

Finding their feet

South Africa's Government of National Unity First Anniversary Report

September 2025

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Formation of GNU

One year after its formation, South Africa's Government of National Unity stands at a crossroads. The coalition promised stability, unity, and effective governance. However, the first year has been marked by budget crises, service delivery challenges, and mounting pressures that test the coalition's resilience.



Methodology

Where do the promises come from?

121 Promises are extracted from the pledges made by the President during the maiden speech of the GNU to Parliament on the 18th of July 2024 and the Medium-Term Development Plan (2024 - 2029).

These promises are grouped into five key sectors: **Economy, Governance, Corruption, Climate Change, and Social Services.**



Methodology

Where do the actions come from?

Actions are tracked using official publications from:

- Government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (e.g. Ministry of Finance, Public Sector Reforms)
- Trusted media outlets (e.g. Daily Maverick, Mail and Guardian)

Only verifiable and publicly documented actions are recorded. If an action isn't published, it's excluded from the tracker.

All reported actions are triangulated and fact-checked across multiple sources before being recorded on the South Africa Citizens Watch platform.

Government Sources

- The Presidency
- Parliamentary Monitoring Group
- South African Government
- South African Parliament Website
- Department of Home Affairs
- Department of Sports, Arts and Culture
- Government Statements

Independent News/Media Houses

- Daily Maverick
- IOL
- Mail and Guardian
- News 24
- The Citizen

Methodology

Where does the score come from?

Each promise is assessed using a standardised scoring framework:

- Implemented: Fully delivered (Score = 14)
- In Progress: Partial fulfilment (Score = 1–13 based on depth and quality of action)
- Broken / Not Commenced: No action or opposite action taken (Score = 0)

Scoring of government actions considers:

- Legal frameworks, budget allocations, institutional capacity, timelines, and cross-sector collaboration.

Sectoral scores are calculated by averaging the scores of all promises within each sector. The overall government score is derived from aggregating these sectoral averages.

ACTION		MAXIMUM SCORE 14 points possible	
New Strategy		Yes = 1	No = 0
Policy Reform (+) Incentive	2x weight	Yes = 2	No = 0
Policy Reform (-) Dis-enabler	2x weight	Yes = 2	No = 0
Does it fit in an existing Legal Framework?		Yes = 1	No = 0
Has a new law been established?		Yes = 1	No = 0
Has budget implications: New resources have been allocated		Yes = 1	No = 0
Fits within an existing ministry		Yes = 1	No = 0
Cross ministry/agency collaboration established		Yes = 1	No = 0
Time-frame-fits within current annual planning cycle	2x weight	Yes = 2	No = 0
Is it a fully implemented policy?	5x weight	Yes = 5	No = 0
Barometer Action Score		TOTAL	

OVERVIEW OF GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

The 2025 Barometer reveals an overall implementation score of 9%. While 0 promises were fully delivered and 26 are in progress, 0 were broken and 94 remain not commenced. As of end July 2025



121 Promises

Extracted from the Opening Speech to Parliament and the MTDP

26 Promises

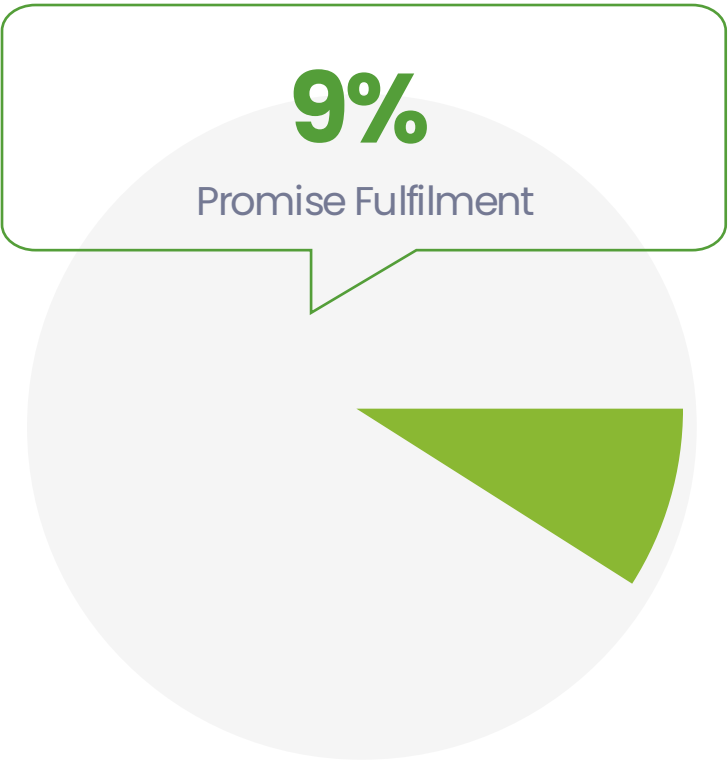
21% of Promises are in progress

0%

0 Promises Implemented

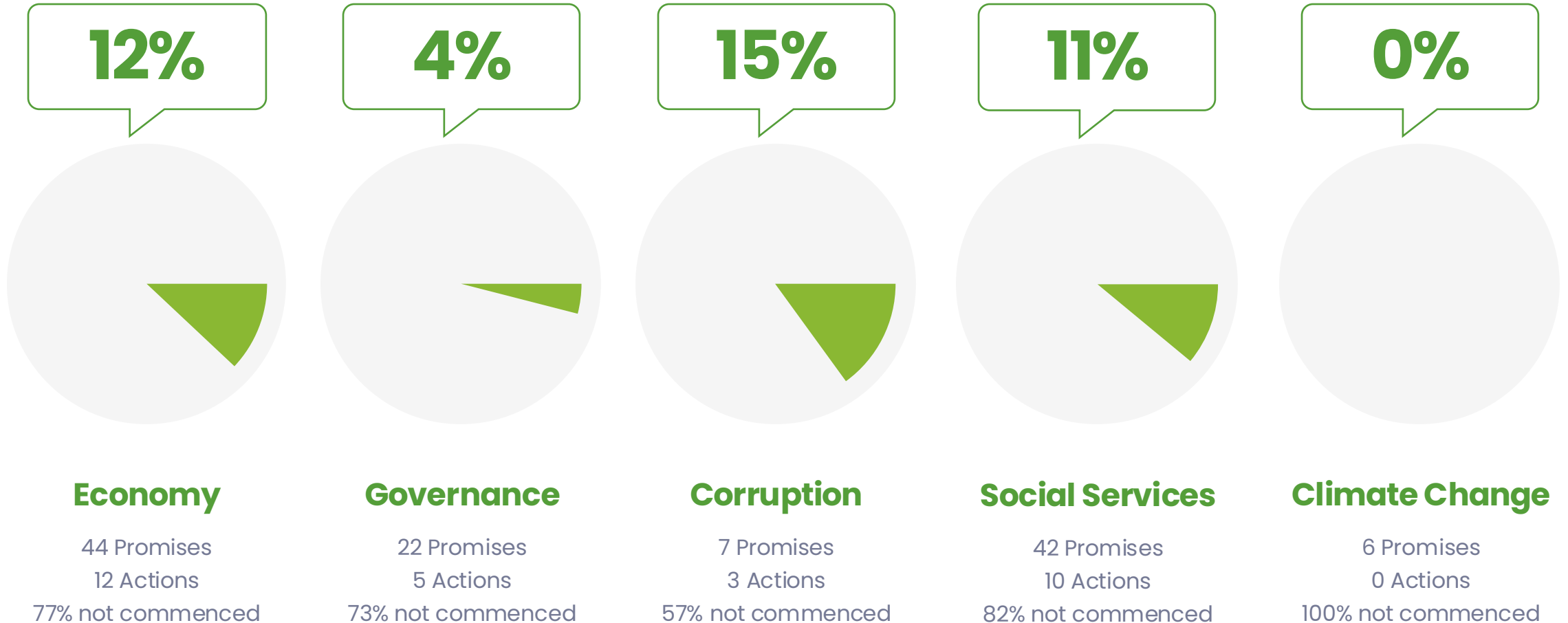
9%

Promise Fulfilment



GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

Sectoral Analysis



12%

Economy

The economic development agenda includes promises to launch provincial One Stop Shops for SMEs and expand energy transmission in high-potential renewable zones. Notably, the Spaza Shop Support Fund (SSSF) has begun disbursing funds to township and rural enterprises, but progress remains slow, with only 1.2% of the allocated budget released.

	# Promises	# Actions	Assessment Score
Industry and Economic Development	16	4	<div><div></div>10%</div>
Job Creation and Employment	6	2	<div><div></div>10%</div>
Trade and Infrastructure Investment	8	4	<div><div></div>19%</div>
Tourism	1	0	<div><div></div>0%</div>
Energy	4	1	<div><div></div>14%</div>
Transport	6	0	<div><div></div>0%</div>
Resource Mobilisation	1	0	<div><div></div>0%</div>
Land Reform	1	1	<div><div></div>57%</div>
Debt Resolution	1	0	<div><div></div>0%</div>



Governance

Progress in the governance sector remains limited, with only 5 of 22 promises showing movement—amounting to 4% overall progress.

- All active efforts are within the “State Capacity Development and Monitoring” subsector.
- No progress yet on commitments related to Women, Youth, & People with Disabilities and International Relations
- Phase II of Operation Vulindlela has been launched - a flagship reform initiative to improve local government performance and accelerate digital transformation.

	# Promises	# Actions	Assessment Score
State Capacity Development and Monitoring	19	5	<div><div></div>12%</div>
Women, Youth and People with Disabilities	1	0	<div><div></div>0%</div>
International Relations and Foreign Affairs	2	0	<div><div></div>0%</div>



15%

Corruption

Progress in South Africa's anti-corruption efforts remains limited and uneven.

- Only three of the seven sector promises are currently in progress, reflecting a 43% implementation rate.
- No action has been taken on core commitments:
 - Establishing independent investigative agencies
 - Reforming governance structures within state-owned enterprises
- These gaps pose a significant risk to transparency and accountability across public institutions.
- The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure has frozen and recovered stolen public funds—an important but isolated success.

Without systemic reforms and full implementation of promised measures, efforts to combat corruption will remain insufficient to rebuild public trust and institutional accountability.





0%

Climate Change

All six climate change promises remain unaddressed, indicating a disconnect from the urgency of environmental concerns.

Energy Transition

- No visible progress on on renewable energy energy investments or or just transition framework implementation

Climate Fund

- Climate Change Response Fund establishment has not commenced

Green Investment

- Promised investments in solar, wind, and green hydrogen sectors remain stalled



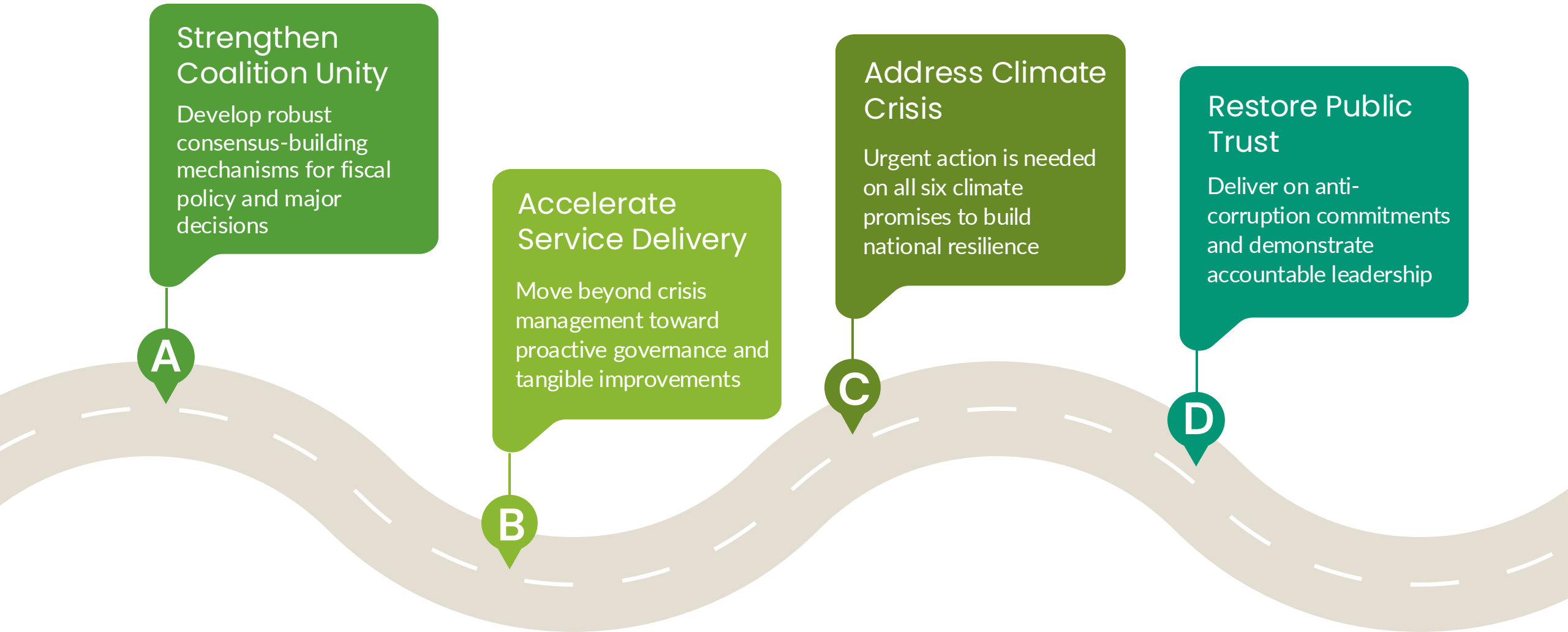
Social Services

Only 8 of 42 promises in the Social Services sector are in progress, with most activity concentrated in education. Key initiatives include a R15.3 billion infrastructure grant to eliminate pit toilets and expand classrooms, and R10 billion allocated to feed over nine million learners daily. The signing of the Basic Education Laws Amendment Act marks a major policy shift—making Grade R compulsory, banning corporal punishment, and mandating safe, inclusive learning environments.

	# Promises	# Actions	Assessment Score
Social Protection	6	1	<div><div></div><div>7%</div></div>
Women, Youth and People with Disabilities	11	3	<div><div></div><div>15%</div></div>
Food Security	3	0	<div><div></div><div>0%</div></div>
Health	5	2	<div><div></div><div>27%</div></div>
Education	7	2	<div><div></div><div>24%</div></div>
Housing and Development	6	0	<div><div></div><div>0%</div></div>
Water and Sanitation	3	2	<div><div></div><div>18%</div></div>
Social Services	1	0	<div><div></div><div>0%</div></div>

The path forward

After one year, the GNU faces a critical choice: transform governance or risk becoming another failed experiment in South African democracy. The promise of unity and effective governance must give way to decisive action that serves all South Africans.



Read the full report

The full report with all the findings is found on the SIVIO Institute website (www.sivioinstitute.org/insights)

DOI: 10.59186/SI.CC9EUZV5

