

# The "Coin" That Sees You...

## CBDC

**Surveillance, submission,  
then just silence...**

**Johann Heynecke...**

## Foreword - *The Digital Rand: How CBDCs Could Reshape, Restrict Life in South Africa...*

The story of money in South Africa has always been a story of power... Who holds it, who issues it, and who is excluded from it... From the early days of colonial coinage to the era of the rand, the control of currency has mirrored the control of people... Now, as the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) prepares to introduce the *Digital Rand*, that story is entering its most decisive and dangerous chapter yet...

a Central Bank Digital Currency, or CBDC, is being sold as the next leap forward in "financial innovation"... The official language promises *efficiency, inclusion, modernization* and *security*... Although history teaches us that when technology and power merge without accountability, convenience often becomes the mask of control.... The Digital Rand is not just another form of money - it is the architecture for a new kind of financial order, one that could redefine what it means to live freely in South Africa...

Unlike Bitcoin or decentralized cryptocurrencies, a CBDC is state-issued and centrally controlled... Every transaction, every payment, every transfer could be visible on a government ledger... It is programmable money - meaning its use can be restricted, its lifespan shortened, its purpose predefined... Once money becomes programmable, it ceases to be a neutral tool and becomes a mechanism of compliance... In such a system, *freedom* is no longer assumed; it is granted - or withdrawn - at the flick of a digital switch...

This document - *The "Coin" that Sees You* - is not a speculative essay or a conspiracy narrative... It is a sober examination of how this technology, when applied in the South African context, could reshape our society in ways few citizens fully grasp... For a nation struggling with deep inequality, fragile infrastructure and institutional mistrust, the introduction of a centrally controlled digital currency is not merely a technical reform - it is a political act of enormous consequence...

Consider the implications... a Digital wallet tied to your South African ID, mobile number or biometric data could seem practical - until access to your funds depends on algorithmic "trust scores" or regulatory compliance... Imagine a system where your spending is restricted for "nonessential" goods or where funds can expire to stimulate consumption.... Imagine that every rand you spend can be traced, taxed or withheld without your consent... These are not theoretical scenarios - they are built into the design philosophy of CBDCs under the banner of "programmability"... In a country already grappling with surveillance concerns, data breaches and state corruption, a centralized financial system of this magnitude would not enhance democracy - it would endanger it... When money itself becomes a form of identification, resistance becomes economically impossible... No protest, no whistleblowing, no dissent can survive when the state holds the off-switch to your livelihood...

South Africa's vulnerabilities make this risk especially acute... Millions of citizens lack reliable internet access, digital literacy or secure devices... Rural communities, informal traders, pensioners and street vendors - the very groups, the system claims to "include" — are those most likely to be locked out or controlled by it. In the name of modernization, the poor could become more dependent than ever on state approval to live and trade...

Globally, the Digital Rand would not exist in isolation... It would plug into a larger network of interoperable CBDC's championed by institutions like the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), the IMF and the G20... This emerging framework envisions a borderless financial grid governed by shared compliance algorithms - a system where local sovereignty gives way to global digital oversight... Once integrated, South Africa's citizens could find their financial data flowing into an international web of surveillance and regulation beyond democratic reach...

But this what is written is not only a warning - it is also a call to awareness and action... Understanding what CBDC's are, how they function and what they enable is the first step in defending economic freedom... South Africans must demand transparency from policymakers, insist on the legal protection of cash and support decentralized community-based alternatives...

The battle for the future of money is not about technology - it is about trust, autonomy and freedom... The Digital Rand may arrive draped in the language of progress, but its true test will be whether it empowers citizens or subordinates them to a programmable economy of obedience... This foreword invites you, the reader, to look beyond the slogans and promises - to examine what a "cashless" society truly costs when control is coded into every transaction... Because once money itself is no longer yours to hold, neither is your freedom...

## The Digital Rand: How CBDCs Could Reshape, Restrict: Life in South Africa...

### 1. *What a Digital Rand Really Means:*

When the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) talks about launching a Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC), it uses words like *efficiency, modernization, inclusion, and innovation*... But beneath those words lies a profound shift in power - from the people to the system... a CBDC is not "digital cash" for example like Bitcoin...

It is programmable, traceable and controllable money, issued and monitored directly by the state's central bank... Unlike cash in your wallet or even money in a private bank... Every rand would live on a government ledger, visible and manageable from a central command point...

That means:

- Your money could be tracked in real time...
- Your spending could be restricted or blocked...
- Access could be turned off instantly - no court order, no appeal...

It's money with strings attached...

### 2. *How It Would Work and What That Enables:*

SARB's retail CBDC model would give every South African a digital wallet - possibly tied to your South African ID, mobile number, or even biometric data... This wallet could be accessed via an app or linked to your bank account... When you buy airtime, groceries, or fuel - the transaction is logged on a centralized government ledger... Every rand that moves leaves a permanent trail...

Now imagine that money is *programmable*:

- It can expire if not spent within a certain time...
- It can be blocked for "unapproved" goods or vendors...
- It can be limited to a specific area - say, "for use only in Gauteng" ...
- It can be withheld if your "trust score" drops below a threshold...

This is not science fiction - it's part of the *stated design potential* of CBDCs under the label "programmability" ... What is sold as efficiency becomes a mechanism of behavioural control...

### 3. *The Dangers for the people of South Africa...*

- Loss of Privacy** - South Africans already face data leaks, state surveillance, and SIM card tracking... a CBDC links your identity, transactions and location into one system... It ends the last form of private exchange - cash... Every tithe, donation, protest contribution or purchase tells a story - one the state can read...
- Financial Censorship** - If your wallet depends on approval, it can be frozen or restricted... Miss a tax filing?... Attend a protest?... Criticize a government department online?... Your funds could be flagged, delayed or cut off entirely... Unlike cash, there's no way to hide or resist a freeze... The switch is digital and instant...
- Programmable Dependency** - The state could reward "compliant" citizens (who pay taxes, vaccinate or follow regulations) with incentives and punish others with spending limits... This creates a *financial obedience system* where survival depends on conformity...
- End of Cash... End of Freedom** - Cash is the only money that doesn't need permission... Once CBDC's dominate, businesses will stop accepting notes and banks will close branches... The poor, elderly, rural and informal traders, millions of South Africans will lose their independence... a Street vendor in Khayelitsha, a pensioner in Mthatha or a taxi driver in Limpopo could be locked out of the economy overnight if digital wallets fail, expire, or require biometric verification they can't access...
- Control Masquerading as Inclusion** - SARB will frame the digital rand as a tool of "financial inclusion"... But inclusion here means registration, surveillance and algorithmic control, not empowerment... To "join" means to hand over your financial autonomy...

### 4. *The Hidden Architecture of Control...*

a CBDC system is built on data fusion - combining identity, biometrics, location and transactions into one traceable record... If linked with Digital ID and social services, it becomes the nervous system of total visibility... Think of it as a financial version of the state's surveillance camera network - except instead of watching what you do, it tracks how you live...

This could allow:

- Automatic deductions (taxes, fines, service debts)...
- Geo-fencing (money usable only in certain regions)...
- Behavioural restrictions (no spending on alcohol, travel, or carbon-heavy goods)...
- Social ranking (credit or "trust" scores tied to digital ID behaviour)...

These are not hypothetical. The technology exists and pilot programs in China and Nigeria already test them...

### **5. South Africa's Risk Factors...**

South Africa's environment makes CBDCs particularly dangerous:

- High state corruption and weak accountability - giving more power to central systems risks abuse...
- Low digital literacy - millions will not understand the implications until it's too late...
- High inequality - a CBDC could entrench the gap between the connected elite and the excluded poor...
- Unstable electricity and networks - outages could freeze access to money itself...
- Political polarization - in the wrong hands, the system becomes a weapon against opponents...

The combination of central control + political volatility + fragile infrastructure is a perfect recipe for digital authoritarianism cloaked as modernization.

### **6. The Psychological Trap...**

At first, the rollout will be soft - voluntary, convenient, maybe even rewarding... You'll get small cashbacks, faster grants or no transaction fees... Then physical cash starts disappearing!... Then government departments and employers begin paying only in digital rand... Then "security upgrades" link your wallet to your digital ID... By the time you notice, opting out will no longer be possible... The system won't demand obedience through law - it will make obedience the default condition for access to life...

### **7. The Global Blueprint and Where We Fit In...**

South Africa's Project Khokha (for wholesale CBDC's) and pilot studies for a retail digital rand follow templates set by:

- The Bank for International Settlements (BIS)...
- The IMF...
- The World Bank...
- G20 initiatives on cross-border CBDC's...

These institutions envision a global interoperable digital currency network - where CBDCs can be exchanged seamlessly across borders under shared standards... That means once South Africa plugs in, control doesn't end at Pretoria...

Your financial data could become part of an international surveillance grid - subject to global "compliance" algorithms.

### **8. The Consequences for Ordinary South Africans...**

- Loss of privacy and anonymity...
- Easier state control of dissent and activism...
- Digital exclusion of the poor or undocumented...
- Collapse of informal and cash economies...
- Potential for mass data misuse or identity theft...
- Automatic taxation or deductions without consent...
- Financial obedience as a new social contract...

In short: CBDCs turn money from a right into a permission...

### **9. How to Prepare and Protect Yourself...**

1. Defend cash - Push for permanent legal recognition of cash as a protected form of tender... South Africa should legislate that cash must always remain available...
2. Demand transparency - Publicly accessible audits of all CBDC code, data policies and privacy safeguards...
3. Support decentralized alternatives - Community currencies, privacy-preserving payment systems and cash cooperatives...
4. Raise public awareness - Most citizens don't understand what's coming. Education is key before

implementation...

5. Insist on voluntary adoption - a CBDC should never replace cash or become mandatory...
6. Strengthen digital rights laws - Expand POPIA (Protection of Personal Information Act) to cover financial telemetry and digital currency data...

### ***Critical Learning & Resistance Courses...***

These courses and materials explore the *dangers* of digital money, data surveillance and algorithmic governance - ideal for anyone wanting to understand or counterbalance CBDC narratives...

<b>Focus</b>	<b>Course / Resource</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Link</b>
CBDC Risk Awareness	<i>Human Rights Foundation – CBDC Tracker &amp; Reports</i>	Documents global pilots and risks to freedom & privacy.	<a href="https://cbdctracker.hrf.org">https://cbdctracker.hrf.org</a>
Financial Surveillance	<i>Electronic Frontier Foundation – Privacy &amp; Digital Money</i>	Explains surveillance in digital finance and how to resist it.	<a href="https://www.eff.org/issues/financial-privacy">https://www.eff.org/issues/financial-privacy</a>
Digital Authoritarianism	<i>Coursera: Digital Transformation and the Public Sector – Risks and Governance</i>	Focuses on how digital tools can enable control and censorship.	<a href="https://www.coursera.org/learn/digital-transformation-public-sector">https://www.coursera.org/learn/digital-transformation-public-sector</a>
Decentralization & Freedom	<i>Blockchain Fundamentals – University of Nicosia (Free MOOC)</i>	Shows how decentralized tech resists central control.	<a href="https://www.unic.ac.cy/blockchain/free-mooc/">https://www.unic.ac.cy/blockchain/free-mooc/</a>
Tech Ethics & Policy	<i>MIT OpenCourseWare – Ethics of Technology and AI</i>	Understands how data systems shape behaviour and autonomy.	<a href="https://ocw.mit.edu/">https://ocw.mit.edu/</a>
African Digital Rights	<i>Paradigm Initiative – Digital Rights Academy</i>	Teaches citizens about data protection, surveillance, and digital policy across Africa.	<a href="https://paradigmhq.org">https://paradigmhq.org</a>
SARB & CBDC Policy Reading	<i>South African Reserve Bank – CBDC FAQ &amp; Roadmap</i>	Official documents showing intended design - to read critically.	<a href="https://www.resbank.co.za">https://www.resbank.co.za</a>

## **Conclusion - *The Digital Rand: How CBDCs Could Reshape, Restrict Life in South Africa...***

As we reach the end of this exploration into the Digital Rand, one truth stands out with absolute clarity: The future of money in South Africa will not merely determine how we pay - it will determine how we live... a Central Bank Digital Currency, though wrapped in the language of efficiency and modernization, represents something far more profound: a reconfiguration of human freedom in the digital age...

Money has always been a form of power, it shapes access, opportunity and survival... Yet never before has money been so intimately tied to identity, data and compliance... With the Digital Rand, every transaction becomes a statement of who you are and what you are allowed to do... That converts personal finance into state-administered behaviour, where every purchase can be logged, every transfer scrutinized and every deviation flagged... The danger is not in the technology itself - it is in who controls it, how it is used and what happens when that control is absolute...

In South Africa's context, the stakes are especially high... a Nation burdened by inequality, fragile infrastructure and institutional mistrust cannot afford to hand unchecked power to a centralized system that controls both money and information... The history of South Africa is filled with examples of how power, when centralized, has been used to exclude, suppress and silence... a Digital financial system governed by algorithms and bureaucracy could replicate those injustices at scale - quietly, efficiently and invisibly...

The promise of financial inclusion through CBDC's is seductive, particularly in a country where millions remain unbanked or underserved... But "inclusion" under such terms means integration into a system where participation requires surrender... To be included is to be registered, monitored and ultimately dependent... When the ability to transact is conditional upon digital verification, the meaning of freedom itself shifts... Autonomy becomes a privilege - one that can be granted or revoked at will...

Globally, the rollout of CBDCs follows a coordinated pattern... From China's e-CNY to Nigeria's eNaira, the narrative is the same: modernization, security, convenience... Behind this language lies the same design - programmable, traceable and controllable money... South Africa's Project Khokha and retail CBDC pilots are not independent experiments but nodes in a broader international agenda, guided by global financial institutions that envision an interconnected network of compliant currencies... Once connected, national sovereignty becomes porous... Financial behaviour becomes subject not only to domestic authority but to international surveillance and algorithmic governance...

The consequences reach beyond economics... They touch the very structure of democracy society where every financial action is recorded and potentially restricted is a society where dissent costs too much to risk... The digital suppression of a citizen's ability to transact is more powerful than censorship - it starves opposition silently, without headlines, without trials, without evidence... It enforces conformity not through fear of punishment, but through fear of exclusion...

Although, this outcome is not inevitable, South Africans can still shape the path forward - if they act before the system becomes irreversible... Defending cash is not nostalgia; it is defending the last form of private, permissionless exchange... Demanding transparency is not resistance; it is citizenship... Educating communities about the implications of CBDCs is not paranoia; it is empowerment... The choice lies between a financial future built on consent or one built on compliance...

The Digital Rand may come dressed as progress, but progress without liberty is regression disguised as innovation... As the nation stands at this digital crossroads, South African's must decide whether they want a future where money serves the people - or one where people serve the system that issues their money...

The choice is not about rejecting technology; it is about redefining its purpose... Technology must expand freedom, not contract it... Money must remain a tool of exchange, not an instrument of obedience... For when control of money becomes control of movement, expression and existence itself... We will have traded our independence for convenience and lost both...

Let this not be the story of South Africa's next chapter, rather let it be the warning that prevented it...

*Please everyone that receive and read this... Doesn't matter if you agree or not with what I've written here, please don't keep it for yourself... Spread it far and wide, let more people see and read, what's going on in South Africa...*

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