

Dear reader

It's no exaggeration to say that 2021 has tested us all immeasurably. The economic, social, and emotional fallout of the Covid-19 pandemic continues, and the civil unrest in July this year, together with regular loadshedding, have demanded extraordinary resilience from everyone in our beautiful, beleaguered nation.

There are hopeful signs on the horizon, though. The pace of Covid-19 vaccinations has picked up following South Africa's discovery of the Omicron variant, which appears to cause milder symptoms than other variants. COP26 also delivered some reasons to be hopeful, with public, private, and cross-sector pledges showing a collective commitment towards achieving 'net zero' and mitigating the damaging effects of climate change (see Trialogue's recent series on [climate change and business](#)).

At Trialogue, we have focused on the broad theme of 'building back better' this year, looking at how companies can put responsible business concepts into practice (the [Trialogue Business in Society Handbook 2021](#) has a wealth of suggestions). Next year, we'll be looking at how to reconnect – with our personal purpose, collective potential and natural environment. We may be used to physical distancing, but there's a sense that the ground is shifting, and people will cautiously come together again as Covid-19 becomes endemic and less threatening.

We'd like to extend a very big thank you to our wonderful partners, who have worked with us through yet another challenging year. We can't wait to reconnect in the fullest sense of the word – which is why we're planning a hybrid version of the Trialogue Business in Society Conference on 10 and 11 May 2022. Until then, stay safe and enjoy the festive season.

With warm wishes from the Trialogue team.

TRIALOGUE BUSINESS IN SOCIETY HANDBOOK 2021



On 25 November we launched the 24th edition of the *Trialogue Business in Society Handbook*. The Handbook examines how the private sector can help to rebuild in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic and other crises. It includes Trialogue's bespoke research on corporate social investment (CSI) in South Africa, case studies, insightful articles on responsible business, and viewpoints from a range of industry leaders.

Watch the launch [here](#). Visit our publication page to [download a copy](#).

CLIMATE CHANGE AND BUSINESS SERIES

This year's global climate conference, COP26, and the 2021 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change assessment report that signalled a 'code red' for humanity placed increasing pressure on businesses to respond to climate change. That is why Trialogue, in partnership with the Institute of Directors in South Africa (IoDSA) and the Sustainability Institute, launched a research and webinar series in October 2021, where we engaged with non-executive and executive directors, as well as other business leaders.



We conducted two surveys of directors, which highlighted the lack of awareness of climate change developments and held two webinars, providing expert knowledge on the topic and sharing leading examples from the business sector. Based on these engagements, the Sustainability Institute will be drafting a paper in early 2022, highlighting the lessons learnt and sharing practical steps on the way forward for businesses in South Africa.

HOW SOUTH AFRICAN BUSINESSES ARE WORKING TO UNDERSTAND AND ADDRESS CLIMATE IMPACT

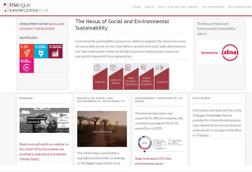
The first webinar, held on 26 October, explored key topics around the science of climate change, director-level awareness relating to the topic, and business's view on the latest developments regarding new codes, standards and frameworks. Watch the webinar [here](#).

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM COP26 AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SOUTH AFRICAN BUSINESSES

The second webinar, held on 2 December, explored key topics around awareness of COP26 outcomes and related climate change issues among South African directors. Watch the webinar [here](#).

TRIALOGUE KNOWLEDGE HUB: THE NEXUS OF SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There is no doubt that society and the environment are interconnected. Humans depend upon environmental resources and adapt and transform the environment they inhabit. As the environment changes, the impacts on people are clear and increasingly profound, particularly on vulnerable communities. Most companies have environmental and social programmes, but seldom consider the nexus between the two. What impact on communities do the environmental and other practices of companies have? And how do social programmes integrate environmental considerations?



Absa has sponsored the topic 'The Nexus of Social and Environmental Sustainability' on the Trialogue Knowledge Hub. Read more [here](#).

WEBINAR SUMMARY: HOW BIG BUSINESS CAN SUPPORT SMALL BUSINESS THROUGH TRYING TIMES



On 30 September, in partnership with the Eskom Development Foundation, Trialogue hosted a webinar that explored how big business can help to support small business. The webinar panellists were Cecil Ramonotsi (CEO of the Eskom Development Foundation), Nomawethu Mampho Sothongaye (Founder and Managing Director of Golden Rewards 1981) and Kevin Stroud (Supply Chain Manager at Sibanye-Stillwater). Watch the webinar [here](#).

HANDBOOK INSIGHTS: CASE STUDIES



EMPOWERING YOUTH WITH THE SKILLS THEY NEED TO THRIVE IN A BOLD NEW DIGITAL WORLD

The MTN SA Foundation's entrepreneurship programme aims to foster an entrepreneurial mindset through training, mentorship, and small business support. In 2020, the Foundation commissioned an independent evaluation of its entrepreneurship programme, with the aim of reviewing how relevant, appropriate and effective the programme has been. Read more in MTN's case study [here](#).

TELKOM HELPS LEARNERS AND TEACHERS DEVELOP DIGITAL SKILLS

South Africa is reviewing its school curriculum to include subjects that will equip learners with digital skills. Telkom's digital skills programme is an example of how these much in-demand skills can be taught quickly, exposing learners and teachers to the world of technology and equipping them with the skills they need in today's world and workplace. Read more about what the programme has achieved thus far in Telkom's case study. Read more [here](#).



PARTNER WITH TRIALOGUE ON YOUR COMPANY'S THOUGHT LEADERSHIP JOURNEY IN 2022

Corporate clients interested in profiling their responsible business initiatives, positioning their brands as thought leaders and, importantly, contributing to knowledge-sharing that aims to enhance developmental outcomes and sustainability, are invited to partner with Trialogue on a holistic thought leadership strategy in 2022.



Our wrap-around offering provides corporate clients with the opportunity to profile their work and share their insight with peers in the development sector, reinforcing their messaging and commitment to development in print (in the Trialogue Business in Society Handbook), online (on Trialogue's Knowledge Hub, website, and social media platforms), and interactively (through Trialogue's Business in Society Conference and monthly webinars). These integrated knowledge-sharing platforms collate a wealth of information that is delivered to a broad audience.

Get in touch with Xolile Zondi (xolile@trialogue.co.za) for more information.

SAVE THE DATE: TRIALOGUE BUSINESS IN SOCIETY CONFERENCE ON 10 AND 11 MAY 2022



THE IPASA 2021 ANNUAL REVIEW OF SOUTH AFRICAN PHILANTHROPY



The IPASA 2021 Annual Review of South African Philanthropy provides valuable information on the nature, scope, achievements and challenges of some of the many hundreds of philanthropic organisations active in South Africa. The case studies in the IPASA Annual Review of South African Philanthropy provide key insights into the nature and scope of philanthropic foundations that are active in fields ranging from education to climate change, food security, gender-based violence, health, job creation and social justice. The hope is that the stories and perspectives in the 2021 edition of the Annual Review may inspire others across the country to consider philanthropic giving or to improve their current funding practice. Download a copy [here](#).

Wishing you a safe and restful festive season!

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