



INPUTS BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF PRODUCTIVITY SA, MR MOTHUNYE MOTHIBA, AT THE OCCASION OF SUSTAINING COMPETITIVE AND RESPONSIBLE ENTERPRISES (SCORE) PROGRAMME KNOWLEDGE SHARING WEBINAR

TOPIC: The future role of the SCORE programme, in South Africa, boosting the productivity of firms and workplace cooperation.

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Programme Director allow me at the outset to state that, South Africa's overall productivity growth, which is a key driver of long-term competitiveness and economic performance is low. This challenge is compounded by the Changing Nature and Future of Work, which is influenced by rapid globalisation and technological advancements, and currently the COVID-19 pandemic. **These have resulted in the most rapid transformation of the workplace (including Business Models) and are also a catalyst to reinvent the Future of Work for managers, who collaboratively with workers, take the opportunity to make things better than they were.** We are being catapulted forward, fast-tracking trends such as automation, digitalization, and innovation.

Counties and companies are at a crossroads: those that capitalise on the technological innovations and post-COVID opportunities will find themselves in a good position to grow their economies, retain their talent and attract people when the situation stabilizes. By contrast, those that fail to change will be left behind, exposing workers to increased risks of financial distress, facing layoffs and closures. **These make a compelling case for scaling up the Workplace Challenge (WPC) Programme and implementation of the ILO's Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) programme in South Africa.**

The correlation between workplace collaboration and productivity as well as enterprise sustainability, as well as higher yield has been discussed at length. One can attest that the SCORE programme draws great parallels with Productivity SA's Workplace Challenge (WPC) Programme. Through the WPC and the SCORE Programmes we stand a good chance of success in the implementation of the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, particularly the two priority areas linked to Productivity SA mandate of employment growth and productivity, namely: **(1) Industrialisation and growing the productive economy**, which include (i) Strategic localisation to repurpose SA's manufacturing sector, (ii) Improving the efficiencies of local producers; (iii) Supporting local manufacturing as well as firms and households in distress; and (iv) Strengthen SMMEs and cooperatives on the back of localisation and support for badly affected labour intensive industries; and **(2) Macro-economic interventions and enablers for economic growth**, which include (i) End wastage including enhanced productivity; and (ii) Review and integrate government support for formal and informal SMMEs, start-ups and cooperatives.

The Workplace Challenge Programme (as is the case with SCORE) is a world-class manufacturing, or Best Operating Practice programme aimed at helping manufacturing companies to become more competitive. This is one of our flagship programmes and one of government's measures to improve the productivity of South African companies and by doing this, improve their competitiveness. This initiative represents a combined investment in which government support is combined with company initiative and labour co-operation. The enterprises supported through the programme (as is the case with the SCORE Programme) are capacitated to adopt world-class productivity-enhancement best practices focusing on products, processes and people.

The WPC and SCORE programmes are designed and structured towards supporting South Africa to achieve a productive, high-income economy which is globally competitive, targeted at the priority economic sectors that have a potential for labour absorption. They are crucial building blocks for an implementable and action-oriented economic recovery and revitalisation plan, premised on unlocking our productivity capability and potential for sustained competitiveness and economic growth, targeting SMMEs as a catalyst for the creation of productive and decent employment.

The SCORE programme is driven by a need to improve productivity, quality, competitiveness, and working conditions within the workplace. From the lessons learned, an improvement in productivity leads to economic growth and a thriving economy sees the creation of productive and decent jobs. Companies that implement SCORE are given a shot at increasing their bottom line thereby enabling growth and job creation.

Just to give a snippet of what workplace collaboration can achieve, let me take this platform to highlight that through the Workplace Challenge Programme, in the past financial year of 2019/20, Productivity SA was able to provide competitiveness improvement services to 100 companies with 3 Industrial/Sector Clusters established (Forestry, Footwear & Leather, Metal and Engineering), 6 Kaizen Clusters (Geographical), 22 companies supported in the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and 17 companies supported in the Industrial Parks. Through these interventions we were able to preserve over 6 170 jobs. A national rollout of the SCORE programme stands to see tangible results and job creation like what we managed to achieve through the Workplace Challenge Programme.

Productivity SA, we remain committed to delivering on our legislative mandate. For us to achieve the country's objectives of creating productive and decent jobs, particularly by SMMEs, we have no other alternative but to adopt and scale up implementation of the SCORE Programme as one of the ways through which we can boost the productivity of firms and workplace cooperation. We adopted the SCORE programme with a full understanding that, SCORE is a globally recognised, tried and tested programme in supporting suppliers of major global brands and products.

As part of scaling up the SCORE programme in South Africa, Productivity SA will in collaboration with the ILO and other local and international strategic partners, embark on the training of more Productivity Practitioners (first as trainers and secondly as agents) to roll out the programme in other sectors, particularly in the productive sectors of the economy. **We are also considering including the companies participating in the SCORE in the Productivity Awards, as part of recognising them as well as promoting a productivity culture and mindset in the country.**