Following this, Dr Rasana presented speakers on the programme with tokens of appreciation.

3. PRE- AND POST-CONFERENCE SURVEY

A pre- and post-conference survey was circulated to attendees before and after the conference respectively. The intention of the survey was to map the perceptions of the attendees before and after the conference to embellish the final recommendations of the conference. All responses were recorded anonymously so that honest answers could be given. The link to both surveys was emailed to attendees and copies of the QR code to the surveys were made available at the conference venue by way of poster and display on the plenary hall screen.

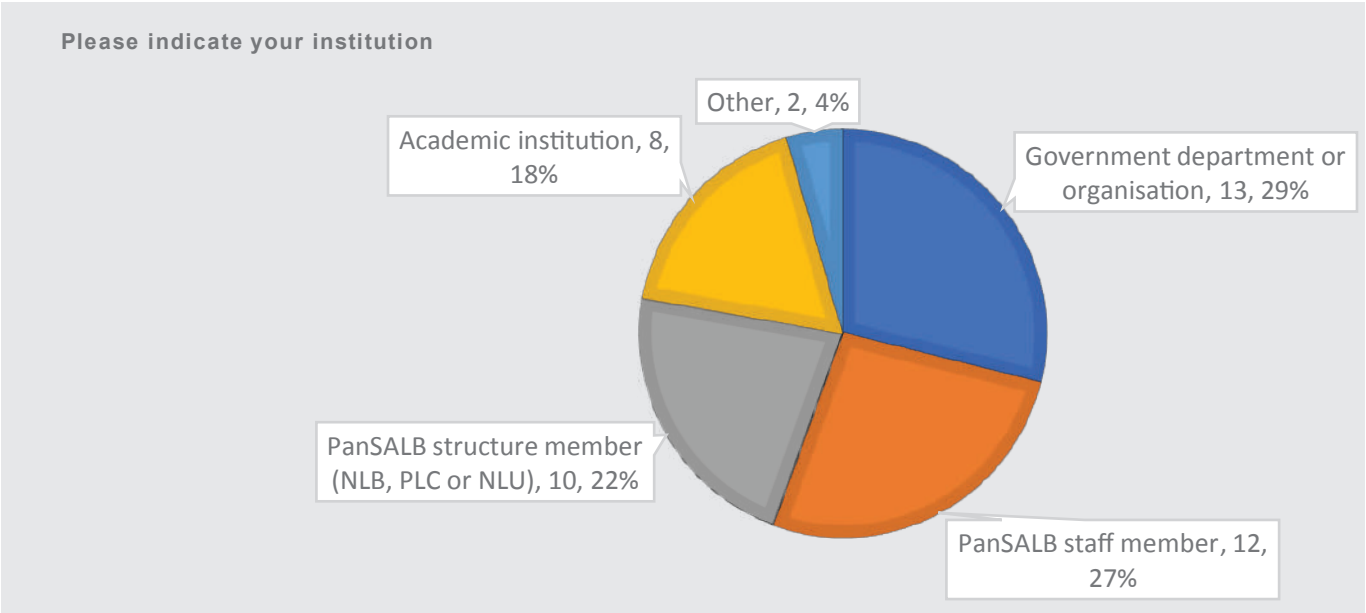
3.1 Pre-conference survey

The questions in the pre-conference survey were:

1. Please indicate your institution
2. Did you attend the 2022 Multilingualism Conference?
3. Have you observed any changes in multilingualism since November 2022?
4. Please explain your answer above
5. What are your expectations for the 2023 Multilingualism Conference?
6. Which commission will you attend?
7. Which language domain do you think must lead the furtherance of multilingualism?
8. Please explain your answer
9. What do you think should be the key national flagship project(s) for the Decade of Indigenous Languages in South Africa?
10. Who should undertake the national flagship projects you have proposed?

Of the 150 people invited to the conference, **45 responded to the pre-conference survey.** The results of the pre-conference survey are detailed below.

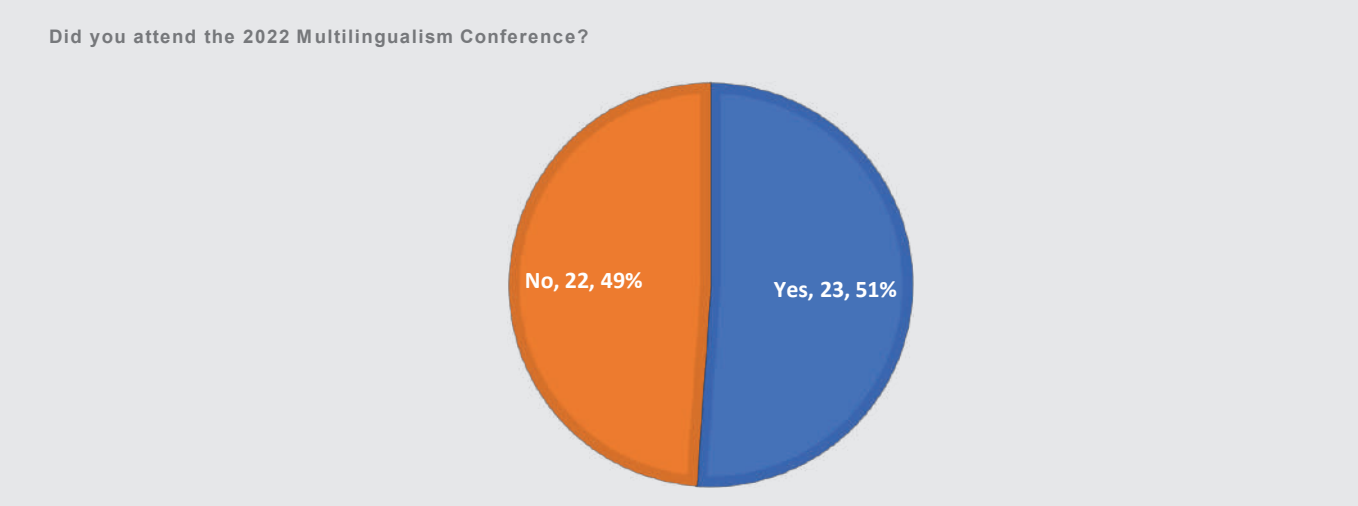
The various institutions represented in the survey are shown below in value and percentage:



Note: “Other” included SANEF, a non-profit organisation, and the South African Nama Development Agency.
Of the 45 respondents, little over half had attended the 2022 conference. The pie chart indicates the number and percentage of the respective responses.

This is interesting as **efforts were made to include those who had attended the previous conference as a means of ensuring continuity between the two conferences.** Because the survey only included 45 respondents, we cannot say that this split can be extrapolated with certainty and that it is representative of the split between the 150 attendees. This result should be understood as indicating that the efforts that were made to ensure continuity had been successful because there were repeat attendees, but, more importantly that this question's result may have implications for interpreting the responses to the rest of the survey.

Of the 45 respondents, **just more than half** of the respondents had **observed changes in terms of multilingualism** since November 2022 (the date of the previous conference). The large pie chart on the left indicates the number and percentage of the respective responses. Further breakdowns were conducted to assess the responses of those who had attended the 2022 conference compared to those who had not, reflected in the two pie charts on the right.



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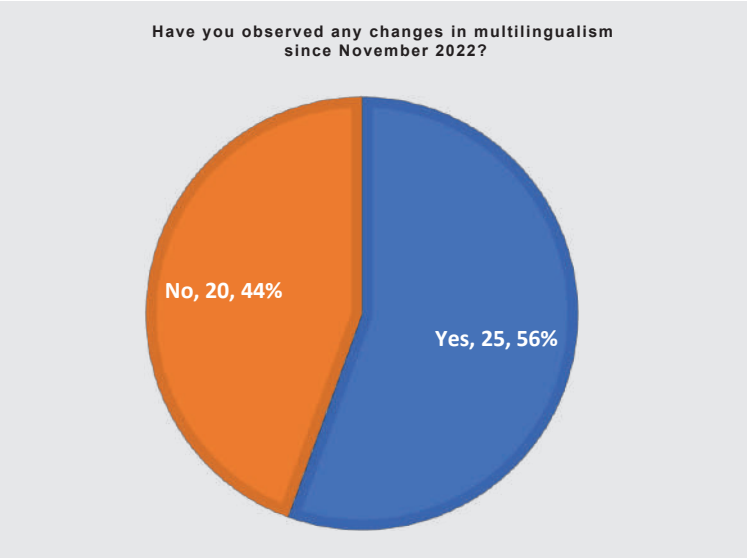
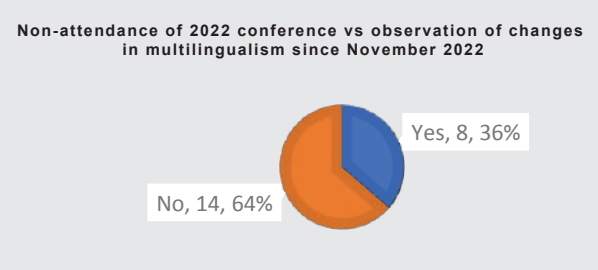




Some encouragement can be taken from the fact that slightly more respondents overall saw a change in multilingualism in the past year; however, the nearly even split is a concern. In is important to note the result could be influenced by a lack of knowledge of the 2022 conference resolutions, which seems to be confirmed by the breakdown of responses based on attendance of the 2022 conference: **only 36% of respondents who had not attended the conference saw a change while, conversely, 74% of respondents who had attended the 2022 conference had seen a change.** However, it must be noted that those invited to the 2023 conference were language stakeholders, which could suggest a lack of visibility for the 2022 conference's recommendations but also perhaps a lack of visibility of progress in multilingualism, which should be taken seriously.

This result is embellished by the explanations given for why respondents thought they had or had not observed changes in terms of multilingualism since November 2022 (the previous conference). Reasons were codified according to broad trends and are detailed below.

Comments that indicated change

Trend	Number of responses
Fulfilment of 2022 conference recommendations	3
• Establishment of SALPC	1
• Revival of National Language Stakeholders' Forum	1
Increased interest in learning and using indigenous languages	4
Better collaboration and networking between institutions	4
Increased number of projects and programmes for multilingualism	4
Improved government compliance with UOLA	1
Officialisation of SASL	3
Increased awareness of the need for multilingualism	4
• Increased use and promotion of multiple languages in the workplace	3
• Increased use and promotion of multiple languages in public sphere	1
Increased implementation of multilingual education	5
• Roll-out of Mother Tongue Based Bilingual Education	2
• Improved prospects for SASL education	2
• Increased possibilities (practically and in policy) for students to learn in the language of their choice	2

Comments that indicated a lack of change

Trend	Number of responses
Changes are slow	1
Government departments have not implemented multilingualism in their work	2
Nothing significant to point to	2
Closure of government language units	1
Dominance of English in public sphere	2
Same issues are still being discussed	2
Lack of education (basic & tertiary) in language of student's choice	3
• Mother Tongue Based Bilingual Education still limited to Eastern Cape	2
• Lack of multilingual education	1
• No inclusion of Khoe and San languages in schools	1
Poor development of the Khoe and San languages	1
Awareness is limited to language professionals	1
PanSALB has not established a Chairperson's Forum as per Section 8 of the Norms and Rules for National Language Bodies	1
Initiatives to promote multilingualism lack visibility	1

Note: **Five respondents did not answer** the question.

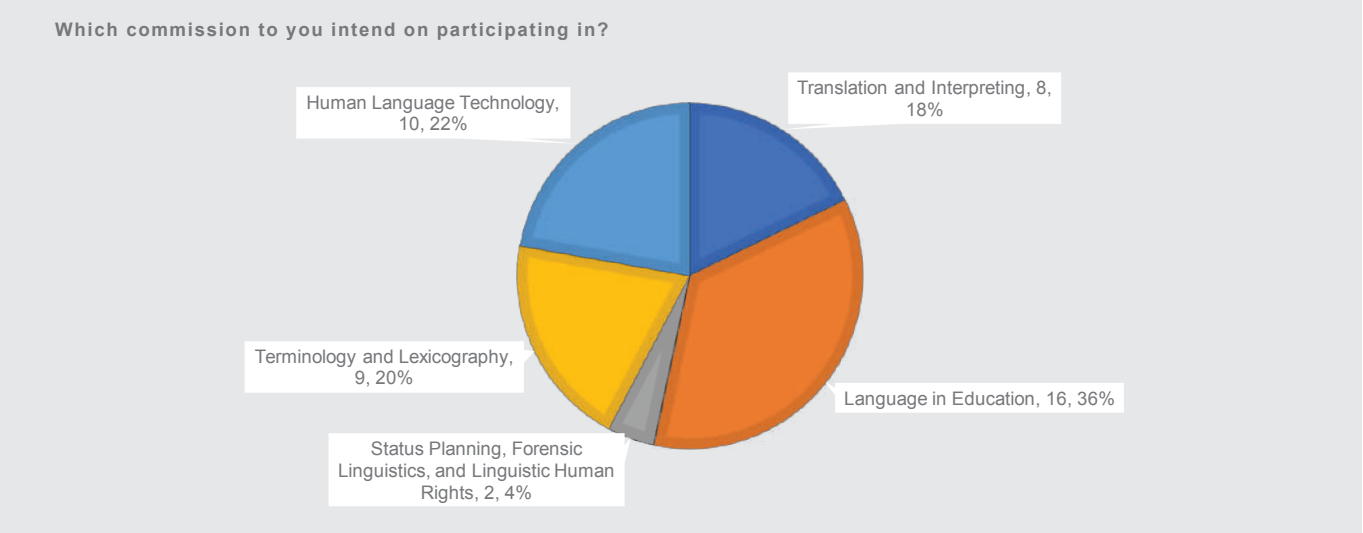
An analysis was then conducted. Of primary interest is the fact that **comments that indicate changes tended to be more cohesive:** respondents pointed out specific examples that could be grouped more broadly. **Comments that indicated a lack of change tended to be far more varied** with only a maximum of two or, at most, three respondents in agreement. What this might suggest is that there are **stronger perceptions regarding improvements in the promotion and implementation of multilingualism.** However, this **progress is not extensive and complete.** As one respondent surmised, "The multilingualism changes are there, but in a slow pace. We are still experiencing difficulties with people and department[s]…", and another explained "this is still work in progress as we need to start on basic level, we still need to change mindsets". These results indicated **the importance of a second conference on the promotion of multilingualism to take stock of and publicise progress but also to refine the way forward** for the next year.

The same process was applied to responses regarding attendees' expectations for the 2023 Multilingualism Conference. Respondents often suggested more than one expectation.

Trend	Number of responses
Reports on progress	14
Engagement among attendees	10
• Sharing of ideas and perspectives	3
Development of resolutions for strategic direction	16
• All sectors should have a language policy that promotes multilingualism	1
• Development and implementation of SASL	4
• Information about what PanSALB plans to do	1
• Strategies to implement multilingualism on social media	1
• Increases in budget for languages	1
• Constitution of the NLB/PLC Chairpersons' Forum	1
• Cross-structure (NLB, PLC, NLU) interaction	1
• Clear action rather than discussion	1
• Commitments from stakeholders to promote/implement multilingualism	2
Knowledge of multilingualism and its benefits	3
Use of multilingualism at the conference	1

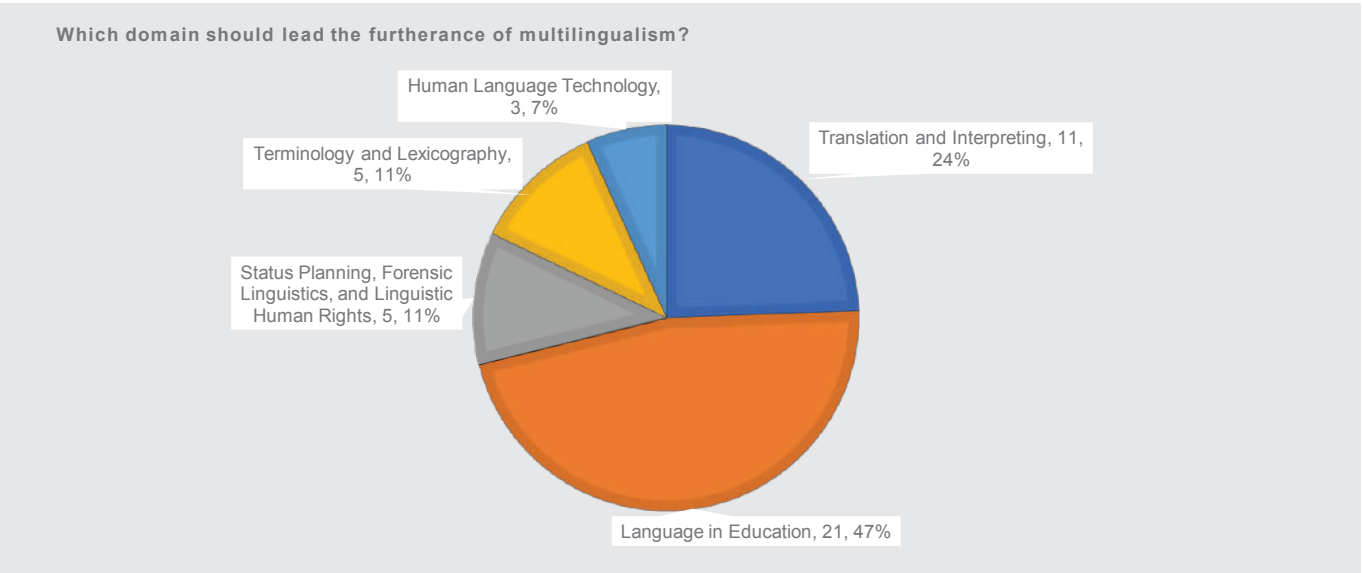
An analysis of these responses shows **strong agreement on what the conference should achieve,** namely **reports on the progress in implementing the previous conference's resolutions (31.1%)** and the **development of further recommendations to be implemented in the next year (35.6%).** These were the main intentions of the conference and so it is encouraging that many respondents seemed to understand this and expect it too. There was also some indication that attendees desired to engage with each other and learn from the various perspectives and best practices shared at the conference. Because a key takeaway from the conference was the need for better collaboration, it was promising that 22.2% of respondents indicated that they expected to engage with each other; however, this result also indicates the need for this desire to grow so as to affect practical and sustainable change. Learning was also extended to knowledge of multilingualism and its benefits. Ideally, attendees should already have this knowledge as stakeholders of language and so this suggests that **even among those working closely with language, there is a need for better understanding and awareness of what multilingualism is and why it should be used.**

Respondents were asked to indicate which commission they intended on participating in. The pie chart indicates the number and percentage of the respective responses.



Language in Education was the most preferred commission, followed by Human Language Technology, Terminology and Lexicography, Translation and Interpreting, and Language Status Planning, Forensic Linguistics, and Linguistic Human Rights.

Respondents were asked to indicate which domain should lead the furtherance of multilingualism. The pie chart indicates the number and percentage of the respective responses.



Language in Education was again the most preferred response with just short of half of all responses. This was followed by **Translation and Interpreting, which had nearly a quarter of all responses.** Language Status Planning, Forensic Linguistics, and Linguistic Human Rights and Terminology and Lexicography were equally considered, while Human Language Technology received the least responses. When compared to the results of the previous question, there is limited consistency, which suggests that **respondents were not influenced by their area of expertise in choosing what they thought would be the best domain for the furtherance of multilingualism.**

Respondents explained their perspective regarding the domain responsible for leading the promotion of multilingualism. Reasons for selecting Language in Education included the idea that **"everything begins with education";** there were well over one million South Africans in the country's education system, which allowed **mass access;** the **success of MTBBE** in the Eastern Cape; the idea that **educated individuals would be key proponents of multilingualism; early interventions were effective and provided for the future; and education's multidisciplinary nature.** Respondents stressed **the need for mother tongue and multilingual (and eventual plurilingual) education through the languages of teaching and learning, and language policy.** Respondents that had selected Translation and Interpreting emphasised the **crucial role that interpreters and translators played in ensuring communication between languages** and hailed them as central to facilitating multilingualism efforts. Those that selected Language Status Planning, Linguistic Human Rights, and Forensic Linguistics argued that the domain would **break the hegemony of English** and allow the **upliftment of marginalised languages.** Reasons for identifying Terminology and Lexicography as the most important domain included **the effectivity of language resources** to promote learning and echoed the reasoning of those that had selected Translation and Interpreting in highlighting the **role of translators and interpreters in facilitating cross-language communication.** Those that indicated that Human Language Technology should lead referred to the **prevalence of technology in the current world, the opportunities provided by ever-advancing AI and social media, and that technology made things easier and more accessible.** A number of respondents also argued that, while they had selected a single domain, **all domains were intertwined and equally important.**

Respondents were asked to suggest ideas about what the key national flagship project(s) for the Decade of Indigenous Languages in South Africa should be. They were codified as presented below

Trend	Number of responses
Promotion and implementation of languages in education	13
• Implementation of the Khoe and San languages as a school subject	1
• Offering languages on different levels	1
• Expanding Home Language teaching syllabi	1
• Expanding opportunities to use multiple languages in education	2
• Additive bi/multilingual programmes	3
• MTBBE	3
• Improvement in early-grade reading ability in indigenous languages	2
Promotion and development of SASL	4
• Standardisation of SASL	1
• Officialisation of SASL	1
• Establishment of SASL NLU	2
Translation and interpreting	5
• Translation of all legislation into indigenous languages	1
• Translation of key government documents into indigenous languages	1
• Use of interpreting in all government efforts	1
• Ensuring that public figures and public spaces use indigenous languages	2

Trend	Number of responses
Resource production	4
• Publication and distribution of indigenous language dictionaries	1
• Terminology authentication	1
• Digitising indigenous language resources	1
• Central hub for multilingual tools and resources	1
Multilingualism conferences	1
Equal treatment of all 12 official languages	1
Media collaboration	1
Survey on the state of indigenous languages in South Africa	1
National language stakeholder engagement and relationship building	1

Note: A number of respondents did not list specific projects, indicating that this question was not well understood.

Answers were highly varied and therefore there was only broad agreement among the project proposed. **Language in Education projects were the most suggested with a general emphasis on including more languages in education at varying levels and in varying ways.** SASL, unsurprisingly given its recent officialisation, also had a few suggestions that related to the current projects of PanSALB. The inclusion of translators and interpreters in government and other public arenas was highlighted by some and related to need to translate key texts and interpret key spoken information into more languages. Resource production also featured with an array of suggestions related to publication, digitisation, distribution, authentication, and better access. Correlation could be found between these suggested projects and the explanations for which domain should lead the furtherance of multilingualism. As before, Language in Education was most dominant perhaps because it is seen as hugely influential and the most accessible route for language promotion. Translation and interpreting as well as language resources also featured strongly as possible tools that were similarly influential and accessible.

Respondents were finally asked who they thought should lead the national flagship project they had proposed. Because the projects proposed were so varied, it is not very helpful to note how often each institution was mentioned, but the results are noted below.

Institution	Number
PanSALB	22
Department of Basic Education	15
• Provincial Departments of Education	1
Department of Sport, Arts and Culture	10
General language stakeholders and those with an interest in language	6
Government departments in general	5
Department of Higher Education	3
Universities	3
Schools	1
CSIR	1
SADiLaR	1

Institution	Number
Communities	1
Language interest groups	1
Parents	1
National Library of South Africa	1

Unsurprisingly, **PanSALB, the DBE, and DSAC were most mentioned** as they are mandated with various aspects of language development, use, promotion, and protection. What is perhaps more useful is to note the **wide variety of stakeholders listed** as demonstrating the **need for collaboration and cross-institutional resource and knowledge sharing.** This is emphasised by the fact that **six respondents specifically indicated that anyone with an interest in language or the broad spectrum of language stakeholders should lead the project and an additional 19 responses named more than one entity.** This suggests that **over half the respondents believed that even a single project should be, as one respondent explained, a "joint effort".**

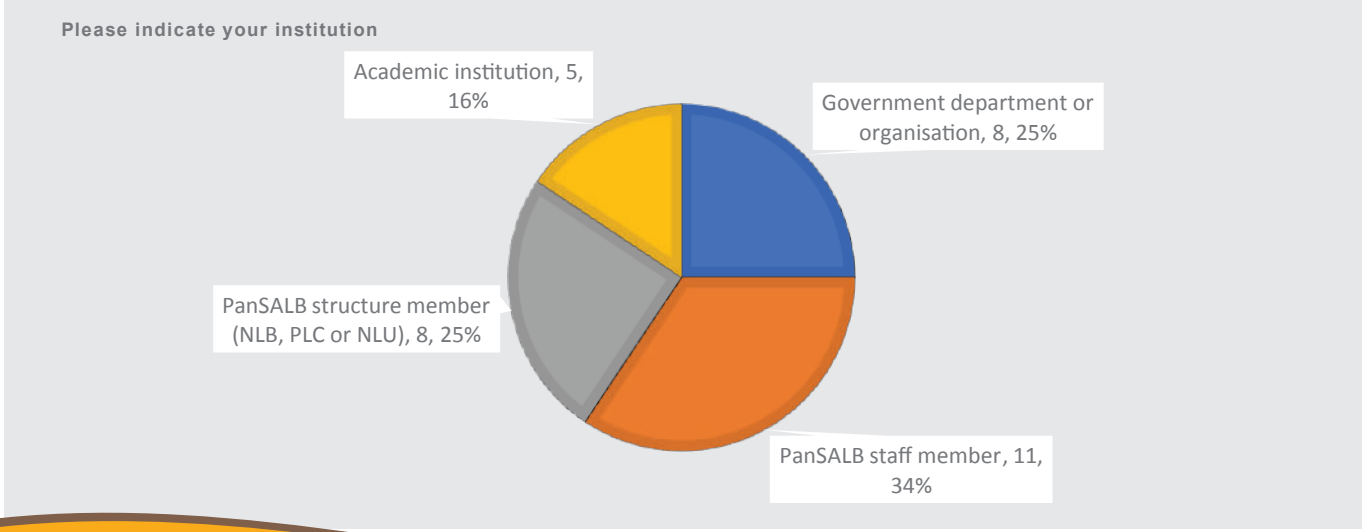
3.2 Post-conference survey

The questions in the post-conference survey were:

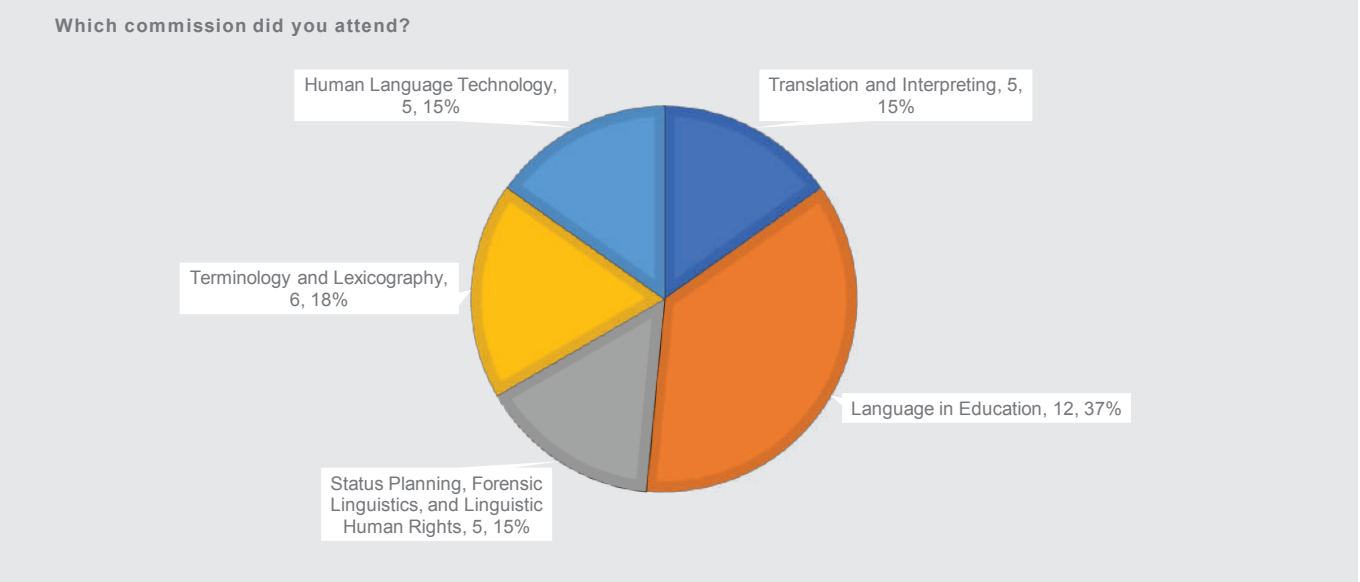
1. Please indicate your institution
2. Which commission did you attend?
3. What did you learn at the conference?
4. What do you think was the most important recommendation made at the conference?
5. Which recommendation will you endeavour to implement at your institution
6. How can PanSALB improve its Multilingualism Conference?
7. Which language domain do you think must lead the furtherance of multilingualism?
8. Please explain your answer
9. Do you now perceive changes in multilingualism since November 2022?
10. What do you think should be the key national flagship project(s) for the Decade of Indigenous Languages in South Africa?
11. Who should undertake the national flagship projects you have proposed?

Of the 150 people invited to the conference, **33 responded to the post-conference survey.** The results of the post-conference survey are detailed below.

The various institutions represented in the survey are shown below in value and percentage:



Respondents were asked to indicate with commission they participated in. The pie chart indicates the number and percentage of the respective responses.



Note: No data about the exact attendance of each commission was kept so the proportionality of this data to actual attendance cannot be verified. The data presented above therefore only informs the answers presented below.

Respondents were asked that they learnt at the conference. Answers were codified on theme, as shown below:

Trend	Number of responses
There has been progress in the past year and language stakeholders are making efforts to further multilingualism	8
• The significant achievements and work done in HLT	3
Indigenous languages in schools	6
• The importance of teaching African languages in schools and universities	3
• The need to develop African Languages enough to be used for teaching and learning	1
• How progressive language policies can be actively implemented at schools and universities	1
• The need for MTBBE	2
• DBE understands its role	1
• LoLT needs to become LoLTA	1
PanSALB understands its role	3
There is room for improvement	3
The importance of understanding the linguistic forensic and the application and the role of linguistics criminal proceedings including investigations and trials	2
The importance of collaboration to ensure that all languages are developed and promoted	2
There is improved awareness about the need for multilingualism	2

Trend	Number of responses
The urgency to research the grammar, vocabulary, and cultural context of each language.	1
The need for stakeholder mobilisation and the importance of consultation & policy review	1
That languages are important	1
The importance of equitable language use	1
Government compliance to the Use of the Official Languages Act (UOLA 12 of 2012) is very low. This is a sign that there is no political will from government to comply.	1
That all languages are equal, and we must have a hunger to learn other African languages like the hunger to master English	1
No answer / answer was not relevant	5

Analysis revealed **that nearly a quarter of respondents indicated that the conference had made them aware of the progress that had been made in recent time,** which also explains the significant change in perception among respondents regarding perceived changes in the progress of multilingualism in the last year, as per question 9 of the survey. Interestingly, **HLT, unlike other focus areas, was specifically named, and more than once.** This could suggest that the discussions of the HLT commission were particularly fruitful in highlighting the successes of the focus area or that this is a focus area in which progress is most obviously evident. Respondents also gestured toward **Language in Education as an area that needed concentrated attention because their awareness of the need for indigenous language teaching, learning, and assessment had been raised.**

Encouragingly, **nearly 10% of respondents specifically indicated that they thought PanSALB understood its role.** One respondent explained "The emphasis that PanSALB has constitutional powers to drive especially the Language Policy Framework for Higher Education Public Institutions was really encouraging. It was very clear at the conference that PanSALB is determined to use this power to ensure that all stakeholders play a role towards revitalising and intellectualising indigenous African languages. This is encouraging!" and another said "PanSALB is beginning to take the lead in enforcing government departments to comply by submitting reports on language related matters". These comments support PanSALB's desire to expand their operations regarding monitoring and evaluation in the next year.

Others noted that there was room for improvement in many domains, despite the successes. Addressing these gaps was part of the conference's aim. As one respondent explained "Thoughtful engagements and recommendations will inform policies and programs" and "it is always great to hear other voices and different external views" for introspection and benchmarking.

Respondents were asked what they thought the most important recommendation made at the conference was. Again, the answers were codified as followed:

Trend	Number of responses
PanSALB must deepen its monitoring and evaluation of the UOLA,	7
• and subpoena non-complaint departments	2
Collaboration between all stakeholders must happen	7
Universities must produce teachers with an understanding of language challenges and ability to teach in indigenous languages (content and language)	4

Trend	Number of responses
Changing LoLT to LoLTA	3
Implementation of multilingualism	3
• Multilingualism must be implemented in all spheres	1
• Multilingualism must be implemented in schools	1
• Multilingualism must be implemented in the workplace	1
Establishment of PanSALB publishing house	1
Advancement of HLT	2
• Harvesting speech and text data for all languages for HLT	1
Production of school-level resources in indigenous languages	1
That languages must be preserved for future generations	1
Action	1
PanSALB must publish its activities	1
Jobs for language practitioners must be created	1
Official languages must be regionalised	1
PanSALB must extend its LHR services and public awareness thereof	1
The movement of the NLS to The Presidency	1
Improvement of Omega T	1
Courts need to consult language experts	1
MTBBE must be implemented country-wide	1

Echoed from the pre-conference survey and the recommendations of the conference, collaboration between language stakeholders received emphasis. Perhaps because many respondents were from PanSALB, their role in monitoring compliance with UOLA was also highlighted. Unsurprisingly, recommendations in relation to Language in Education also emerged as a trend with emphasis on producing assessments in students' mother tongues and teacher training that addressed the multilingual South African context.

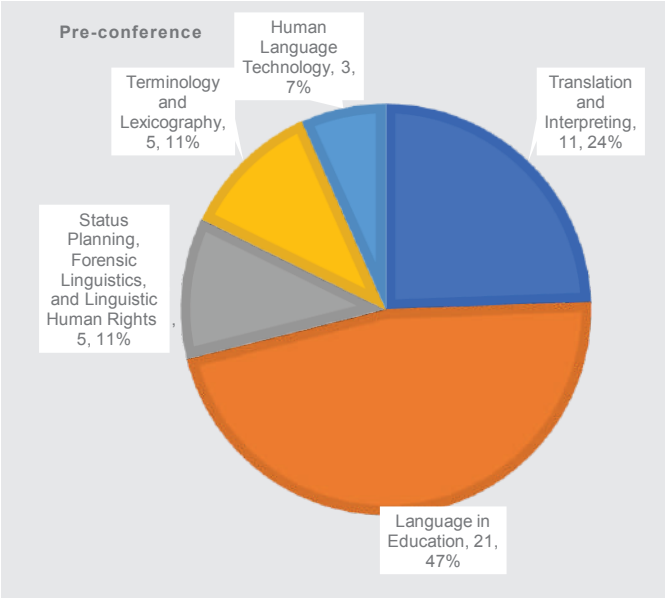
Respondents were asked which recommendation they would personally implement at their institution. Answers were codified, as represented below, and those who made the commitment are also listed as supporting data.

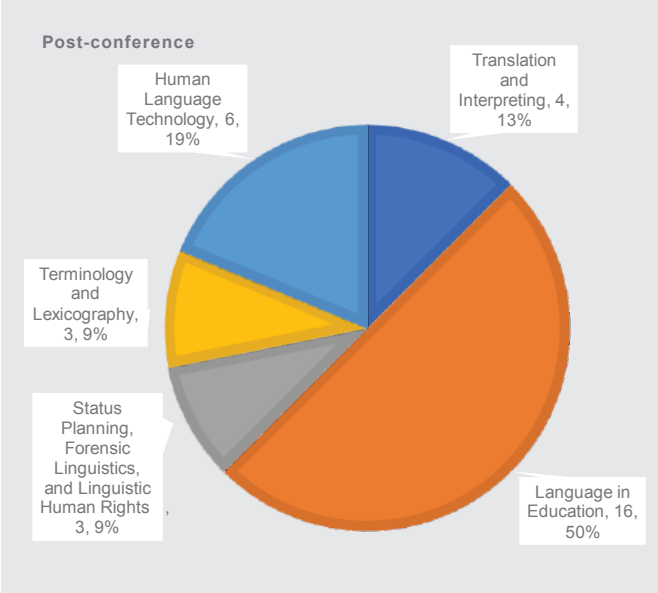
Commitment	Who made the commitment	Number of responses
Monitoring of UOLA	PanSALB	4
Collaboration with others	PanSALB	3
Implementation of language policy	Academic institution	3
Multilingualism and indigenous languages in the workplace	Government department	3
• Encourage employees to speak their mother tongues	Government department	1
• Use of 3 or more languages in communications	Government department	1

Commitment	Who made the commitment	Number of responses
• Using official languages for internal communication	Government department	1
Implementation of multilingualism in teaching and learning, use of assessment questions in indigenous languages	Academic institution	5
In service training / professional development of language practitioners	Academic institution, government department	3
Language promotion activities	Government department, PanSALB structure, PanSALB	3
Improved compliance with / implementation of UOLA	Government department	2
Use HLT to improve services and resources	NLU	2
The establishment of a PanSALB publishing house	NLU	1
Make terminology lists "public goods"	PanSALB	1
Teacher training that prepares teachers with knowledge of the challenges and skills to implement mother tongue and multilingual teaching	Academic institution	1
Creation of guidelines on the interpretation of language rights and universal human rights	PanSALB	1
Establishment of language unit	Academic institution	1

These commitments provide some encouragement and inspiration. Most importantly, they indicate the recommendations that respondents felt were easiest and most practical to do. Most notable are the **five academic institutions that committed to implementing multilingualism in their teaching and learning, as well as assessments.** Three other institutions **committed to implementing their institution's language policy, which may include multilingualism and indigenous languages in teaching, learning, and assessments.** PanSALB respondents felt **most secure in their commitment to monitor the UOLA** in 2024. **Three government departments indicated that they would be implementing multilingualism and indigenous languages in the workplace,** although, they varied in how they would do this. There was also some agreement between **academic institutions and government departments to provide better development opportunities for pre-service and currently employed language practitioners.** On the whole, **the responses to this question, even where there is only one respondent, suggest the most practical and easiest "first steps" after the 2023 conference.**

As in the pre-conference survey, respondents were asked to indicate which domain should lead the furtherance of multilingualism, which can now be directly compared to the data from the pre-conference survey. The pie chart on the left indicates the pre-conference number and percentage of the respective responses and the pie chart on the right indicated the post-conference number and percentage of the respective responses.



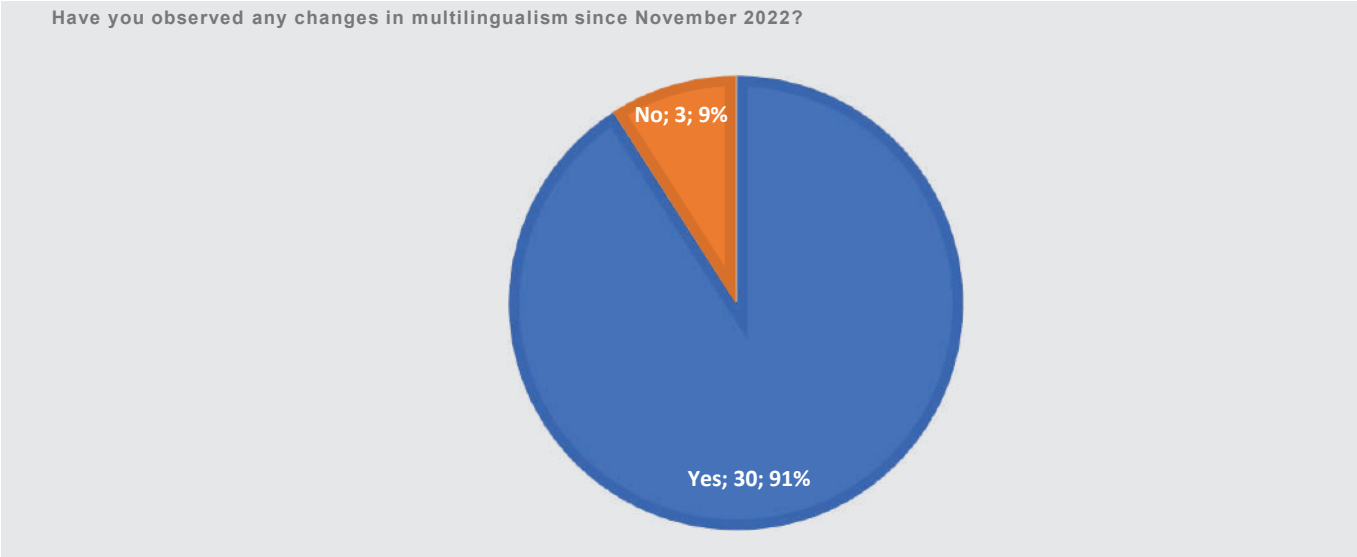


Most notably, **Language in Education remained the most-preferred domain,** with 50% of respondents selecting it post-conference. Terminology and Lexicography and Status Planning, Forensic Linguistics, and Linguistic Human Rights remained the same proportionally. However, Translation and Interpreting showed a dropped in selection while **HLT grew in popularity.** What is most important here is the **continuous dominance of Language in Education** as the domain with the most potential. It is also worthy to note the change in perspective regarding HLT. In some sense, because HLT is developing and not always familiar to season language stakeholders, **this result shows HLT's potential to become a pivotal domain as awareness around its capabilities is raised.** This is supported by the synergy that can be found between these results and the responses that addressed what attendees learnt at the conference: developments and opportunities in HLT were specifically mentioned, unlike developments and opportunities in other domains.

Respondents explained their perspective regarding the domain responsible for leading the promotion of multilingualism. Language in Education was popular because **there was a noted discrepancy between indigenous languages and English and Afrikaans in education; LoLTA was considered highly impactful; it was an accessible and wide in-road for language promotion (and it offered access at a grassroots level); educated multilingual and multiliterate people would be empowered people; education was the foundation of many other aspects of life and it was interdisciplinary; and educational spaces presented a microcosm of society and societies were built around schools, colleges and universities.** Reasons for selecting HLT included the **advancement of AI, the rapid pace at which technology in general was developing, and the need for languages to be incorporated in the domain to capitalise of this development.** Reasons for choosing Translation and Interpreting included the idea that **practitioners also assisted with terminology development, they provided easy access to communication across all languages, and that it was interdisciplinary.** Others chose Status Planning, Forensic Linguistics, and Linguistic Human Rights because it spoke to basic human rights, and it created legislative mandates and obligations. Reasons for selecting Terminology and Lexicography included the idea that **dictionaries were public goods that were able to teach languages in content and context.** Interestingly, there was no emphasis on the interdependent relationship between the various domains, which was observed in the pre-conference data. This does not undermine their interdependent relationship but perhaps

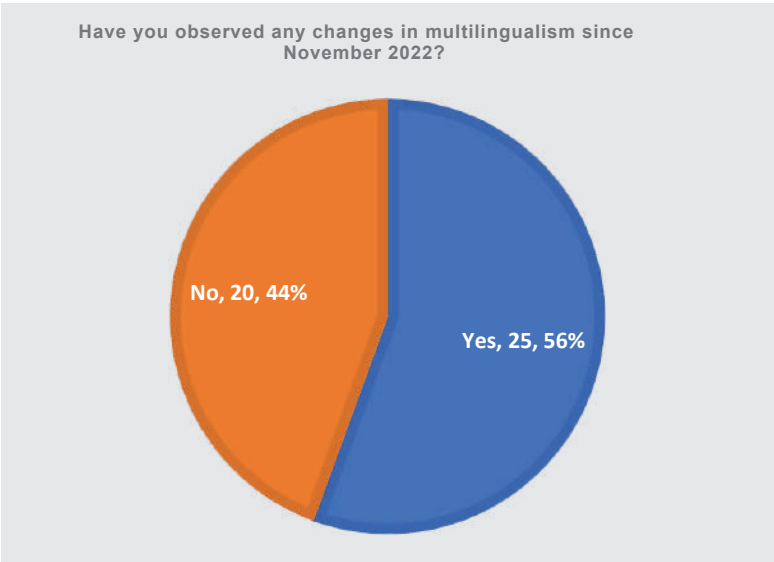
suggests that respondents had crystalised ideas regarding the furtherance of multilingualism after specific progress reports and recommendations had been made at the conference.

As in the pre-conference survey, respondents were asked if they had observed any changes in multilingualism since November 2022. This time, the responses were overwhelmingly positive as presented below in number and percentage.



As gestured to in the discussion of the responses to the question in which respondents were asked to indicate what they learnt at the conference, many of them noted that the conference had informed them of the progress made in the past year in terms of multilingualism.

This should also be compared to the responses to the same question asked in the pre-conference survey as presented again below.



As suggested in the discussion of the pre-conference survey results of the same question, some encouragement can be taken from the fact that the majority of respondents now saw a change in multilingualism in the past year; however, the change from a nearly 50/50 split to a 91/9 split in favour of noticeable change should still raise concern. These results indicate that there is indeed change, however, awareness of this change is poor. This presents

arguments both for the **value of the Multilingualism Conference in publishing the work done by language stakeholders but also that this awareness should be ramped up between conferences.**

As in the preconference survey, respondents were asked what the key national flagship project(s) for the Decade of Indigenous Languages in South Africa should be. The answers were codified as presented below.

Trend	Number of responses
Awareness campaigns	6
• PanSALB Multilingualism Conference	1
Promotion and implementation of languages in education	11
• MTBBE	3
• Introduction of LoLTA	1
• Multilingualism in education, schools	3
• Education policy implementation and monitoring	3
• Training of teachers for multilingual classrooms	1
Development of African languages	5
• Terminology development	2
• Standardisation of indigenous language terminology	1
Addressing LHR matters	2
Equal treatment of languages	1
HLT projects for all languages	1
Governmental partnership with PanSALB's work	1
Learning other languages	1
Promotion of authors writing in indigenous languages	1
How to make use of social media to promote indigenous languages	1
The translation of all national legislation into all the official languages	1
Governmental compliance with UOLA	1
Establishment of SASL NLU	1

As with the pre-conference results, there was **limited agreement among the responses received.** However, there was still correlation between the pre- and post-conference results. **Language in Education projects were still the most suggested with a general emphasis on including multilingualism and mother tongue-based learning at all levels through practice and policy. Awareness campaigns** featured in this set of results, perhaps because of their ease in implementation, but also because of their need as noted previously. Interestingly, the role of translations and interpreters as well as resource production were not as strong in this set of results, but the **development of African languages still garnered good attention.** The broad theme of development could relate to the roles of translators and interpreters, developments in HLT, and the production of resources. When compared to the data related to which domain should lead the furtherance of multilingualism, some consensus can be found. **Language in Education remains the north star for multilingualism efforts in line with the huge variety of explanations already offered for its preference while the interdependent nature of these domains should also be considered.**

Again, respondents were asked who should undertake the national flagship projects that they had proposed, presented below.

Institution	Number of responses
DSAC	5
DHET	5
DBE	9
PanSALB	23
Collaboration	2
Language Units	1
HEI	2
All language stakeholders	4
NGOs and community groups	2
Not sure	1

Unsurprisingly, **PanSALB, DBE, DHET, and DSAC were again the most mentioned** as organs of state mandated with various aspects of language development, use, promotion, and protection. Collaboration was again emphasised by the two comments that specifically listed it as well as the four comments that indicated that all language stakeholders had a role and the 17 comments that listed more than one entity. Again, it is perhaps not useful to focus on which entity was most-mentioned, but rather that a **wide variety of stakeholders were mentioned,** demonstrating the **need for collaboration and cross-institutional resource and knowledge sharing.**

Finally, respondents were asked how PanSALB could improve the Multilingualism Conference. The answers were codified as presented below.

Trend	Number of responses
Invite youth	5
Invite a broader representation of language stakeholders to the conference	4
No improvement needed	4
Need for more time	4
• Longer programme	2
• Time management	2
Invite teachers	3
Vigorous publication about the conference proceedings and recommendations/goals	3
Get more expert reports and academic presentations, allow submissions for presentations	3
Logistical arrangements (quality of accommodation, bigger venue)	2
By taking the mandate from people to address topical issues	1
By implementing the recommendations	1
Rotate in province	1
Provision of more headsets to access different languages	1

Trend	Number of responses
Question and answer sessions after every presentation	1
Hybrid conference to cater for more audience	1
Encourage more participants to use their languages	1
List AI as a topic of discussion under HLT commission	1
More robust engagement in commissions	1

The need to invite a wider variety of language stakeholders, especially the youth, and the need for more time for even deeper discussions have been noted in PanSALB's lessons learned register.

4. WAY FORWARD FOR 2024 MULTILINGUALISM CONFERENCE

In preface, it should be noted that while the conference aimed to generate progressive findings and recommendations, any progressive findings and recommendations should not detract from the transformative work already being done by language stakeholders. Similarly, the failure to produce new recommendations should not be indicative of conference failure. Instead, it gives credence to the work already being done by departments to implement and promote multilingualism that recommendations largely encourage them to successfully complete their already-planned targets. Thus, the following are the key recommendations that must be implemented, grouped by responsibility:

4.1 PanSALB

Recommendation to implement	Timeframe
PanSALB should host awareness campaigns regarding UOLA compliance	November 2024
PanSALB should continue their in-depth analysis and monitoring of government departments' compliance with the UOLA and should release public scorecards for each government department	November 2024
PanSALB should advise specific national departments on the recommendations tabled at the conference	31 March 2024
PanSALB should make recommendations to specific organs of state based on the recommendations tabled at the conference,	31 March 2024
PanSALB should publish an annual LHR report on their website	31 March 2024
PanSALB should subpoena the organs of state that were non-compliant, and they should appear before PanSALB to provide the required information	31 March 2024
PanSALB should recommend that the non-compliant organs of state appear before the Equality Court on the account of committing LHR violations, and	31 March 2024
PanSALB should publish the *2023 Multilingualism Conference Public Report* on PanSALB's website.	31 March 2024
PanSALB should, through the appropriate departments and protocol, engage the African Union on translating its anthem and charter, in full or in part, into Kiswahili or another indigenous African language	November 2024
PanSALB should identify what is available as language resources for all organs of state and monitor their availability	
PanSALB should offer an award for translators at their Multilingualism Awards	2024/25
PanSALB should explore the possibility of in-house publishing	November 2024

4.2 DEPARTMENT OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE

Recommendation to implement	Timeframe
DSAC should publicise among language stakeholders the timelines and agreements for sharing translation memories	31 March 2025
DSAC in conjunction with the National Library of South Africa should ensure that not only translations from English into an indigenous language are done but that original work is published in indigenous languages	31 March 2025
DSAC should host awareness campaigns regarding UOLA compliance	31 March 2025
DSAC should continue to develop a functional term bank that is online, viable, and attractive to sponsors.	31 March 2025

4.3 DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

Recommendation to implement	Timeframe
DBE should prioritise the inclusion of assessments in mother tongue learning during curriculum strengthening in March 2024	31 March 2025
DBE should encourage schools to devise and implement “transformative policies”, to align with the South African jurisprudence of transformative constitutional democracy	31 March 2025
DBE should offer training to all language in education stakeholders regarding implementing the Language in Education policy (advocacy for MTBBE)	31 March 2025
DBE should explore how computer literacy can become compulsory in the school curriculum and teach students how to harness the potential of AI and HLT in an honest way	On-going
DBE, in collaboration with DHET and HEIs, should extrapolate teaching and assessment methodologies used in the Foundation phase for senior grades	31 March 2025
DBE should assess which SASL materials are lacking and what needs to be done to fill any gaps. A measure needs to be developed to assess this.	On-going
DBE, in collaboration with other stakeholders, should ensure policies are aligned to allow assessments, as well as teaching and learning, in students’ mother tongues and advocate,	On-going
especially in collaboration with NPOs and civil organisations, for additive and transformative policies.	

4.4 DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Recommendation to implement	Timeframe
DHET should explore who should and then implement the hosting of a central, national platform for universities to access language products and services. The host(s) should also monitor the use of products and services and report to DHET on matters like language policy implementation and planning.	31 March 2025
DHET, in collaboration with DBE and HEIs, should extrapolate teaching and assessment methodologies used in the Foundation phase for tertiary studies	On-going

4.5. ORGANS OF STATE

Recommendation to implement	Timeframe
Organs of state should submit the annual UOLA compliance reports they are obliged by law to submit to PanSALB	Immediately
Organs of state should establish language units in compliance with the UOLA	ASAP
Organs of state should prioritise capacity building through training programs and resource development for current staff and resources	ASAP
Organs of state should review and revise their language policies to align with the recent Constitutional Amendment that officialises SASL	31 March 2024
Organs of state should implement public awareness campaigns to elevate the prestige of all official languages and use social media platforms to celebrate linguistic diversity	On-going
Organs of state should request training on HLT from DSAC and investigate the use thereof to ease language service operations	On-going
Organs of state should endeavour to partner with academic institutions, language boards, and civil society organisations in efforts to promote and implement multilingualism	On-going
Organs of state should share existing translation memories among themselves until DSAC can set up centralised sharing	31 March 2025
Organs of state should host students for work integrated learning opportunities and consider appointing interns	31 March 2025
Organs of state should encourage the formal and informal use of indigenous languages in operations and communications	Immediately

4.6 HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Recommendation to implement	Timeframe
HEIs should raise awareness about the language services they already offer by integrating them into teaching and learning by directing students to these services as well as resources	Immediately
HEIs should develop expertise in terminology development, creation and maintenance of resource banks, multilingual glossaries, multilingual exam papers, academic language ability development and support, the use of some codeswitching in the classroom, and	31 March 2025
proper implementation of language policies to facilitate student success and should therefore become the focus of academic studies and pilots	
HEIs should align their language of communication and administration with the ethos of multilingualism, including the use of official and other languages on signs and in marketing and general communication	Immediately
HEIs should prioritise expertise in language policy planning and management, as well as resource management and multilingualism in recruitment and staff development strategies	Immediately
HEIs should commit to collaboration, not competition, with language resources	On-going
HEIs should ringfence part of the UCDP grants or set aside other funding for language development and advancement	Funds made available by DHET in 2023/24

HEIs should prioritise offering language courses and resources in other official South African languages, but especially SASL, for staff and students	31 March 2025
HEIs should partner with CSIR and other stakeholders that are knowledgeable about ChatGPT and other AI to train staff and students on identifying and preventing the dishonest use of AI.	On-going
HEIs should ensure teacher training and language practitioner courses include content (vocabulary, grammar, syntax, punctuation) and proficiency (fluency in multiple registers). Courses for translators, interpreters, subtitlers, transcribers, should be designed.	On-going
HEIs, in collaboration with DBE and DHET, should extrapolate teaching and assessment methodologies used in the Foundation phase for secondary and tertiary education	On-going

4.7 NLUS

Recommendation to implement	Timeframe
Boards of Directors should investigate sponsorships for dictionaries as well as the digitisation of dictionaries so that they may become free	On-going

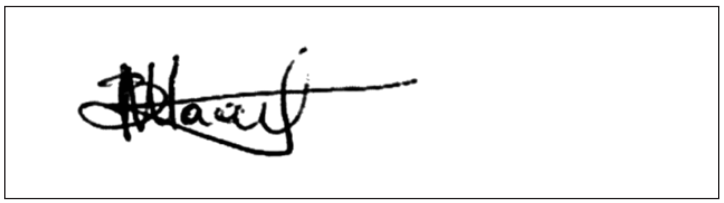
4.8 SALPC

Recommendation to implement	Timeframe
SALPC should publicise the various criteria, including recognition of prior learning, for registration with SALPC to remove language chancers as well as standardised service tariffs	31 March 2025

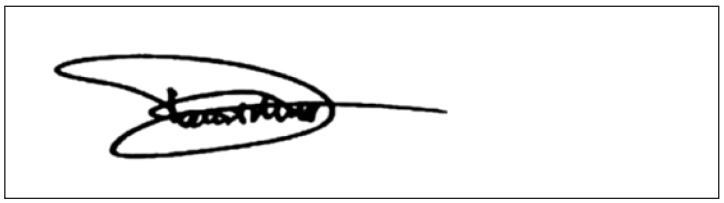
4.9 NATIONAL SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

Recommendation to implement	Timeframe
Language practice development and training cover content (vocabulary, grammar, syntax, punctuation) and proficiency (fluency in multiple registers) in language and courses for translators, interpreters, subtitlers, transcribers, and so forth should be designed in collaboration with other stakeholders.	31 March 2025

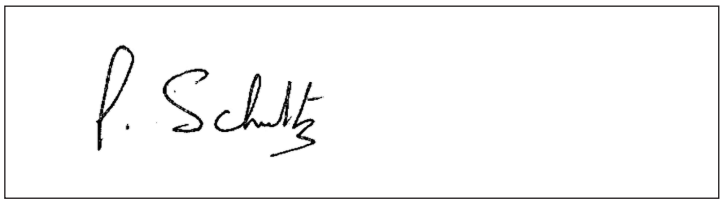
5. OFFICIAL SIGN-OFF



DR SALLY MAEPA
Gauteng Senior Provincial Manager



MR JULIUS DANTILE
PanSALB Executive Head: Languages



MR LANCE SCHULTZ
PanSALB Chief Executive Officer

PanSALB CONTACT DETAILS

PRIVATE BAG X08 | ARCADIA | 0007

523 STANZA BOPAPE STREET | 5TH FLOOR PROVISUS BUILDING | ARCADIA | 0083

TEL : +27 12 341 9638 FAX : +27 12 341 5938 URL: www.pansalb.org EMAIL: *communications@pansalb.org*

PROVINCIAL OFFICES

EASTERN CAPE
18 A SURREY ROAD, VINCENT, EAST LONDON, 5210
TEL: 043 721 3357 FAX: 043 721 1966

FREE STATE
NO. 17 FIRST STREET, GROUND FLOOR, ARBORETUM, BLOEMFONTEIN, 9301
TEL: 051 448 2300 FAX: 051 448 3189

GAUTENG
259 WEST AVENUE, DIE HOEWES, CENTURION, 0157
TEL: 012 361 7117 FAX: 012 361 6116

KWA-ZULU NATAL (KZN)
SUITE 402 4TH FLOOR REDEFINE TOWERS
DR PIXLEY KASEME STREET, DURBAN, 4001
TEL: 031 304 5621 FAX: 031 304 5634

LIMPOPO
29 HANS VAN RENSBURG STREET, OFFICE NO 10
KWANE CHAMBERS BUILDING, POLOKWANE, 0700
TEL: 015 291 5888/77 FAX: 015 291 5898

MPUMALANGA
20 PAUL KRUGER STREET, MBOMBELA, 1201
TEL: 013 656 0307 FAX: 013 656 0361

NORTHERN CAPE
NEDBANK BUILDING, 37 CHAPEL STREET, KIMBERLEY, 8301
TEL: 053 832 0037 FAX: 053 832 1280

NORTH WEST
825 CARNEY STLIBERTAS, MAHIKENG, 2745
TEL: 018 384 0120 FAX: 018 384 0122

WESTERN CAPE
EDWARD III BUILDING, 70 EDWARD STREET
CNR BLOEMHOF & MISPEL ROAD, TYGER VALLEY, CAPE TOWN, 8000
TEL: 021 421 8506 FAX: 021 425 2399

 @PanSALB  @PanSALB  pansalb_za