

Over R5m allocated to small and informal businesses affected by civil unrest

The Seriti Institute has so far allocated over R5m to small and informal businesses that were negatively affected by the July 2021 unrest that took place in the Gauteng Province.



Source: iStock

This is a portion of a R10m grant allocation provided by the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) to rescue small and informal business from job losses, foreclosure, income reductions, and to re-establish them and help them build back better.

The unrest negatively affected the informal business sector, and at the time it was anticipated that small and medium-sized businesses, which contribute to more than 18% of employment in this country, would never re-open again, with predictions regarding those remaining in business having a difficult time keeping their doors open.

"The lootings broke our hearts. We experienced huge loss, but the worst was human capital because we had to let go of more than 12 people while we were trying to recover and bring the station back to operation," says Sam Mfaladi, Mamelodi Community Radio Station director. "We had already been having a hard time with the Covid-19 lockdown regulations, so the lootings just added salt to the wound. The station was badly ransacked and we lost a lot of expensive equipment."

Mamelodi Community Radio Station (Mams Radio) in Northeast Pretoria, Gauteng is one of the beneficiaries of this programme. Through the grant allocation of over R200,000, Mams Radio will be able to remain operational and be more viable.

Restaurants, pharmacies and furniture stores can now bounce back

In the past couple of months, more than 49 small businesses such as restaurants, pharmacies and furniture stores, among others, have received funding as a way of ensuring that they remain in business and build back better.



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"We are excited to be allocating close to R2m in the next week to help businesses get back on their feet. This is a small portion of the grant, which is why we would like to encourage all small businesses that were impacted by the lootings, to apply for the grant. Small businesses have been under immense pressure since the advent of Covid-19 and the unrest has certainly not helped.

"With this grant, small businesses have an opportunity to re-open, be more sustainable and to contribute to South Africa's economy again," notes Juanita Pardesi, CEO at Seriti Institute.

"Seriti Institute's intervention is remarkable for businesses that were affected by the lootings. This grant affords us an opportunity to create and maintain jobs, and to buy essential production and broadcast equipment, which means that our community will benefit from receiving valuable and informative content, with the added benefit of having drugs, crime, poverty, abuse and HIV/Aids curbed, so Seriti's contribution in this regard, is immeasurable", said Mfaladi.

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