



MEDIA STATEMENT

SABC LAUNCHES CITIZEN-CENTRED PROGRAMME 'DEMOCRACY GAUGE'

Johannesburg - Friday, 1 March 2019 – The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) is pleased to announce the launch of a multiplatform production called *Democracy Gauge*. The project, which commemorates 25 years of South Africa's democracy, starts on Monday, 4 March 2019 and will run until the end of the year.

Democracy Gauge is about the electorate, their lived experiences, and their views on the country's successes, failures and challenges. For the whole year, about 210 South Africans will be profiled across the length and breadth of the country. They will share their lives and experiences of 25 years of democracy. *Democracy Gauge* places the power with the citizen and supports the notion that while elections are the centerpiece of democracy, the decision on who governs lies with the electorate. It provides an unscripted and unrestrained opportunity to the electorate to give their personal accounts without the involvement of politicians making their promises or analysts predicting outcomes on their behalf.

Democracy Gauge will be two-fold. Firstly, it will feature radio and television inserts of up to three minutes in length, which are short personal narrations of citizens. Profiles of the interviewees as well as the video and audio clips will also be available on an online map on sabcnews.com. This will be the first election feature to be rolled out on the SABC News digital platforms, to become part of a comprehensive election 2019 online offering, in the run-up to the elections.

In addition to the three minute inserts, audiences can also look forward to a 30-minute current affairs programme of the same title, which will be presented by seasoned news anchor, Bongani Bingwa. The current affairs programme also starting on 4 March 2019 will be broadcast on SABC 3 and SABC News Channel 404 on DStv weekdays at 17h30.

Commenting about the project, the Group Executive of SABC News and Current Affairs, Ms Phathiswa Magopeni, described the project as an open platform for South Africans, who are the focal point of the rich and diverse experiences of the 25-year milestone.

“This project is meant to bring back the custom of oral tradition which is steeped in African culture, but has largely been neglected. The independent and impartial approach applied to this storytelling device puts the citizens at the front and center of the story of South Africa’s democracy, allowing them to tell their stories, share their experiences in their own voices, languages and locations, in a way that reflects the plurality and inclusivity that are central to SABC News’ mandate.” said Ms Magopeni.

Democracy Gauge is one of several projects that the SABC News division is rolling out ahead of the 2019 national elections.

The SABC’s election website, accessible from sabcnews.com, will also be launched on 4 March 2019. It will feature election news, online access to the *Democracy Gauge* profiles and other election programmes, and the 2014 and 2016 election results.

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