

SOUTH AFRICAN INFORMAL TRADERS FORUM
(SAITF)

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Media Statement

Informal traders' soccer boots blunted

The South African Informal Traders Forum (SAITF), which comprises of associations of informal traders from around the Johannesburg inner-city and the neighbouring townships is saddened and disappointed at the contents of recent misleading media articles under the headline: "Informal traders to score on World Cup".

We were all astounded when the City of Johannesburg's 2010 Office announced in the media last week that the informal traders would score and score big on World cup. Surely, the 2010 Office is being economical with the truth and misleading the public by announcing that informal traders would benefit in the World cup. Firstly, neither the SAITF nor individual traders are aware of any opportunities being created for them to benefit from the World cup. If we were approached to enlist our names or that of individual traders on the 2010 Office's database, we would have done so without any hesitation but we were not. In addition, if the 2010 Office is genuinely in the process of creating platform for informal traders to participate in the World cup, why then do they first go to announce in the media whereas they have not even engaged the traders. As a matter of fact, this is mind boggling as the same 2010 office last week gave verbal eviction notice to informal traders operating at Soccer City to vacate their trading site by the end of this weekend.

The action taken by the 2010 Office demonstrate the fact that the City of Johannesburg still propagate the current economic trajectory that unjustly and falsely divides the economy into first and second economy and keep underprivileged and marginalised continually trapped under devastating cycle of unemployment and underemployment. It's also depict a norm of frowning at the marginalized communities such as informal traders who have been excluded from economic policy-making while at the same time big business is extended a hand of errand. Therefore, the SAITF hold the view that the World Cup is not for everyone.

In fact, since the announcement that the World cup was heading to Africa, the informal traders have been receiving reassurances that they would financially benefit from the event. However, in months building to the World cup, we have been sent from one pillar to the next when enquiring on the processes we should follow if we want to trade our goods during the world cup. Though the informal sector has been part of the mobilised public and contributing towards the success of the World Cup, we are disturbed to learn that the formal businesses that are affected by the commercial restriction rules of FIFA would be the only ones to be compensated while

the informal traders stand to get nothing. Why should our government apply double standards, after-all isn't it that we are all traders- irrespective of whether we are from formal or informal sector.

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