

The release of the Nedlac Bulletin in the second quarter of 2002 was an important development for the institution. The demand for Nedlac to publish Volume 2 has been overwhelming. In response to the requests for a second publication, we have now compiled volume 2. In this volume, a comprehensive compilation of key socio-economic data that presents a coherent statistical picture of South Africa has been put together in one document.

This bulletin is compiled at a time when South Africa is in its 10th year after the election of a non-racial government in South Africa. At this point, it seems fitting to review the last decade by looking at the progress (or lack of) in light of the following issues (as included in the Bulletin):

- o **social development, including:**
 - o demography;
 - o infrastructure developments or access to services;
 - o education levels; and
 - o labour and employment.

- o **economic structure and performance, including:**
 - o inflation levels;
 - o currency developments; and
 - o government spending.

The statistics highlighted in this bulletin focus on the key drivers of the economy, viz: infrastructure investment, higher savings levels, skills development, job creation, etc. Whilst there is evidence that economic growth between 1994 and 2003, for instance, has been higher than the preceding ten years, it has not been at levels that could absorb the huge socio-economic deficit in our country.

The data in the Bulletin is essentially descriptive rather than analytical in nature and in compiling it, no attempts were made to engage with the methodologies of the various statistical data. Data has been obtained from both public and private sector sources, which must be evaluated on their own merit.

It is hoped that this Bulletin will further drive the Nedlac process of social dialogue which in the end is aimed at addressing the challenges that face South African citizens. We would further encourage comments and interaction about the future shape and content of the Bulletin from readers within the Nedlac constituencies and the public at large.