



*"Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time."*

**~Thomas Edison**

## Dear Marang Readers,

According to the Caring Cities Initiative, the primary role of cities extends beyond service delivery—it encompasses effective planning and policy development.

This involves not only the operational functions of city administration but also the strategic responsibilities of city governments.

As such, the City of Johannesburg embraces a multidimensional view of 'care.'

A caring city prioritizes improving residents' quality of life, fostering economic inclusivity, promoting shared humanity, and enhancing civic engagement.

The City's newly elected Executive Mayor, Cllr. Sello Dada Morero, is committed to driving a progressive vision for Johannesburg, one of Africa's most significant metropolitan areas, during this dynamic period of transformation and growth.

Despite the challenges posed by inequality, which strains socio-economic

structures, deepens poverty, and hinders inclusive development, Johannesburg remains resolute in its mission.

The City is taking bold steps to transform itself into a beacon of sustainability, inclusivity, and innovation.

We hope you enjoy this edition as it highlights Johannesburg's commitment to being a 'Caring City' - one dedicated to building a more resilient, inclusive, and prosperous future for all.

**Warm regards,**

*Hlompho Mphanje*

*Editor-in-Chief, City of Johannesburg  
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**Section 1: Profile**

*City of Johannesburg Executive Mayor, Cllr. Sello Enoch Dada Morero*

**J**ohannesburg led a comprehensive engagement back in 2013 with Metropolis where the definition of a ‘caring’ city was developed. It was then unanimously agreed that caring cities refers to governments that put residents at the cornerstone of their policies to ensure cohesion and inclusivity.

The city views ‘care’ as multidimensional- i.e, when a city cares, the quality of life of residents should improve, there will be economic inclusivity, sharing & humanity will be exuded and civic affairs be will be better.

These are all the elements that the current Executive Mayor of Johannesburg-Mr Sello Dada Morero- strives for. The Johannesburg that ‘empowers and creates opportunities for all its residents’.

Mr. Morero was appointed as the Executive Mayor of the City of Johannesburg in August 2024, making this the city’s 3rd Government of Local Unity (GLU). His appointment came at crucial time following the Nation’s first formed coalition.

With an unwavering commitment to service delivery, socio-economic empowerment, and strategic governance, Mayor Morero is sure to drive a progressive vision for Johannesburg-one of Africa’s most significant metropolitan areas- through a dynamic period of transformation and growth.

**Professional Background**

Mayor Morero’s career is filled with extensive experience in political leadership, governance, as well as community engagement. Prior to assuming his recent role, he served a brief term as Mayor from 30th of September 2022 to 25th of October 2022.

Morero is also the Regional Chairperson of the African National Congress (ANC) in Johannesburg, a role he assumed in June 2022, where he continues to be instrumental in shaping policies aimed at improving the quality of life for residents in Johannesburg. A seasoned political figure, Morero is a former leader of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS).

He served two terms as the Regional Secretary of the ANC in Johannesburg, making him the longest-serving individual in this role. After being sworn in as a councillor in July 2022, Morero returned to the mayoral office with a focus on building a financially resilient City of Johannesburg.

As a Member of the Mayoral Committee for Finance, Morero’s ambitious goals included achieving a 90% revenue collection rate for rates and services.

He is also committed to eliminating load-shedding in Johannesburg within 24 months through public-private partnerships,

while promoting energy efficiency among residents.

In addition, Morero is deeply invested in addressing the City’s apartheid-era spatial inequalities, which force many residents to live on the periphery and endure long commutes. He advocates for expanding the City’s spatial economy and creating a business-friendly environment for seamless development.

**Personal Background**

Born and raised in Orlando West Extension, a historically significant area near the homes of Nelson Mandela and Andrew Mlangeni, Morero is a family man, married to Kgomotso, and he is a father of five children. They reside in Roodekrans, Roodepoort.

Morero’s political activism began in high school when he opposed the occupation of Soweto schools by members of the South African Defence Force in the late 1980s. He later held leadership roles within COSAS and the ANC, solidifying his reputation as a dedicated political figure.

**Early Career**

Academically, Morero holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Public Management from Wits Business School and a Master’s degree from Regenesys Business School. He is currently pursuing a master’s in policy development from the University of London.

Morero’s career at the City of Johannesburg commenced in 2004, when he joined the City of Johannesburg, working in the office of the then MMC for Finance, Parks Tau.

He later became the Director of Customer Communications and Marketing in 2008, where he oversaw media relations, customer walk-in centres, and marketing for the City’s revenue department.

Indeed, Mayor Morero is deeply committed to the principles of social justice and improving the lives of ordinary citizens. His leadership philosophy is guided by the values of community empowerment, inclusivity, and sustainability.

He is driven by a vision to see Johannesburg become a city that offers equitable opportunities, world-class infrastructure, and a safe, sustainable environment for all its residents.

His work continues to inspire a collective effort toward building a prosperous Johannesburg that reflects the aspirations of all its people.



**Section 2: Engagement Snapshots**

In line with the City of Johannesburg’s vision as a caring city, this section of the newsletter highlights engagements, initiatives and developments undertaken by the city to enhance sustainability that will in the end improve the well-being of all residents.

Highlights include Mayor Morero being elected as President of FMDV, the City’s participation at the UCLG World Council, the Dakar Solution9 workshop and the recently signed MoU with AFD.

These efforts not only reflect Johannesburg’s commitment to sustainability but also showcase its resilience in building a city that meets the essential needs of its people and promotes financial security. building a city that caters to meet the essential needs of its people and create financial security.

**Executive Mayor Elected as President of FMDV**

In October 2024, the Mayor Morero was elected as the President of Fonds Mondial Pour le Développement des Villes (FMDV) Global Fund for Cities Development). FMDV is a global network that dedicated to issues of local finance and develops solutions to support the entire value chain of urban development financing.

The City has been a member of FMDV since 2013 and the Mayor being recently elected as President solidifies his efforts in promoting innovative financing solutions for urban development and local economies.

This includes financial tools and mechanisms, such as the development of Johannesburg’s green bond and pooled financing model. These measures continue to strengthen the city’s position in sustainable urban finance, helping to establish Johannesburg as a global leader in this field.

**The UCLG World Council**

The Executive Mayor, along with the Group Head (GSPCR-Mr Zayd Ebrahim) and the Director International Relations (Mr. Jan Erasmus) participated in the UCLG World Council Meeting that took place from 8-10 October 2024 in The Hague, Netherlands.

UCLG- United Cities and Local Governments- is a global network committed to representing, defending, and amplifying the voices of local and regional governments to ensure that the ideals of the SDGs become a lived reality.

COJ holds key positions in the decision-making structures of UCLG

and as a means of becoming more active and having an explicit presence in UCLG, the city saw it befitting to attend the World Council. The meeting was also used to lobby for hosting the U20 in Johannesburg in 2025.

As there are many MOUs between the Netherlands and SA, it remains important for Johannesburg to identify areas to benefit from the relationship between the two countries.

For example, there are opportunities for young people to study logistics in the Netherland. Exploring such initiatives can be beneficial for the city and its residents.



*The UCLG World Council in Netherlands, Executive Mayor Morero meeting SA Ambassador to the Netherlands , and with the COJ delegation & Mayor of Hague- Mr. Jan van Zaanen.*

## Solutions Lab 9: Developing Care Systems for Equitable and Prosperous Cities

Solutions Labs- a new approach to policy exchange, that brings cities together around a common metropolitan challenge- by Metropolis. The City of Johannesburg currently participates in some solutions labs either as active members or members to observe.

Due to Johannesburg's important legacy in the work of 'caring cities', Metropolis invited COJ to participate in the Solutions Lab 9: Developing Care Systems for Equitable & Prosperous Cities workshop, which was held in Dakar from 15-16 October 2024. The MMC of Finance (Ms. Margeret Arnolds) and Specialist IR (Ms. Hlompho Mphanje) attended the workshop.

This solution lab focuses on supporting care givers and targe participants across gender, social policies, and employment experts. To support cities with their programs that support care givers, Metropolis founded a fund provides technical and financial resources to cities. The City is encouraged to apply for this funding.

marginalised populations to basic services, accelerate spatial transformation and respond to the climate transition.

Thus far, the City has benefited a total of R6.4 billion funding since 2004, which has contributed to various projects and programmes such as the implementation of the Gcin'amazi project (aimed at improving Soweto's water supply network), operational research project on "Corridors of Freedom", support to the City for the development of the Inner City Investment Masterplan and an Economic Roadmap, to name a few. Indeed, this marks continued progress toward creating a more equitable, climate-resilient, and sustainable Johannesburg.



Mayor Morero, the Regional Director For Southern Africa and Country Director for South Africa at AFD (Audrey Rojkoff) with some COJ and AFD delegates.

The Solutions Lab 9: Developing Care Systems for Equitable & Prosperous Cities workshop in Dakar.

## The City of Johannesburg and AFD Forge Partnership with New a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

On the 24th October 2024, the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the City of Johannesburg signed an MoU, signifying a step to renewing their partnership. The agreement outlines how the partnership will cooperate in order to continue accelerating the implementation of the City's strategies to improve access for

### Section 3: International Relations Quick Facts

The following fact files highlight the city's efforts to foster inclusivity, compassion, and sustainable development for all its residents through thoughtful international engagements and global partnerships.

#### Fact:1

The City of Johannesburg adopted its first International Relations (IR) Policy in 2001 and its first IR Strategy was approved in 2012. This aims to ensure that IR activities benefit the city and its citizens while promoting Johannesburg's leadership role regionally and globally. The last IR Strategy Review (for 2021 – 2026 period) was approved in October 2023.

#### Fact:2

At a strategic level, international relations activities involve the City's activities in global networks and city-to-city relations. As such, activities are reflected and guided by the international relations strategy.

#### Fact:3

The City participates in international dialogues centred on different topics including human rights, social justice, and dignity for all. These forums provide a platform to share experiences and strategies for creating an equitable society, emphasizing its dedication to being a caring city.

#### Fact:4

Johannesburg is an active member of the Inclusive Cities Network. This global partnership promotes inclusive urban development, ensuring that no one is left behind. Through this collaboration, the city has advanced initiatives supporting marginalized groups, including refugees, migrants, and persons with disabilities.

#### Fact:5

CoJ's partnerships with international development organizations has led to several women and youth empowerment programs, offering skills training, mentorship, and entrepreneurship opportunities. This indeed reflects the city's dedication to creating an inclusive and supportive environment for all.

#### Fact:6

The City continues to offer communities the opportunity to make critical IDP (Integrated Development Plan) inputs with direct engagement with city's leadership. In essence, meaningful citizen participation and empowerment is promoted by putting customers and citizens first and driving behavioural change through cross-cutting approaches.

#### Fact:7

To date the City of Johannesburg has relationships with different cities namely: Addis Ababa, Birmingham, New York, Ramallah, Windhoek, Shanghai, Copenhagen, Rio de Janeiro, and Montreal. Additionally, the city is a member of seven international associations (UCLG, FMDV, Metropolis, ICLEI, C40, U20 and UCLGA).

#### Fact:8

The City of Johannesburg's first coalition government was formed after the 2016 local government elections as no single political party won an outright majority.

#### Fact:9

The City of Johannesburg holds key positions in the decision-making of various network structures. For example, Board member of the Metropolis Section of the World Council, Metropolis Board member and President of FMDV.

#### Fact:10

The city actively participates in the African Union's Agenda 2063, which aims to promote sustainable development across the continent.



Section 4: The City of Johannesburg gears up to co-host U20 in 2025

As South Africa (SA) prepares to host the prestigious G20 Summit in 2025, the City of Johannesburg is proud to announce its role as co-host of the U20 Summit. The Global Twenty (G20), which was established in 1999, is an international forum for governments and central banks from 19 countries and the European Union (EU).

It brings together major and emerging economies to discuss and address global financial issues like climate change, economic stability, sustainable development, and trade.

On the other hand, the Urban 20 (U20) is an initiative facilitated by C40 Cities. It brings together major cities from G20 countries to raise the profile of urban issues and enhance the role of cities in the G20 agenda, to develop collective messages and solutions for global issues such as climate action, the future of work, and social integration.

The G20 has a rotating presidency, meaning that any member state can be president of the forum. In 2025, South Africa will be the president of the G20 and host the summit in late November.

This remains remarkable as SA will be the first country on the African continent to host the G20 summit.

With SA's presidency to take place on the 1st December 2024, President of the State Mr Ramaphosa commended Brazil "for elevating the participation of social and civil society groups in the work of the G20 by convening the first ever G20 Social Summit" and stated that South Africa will "continue with this innovative platform for engagement during our Presidency" in his closing remarks at the recently held G20 Closing and Handover Ceremony of the G20 Leaders' Summit, Rio De Janeiro, Brazil.

The City of Johannesburg's (CoJ) Executive Mayor, Mr Morero who has taken up the role as co-chair of the U20, concurs that the role is set to offer a unique platform to amplify the voice of city, while addressing the pressing challenges faced.

He explained at the U20 Mayor's Summit handover ceremony in November 2024 that "the U20 is not just a forum for discussion; it is a call to action.

Together, we can create a framework that empowers our cities to thrive in the face of

challenges and seize the opportunities of tomorrow."

Johannesburg's participation underscores its commitment to shaping the international agenda and highlighting the critical role cities play in driving global change.

With U20 running parallel with the G20 process, CoJ applied to host the U20 in 2025, and it was indeed confirmed that it will be co-hosting and co-chairing with the City of Tshwane.

The hosting of the U20 will elevate both cities' international profile and provide a unique opportunity to showcase advancements in local governance, urban management, and sustainable development.

It has been agreed that Johannesburg's world-class infrastructure, robust hospitality industry, and rich cultural and economic potential make it an excellent venue for the U20 meetings.

<sup>1</sup> Member states are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Türkiye, the UK and the US, and the EU and African Union (AU). The AU was made a permanent member of G20 in September 2023, a move that has given the continent an important voice on key global issues.

The South African Cities Network, which greatly supported the U20 being held in Johannesburg stated that potential benefits of hosting the U20 include:

- **Promotion of Local Governanc and Urban Management:** The event will highlight both city's achievements in these areas, fostering greater collaboration and knowledge exchange among participating cities.
- **Economic and Cultural Showcase:** Hosting the U20 will provide a platform to promote both city's cultural and economic assets, attracting tourism and investment.
- **Sustainable Partnerships:** The event will facilitate the establishment of sustainable partnerships with local governments and the private sector, enhancing both city's role in global urban development.

Johannesburg - the economic hub of South Africa, together with Tshwane-the Capital city of South Africa look forward to hosting a successful summit, as cities will unite to align global climate goals with local action.

Indeed, this critical gathering of urban leaders from G20 cities will provide a platform to address pressing global challenges from a city-level perspective, fostering innovative solutions for sustainable urban development, economic resilience, and inclusive growth.



At the U20 2024 U20 Mayors Summit, which took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (November 2024).