

# Protests have cost SA R4.6bn

**TRAPPED:** VIOLENT COMMUNITY ACTION TRAPS COUNTRY IN CYCLE OF NEVER-ENDING POVERTY

**Cedric Masondo**

**U**nless civil society, labour and government can find new ways of engaging and solving problems, SA will continue to waste resources on fixing and replacing assets damaged during violent service delivery protests, instead of rolling out new infrastructure.

Service delivery protests – and the severity of claims resulting from them – have been on a steady upward trajectory for the past five years.

Instead of building new schools, roads and clinics with money that

should go to the fiscus as dividend from the SA Special Risk Insurance Association (Sasria), these funds end up going towards replacing property that has been damaged during service delivery protests.

Sasria is a state-owned insurer that provides cover to businesses and municipalities that suffer losses related to riots, strikes, terrorism and public disorder.

Resources are spent on fixing the same problems. Violent protests aren't isolated to any specific province or region. They've become endemic across SA. Service delivery protest claims processed

by Sasria increased sharply in the 2018-19 financial year, totalling over R1.7 billion in value from over 5 000 claims, versus over 3 000 claims in 2017-18, amounting to about R800 million.

The first five months of the 2018-19 financial year were particularly violent, with Sasria seeing over 2 000 new claims registered, totalling an estimated value of R1 billion.

In the past five years, Sasria has received over 16 000 claims valued at over R4.6 billion. Schools and clinics could have been built, roads fixed and so much more done to enhance daily

living standards.

Something drastic must be done. The culture of violent protests must end. If not, we'll be trapped in a cycle of poverty, spending our resources fixing the same things over and over again.

► *Cedric Masondo is managing director of Sasria*

» **State-owned insurer paid businesses and municipalities R1.6bn last year alone.**



**FLAMES OF FURY.** Unless civil society, labour and government can find new ways of engaging, violent protests will continue to drain limited resources that should be spent on development. Picture: Bloomberg

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