

Gig Workers, Platforms and Government During Covid-19 in South Africa

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Executive Summary

How are the tens of thousands of gig workers in South Africa – those performing tasks for digital platforms like Uber, Uber Eats and SweepSouth – being supported during the Covid-19 crisis? We report here a review of gig economy platform and government responses, supplemented by a small survey of worker experiences.

While gig workers are by no means the only vulnerable group in South Africa suffering during the pandemic, their non-standard employment status is proving a particular challenge. Platforms – arguably incorrectly and possibly even illegally – tend to regard their workers as independent contractors rather than employees. Notwithstanding this, a small number of platforms have stepped up during lockdown. For example, we outline ways in which SweepSouth and M4Jam have tried to offset income losses for their workers, and cite getTOD's efforts to enable online working for its tradespeople.

But the majority of platforms have taken no responsibility to compensate workers for by far their major problem: loss of earnings. Yet our survey suggests a majority of gig workers have lost their jobs entirely, while those able to work during lockdown have, on average, lost four-fifths of their income. As a result, many reported that just getting food to eat was their top priority. While platforms have long marketed themselves as facilitators of supplementary income streams, all of this exposes the complete dependency of most workers on their platforms as the basis for their livelihood.

Given the control they exercise over the welfare and conditions of their workers, South Africa's platforms could and must do more to help, and we outline a series of measures they could be undertaking on issues including reduced commissions, loan deferrals, physical protection, healthcare assistance, sick pay, improved communication, and engagement with workers and their representatives.

The breadth and depth of response by South Africa's government has been recognised worldwide. However, as yet, gig workers have fallen between two stools: able to access neither the support offered to formal employees, nor the support offered to those registered as small businesses. If gig workers are to avoid destitution, government must take further action. Here, again, we outline a series of measures – pushing for gig workers' *de facto* employee status to be recognised formally, but also ensuring that the safety net of assistance covers gig workers.

The pandemic has highlighted the importance of South Africa's gig workers: delivery services, for example, have been essential to society during lockdown. Covid-19 will not be with us forever but the issues we surface in this report are just an acute manifestation of longer-standing problems. In the longer-term, then, a legal resolution must be found to rescue gig workers from the employment-status limbo that the pandemic has brought into sharp relief.

Introduction

There are tens of thousands of gig workers in South Africa: those performing short-term tasks for digital platforms like Uber, Uber Eats and SweepSouth. We estimate around 35,000 workers in location-bound work like taxi driving, delivery, and cleaning¹ with up to 100,000 actively undertaking other types of digitally-mediated freelancing². While many of the latter will not be full-time, this still suggests gig work touches at least 1% of the South African workforce; a number growing by well above 10% yearly³. Taking account of household size, gig work in South Africa may therefore directly touch the lives of up to half a million people; making it an important economic and social issue for the country⁴.

Yet, to date, there has been little evidence in the public domain about the response of platforms and of government to the particular needs of gig workers arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. To address this, a team from the Fairwork project – which has been undertaking ratings of South African platforms against decent work standards for the past two years⁵ – systematically reviewed the actions taken by a set of leading platforms and available evidence of relevant government actions. We supplemented this with a small survey of gig workers and worker groups, in order to get a sense of whether gig workers in South Africa were still able to work during lockdown; what earnings – if any – they had; what support – if any – they were getting from their platform; and what they wanted platforms and government to do to help them.

Findings

Platform Responses

We undertook a survey of platform responses to Covid-19, as summarised below in Table 1's scorecard (for further detail of responses, see Appendix 1). The responses are categorised using the five Fairwork principles of Fair Pay, Fair Conditions (divided into two types of response – prevention of infection, and actions taken if workers are ill), Fair Contracts, Fair Management and Fair Representation⁶. The scorecard specifically highlights pay-related policies given their importance to workers.

	Policy Category	1. Fair Pay		2a. Fair Conditions (Prevention)				2b. Fair Conditions (Illness)			3. Fair Contracts	4. Fair Management		5. Fair Representation
	Sub-Category	Pay Loss Compensation	Financial Deferral	Physical Protection	Personal Protection	Virus Safety Knowledge	Healthcare Assistance	Sick Pay	Insurance	Death Benefits	No Policies	Penalty Protection	Anti-Discrimination	No Policies
South Africa	Uber		●	●	●		●	●				●	●	
	Bolt			●	●	●								
	Uber Eats			●	●		●	●				●	●	
	OrderIn													
	Picup			●	●									
	Droppa													
	Mr D			●										
	SweepSouth	●				●	●	●						
	Domestly													
	M4Jam	●				●								
	Secret Agent													
	NoSweat													
	getTOD				●	●								

Table 1. Platform Responses to Covid-19 in South Africa

We can draw the following conclusions:

1. Inaction is the Norm. One can see the relative lack of response from platforms from the extent to which Table 1 is largely unfilled: of 169 possible responses, there is evidence for action on only 27; just under 16% of the total. In particular, little was being done in relation to workers who become sick (perhaps reflecting the low levels of infection to date in South Africa). There was little evidence of platforms improving management processes: ride-hailing platform Uber and food delivery platform Uber Eats were registered here simply due to short, global statements about protecting workers’ “Uber Pro” status and that clients should not discriminate against worker groups. Conversely, under this heading, both Uber and Bolt (another ride-hailing platform) had closed down their local contact centres, making it harder for drivers to interact with the platform. There was no evidence of platforms addressing workers’ concerns about their lack of contractual status as employees. Finally, there was no evidence of platforms receiving, engaging with or taking action on Covid-19-related demands from workers or their representatives; despite there being groups and mechanisms by which this could occur.

2. Pay vs. Prevention. By far the majority of action taken by platforms in South Africa – nearly two-thirds of the response areas logged in Table 1 – has been preventive. Prevention of spread of the disease is of vital importance. South Africa has been praised in general for the swift and decisive measures taken by government, and more than half of the platforms have themselves taken actions to support this.

But the top priority by far for workers, as expressed in our interviews with them, is not prevention but earnings. Only two platforms had initiatives to compensate workers for the pay they were losing due to lockdown. Microtasking platform M4Jam had adopted a slightly unusual approach given removal of all location-based microtasks from the platform. In mid-April, in collaboration with mobile company Cell C, it rolled out a three-week micro-training initiative that provides payments to workers for completion of up to 48 short lessons undertaken via mobile phones⁷. The platform estimated that workers would receive on average R310 per week as well as, it is hoped, being upskilled.

Domestic work platform SweepSouth was unable to provide any work for its cleaners given such work was forbidden as part of lockdown regulations. Instead, it organised a fund paid for by clients – either making specific payments for cancelled cleaning assignments that workers would normally have fulfilled, or making general donations – and from other sources; particularly the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation that was an investor in SweepSouth⁸. It was said as a result that 3,200 workers were being paid between R150 and R450 per week⁹. Though rolled out to cover all workers, this was initially intended just as a form of sick pay for those who were ill or having to self-isolate¹⁰. Only two other platforms – Uber and Uber Eats – have instituted sick pay¹¹.

3. Innovation vs. Incrementalism. Platforms have brought in some individual innovations – M4Jam and SweepSouth in relation to the pay initiatives just described, Bolt in implementing “isolated cars” that separate driver and passengers with plastic screening¹²; professional tradespersons platform getTOD has set up a ‘Virtual Heroes’ model allowing its workers to guide clients online in undertaking home maintenance or improvement tasks¹³. The latter is an example among others of platforms rethinking their business models to try to maintain or at least reduce the fall-off in their income: ride-hailing platform Bolt has added a food delivery service; food delivery platforms Uber Eats and Mr D have added grocery delivery services; bakkie platform Droppa has added retail delivery services.

But alongside these, there has been an incrementalism about actions. Provisions under “financial deferral” go little further than encouraging drivers to negotiate suspension of loan repayments. Provisions under “physical protection” focus on contactless delivery rather than contactless pickup e.g. from restaurants. Provisions under “healthcare assistance”

have amounted to nothing much more than cut-and-paste of general health advice from government.

4. Rhetoric vs. Reality. There was a mixed picture when we asked workers if they were receiving the assistance that platforms were promising. Uber drivers report not receiving personal protection materials despite a general company policy to provide these for areas most affected¹⁴. By comparison, drivers from delivery platform Picup all reported they had received masks, gloves and hand sanitiser from the platform. All but one of the SweepSouth workers we interviewed had received a payment, though these were at the low end of the range – R150 per week. The M4Jam-Cell C initiative did not extend to all workers and closed to applicants at the end of April: only half of our M4Jam interviewees had been able to take advantage of it. Health-related guidance from platforms was acknowledged by workers. We were unable to assess the effectiveness of sick pay because neither our respondents nor any of their family members had shown symptoms of the virus (not unexpected given figures from South Africa which show only around 0.01% of the population as confirmed infected¹⁵).

5. Fairwork Rating and Covid-19 Response. The results here suggest the relevance of the Fairwork ratings as an ongoing guide to the concern that platforms have for their workers. Of the four highest-scoring platforms in the 2020 round of Fairwork ratings, three – M4Jam, SweepSouth and getTOD – were among those identified as coming up with innovative solutions to the problems their workers have faced during Covid-19¹⁶.

Government Policy

A key problem is that gig workers without work during the Covid-19 lockdown risk falling ‘between the cracks’ of the government’s financial relief measures because of their particular employment status. *De facto*, they are workers for their platforms and rely on the platforms for their livelihoods. But contractually, they are held at arms’-length by the platforms and categorised not as employees but as “independent contractors” (as discussed below, this categorisation is contentious).

Thus, on the one hand, most gig workers have not registered as independent businesses so they do not qualify for the government’s small business relief measures¹⁷. On the other hand, since they do not have formal employers who pay UIF (Unemployment Insurance Fund) contributions on their behalf, gig workers cannot apply to the UIF for unemployment benefits such as the Temporary Employee Relief Scheme which pays a proportion of workers’ salaries while they are temporarily laid off¹⁸. This despite the fact that this fund has an enormous surplus (R100+ billion of which at least R30 billion was specifically earmarked for Covid-19 relief for laid-off workers)¹⁹.

The government has now realised that there are too many individuals – including gig workers – who fall outside the UIF safety net. It has therefore created a special Social Relief of Distress grant to be administered by the national Social Security Agency, available to those who receive no other social grants (UIF, pension, disability or child support grant)²⁰. This has already put in place a very simple registration system using WhatsApp, and alternative channels for those without smartphones (using SMS, USSD or volunteers) will also be put in place²¹. It will pay out to unemployed South Africans and to legally-registered migrants and refugees²². However, our interviewed workers had not yet been able to access this fund and there are two additional limitations. First, it will pay out only R350 per month: less than 10% of the current minimum wage and around 5% of what Fairwork calculates to be a living wage in South Africa²³. Second, a proportion of gig workers in South Africa are illegal migrants who will still fall outside the scope of this scheme.

Worker Experiences

To provide a supplement to our analysis of platform and government actions, we undertook 17 interviews with gig workers at the end of April 2020, as South Africa was moving from Level-5 to Level-4 lockdown. To get as broad a range of experience as possible, interviewees were drawn from five different sectors – taxi driving (Uber, Bolt), delivery (Uber Eats, Picup, Droppa), domestic work (SweepSouth, Domestly²⁴), physical microtasks (M4Jam, Secret Agent) and online freelancing (NoSweat) – and from Johannesburg, Cape Town and Port Elizabeth²⁵. We also reached out to a number of gig worker groups and relevant civil society organisations.

Of the workers we interviewed, only five were still getting any work via their platform and one was undertaking M4Jam’s earning-via-learning initiative, described above. In other words, two-thirds of the South African gig workers in our survey had lost their source of earnings and livelihood. This is a little above but not greatly dissimilar from research findings in other countries, which suggest that around half of gig workers have lost their jobs.²⁶ The impact in South Africa is sectorally-differentiated: most delivery drivers are still required and have retained their jobs; online work is still feasible; but domestic workers and many who earned a living in taxi driving and microtasks now have no work.

Those not working cite the lockdown as the main cause of their unemployment. For example, platform-based domestic work is not permitted under both Level-5 and Level-4 of South Africa’s lockdown protocol, and physical microtasks such as “mystery shopping” are not possible. Workers also report they are frightened of getting infected and/or that demand – e.g. for taxi rides – has significantly dropped off even though it is still permitted within limits.

While a testament to the effectiveness of government policy, lockdown has brought serious economic consequences.

Of those who were still working, all had suffered a severe reduction in hours of work and earnings. On average, workers' hours and earnings were down to just less than one-fifth what they had been before the pandemic. As noted above, of course, earnings for the majority of gig workers were down to zero.

The situation was summarised by one worker group representative, talking here specifically about ride-hailing:

“Many drivers had to stop working, others who do go into the field find it extremely difficult to generate income and suffer anxiety attacks for the fear of contracting the virus. They hardly cover their expenses with one/two trips if they are lucky. Others are having trouble sanitising and maintaining the vehicles. Drivers who work for car owners are faced with withdrawal of vehicles as they cannot make target. So, the situation is really depressing...”

Recommendations

Platform Responses

We asked workers what responses they would like to see from platforms. For all of them, there was only one issue: money. This was a very basic matter of survival: workers need money right now for food and for rent, and they simply do not have that money. One even asked very directly that the platform provide them with food parcels because they and their children did not have enough to eat. As noted above, we found evidence of only two platforms taking direct initiatives to address this urgent and vital need. Five more were expanding or altering their business model to try to maintain transactions on their platforms; something which – if successful – could help mitigate earnings reductions.

Why and when should provision of income support and other measures to gig workers be a responsibility of platforms? When they are formal employees because that is a formal obligation but also – and crucially for the gig economy – when workers are *de facto* employees. Section 200A of South Africa's Labour Relations Act states that a worker “is presumed, regardless of the form of the contract, to be an employee, if any one or more of the following factors are present:

- a) the manner in which the person works is subject to the control or direction of [*the platform*];
- b) the person’s hours of work are subject to the control or direction of [*the platform*];
- c) in the case of a person who works for [*a platform*], the person forms part of that [*platform*];
- d) the person has worked for that [*platform*] for an average of at least 40 hours per month over the last three months;
- e) the person is economically dependent on the [*platform*] for whom he or she works or renders services;
- f) the person is provided with tools of trade or work equipment by the [*platform*]; or the person only works for or renders services to one [*platform*].”²⁷

Because of their platform’s direction of, and control over, their work and because of its constitution as an essential “tool of the trade”, then all of the workers we interviewed for this and prior research should be regarded as employees, rather than as independent contractors. Even more so for the great majority who were economically dependent on the platform for their livelihood: a dependency that has become sharply apparent during this crisis, as our survey sample has illustrated. Platforms can therefore be seen to have not just a moral but also a *de jure* responsibility to protect and support their workers during the Covid-19 crisis.

In Table 2, we summarise a set of “best possible” actions that platforms could be taking, drawn from a recent global study undertaken by Fairwork²⁸. But, echoing the points just made, it is those on fair pay – including sick pay should Covid-19 spread more widely in South Africa – that are currently by far the most important from the perspective of workers.

Fairwork Principle	Recommended Platform Action
<p>1. Fair Pay</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapid access to a minimum income (equivalent to at least the local living wage) for those unable to work due to fall-off in demand, legislative restrictions, or to pre-existing health vulnerabilities • Reduction in costs (e.g. platform commission/fees) or increase in per-gig payments for those still working but with reduced earnings • Additional hazard pay for those facing additional risks while working during the pandemic • Waiver (not deferral) of work-related costs such as loan repayments • Facilitated access to interest-free emergency loans • Plan for post-lockdown income recovery measures which may include higher per-gig payments or lower commission fees • Inclusion in income compensation and financial deferral schemes of all those who have worked for the platform during the past three months

Fairwork Principle	Recommended Platform Action
2a. Fair Conditions (Prevention)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular, adequate, free provision of PPE: disinfectants, gloves and masks • Installation of physical barriers between driver and passengers in all ride-hailing cars • Fully contact-free supply chains (both collection and delivery) for delivery workers • Daily sanitisation of vehicles and upstream locations: warehouses, hubs, etc. • Free Covid-19 check-ups for workers and their families
2b. Fair Conditions (Illness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible sick pay from platforms that applies universally to all those unable to work while ill or quarantined or while providing essential care for sick family members, and which relates to pre-pandemic average earnings • Sick pay policies that specify precisely and openly how much workers will be paid, with simple application processes which do not impose onerous health documentation requirements that sick workers cannot meet • Extended sick pay for those workers hospitalised by Covid-19 infection • Provision of general medical insurance cover • Provision of life insurance cover or other death-in-service benefits
3. Fair Contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No temporary or permanent alteration of contracts during the period of the pandemic to the detriment of workers
4. Fair Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all Covid-19-related communications are in a form that can be readily accessed and understood by all workers • Set up an accessible communications channel for workers for all issues relating to Covid-19; adequately staffed for rapid resolution of issues • Transparent reporting of policies, actions and funds initiated by platforms during the pandemic • Adhere to data privacy standards in collecting and sharing data about workers • No loss of incentives, bonus levels or future availability of jobs for those temporarily deactivated as a result of Covid-19 • Public statements to customers and others that discrimination against certain worker groups during the pandemic will not be tolerated
5. Fair Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal receipt of, engagement with, and action on Covid-19-related demands from worker representatives

Table 2. Recommended Gig Work Platform Responses to Covid-19

Government Policy

We asked workers what responses they need from government. A couple took a health-related perspective, seeking broader virus testing and better provision of personal protection equipment among the population. But otherwise, and repeating the message of what was sought from platforms, what workers needed was money – often specifically for food and rent – or, in the case of one-third of respondents, food parcels. This reflected the dire straits in which workers now found themselves; without any means to pay for even the most basic necessities of life because the platform was their only source of income.²⁹

While workers' expressed needs for platform and government action may be similar, the responsibilities of platforms and government differ. As noted above, most direct worker support measures, as for any employee of a company, should be the responsibility of the platform. Government should enforce gig workers' rights to such support regardless of platforms' claims about workers being independent contractors. Government should only step in – as it would for any other employer – where a platform is truly financially unable to assist. In parallel, government's other roles will be to provide a basic safety net of income, prevention and support for those who are ill; ensuring that gig workers do not – as they have been doing so far – fall between the two stools of employee and entrepreneur.

In Table 3, and as for platforms, we summarise a set of “gold standard” actions that governments could be taking to mitigate the problems arising for gig workers. This is drawn from an as-yet-unpublished multi-country review by Fairwork members of government policies, from worker group feedback in South Africa, from gig worker demands in other locations³⁰, and from a multi-country review of general Covid-19 government measures³¹.

Fairwork Principle	Recommended Government Action
1. Fair Pay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payments via social assistance or earnings subsidies to compensate for loss of work or loss of income to include gig workers, with payment based either on prior average income or on a universal basis payment • Reduction of bureaucracy in application process for work-loss/income-less compensation payments • Extension of tax return and tax payment deadlines • Mandatory loan repayment holidays covering both formal and informal loans, and a moratorium on evictions • Facilitated access to emergency grants or interest-free loans • Controls to minimise price-gouging and profiteering on basic necessities • Provision of food parcels for those temporarily without income sources
2a. Fair Conditions (Prevention)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement of social distancing rules in all workplaces and locations, covering both pick-up and drop-off delivery points for gig workers • Mandatory public use of masks once supplies for health and care workers are ensured • Subsidies for conversion of vehicles to reduce risk of viral transmission • Provision of regularly-sanitised, socially-distanced or otherwise risk-minimising public transport • Widespread testing and contact-tracing
2b. Fair Conditions (Illness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of sick pay but only where platform workers are truly independent contractors and not mis-classified as such (in which case sick pay is a responsibility of the platform) • Temporary waivers on health or social insurance payments where such schemes apply • Public cover for all Covid-19-related healthcare costs up to and including intensive care • Where relevant, re-classification of socially-necessary gig work during Covid-19 as “high risk” and hence subject to similar allowances, insurance schemes and death-in-service benefits
3. Fair Contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement of employer responsibilities for those platforms which are mis-classifying their workers as independent contractors
4. Fair Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public statements that discrimination against certain worker groups during the pandemic will not be tolerated
5. Fair Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal engagement with representatives of gig workers • Prosecution of platforms seeking to dismiss workers engaging in organisation of workers on Covid-19-related matters

Table 3. Recommended Gig Worker-Relevant Government Policies During Covid-19

Appendix 1: List of Covid-19-Related Platform Policies

Policy Category	Sub-Category	Platform Action
1. Fair Pay	Pay Loss Compensation	Additional payments to compensate for loss of income, including increase in pay rates
	Financial Deferral	Emergency loan facility
		Asking renters to reduce vehicle / other rental costs
		Loan repayment suspension
		Deferral of loan/rental costs
	Income Opportunity Attempted Compensation	Expansion of scope of service to try to increase business for platform and workers (e.g. ride-hailing adding delivery; meal delivery adding grocery delivery)
		Waiver of customer fees to try to maintain level of business
Stopping onboarding of new workers to preserve income for existing workers		
2a. Fair Conditions (Prevention)	Physical Protection (Workers)	Contact-free delivery, including no signature and no cash payment for delivery
		Physical barriers installed in vehicles
		Suspend accounts of customers diagnosed with Covid-19
		Additional sanitisation by platform, e.g. of vehicles, warehouses, hubs, etc.
		Contact-free management via closure of physical hubs
		Destroying all unpackaged goods, against contamination
		Social distancing / other measures in upstream supply chain (e.g. food preparation and grocery picking / packing)
	Physical Protection (Consumers / General Population)	Suspend accounts of drivers diagnosed with Covid-19
		Travel ban policy in line with the latest guidelines given by local / national authorities
		Suspension of some services
	Personal Protection	Provision of disinfectant (gel, spray) to workers

Policy Category	Sub-Category	Platform Action
		Provision of masks for workers
		Instruction to follow best hygiene practices
		Mandatory use of PPE, including monitoring of worker hygiene practices
	Virus Safety Knowledge	Provision of standard virus health practice information
		Provision of virus safety training
	Healthcare Assistance	Medical checkups, including temperature scans
		Access to general health advice
		Access to personal health advice (paid / provided by platform)
	2b. Fair Conditions (Illness)	Sick Pay
Usual pay rate for workers who are ill or in mandatory quarantine (14 days)		
Financial support fund (use to be clarified but usually for sick pay)		
Workers made to sign agreements that sick pay was pandemic-specific and does not change employment status		
Insurance		Platform provision of health insurance, or credit on health savings account
	Death Benefits	Provision of death benefits
3. Fair Contracts	[No example policies found]	[Beneficial changes to worker T&Cs / contracts / status as a result of Covid-19]
4. Fair Management	Algorithmic Penalty Protection	No loss of incentive level despite lower level of work
		Unlimited unpaid time off without penalty
	Anti-Discrimination	Platform statement to customers that discrimination against certain worker groups during Covid-19 (e.g. on spurious hygiene grounds) will not be tolerated
5. Fair Representation	[No example policies found]	[Formal receipt of, engagement with, and action on Covid-19-related demands from worker representatives]
		Dismissal of workers if they engage in organisation of workers during Covid-19

Policy Category	Sub-Category	Platform Action
Other	Donation	Substantial donation or other assistance (e.g. free services) to national health services, community funds or similar
	Hiring	Hiring initiative for unemployed workers (does not benefit current workers)
	Service Contraction	Contraction of scope of services, e.g. to emergency provision only

Key: items in blue text appear to be particularly for the benefit of the platform but with some potential benefit for workers; items in orange text are likely negative for workers; items in red text are negative for workers.

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Endnotes

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- ¹³ getTOD (2020) Virtual DIY handyman, getTOD <https://www.gettod.com/virtual-hero/>
- ¹⁴ Anwar, M.A. (2020) “We work for Uber”: South Africa’s gig drivers left alone at the wheel, *African Arguments* <https://africanarguments.org/2020/04/28/we-work-for-uber-south-africa-covid-19-gig-drivers-alone-wheel/>
- ¹⁵ Wikipedia (2020) COVID-19 pandemic by country and territory, Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2019%E2%80%932020_coronavirus_pandemic_by_country_and_territory#Confirmed_cases
- ¹⁶ The fourth high-scoring platform, NoSweat, is an online freelancing platform; a sector that has seen much less impact of Covid-19 and in which many measures (e.g. relating to physical contact) would not be relevant.
- ¹⁷ An exception might be some tradespeople such as plumbers and electricians.
- ¹⁸ Devereux, S. (2020) Social protection responses to the COVID-19 lockdown in South Africa, *The Conversation* <https://theconversation.com/social-protection-responses-to-the-covid-19-lockdown-in-south-africa-134817>
- ¹⁹ Mahlaka, R. (2020) UIF has R30bn available for Covid-19 income support to laid-off workers, *Business Maverick* <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-04-01-uif-has-r30bn-available-for-covid-19-income-support-to-laid-off-workers/>. The UIF application procedure is also quite cumbersome and historically it has taken a long time to start paying out benefits.
- ²⁰ SA Government (2020) Social grants - Coronavirus COVID-19, SA Government <https://www.gov.za/coronavirus/socialgrants>
- ²¹ Business Insider SA (2020) How to apply for the R350 unemployment grant, *Business Insider South Africa* <https://www.businessinsider.co.za/how-to-apply-for-the-r350-unemployment-grant-covid-coronavirus-2020-4>
- ²² EWN (2020) How the coronavirus R350 unemployment grant will be rolled out, *Eyewitness News* <https://ewn.co.za/2020/04/25/how-the-covid-19-r350-unemployment-grant-will-be-rolled-out>
- ²³ Heeks, R. (2019) A living wage for South African platform workers, Fairwork <https://fair.work/a-living-wage-for-south-african-platform-workers/>. Note the figure was updated to R6,800 per month for 2020.
- ²⁴ In March 2020, workers on the Domestly platform were transferred to another company but accounts remained active.
- ²⁵ All interviewees were provided a R70 payment as recompense for their time and participation.

²⁶ AppJobs (2020) How much is the gig economy affected by the coronavirus outbreak?, AppJobs <https://www.appjobs.com/blog/coronavirus-effect-on-gig-economy>

²⁷ Substituting the word ‘other person’ in the Act for ‘platform’ – except in criterion (c), where the substitution is for the original word ‘organisation’ – in order to assess whether the worker was an employee of the platform.

²⁸ Katta, S. (2020) Fairwork releases report on platform responses to Covid-19, Fairwork <https://fair.work/fairwork-releases-report-on-platform-responses-to-covid-19/>

²⁹ Seeing the urgency of the problem, one workers’ group had organised food distribution for ride-hailing drivers and their families in Cape Town. But it had been ordered by the police to stop because it lacked the necessary permit and health and safety compliance.

³⁰ E.g. India: Mawii, Z. (2020) Covid-19 Charter Of Recommendations, Tandem Research <https://tandemresearch.org/publications/covid19-charter-of-recommendations>

³¹ Gentilini, U. (2020) Weekly social protection links <https://www.ugogentilini.net/>