**REPORT ON KNOWLEDGE SHARING SESSION**

**A REVIEW OF SOUTH AFRICA’S INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES: SUCCESSES, CHALLENGES & KEY LESSONS**

**Summary**

This report presents the proceedings of a knowledge sharing session themed *“A review of South Africa’s infrastructure development programmes: successes, challenges, and lessons”*, held on 30 November 2020. The session was convened to share insights on the country’s infrastructure investment programmes, drawing comparisons with global examples, and lessons for the future.

Infrastructure is integral to the socio-economic and environmental life of nations, affecting quality of transportation, buildings, energy production, water supplies, and communications. Globally, infrastructure development has been used to stimulate struggling economies. South Africa has also followed this practice to catalyze its economy. All South Africa’s three economic policies – the RDP, GEAR, and the NDP – have prioritized infrastructure development. Even under current tough economic times, the country is leveraging infrastructure to stimulate the economy. The session enjoyed several highlights summarised below.

The session learnt that several countries have leveraged infrastructure investment and development to catalyse their national economies. Global lessons were drawn from Australia, Singapore, China and the USA. It was gathered that Australia has emerged as a leader in private infrastructure investment and, for 30 years, has been a global innovation leader in infrastructure planning, financing and delivery. Singapore also provided an insightful example of fruitful leveraging of infrastructure development, transforming from a squalor city into a global trade centre with world class infrastructure in less than 60 years.

The session acknowledged that South Africa’s infrastructure development programmes have positively impacted the economy. The main benefits realized include job creation, GDP growth, and improving the well-being of previously marginalized groups. Between 1998 and 2019, government spent R3.2 trillion on infrastructure.

Despite the huge investments and benefits, several challenges and gaps persist. Such challenges were highlighted to include institutional capacity constraints, skills shortage, and inadequate funding exacerbated by unfavorable economic landscape and related ratings downgrades. Infrastructure investment has not reached the 30% of GDP target. Notably, ratings downgrades were highlighted as directly impacting TCTA work and sustainability.