
GENERAL NOTICE

NOTICE 291 OF 2015



LANGUAGE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The DBSA is committed to promoting multilingualism and fair language use that is based on tolerance and respect for other cultures.

The policy provides guidelines for the use of languages at the DBSA and applies to all DBSA employees and may affect DBSA stakeholders.

It is guided by the values and principles the DBSA promotes which are a commitment to the promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity, accessible communication or information, and multilingualism. It is intended to give effect to principles enshrined in sections 6 and 9 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996); the Pan South African Language Board Act (Act 59 of 1995); the National Language Policy Framework (2003) and the Use of Official Languages Act ("UOOLA").

UOOLA was promulgated to provide for the regulation and monitoring of the use of official languages by National government for government purposes, as well as to require the adoption of a language policy by a national department, national public entity and national private enterprise.

The Minister of Arts and Culture extended the period of adoption of a language policy to the 2nd of May 2015, however linked strict conditions to this extension which includes that the language policy be gazetted for public comment by the 31 March 2015.

As such, any commentary on the proposed language policy can be directed to Nonnie Letsholo at NonnieL@dbsa.org; or telephonically on 011 313 3437 or by facsimile 011 206 3437.


Natalie Hayden
Group Compliance Manager

30 March 2015
Date

DEVELOPMENT BANK OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND CONTRIBUTORS

The format and flow of the document has been copied from “A guide to Organisation Policy Formulation” Manual, ISBN 1-919692-68-1 published by the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA).

This policy is initiated, compiled and drafted by the Communications, Marketing and Events Unit together with the Group Compliance Unit.

This policy shall be presented for quality assurance and endorsement to the following committees:

- The DBSA EXCO;
- The Audit and Risk Committee; and
- The DBSA Board.

This policy will be implemented by the Communications, Marketing and Events Unit.

This document shall remain the property of DBSA.

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1. INTRODUCTION

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It is guided by the values and principles the DBSA promotes which are a commitment to the promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity, accessible communication or information, and multilingualism. It is intended to give effect to principles enshrined in sections 6 and 9 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996); the Pan South African Language Board Act (Act 59 of 1995); the National Language Policy Framework (2003) and the Use of Official Languages Act ("UOOLA").

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

This policy is informed by the pronouncement of the South African Constitution which enshrines cultural diversity including the recognition of all indigenous languages of the country. Without this policy as a guiding document on language practice at the DBSA, there is a risk that communication activities in the Bank could violate constitutional clauses.

The DBSA recognises all the eleven official languages of South Africa. However, it may not always be possible, because of costs or human resource expertise, for the Bank to use all of them in business correspondence. Although English is the official working language of the Bank, in the interests of promoting multilingualism, other languages may also be used in some cases.

The circumstances or instances in which those languages can be used, is described further in this policy. The policy also outlines language use guidelines so as to ensure that written or oral

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communication is respectful of diversity and does not offend or discriminate against any staff member or DBSA client.

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to determine the languages of communication and guide staff members on acceptable language use as guided by the principles of respecting diversity, tolerance and mutual respect.

Furthermore, the government of South Africa in conjunction with the department of Arts and Culture has since passed into law legislation called “The Use of Official Languages Act” (“UOOLA”). This Act makes it compulsory for all National Departments, Public Entities and Enterprises to at least use three (3) official languages to effectively communicate with the general public. In terms of this Act, the DBSA, as a national Public Entity is required to comply with the following requirements:

- To develop a Language Policy;
- To use at least three (3) official languages to effectively communicate with the general public; and
- To establish a Language Unit or apply for exemption to the Minister of Arts and Culture etc.

4. THE NATURE OF THE DBSA

The Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) is a state owned entity with the purpose of accelerating sustainable socio-economic development and improving the quality of life of the people of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the rest of the continent by driving financial and non-financial investments in the social and economic infrastructure sectors:

- *Social infrastructure*: Infrastructure aimed at addressing backlogs and expediting the delivery of essential social services to support sustainable living conditions and a better quality of life within communities.

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- *Economic infrastructure*: Infrastructure aimed at addressing capacity constraints and bottlenecks in order to optimise economic growth potential.

The DBSA has prioritised water, energy, transport and ICT as its key focus areas. Other areas of focus include health, education and low-cost housing.

REGIONS WHERE SERVICES ARE PROVIDED

The Government through Act. 13 of 1997 mandated the DBSA to:

- Promote economic development and growth, human resources development and institutional capacity in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region;
- Support sustainable development projects and programmes in the region; and
- Focus on infrastructure and leverage the private sector.

In 2014, Parliament expanded the DBSA mandate into selected African countries outside the SADC area into the rest of the continent.

5. POLICY

ENGLISH IS THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

English is the main working language of the Bank. It should be used in all official Bank documents.

The documents that would be written in English include:

- *Contract documents* such as employment contracts, contracts with suppliers, consultants, service providers, and clients.
- *Partnership documents* such as memoranda of understanding/cooperation; partnership/cooperation agreements.
- *Policies and guidelines* of the Bank.
- *Transaction documents* such as credit approvals.
- *Official notices, advertisements*
- *Reports, proposals, publications, and organisation memorandums.*

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- *Other internal documents and those intended for an external audience.*

6. EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Information and marketing publications will be published in English and from time to time in other languages depending on the target audience.

The Bank's annual report will be published in English as it may be too expensive to avail it in all or some of the other official languages in South Africa, the SADC region and selected African countries outside the SADC area as per the DBSA's extended mandate.

Electronic communication such as information or documents in the external website <http://www.dbsa.org> shall be in English.

7. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

The language for all internal communication in the DBSA shall be English. Information posted on the Intranet shall also be in English.

8. WHEN OTHER LANGUAGES MAY BE USED

Although English is the principal language of business, the DBSA shall endeavour to promote the predominant languages in its provincial jurisdiction of Gauteng, namely IsiZulu, Sesotho, Setswana and Afrikaans. (To minimise the number of languages - it is advisable to use Southern Sotho for the Sotho cluster languages and IsiZulu for the Nguni language cluster. This will then be limited to three languages as the majority of the people understand these languages). The language used could also be determined by the language used in a specific Province the Bank communicates with.

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In community or stakeholder engagements, i.e., project or site visits, in provinces outside Gauteng, the DBSA should also endeavour to source local interpreters.

The four languages may be used in public notices and announcements, promotional/marketing written material or signage as well as in oral communication when the Bank interacts with stakeholders/clients or communities. The Bank must organise translation or interpreting services in such instances.

English will be the official language used in official documents such as government reports, legal documents, in hearings and other official proceedings unless a specific request has been made to produce such documents or conduct such proceedings in other languages. In such a case, the DBSA will endeavour to produce such documents/ conduct such proceedings in that language as requested.

The Bank would require a period of ten (10) working days to consider a formal request that has been made by a member of the public for a specific language not catered for in this policy. A request of this nature must be sent to the DBSA's Communication, Marketing and Events Unit to the following e-mail: nonniel@dbsa.org

In terms of the SADC region, the Bank should prioritise on the predominant official languages used in the region including Portuguese, French and Kiswahili. In addition, marketing or promotional material in the predominant SADC languages, i.e., French, Portuguese, Kiswahili, etc. must also be availed. Again, the Bank will be expected to organise translation services. Any of the SADC official languages may be used, upon request by clients/partners or when necessary, in:

- Contract documents
- Partnership agreements/MoUs
- Marketing material
- Other business related documents.

In delegation visits by large foreign emissaries or overseas partner organisations whose official language is not English, the DBSA should organise interpreters to provide verbal interpretation in proceedings, whenever possible if there are no budget constraints i.e., signing agreements, conferences.

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9. LANGUAGE USAGE IN THE BANK

In terms of written and spoken language in the DBSA, staff members should not utter or write derogatory remarks on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, culture or religion.

All Bank documents, should as much as possible, be written in clear jargon-free language so as to be accessible when shared with non-specialists. All divisions should compile a glossary of terminology predominantly used in their business environment which should be accessible to staff for reference i.e., posted on the Intranet. In the event that acronyms are used, the full meaning should be provided in a list either on the initial pages of the document or at the end.

10. ACCESS TO THE POLICY

This policy will be published in English and will be available in hard copy from the Communication Marketing, and Events unit. An electronic version of the policy can be found by visiting the DBSA's intranet or its external website on <http://www.dbsa.org>

The DBSA will also endeavour to make this policy available in Braille upon request of a Braille version. Such a request must be sent to the DBSA's Communication, Marketing and Events Unit at the following e-mail address: nonniel@dbsa.org

11. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibility for overseeing and implementing this policy will be the Human Capital unit in so far as employees are concerned and the Communication Marketing, and Events Unit in so far as the interaction with the community or stakeholders, government officials and clients.

This will include handling violations of this policy and accordingly implement appropriate punitive measures.

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12. COMPLAINTS REGARDING THE USE OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES BY THE DBSA

Any person who is dissatisfied with a decision of the DBSA regarding its use of official languages may lodge a complaint addressed to the Chief Executive of the DBSA. The Chief Executive (CE) of the DBSA may delegate this responsibility and the person delegated will assume and execute such a responsibility as delegated by the Chief Executive.

A complaint must be delivered to The Development Bank of Southern Africa, 1258 Lever Road Headway Hill, Midrand 1685, South Africa, Gauteng.

A complaint regarding the use of official languages by the DBSA must be sent by registered post remitted to the Chief Executive of the Development Bank of Southern Africa.

The Complaint must:

- Be in writing; and
- Be lodged within three (3) months of the complaint arising and;
- Must state the name, address, and contact information of the person lodging the complaint; and
- Must provide a full and detailed description of the complaint.

The CE must consider the complaint and make a decision, no later than three (3) months after the complaint was lodged and must inform the complainant in writing of the decision.
