

# SAASSAP

South African Association of  
Senior Student Affairs Professionals

# 2024

## STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW

Reflect | Reimagine | Consolidate

11-12 January 2024



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The theme **Reflect | Reimagine | Consolidate** guided the 2024 annual Strategic Plan review session of the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the South African Association of Senior Student Affairs Professionals (SAASSAP). The session was convened from 11 to 12 January 2024 at the Irma Stern Museum of the University of Cape Town (UCT), Rosebank, Cape Town.

Facilitated by **Dr Phumzile Mmope**, the session was attended by the following NEC members:

NEC Member	Position	Abbreviation
Prof Sibusiso Chalufu	President	
Mr Pura Mgolombane	Secretary-General	SG
Dr Irene Mohasoa (Online)	Deputy Secretary-General	DSG
Mr Temba Hlasho	Treasurer-General	TG
Prof Matete Madiba	Research and Development Officer	RDO
Ms Nicole Morris	Media Liaison Officer	MLO
Mr Jerome September	Project Officer	PO
Ms Nothando Hlophe	Support Staff	
Mr Terence Matasva	Support Staff	
Ms Nadia Wilson	Support Staff	

*In spite of having resigned following his promotion to the position of Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC): Operations at the Nelson Mandela University, the Deputy President, Mr Luthando Jack, intended to attend the Strategic Plan session given the value-add from his experience, contribution and position. However, due to the complexities of changing offices, the dates could not align. The NEC wishes Mr Jack all the best in his new position and conveys its appreciation for his intentions, commitment and unequivocal support not only for SAASSAP but for the sub-sector.*

The session theme summarises the threefold focus of the deliberations at the meeting, which was to:

- (1) **reflect** on 2023 portfolio strategic plans and priorities, areas of prioritisation, recommendations and the Implementation Plan, with the aim to assess and provide feedback on progress;
- (2) **reimagine** key priorities for 2024 based on the reflections and feedback, with the aim to compile the 2024 Implementation Plan; and
- (3) **consolidate** identified 2024 key priorities and outline an Implementation Plan with priority areas, action steps, key deliverables, a timeframe and additional resources.

Further guiding the session was an awareness of the imminent conclusion of the NEC's term of office in August/September 2024 and the need for a comprehensive term report, assessing the overall SAASSAP Strategic Plan (2020–2024), to be presented at the elective conference.

Therefore, while the NEC was keen to reflect on the 2023 areas of prioritisation, and to identify priorities to inform the 2024 Implementation Plan, the session also provided an opportunity for them to co-create a collective stance in facilitating a transition and handover to the newly elected NEC at the planned elective conference in August/September 2024.

The SG opened the meeting and proceeded to hand over to the President to welcome the members and Facilitator.

In his introductory remarks, the President used the metaphor of an intensive care unit (ICU) to describe the revival of SAASSAP as an organisation since January 2020. Having previously been run by two individuals, without any assistance, the organisation ended up in 'ICU'. In January 2020, however, a dedicated group of the then newly elected NEC, met in Bloemfontein to take the organisation forward.

When the journey started, SAASSAP's architecture as an organisation was in bad shape. Looking back, however, the President shared his fulfilment at the progress made thus far, yet also cautioned that more work was required to prevent a relapse. He expressed concern that some NEC efforts might not succeed and that SAASSAP, should it end up back in ICU, might not survive.

This concern, the President suggested, pointed to a need to further consider and diligently work on the following:

- SAASSAP's organisational architecture in terms of financial stability.
- An effective operating approach suited to NEC members' dual role of serving in the committee while occupying demanding full-time roles at their respective higher education institutions.
- Learning from other membership-based associations to clarify oversight roles, and exploring the possibility of approaching retired colleagues to help the NEC take the organisation forward and get paid an honorarium in return.
- Introducing further leadership levels to SAASSAP and leveraging their skills set to build support and capacity in the NEC.

The President also noted the overall progress made and some momentous achievements, including the 2023 SAASSAP Awards and Roundtable. In addition, he highlighted the opportunity to draw noteworthy topics and insights from the roundtable and share these with SAASSAP members in appropriate communiqués.

Reimagining the way forward, the President expressed his expectation to focus this year's efforts on building on the work done since January 2020 and handing over SAASSAP to the newly elected NEC with a clear sense of accomplishment.

Following the President's introductory remarks, the SG formally introduced the facilitator, who then provided an opportunity to establish rapport and outline the Strategic Plan review method.

Elucidating the programme, format, roadmap and rules of engagement for the strategic planning session, the facilitator referred to PowerPoint slides, which are attached as **Appendix A** to this report.

The Strategic Plan review method, tailored to the specific brief, theme and expected output of the session, can best be described as a hybrid between *strategic reflection*, *strategic thinking*, *strategic planning* and *operational planning*. It applies best-practice techniques to enable a somewhat structured yet agile, coherent and focused facilitated approach to the strategic conversation.

The facilitator clarified the approaches that informed the overall Strategic Plan review method. A brief summary of each approach follows below:



### 3.1 Preliminary review

The 2023 portfolio strategic plans were used as a basis to create a template for the assessment of the 2023 Implementation Plan by each NEC member. Based on guiding questions, the members reviewed each recommendation/action/activity in their respective **2023 portfolio areas of prioritisation** and the associated **Implementation Plan**. They noted down responses to the guiding questions in order to contribute their own assessment and feedback during the review of the 2023 portfolio strategic plans and priorities at the session on 11 January 2024. Section 4 below provides a summary of the feedback, key insights and considerations from the 2023 portfolio strategic plans review.



### 3.2 Programme

The programme outlined the specific discussion points on the agenda, a copy of which is attached as **Appendix B** to this report. The session theme – Reflections | Reimagine | Consolidation – was well aligned with the focus of the review session discussion. In addition, the programme included a review of SAASSAP's Constitution and a presentation on an election system (both led by support staff) and a team-building activity.



### 3.3 Format

The format for the facilitated strategic conversation involved sharing reflections and feedback, integrating key insights, identifying key priorities for 2024, and outlining the 2024 Implementation Plan.



### 3.4 Roadmap

The facilitation was guided by aspects of an adapted best-practice eight-point roadmap towards establishing a strategy. These are included in the PowerPoint slides attached as **Appendix A** to this report.



### 3.5 Rules of engagement

The three 3 Cs included in the PowerPoint slides in **Appendix A** – clarity, commitment and completion – served as a guiding principle for the engagement. The three Cs emphasised the importance of each member's contribution to ensure effective communication by being clear and candid in their dialogue. Clarity would facilitate commitment and follow-through on the resolutions and actions of the overall session.

With a shared understanding of the Strategic Plan review method, the focus then shifted to 2023 portfolio strategic plans and priorities, areas of prioritisation, recommendations and the Implementation Plan with the aim to provide feedback on progress. The following paragraphs summarise the **feedback from the 2023 portfolio strategic plans review**, as presented by each NEC lead, and **key insights and considerations** from the overall contribution.

The section contains the feedback, key insights and considerations from the 2023 portfolio strategic plans review, listed by priority area and action.

Methodology	Priority Area	Action	Page
1. What did we ACHIEVE? 2. What should we START DOING? 3. What should we STOP DOING? 4. What should we CONTINUE DOING? 5. Any key considerations for 2024 Implementation Plan?	Organisational Architecture	4.1 Membership and membership diversification	7
		4.2 Subdivisions of Departments of Student Affairs	8
		4.3 Financial Sustainability	9
	Strategic Positioning	4.4 Student Affairs Services structural configuration	10
		4.5 Building Student-Centred Universities Conference	11
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	Professional Development	4.7 Postgraduate work	12
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		4.10 Corruption book review and ethics	13
		4.11 Statement in support of <i>Fort Hare</i>	13
		4.12 Policy development and review support, contextualisation	14
	Scholarship	4.13 Guest issue (editorial team)	15

Action	Date	NEC Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain 100% membership</li> <li>2 + 1 Representative from all DSAs/Allied Structures</li> <li>Welcome pack for the Executive of DSA per institution</li> <li>Incentivisation for 5 +1</li> </ul>	March 2023	TG & MLO

### Key insights and considerations

- In 2022, SAASSAP membership consisted of 24 of the 26 universities in the country. In 2023, registrations dropped to 22 when two universities could not finalise their registration because of financial policy shifts that required SAASSAP to provide them with a tax clearance certificate. SAASSAP has been struggling to obtain a tax clearance certificate. Documentation had been submitted to SARS, but at a follow-up meeting, the organisation was informed that some documents were missing. A meeting has subsequently been scheduled for 17 January 2024 to conclude the issuing of a tax clearance certificate. This would enable the two universities that could not register in 2023, to process payment, which would bring the number of member universities back to 24.
- SAASSAP needs to think more creatively about membership and about how the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector could be included. Options are to explore associate membership or consider extending membership to the TVET sector. Ultimately, there are more professionals in this space who would like to participate in SAASSAP.
- Every Members Meeting should be well structured and scheduled in advance. These meetings are where important SAASSAP announcements are made, topical issues are discussed and members talk about their state of affairs. Meetings should add value and be supplemented with WhatsApp communication. While the NEC does a lot, this does not seem to be reaching the Association's members. One should not underestimate how accessible WhatsApp is and how powerful it can be to keep the SAASSAP community going.
- The organisation should consider three-year university affiliation payments, which would allow the budget to be spread across three years, this can assist the TG to have an impactful budget.
- Consideration should be given to how the criteria for membership and membership categories could be clarified.  
A Guiding Document is required, which should be adopted at the next meeting.
- There is a need for a clear Implementation Plan and discussion on representation from DSA/allied structures.
- The idea has been proposed that once the university registers, they should receive a Welcome Pack through the Main Member.
- As an incentivisation tool, the Finance Committee decided to procure SAASSAP-branded mugs to give to institutions. This, however, has not been done. This is only one example of a resolution taken, yet left hanging, as there are no hands to implement. To prevent this from recurring, role clarification and the capacitation of certain offices is needed. The Association may also wish to consider paying an honorarium for administrative support to implement resolutions.

**Key insights and considerations (continued)**

- In terms of meeting attendance, NEC members were reminded about the NEC resolution that those unable to attend should submit a written report to ensure accountability, and that members should re-strategise to ensure availability for meetings. Establish a pattern of sending out meeting dates, agendas and reminders, and maintain contact with offices to make sure that meetings are officially scheduled. Once members have confirmed meeting attendance, the expectation is that they should attend. The importance of meeting attendance ought to be emphasised, and clear resolutions about meetings and membership are required.
- It has become standard practice to speak to office managers when scheduling SAASSAP meetings. What can be done is to reinforce the practice and further report to the NEC of the none responsive Office Managers.
- More regular meetings would also imply shorter meetings. Meetings should be tied down in members' diaries as soon as possible and members should ensure that they protect those meetings from being moved and/or overtaken.
- Meeting quorums should be actively managed. Without a quorum, a meeting cannot proceed, which also means that the action list and progress cannot be tracked culminating to NEC paralysis.
- A proper monitoring system does exist to follow up on the list of actions referred to during meetings, monitoring which actions have been implemented. However, it is rendered useless if the NEC does not meet and/or meetings do not quorate.
- The TG's office is commended for being a steward with probity by giving direction and taking a resolute corporate governance stance in following through good financial principles by ensuring that things are done right.

## 4.2 Organisational architecture: Subdivisions of Departments of Student Affairs (DSA)

Action	Date	NEC Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Database of DSA/Allied Structures (Vhugala)</li> </ul>	June 2023	MLO & DP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The next layer – succession planning</li> </ul>	October 2023	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholder Conversations</li> </ul>		

**Key insights and considerations**

- Together with Terence and the MLO team's strategy, technology has assisted greatly in terms of increasing SAASSAP's visibility and reach. SAASSAP now reaches a more diverse audience and receives more positive feedback and interest.
- A Google search using "SAASSAP" or the full association's name directs one to the Association, which legitimises SAASSAP and the work it does. This, in turn, has assisted in affiliation growth.
- SAASSAP's digital-platform success is evident from an increase in followers, more content viewers and a broader reach across demographic categories. Engagement on Instagram and LinkedIn has been growing, and SAASSAP's followers on these platforms have doubled.



**Key insights and considerations (continued)**

- Media outreach took place once, but elicited no response. Therefore, there is a need to think creatively about how the organisation could establish links with media houses-through exploring strategic partnerships with these media houses. NEC members are encouraged to share their media contacts.
- The Awards and Roundtable in December 2022 were livestreamed/broadcast. Yet it is a misconception that large numbers of people log in and participate. The size of the audience attracted in this way did not justify the cost of livestreaming. It is proposed that the event be recorded and uploaded to YouTube after the event, as this would cost nothing.
- Consideration should be given to prioritising a culture of continuous improvement, regularly assessing strategies based on performance metrics, feedback and industry trends, and staying abreast of technology.
- Members ought to be encouraged to work more collaboratively within the regions.
- More could be done to capture SAASSAP's activities. While the newsletter is a sound idea, expecting the MLO to compile it does not make sense. Rather, consideration should be given to contracting someone for the task and paying an honorarium, with the MLO facilitating the process. Such a person could be tasked with collating the various members' contributions. Contributions need not be lengthy or formal: For instance, NEC members may send a simple text message, referring the newsletter developer to specific stories or news releases on their respective institutional websites.
- This ties in with the idea of having a dedicated SAASSAP writer.
- This portfolio can do more. While the team is very agile and tries its utmost to report on SAASSAP's activities in real time, there is always room for improvement.
- The MLO is the heartbeat of SAASSAP, and the team is commended for putting SAASSAP on the map and for the excellent work they carried out in 2023. This makes it essential to consider the risks that need to be mitigated to future-proof and strengthen the team and the Association.
- Direct requests to Terence to assist NEC members have been flagged as a possible concern- because in terms of protocol, all communication to Terence should be sent via the MLO.
- In considering Stakeholder Engagement, we need to think about how best to establish relationships with strategic partners. To this effect, stakeholders need to be thought of in a broader way, and a clear engagement strategy should be put in place. While this was not part of the 2023 priorities, the organisation did good work in 2021 and 2022 to engage strategic partners. In addition, stakeholder engagement should be a soft approach, including sending 'love letters' sharing SAASSAP's vision, with follow-up letters soon thereafter, as well as extending invitations for speaking opportunities as a relationship-building tactic.

Action	Date	NEC Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership Diversification</li> <li>• NASPA – Benchmark Financial Model for Best Practice</li> <li>• IASAS – Benchmark Financial Model for Best Practice</li> <li>• Advancement – INYATHELO</li> <li>• Premier Knowledge Centre</li> <li>• Commercialisation of the Website</li> </ul>	<p>2024</p> <p>2025</p>	TG, MLO & DP

#### Key insights and considerations

- Intervention strategies to increase membership also speak to financial stability, as membership is a source of income for SAASSAP.
- While sponsorship can be an added income generator, some sponsorships require audited financial statements, which SAASSAP does not currently have. Once it does, the Association will be able to explore sponsorships as an avenue of securing funds.
- With a view to 2024, one or two objectives should be pursued in enhancing engagement and relationships. Some low-hanging fruit is membership diversification, which can be dealt with immediately, and commercialisation of the website.
- Commercialisation of the website can also be tricky, however. One approach is to treat the website as a resource centre, getting different companies who offer products aligned with South African needs to write articles and include a link to their products (so-called affiliate marketing). In fact, SAASSAP was approached with an offer to advertise last year, but the offer seemed questionable. Ultimately, it will require innovation, creativity and proactive engagement to develop a website in a way that offers mutual benefits and incentives.
- Recruiting an advancement practitioner might be worth exploring. This person could be tasked with securing sponsors in return for a percentage share of the amount (s)he generates. If the person does not generate any sponsorships, no compensation is due.

Action	Date	NEC Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structural Configuration</li> <li>• Commission a Contractor (Proff Thierry/Soudien)</li> <li>• Workshop and sectoral engagement</li> <li>• Research and Development</li> <li>• Position Paper</li> </ul>	<p>April 2023</p> <p>August 2023</p>	<p>Presidency &amp; RDO</p>

### Key insights and considerations

- Instead of hiring a full-time member to attend to SAASSAP matters, there appears to be very specific tasks that need to be outsourced, such as developing a magazine/newsletter, recruiting a fundraiser, etc. Contractors should be approached to explore how they can assist.
- Another need is an academic writer for SAASSAP, who may be contracted per task. This person would be approached to develop members' ideas into papers, potentially as a co-author, but at all times on behalf of the organisation.
- Assistance is required to build on the work done by Dr Pakiso Tondi, to develop a SAASSAP position paper on student services in the country.
- Once the structural configuration at universities has been figured out, the focus should shift to professional development. Part of the work has already been done: A needs analysis conducted by Higher Education Leadership and Management (HELM) resulted in a Student Affairs and Student Success (SASS) programme. SAASSAP should identify with the work already done and ask for more work and analysis. In this regard, the President and the RDO could organise an engagement with Dr Oliver Seale, HELM Director, to take the idea forward. A possibility could be to write a paper on how the SASS participants structure their Student Affairs work at their respective universities, and then to draw conclusion as to how Student Affairs may be structured in a manner that is agile across the sector. Ultimately, therefore, connecting with HELM and building on their work will culminate in a position paper. Moreover, engagement with HELM might also unlock financial support from their office, being highly resourced.
- Likewise, to proceed on the curricula aspect, Dr Seale could be approached and his resources unlocked to arrive at the answer, with a resultant position paper being generated.
- A key question to be answered is: What is the purpose and value of having student support services at a university?

Action	Date	NEC Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Student Centred Universities Conference – the theme to be finalised.</li> <li>• Understanding the profile of the students we serve, possible sub – theme.</li> <li>• NB: the theme must be able to draw all the available services of the SAS.</li> </ul>	December 2024	SGO

### Key insights and considerations

- This work has not been done and needs to be factored into the priorities for 2024. While the need for a conference is clear, the theme requires more work. In considering the theme, it should be kept in mind that the conference would be an ideal opportunity to pull together various structures in student support services, convene and deliberate as a subsector. In addition, incorporating the issue of 30 years of democracy into the conference theme is worth considering, as a representative from the Nelson Mandela Foundation recently remarked on the dearth of intellectual work on the 30-year journey.
- Themes that have been proposed are:
  - Student-centred universities for student success ... 30 years on and focusing on the future
  - Building student-centred universities ... looking back, looking forward, 30 years on
- In terms of timing, one should consider that 2024 is an election year for the Association, and the premise is for the elective conference to take place first and then to host the conference. Therefore, the proposed conference date needs to be revisited. Timing should also be strategic so that people are not tired of the 30-year democracy conversation by the time the conference is hosted.
- A further consideration is that the student fees policy remains unresolved and that government will now have a policy for the missing middle. As practitioners in this environment, SAASSAP should be the vision bearers to ensure that the sector ends up with the best fees policy.



Action	Date	NEC Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roundtable &amp; Awards 2023</li> </ul>	December 2023	SGO, MLO & TG

**Key insights and considerations**

- The Roundtable & Awards took place in December 2023 and a report will be released on the roundtable discussion.
- Taking everything online worked well, and the number of nomination submissions improved to 43. Automated registration contributed to the success of the event. There is an opportunity here to find a stakeholder to partner with as event sponsor.
- The excellent work in hosting the event should be overcommunicated rather than under-communicated.
- It needs to be acknowledged that, at the very core, the event is about building scholarship, which is why the roundtable part needs to be elevated. A powerful platform such as the roundtable can turn the scholarly community into members. The awards may be added later.
- Organising awards necessitates more hands, the lack of which caused significant frustration. Proper planning should start long in advance, incorporating every aspect that needs to be arranged.
- In communicating with SAASSAP’s membership, a report should be issued that speaks to the Roundtable and Awards. As the Deputy President has resigned, the NEC will have hopefully decided on how to operate in the interim.



Action	Date	NEC Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CHE conference: follow up on the CEO's invite <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email to meet with the CEO: President and PO</li> <li>Propose that a Student Affairs and Services panel</li> </ul> </li> <li>A reflective paper on the journey so far, on the PG work, <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>for the SAASSAP website,</li> <li>then World News,</li> <li>The Conversation and JSAA guest issue article of 2024, and</li> <li>1 webinar- a PG student focused conversation</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<p>January 2023 TBC</p> <p>July 2023 Ongoing August 2023</p>	<p>PO &amp; President</p>

#### Key insights and considerations

- SAASSAP has not moved the needle in terms of what it set out to do in this space.
- SAASSAP's postgraduate area did reach out to the Council on Higher Education (CHE), but there was no response or uptake. The lesson in this regard is similar to the one about stakeholders, namely to think bigger and build more energy to nurture stakeholders and maintain relationships.
- Production of the reflective paper has been delayed, but it remains something that needs to be done. It should be a main item on the 2024 agenda, together with the webinar on postgraduate student support.
- This is one area where SAASSAP can play a massive role nationally, including as convenor. Closely linked to RDO's work around scholarship, it is about how we support and build a culture of scholarly work.

## 4.8 Professional development: Gender-based violence (GBV)

Action	Date	NEC Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnership: HH and CoP on GBV: Conversation/webinar on GBV: 3 unis-Literature, institutional practices- what is the role of Student Affairs: PO</li> </ul>	<p>March/April 2023</p>	<p>PO &amp; DSG</p>

#### Key insights and considerations

- The issue of GBV is a tough one. The Deputy Secretary-General and Projects Officer met with the Community of Practice and also pulled in Higher Health (HH) to start working on the webinar/seminar/conversation that SAASSAP wishes to convene.
- The hope was that the report of the Ministerial Task Team would be released so that the event could be convened around it, yet the report is yet to be made public, despite Cabinet having approved the document and given the go-ahead for it to be released.
- In the activism space, there is a groundswell of support for efforts to compel the Minister to release the report.
- The report contains a number of good recommendations that SAASSAP and the broader community need to grapple with.
- SAASSAP's options are either to wait for the report, or not touch on it for now, but rather focus on the work spearheaded by the Deputy Minister. Engagement with the report, however, is preferred.

## 4.9 Professional development: African cultural and traditional practices (mental health)

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Action	Date	NEC Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>African, Cultural and traditional practices (Mental Health)</li></ul>	March/April 2023	President & DSG

### Key insights and considerations

- This area has not been implemented.
- There was a plan in place to join the debate at policy level. The University of Cape Town (UCT) had their own conversation and campaign in this regard. Upon reflection, SAASSAP could have partnered with UCT, but missed the opportunity. SAASSAP ought to look at what UCT and North-West University did and examine issues around raising consciousness and developing policies so as not to be caught on the wrong foot, yet also ensure that students and staff do not abuse this intervention.

## 4.10 Professional development: Corruption book review and ethics

Action	Date	NEC Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Corruption and book review and Ethics (Prof Singh)</li></ul>	September 2023	RDO, DSG & PO

### Key insights and considerations

- This action has not been implemented.
- The intention was to use the book to review corruption and its (dys)functionality.
- It is probably no longer needed, given the conversation at the roundtable around the state of governance and issues in higher education.
- The action is unlikely to make the cut in the prioritisation session.

## 4.11 Professional development: Statement in support of *Fort Hare*

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Action	Date	NEC Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Statement in support of Fort Hare</li></ul>	ASAP	President & SG

### Key insights and considerations

- This action was completed.

Action	Date	NEC Lead
• Policy Development and review Support, contextualisation	March/April 2023	DSG

### Key insights and considerations

- Having faced implementation challenges in 2023, it is the intention to establish a Policy Development Task Team this year.
- There is concern that SAASSAP is not being sensitive to the constitutional mandate when developing policies. To remedy this, the plan is to identify a pool of experts (e.g. specialists in policy development, policy review, policy analysis, constitution, student affairs, gender equality, etc.) and to tie down suitable dates for them to come and make presentations. With the MLO's assistance, these presentations should be featured on the website.
- Consideration should be given to developing a Policy-on-Policy Development. In this regard, there might be lessons to learn from universities that have 'policies about policies' and to explore how this can add value.
- When dealing with policies, one needs to be mindful that these are not intended only for abled persons; the perspectives and inputs of differently abled persons need to be considered.
- National Student Governance Framework
- Existing best practices and resources could enhance what SAASSAP is trying to achieve.
- There is a need to develop a plan for the task of empowering colleagues on the issue of policy development.



Action	Date	NEC Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guest Issue (Editorial Team)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. A call for papers and a set of actions for support (webinars, writing retreats)                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Publishing an article out of your completed M or D</li> <li>b. Hot seat</li> <li>c. Tools of the trade with Librarians</li> <li>d. Collecting data- Saleem Badat</li> </ul> </li> <li>B. MoU with JSAA</li> <li>C. Editorial team- DSG as the lead, invite Neo Pule, Corrie Rheeder, get interns to assist, Khan at UWC</li> <li>D. The call in April, first meeting of the editorial within the first quarter</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Support for doctoral candidates- check in, SAASSAP lounge, share milestones and technologies, once a quarter.</li> </ul>	<p>December 2024</p> <p>April 2023</p> <p>April 2023</p>	RDO

#### Key insights and considerations

- SAASSAP has an understanding with the *Journal of Students Affairs in Africa* (JSAA) to run a guest issue every two years. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) is drawn up each time the process starts. A budget of R100 000 has been made available to facilitate the publication and is much appreciated. The objective is to build scholarship within SAASSAP. The call for papers has had a good response, although not from SAASSAP practitioners in the traditional sense.
- Work is on schedule and geared towards a good publication. The two webinars that were hosted – the first on research frameworks, and the second on artificial intelligence and how to advance scholarship – attracted a lot of activity and discussion. This year, the focus will be on writing with a view to the 2024 publication.
- What is missing is writing retreats to support scholarship. This should be presented as an opportunity for Professional Development and Enhancing and Supporting Scholarship, hosted by a legitimate structure. Institutions could be asked to cover the costs. A challenge might be capacity to organise these retreats.

Area of Prioritisation	Description
a) Elective Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is the highlight of the year, covering a range of areas.</li> <li>• The timing of the conference is critical, in order to allow colleagues to go on leave in December.</li> </ul>
b) Term Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This report needs to be presented at, and is tied to, the elective conference.</li> </ul>
c) Handover and Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The timing of the elections requires serious consideration to allow enough time for handover.</li> <li>• Having audited financial statements by the time of the handover would be ideal from a governance perspective.</li> </ul>
d) Membership Diversification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private Higher Education Institutions came out strongly as a membership focus area for 2024 as it is crucial for the diversification of SAASSAP's membership.</li> <li>• The membership journeying is important.</li> </ul>
e) Writing Retreats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These are critical in terms of building a legacy for SAASSAP's leadership.</li> </ul>
f) Journal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With work already under way, the publication will definitely be produced.</li> <li>• The guest issue helps position SAASSAP in the higher education landscape.</li> </ul>
g) Postgraduate Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is important to clarify how SAASSAP will go about doing the work besides getting teams to support the different portfolios.</li> </ul>
h) Organisational Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This should enhance support for the rest of the portfolios.</li> </ul>
i) Contracted Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarity is required as to which tasks will be assigned to contractors.</li> </ul>
j) GBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This issue is not only critical at an Association level, but also in the country context.</li> </ul>
k) Fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruiting a fundraiser to help SAASSAP generate funds is essential.</li> </ul>

Priority area	Action	Action due	NEC lead	Additional resources
Elective Conference*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish the Local Organising Committee (LOC)</li> <li>Elective conference to take place in August/September</li> <li>Establish date for the conference</li> <li>Nelson Mandela University (NMU) identified and agreed</li> <li>Identify and include other organisations</li> </ul>	End of February 2024	SG (lead) DSG MLO TG (chair of LOC) *LOC reports to NEC	Include other organisations
Term Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phase 1: Submit documents (This will be a central submission that is approved by the NEC.)</li> <li>Phase 2: Draft report</li> <li>Phase 3: NEC inputs collated and submitted for refinement</li> <li>Phase 4: Final report</li> </ul>	19 January 2024 End of March 2024	NEC Writer NEC Writer	Negotiate with Mark
Handover and Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider an extra two days after the elective conference for the handover session (full-day)</li> <li>Consider how to communicate to members standing for election that they should be available for the handover</li> </ul>	End of conference	NEC	
Membership Diversification*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish the cost of membership</li> <li>Communicate affiliation on the website early enough to allow for the March cut-off</li> </ul>	Done	TG, MLO, PO (Finance Committee)	
Writing Retreat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target winter vacation (for paper development writing retreat)</li> <li>Include Dr Neo Pule</li> </ul>	July 2024	RDO, DSG, MLO, SG	Dr Neo Pule
Journal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publication (guest issue of JSSA)</li> <li>Two development activities</li> <li>Writing retreat will be the preliminary</li> </ul>	End of December 2024	RDO, DSG, Dr Neo Pule	
Postgraduate Support (link with RDO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convene a small team of interested SAASSAP members</li> <li>Finalise the reflective piece on the journey thus far for publication</li> <li>Finalise the workshop/ conversation on SAASSAP postgraduate support by end May</li> <li>Follow up conversation with a report that may form part of the handover report</li> </ul>	End of March 2024  End of May 2024	PO, President, RDO	Report-writing support
Organisational Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic communities (President/MLO/ PO and SG)</li> <li>Secure contractors</li> <li>Establish strategic teams to support portfolios</li> </ul>		President All team leads All team leads	Contractors Support
Contracted Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Included above under 'Organisational Architecture'</li> </ul>			
GBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reconvene the planning team (with DSG)</li> <li>Webinar hosted in partnership with Higher Health</li> <li>Consider quick SAASSAP response to ministerial report once released</li> <li>Discuss how to get this report to the SAASSAP community</li> </ul>	February 2024 May/June 2024 Pending release by Minister	PO, DSG	Short-notice writing support
Fundraising (financial sustainability)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pursue sponsorships, donations and advertising</li> <li>Conference</li> </ul>	Ongoing/meeting updates	TG, MLO	Contractors & donors

\*Refer to resolutions below on the following page.

Area of Prioritisation	Resolutions for Implementation by the National Executive Committee
a) Cost of Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently, membership costs R10 000 for both public and private institutions and TVET colleges.</li> <li>• Private institutions must be registered with DHET to be considered for membership. (Proof of registration must be produced on application, and verified.)</li> <li>• Additional membership: R5 000</li> <li>• Associate membership: R2 500</li> <li>• Interested individuals: R2 500</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right; margin-right: 20px;">} Suggestions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership descriptions need to be clear to ensure proper membership levels and costing.</li> <li>• It is decided that there will be no variation in membership at a lower cost level. <b>It is resolved that R15 000 will allow a maximum of four members per institution, including NEC members.</b> Over and above the four members, an additional charge of R2 500 will apply.</li> <li>• Emeritus membership for retired SAASSAP members. A list of these members should be drawn up with the aim of creating an emeritus community. The SG &amp; President will meet by the end of March to work on this list</li> </ul>
b) NEC Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequency: monthly</li> <li>• On a Thursday afternoon in the second or third week of the month, for 1½ hours from 16:00 until 17:30</li> <li>• Emergency-request meetings will continue without a quorum being met. If decisions are to be made, these will be ratified via email.</li> <li>• It is requested that reminders of any upcoming meeting be sent out by Support Staff.</li> <li>• The year schedule will be communicated by the <b>end of January 2024.</b></li> </ul>
c) Member Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue with the current membership, and start the promotion to affiliate at the first meeting</li> <li>• Meetings will continue to be held bimonthly from 16:00 to 17:00.</li> <li>• Meetings are to be hosted by strategic teams.</li> </ul>
d) Special Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEC vacancy – Deputy President</li> </ul>
e) Final Report submission by Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft to be submitted by 26 January 2024</li> </ul>
f) Elective Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The SG's suggestion to have the conference at NMU again is supported by the President as well as the TG. RDO raised the concern that repetition might not sit well with other members. Yet the choice of venue is for the very practical reason that this is where the Association's ground support is located.</li> <li>• Having undertaken to confirm the venue before the end of the Strategic Planning session, the SG advised that NMU had agreed to host the event, with a preference of August.</li> <li>• The TG will chair the LOC.</li> <li>• The LOC will report to the NEC.</li> <li>• The TG/MLO and SG will draft the LOC's terms of reference.</li> <li>• The LOC is to consider the proposed conference theme.</li> </ul>



## 8. Conclusion

This is a significant year for the NEC, as its term of office concludes at the planned elective conference in August/September 2024. While the Strategic Plan review session has resulted in a clear Implementation Plan to guide this year's priorities and actions, the required additional support will be crucial to enable follow-through and delivery of the portfolios' agreed priorities and actions. Contracting processes need to be clearly mapped out so that everyone involved knows what is required. A contract guideline has to be created to outline the contracting process.

The SAASSAP Strategic Plan (2020–2024) has played a key role in facilitating the Association's revival, aligning operations and regaining credibility. Renewing the Strategic Plan for the next term necessitates a participatory approach to continue reimagining and developing a fit-for-purpose strategy with appropriate focus areas, goals, priorities, operating and funding models, governance processes, and capacity. Getting these fundamental elements of the Strategic Plan in place will enable SAASSAP to build on the strides it has already made and be better positioned for sustainability and impact.

Furthermore, the next Strategic Plan could be a timely opportunity for SAASSAP to reposition itself in the higher education sector and among strategic partners. Essentially, SAASSAP is on the cusp of a new horizon. With a committed and cohesive leadership team in office, the possibilities of further development and increasing success are unending.

*Phumzile Mmope, PhD*

*Somerset West*

*26 January 2024*



**SAASSAP  
NEC STRATEGIC PLANNING  
HOST: UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN**

THEME  
REFLECTIONS | RE-IMAGINE | CONSOLIDATION

11 – 12 JANUARY 2024

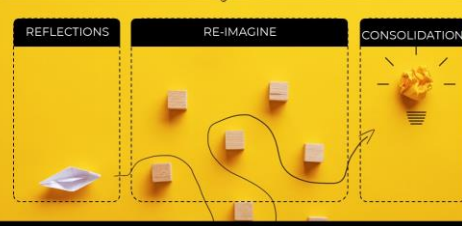
Leadership & Business Coach | Consultant | Facilitator  
www.drphumzilemmope.com

*Programme*

REFLECTIONS

RE-IMAGINE

CONSOLIDATION



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*Strategic Alignment - 8-Point Roadmap*

**Point 1**  
Listen, Learn, Identify Goals

**Point 4**  
Craft your vision

**Point 5**  
Get your house in order and craft your roadmap

**Point 8**  
Avoid common pitfalls

**Point 2**  
Set and align proper expectations

**Point 3**  
Shape your team

**Point 6**  
Establish productive working relationships

**Point 7**  
Communicate exceptionally well

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*Rules of Engagement*

  
CLARITY

  
COMMITMENT

  
COMPLETION

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**1 | REFLECT**  
2023 Strategic Plan Review

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*Reflections*

- 1. CHALLENGES**  
How is the challenge affecting you, others and the Departmental Operational Plan
- 2. OPPORTUNITIES**  
What's possible?
- 3. OUTSTANDING TASKS**  
What needs to happen now?

**KEY LESSONS**

- What should we **START DOING**?  
• Things to begin doing to get better results
- What should we **STOP DOING**?  
• Things that are not working or helping
- What should we **CONTINUE** doing?  
• Things that are working well, things that we want to keep

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**2 | RE-IMAGINE**

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**3 | CONSOLIDATE**

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*Point of Clarity*

- Refer to 2024 Consolidation Working Document

1. Align expectations in terms of deliverable from 2024 NEC Strategic Planning Review Report
2. Template for today's consolidation - Implementation Plan

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*Debrief Day 1*

**What insight learned from yesterday will be valuable for today's task – Consolidation?**

- 2024 Priorities
- HE Sectoral Themes
- Implementation Plan
- Recommendations

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*Action Plan*

**Recap of Feedback and Collective Input to Identify 2024 Areas of Prioritisation and Implementation Plan**

- 2024 Key Priorities

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*What Do I do?*



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**I AM** Dr Phumzile Mmope

**I BELIEVE** that leaders who communicate skillfully and respectfully with empathy across cultures are increasingly sought after, confident leaders who succeed in taking people with them, rather than forcing change

**AND I** believe that communication is a skill that should be honed continuously no matter how long a person has been a leader

**AND SO I (WHY)** help leaders and businesses identify and target painful leadership and communication issues keeping them and their teams from ultimate success.

**I ACHIEVE THIS BY (HOW)** taking you through a simple 3 step process designed to uncover your pain points and find the right solutions

**I DO THIS BY (WHAT)** creating tailored coaching programs and practical solutions to meet specific leadership and communications needs of businesses, leaders and communications professionals

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LEAD DIFFERENTIALLY*



## NEC Strategic Planning Programme

Date: 10 - 12 January 2024

Host: University of Cape Town

Venue: Irma Stern Museum – 21 Cecil Road, Rosebank, Cape Town

# THEME: Reflections, Re- imagine & Consolidation

## DAY ONE: NETWORKING & REFLECTION – Wednesday, 10 January 2024

Time	Activity	Responsible
18h00 – 22h00	<b>UCT Welcome &amp; Dinner</b> <i>(Venue) De Grendel Wine Estate, Platteklouf Road, Panorama, Cape Town</i>	NEC Invited Guest

## DAY TWO: REFLECTION & REIMAGINING – Thursday, 11 January 2024

Start	Activity	Responsible
08h30 – 09h00	<b>Arrival</b>	All
09h00 – 09h30	<b>Opening and Welcome</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction of Facilitator</li> <li>Workshop Programme, Format, and Roadmap</li> <li>Rules of Engagement for the Strategic Planning Session</li> </ul>	Prof Sibusiso Chalufu Pura Mgolombane  Dr Phumzile Mmope - (Facilitator)
09h30 – 09h45	<b>Session 1: Reflection – Looking Back</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2023 Strategic Plan Review: Our Focus, Challenges and Solutions</li> </ul>	Facilitator



**Department of  
Student Affairs**  
Liberating the Soul for Well-being & Flourishing

09h45 – 11h00	<b>Presentation and Discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback on Reflections and Review of 2023 Portfolio Strategic Plans and Priorities</li> </ul>	All
11h00 - 11h15	<b>Tea</b>	All
11h15 – 12h30	<b>Key Insights and Considerations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessing Overall 2023 Operational Actions in Relation to Priorities and Implications for 2024 Strategic Planning and Priorities</li> </ul>	NEC members
12h30 – 13h30	<b>Lunch</b>	All
13h30 - 16h30	<b>Session 2: Reimagining – Action Plan</b> Recap of Feedback and Collective Input to Identify 2024 Areas of Prioritisation and Implementation Plan	Facilitator
16h30 - 17h30	<b>Key Insights and Remarks</b> Implementing 2024 Portfolio Strategic Plans and Priorities	NEC members
17h30 - 17h45	<b>Day Two Consolidation and Closing Remarks</b>	Facilitator / Pura Mgolombane

### DAY THREE: CONSOLIDATION & PRIORITIES – Friday, 12 January 2024

Time	Activity	Responsible
08h00 – 08h30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arrival</li> </ul>	All
08h30 – 09h00	<b>Opening and Welcome</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hand over to Facilitator</li> </ul>	Prof Sibusiso Chalufu Facilitator







	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debrief Day 1</li> <li>• Day Two Programme, Format, and Roadmap</li> </ul>	
09h30 – 12h00	<b>Session 3: Consolidation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2024 Portfolio Strategic Plans and Priorities Consolidation</li> </ul>	Facilitator / All
12h00 – 13h00	<b>Elections Systems</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constitutional Review</li> </ul>	Terence Matasva
13h00 – 14h00	<b>Lunch</b>	All
14h00 - 18h00	Irma Stern: Transformative Human Encounters	NEC

END.

