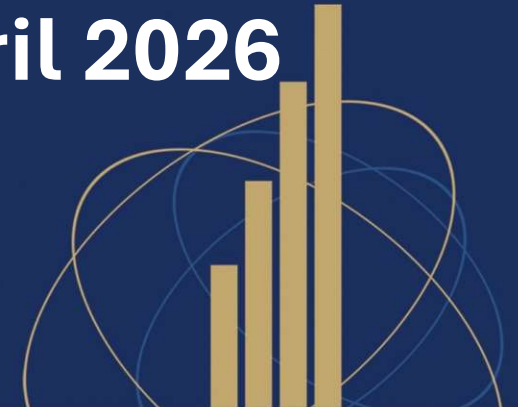




**22 April 2026**

**Current Global and Political Risk  
Environment: How adaptive strategies can  
safeguard Vision 2030 implementation**



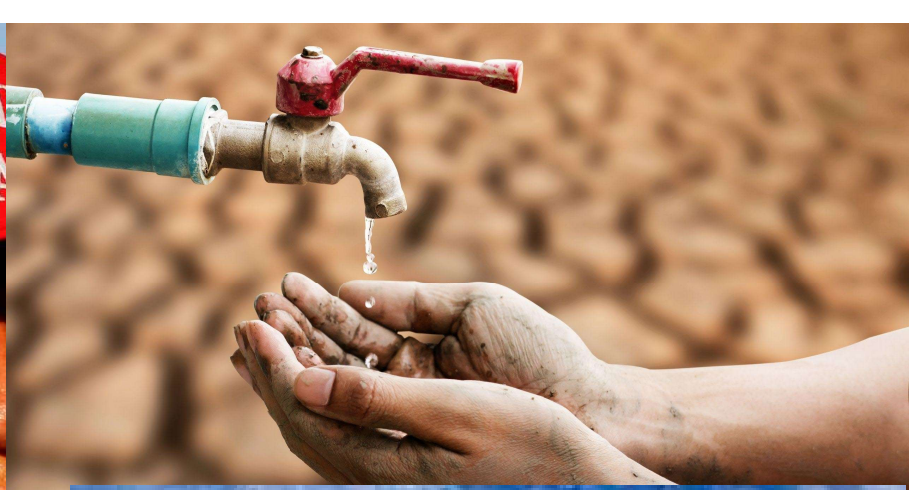
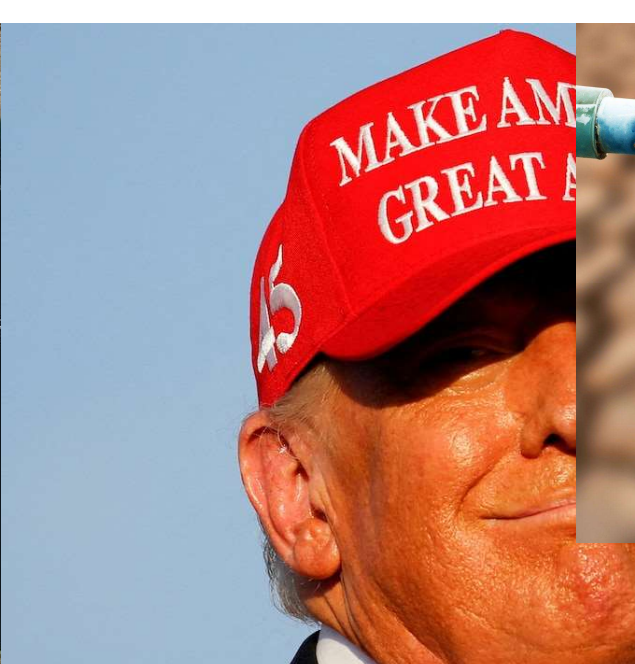
**Vanessa Thurlwell**  
**Institute of Risk Management South Africa (IRMSA)**

[www.cigfaro.co.za](http://www.cigfaro.co.za)

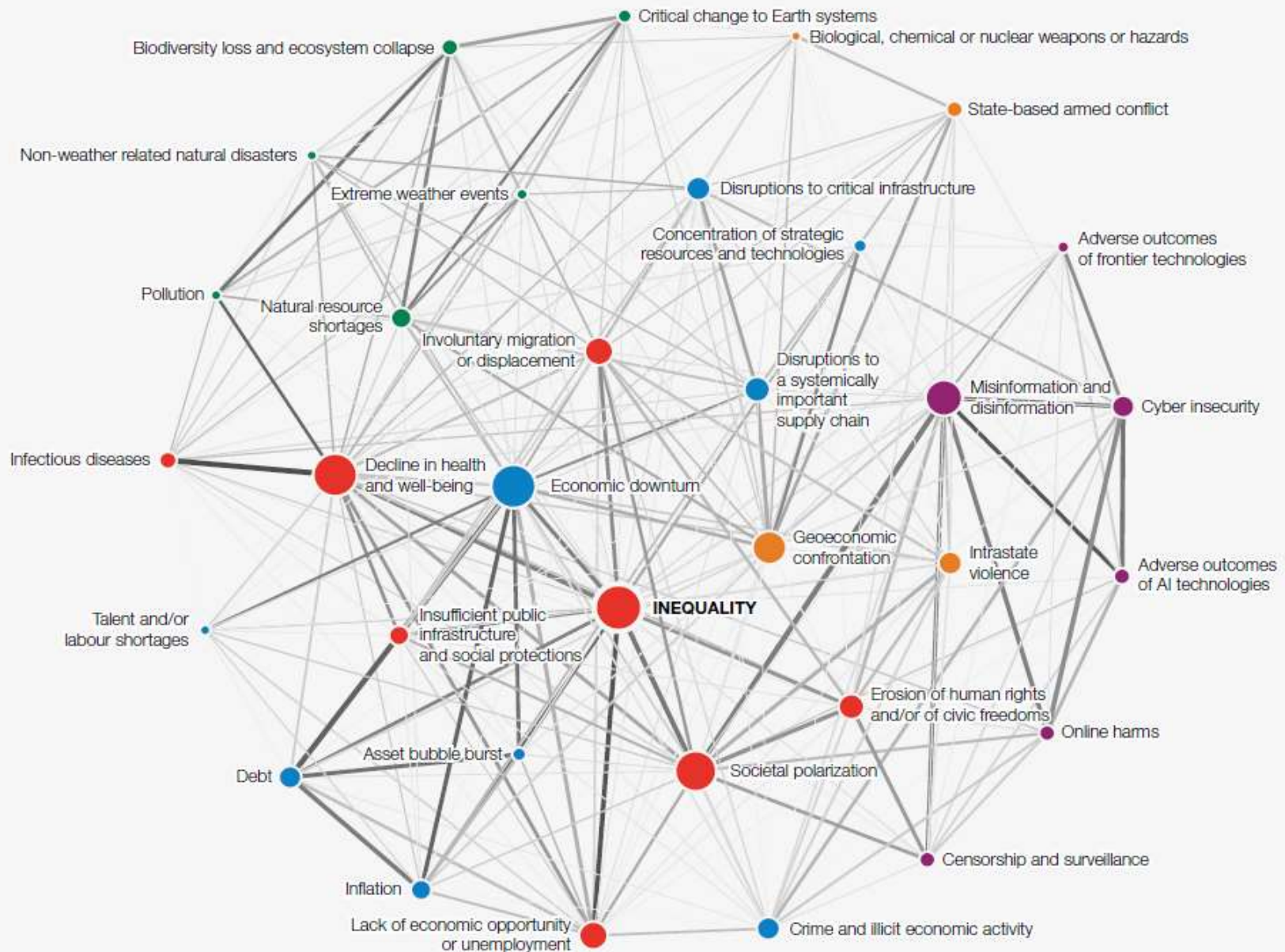
SAQA Recognised Professional Body

# Permanent Volatility





# Risk is no longer episodic: It is continuous and interconnected



# Risk Report 2025/6



# IRMSA Top 10 Risks

Political instability



Cohesive Politics

Disruptive technology



Creative Technology

Failed State



Capable State

Economic regression /  
stagnation



Competitive Economy

Breakdown in the rule  
of law



Credible Rule of Law

Inequality and social  
fragmentation



Connected Social  
Security

Failed public  
infrastructure



Capacitated  
Infrastructure

Extreme weather  
events and changing  
weather patterns



Context-Relevant  
Climate Resilience

Insufficient human  
capital



Competent People

Long-term malnutrition  
and developmental  
stunting



Cost-Accessible  
Food Security

# National Priorities

## Leadership

Activate the most competent leaders in critical vacancies

## Policy

Embed political cohesion through governance and policy reforms

## Capability

Build State capability and strengthen the rule of law

## Infrastructure

Urgently re-capacitate public infrastructure

## Economic Growth

Drive inclusive economic growth

## People

Invest in people, e.g., reconciliation, healthcare, education

*Leadership capacity counters divisive politics.  
Cohesive politics drive State capability and the  
rule of law.*

*These enable capacitated infrastructure to  
facilitate a competitive economy and fuel a  
connected society.*

# Global Risk Environment

## Short term (2 years)

1. Geoeconomic confrontation
2. Misinformation and disinformation
3. Societal polarization
4. Extreme weather events
5. State-based armed conflict
6. Cyber insecurity
7. Inequality
8. Erosion of human rights and/or of civic freedoms
9. Pollution
10. Involuntary migration or displacement

## Long term (10 years)

1. Extreme weather events
2. Biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse
3. Critical change to Earth systems
4. Misinformation and disinformation
5. Adverse outcomes of AI technologies
6. Natural resource shortages
7. Inequality
8. Cyber insecurity
9. Societal polarization
10. Pollution

# Adaptive Strategy

**Leadership | Capability |  
Resilience over control**

“Vision 2030 will fail without adaptive risk strategies”



# Adaptive Strategy

Dynamic, flexible, forward-looking decision-making

**Compliance → Intelligence**

**Reaction → Anticipation**

**Silos → Integrated resilience**



# Vision 2030 is dependent on Risk Maturity

<b>Vision 2030 Goal</b>	<b>Risk Threat</b>	<b>Adaptive Strategy</b>
Economic growth	Stagnation, FX volatility	Diversification, resilience planning
Social stability	Inequality, fragmentation	Inclusive policy + social safety nets
Infrastructure	System failure	Resilient, future-ready infrastructure
Governance	Political instability	Ethical leadership + strong institutions

# Our “So What”

## 1. Build a Capable State

Strengthen institutions  
and governance

## 2. Invest in People & Skills

Future workforce  
readiness

## 3. Strengthen Infrastructure Resilience

Energy, water, digital  
systems

## 4. Embed Risk Intelligence

Data, AI, predictive  
analytics

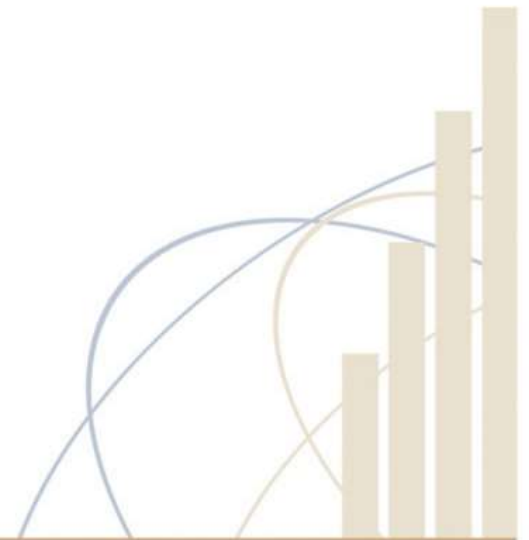
## 5. Foster Collaborative Leadership

Public-private  
partnerships



# Things to remember:

- ✓ We are in an age of permanent disruption
- ✓ Risks are interconnected and systemic
- ✓ Governance and leadership are central risks
- ✓ Adaptability = competitive advantage
- ✓ Vision 2030 requires risk-informed decision-making



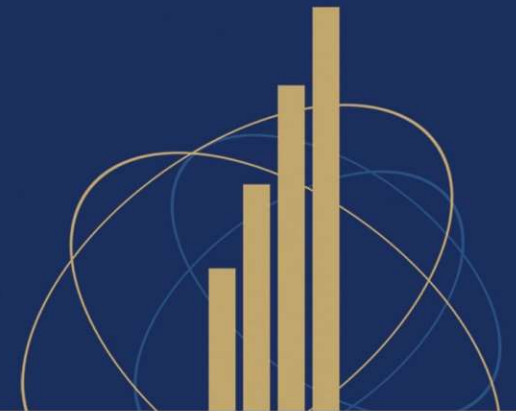
“The biggest risk is not uncertainty, it is failing to adapt.”

“Are we managing risk, or are we managing yesterday’s risks?”





# Thank You!



**CIGFARO**  
Chartered Institute of  
Government Finance, Audit & Risk Officers

[www.cigfaro.co.za](http://www.cigfaro.co.za)

SAQA Recognised Professional Body