

# A Feminist View

of the

## 2021 Local Government Election Manifestos

Sam Waterhouse, Vivienne Mentor-Lalu & Motlatsi Komote  
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**Womxn and Democracy Initiative**

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**Womxn and Democracy Initiative**



## Section One: Introduction

The Womxn and Democracy Initiative (WDI) is based at the Dullah Omar Institute at the University of the Western Cape. We identify as feminist, taking an intersectional approach to our work on realising social justice through active political participation of the public in the context of a feminist version of constitutional democracy.

With this project we considered the three biggest and one newly formed small political parties' manifestos and hope to provide information to the public on the extent to which parties respond to an intersectional feminist agenda. We hope this will increase the tools available to hold political parties accountable after elections, to the promises they make to the public through their manifestos ahead of elections. Political parties themselves may find the content useful for reflection on these issues and to consider their integration in future manifestos or policies.

While we do hope to make information available to help inform people ahead of the election, we are not attempting to tell people how to vote. That would be irresponsible, as the manifestos alone are blunt tools to assess the potential future performance of a party. These can really only tell us what political parties say they want voters to hear before an election. We hope that this analysis will serve beyond this time of election, to deepen public discourse from a feminist perspective and to deepen the idea of what a feminist agenda for political leadership might look like.

Despite the manifestos being 'blunt' in terms of holding political leadership to account, the more that the public inform ourselves, the more we engage with political parties on their pre-election promises, and the more we call on them to adapt their positions to respond to our needs, the more useful they become. Once a party gains power, be it nationally, provincially or in a single ward, or if they gain enough votes to be part of the opposition, then the manifestos can be used along with other methods to hold them to account.

We considered the three top performing political parties in the last national election – the African National Congress (ANC), the Democratic Alliance (DA), and the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF). We have also considered the manifestos of the newly emerged Ikhwezi Political Movement (IPM) a small women led party that is contesting the election in Plettenberg Bay - this manifesto, in contrast to the other three parties' lengthy offerings, is a concise two pager, the other point of difference is that IPM are only contesting in one municipality.

### Our 'Feminist Indicators' and intersectionality

We analysed the 2021 election manifestos against a set of indicators that we developed ahead of the 2019 national elections. We felt it would be helpful to develop a framework to analyse the manifestos, but we were mindful that by their very nature such tools can flatten meaning; claims of objectivity are often false, and they remove conceptual analysis and theoretical foundations. To conduct feminist analysis of political parties manifestos required us to take a far more complex and nuanced approach.

We were also mindful that, by definition, there can be no definitive version of 'Feminist Indicators'. For a start as researchers, our positionality influences the indicators that we have identified. So we have envisaged this framework as an evolving tool meant to serve our ongoing feminist analysis of the priorities and performance of government and political leadership. In addition to our own lives and professional experience and research, as a small group, we have been influenced over the past decades by other womxn, activist groups, local organisations, NGOs and researchers in developing this 'agenda', but we don't doubt that these indicators can be strengthened through more engagement and input.

Our indicators prioritise patriarchy as a system of power which undermines gender and sexual determination in our society. This is linked with other key social justice agendas that respond to neo-liberal capitalist systems, raised through a feminist intersectional lens. We don't claim that they are agnostic, or objective. Thus this project aims to provide a social-justice and feminist perspective on key political party manifestos – taking the questions beyond what the parties are saying on issues that are commonly defined as gendered or 'women's issues' such as gender based violence and women's representation, into questions of how parties have addressed a gendered or women's agenda throughout their manifestos.

In our attempts at intersectionality, we have looked at how parties recognise and respond, through their manifestos, to the layers of exclusions and discriminations faced by different groups of women, Black women, poor and working-class women, women living with or caring for other people with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ people, migrant and refugee women, women living in rural contexts and in urban poor contexts. We've focussed further in on the question of if parties have specifically addressed the context of groups such as women living under traditional authorities, farm women, women in the informal economy and women in insecure employment.

We have taken care that we ourselves, not write a 'shopping list' of people that loses meaning. Rather we try to reference these groups of people intentionally and linked to different sectoral or thematic issues where our understanding and knowledge indicates it is most relevant. As with our overall recognition of our positionality and subjectivity, we are likely to have missed some important issues. We also debated the question of writing womxn with an x to denote our recognition of the struggles of people who identify as wom\_n or are gender non-conforming. Ultimately we opted not to, for two reasons,

firstly much of the research on the situation people live in is completely blind to the LGBTIQ+ communities varied experiences - thus using the x in the word relating to other research is misleading; secondly we were careful that our own writing should not take the easy route of using the x or taking women and LGBTI+ onto sentences without considering the differences and specifics of people within that very broad category that are relevant to local government mandates. Where we considered that there is a particular relevance we have used the x or noted gender-non conforming people, or referred to groups of people within the LGBTIQ+ categorisation.

### **Making sense of promises, populism and lip service**

As noted above, manifestos can only tell us what political parties want us to hear. However we have tried to **assess the difficult question of populism and lip-service**, in terms of the quality of what's promised, if the commitments are backed up by a depth of understanding of the context of women, if they appear realistic given the context on any particular issue, and if they are specific and targeted. This includes:

- The quality of their analysis in their manifestos, are the promises they make backed up by recognition of what the challenges have been to past plans to implement those promises.
- The specificity and clarity of the promises/plans. Are they detailed and target specific, recognising the limits of what can be expected from manifestos?
- Is an indication given of how the promise will be resourced?
- Are there commitments to mechanisms for transparency, monitoring and accountability?

### **Translating the work to the local sphere**

Embarking on research to assess promises ahead of a local government election required an extensive rewrite of many of the indicators that we'd previously developed for assessment of national level manifestos, speeches and policies over the past three years, so that they spoke to the specific context of local competencies.

There are certain issues that are the primary constitutional mandate of local government, these are relatively easy to identify and to understand. However there are a number of areas of 'concurrent responsibility' - where different levels of government (local, provincial, and/or national) should work together to fulfill the rights or deliver the service. These are numerous, and many are notoriously complex and difficult to understand and unravel. To understand this requires readings of multiple laws, starting with the Constitution and ranging to those that deal with democratic systems and responsibility such as the Municipal Systems and Structures Acts, to those sectoral laws dealing with issues such as land reform, housing, health and so on. In addition, different types of municipalities - Metro, District or Local have different levels of authority and responsibility on different issues which we needed to understand.

Guided by the Constitutional objectives for local government we have taken the approach to explore roles that local government could better fulfil even when these may not be well established in practice, however we have been cautious not to propose that national or provincial government's responsibilities should be devolved to local level, and we are especially mindful of the current underfunding of local government and how this vexes their ability to fulfil their mandates as it is. There are also some issues that fall strongly within the scope of national and/or provincial competencies - outside the responsibility of local government such as basic education. However even with these there are functions of the local level that can impact on these issues and the realisation of these rights and vice-versa.

#### **Chapter seven of the South African Constitution establishes the objectives and developmental duties of local government.**

##### **S152. Objects of local government**

152(1) The objects of local government are –

- (a) To provide **democratic and accountable** government for local communities
- (b) To ensure the **provision of services** to communities in a **sustainable** manner;
- (c) To promote **social and economic development**
- (d) To promote a **safe and healthy** environment
- (e) To encourage the **involvement of communities and community organisations** in the matters of local government.

(2) A municipality **must strive**, within its financial and administrative capacity, to achieve the objects set out in subsection (1).

S153. Developmental duties of municipalities.

A municipality must-

- (a) Structure and manage its administration and budgeting and planning processes to **give priority to basic needs** of the community and to **promote the social and economic development** of the community; and
- (b) **Participate in national and provincial development** programmes.

### **Recognition of the contributions and ideas of others**

This process required a fast upskilling of the research team, who do not qualify as experts on local government. The vast range of issues that fall under local government control took us into territory that we as a group have less experience on. We have challenged ourselves to expand our knowledge and understandings and tackle them as thoroughly as we could. This was both for our own learning and expansion and because we consider it an important part of the exercise of deepening our intersectionalities. The consequence is that there are areas where other people who have lived-experience or other expertise on the issues we tackle may wish to contact us to engage with us on these.

As feminists we believe in co-creation, that our knowledge, views and opinions are influenced by and influence others. To achieve this analysis, we have relied on the work, publications, and participation in various meetings, workshops and Whatsapp groups over the past two decades. Where appropriate (actual events attended or documents reviewed) we have made direct references in the document, however after years of collaboration it becomes difficult to define the source of specific ideas and nuanced understanding.

The WDI works in collaborative and collective ways with partners both in structured formations and in more organic ways. These partnerships have contributed to enriching our understanding and knowledge and we would like to specifically name Parliament Watch, the Budget Justice Coalition, the Asijiki Coalition, and The Shukumisa Campaign.

Working on local government matters is new terrain for the WDI team and we were fortunate to draw on the knowledge and expertise from colleagues in the broader Dullah Omar Institute. We would like to specifically acknowledge Michelle Rufaro Maziwisa, Thabile Chonco, Annette May, and Jean Redpath, on whose expertise we relied in different sections of the report. Jaap de Visser took additional time to read, guide, and share insights with us in some of the especially complicated areas relating to multi-level governance. Lenina Rassool joined in the last phase of the writing, and her questions have been invaluable to help us to try to ground the work.

Alicestine October, Zukiswa White, and Ashley Nehrebecki were part of our 2019 election analysis team and have played an important role in our original development of the indicators and the complexities that come with attempting to apply them to the different contexts of political parties.

## Section Two: The big picture

This section provides commentary on what we could tell and what we couldn't from reading the manifestos. We provide an overview of our analysis relating to two of our key issues - how parties dealt with women's invisible work, and their engagement with issues of democracy at local level. We provide a brief synopsis of our impressions of each of the four parties in relation to our feminist indicators. The section is wrapped up with a bit more detail on if and how the parties deal with bigger picture issues of patriarchy and structural violence.

### 2.1. What can manifestos tell us?

As we've noted, manifestos are not a strong tool to hold government to account because they are not legally binding. While we can track, in terms of the ruling party, the consistency of promises in the manifestos to the commitments in law and policy, this isn't possible with opposition and minority parties. In addition, to a large extent manifestos are inaccessible and people obtain information about parties through different sources. For the parties with a large footprint they are lengthy, informed by research, and include incredible levels of detail - in some cases, literally incredible or hard to believe. Sometimes this detail seems to be used to hide the lack of specificity in the parties' offerings. On the other hand, having looked at the IPM which is a small, local party contesting in one municipality and that doesn't have the level resourcing available to the ANC, EFF or DA, they provide a succinct two-page manifesto which makes it much more accessible to the average reader, this comes at the cost of providing a sense of their targeting, which would allow for future accountability.

Although the manifestos all cover a lot of ground, especially for the larger parties it is still possible to identify the broad orientation and key target audience for the parties. This is particularly true of the opposition parties, whereas the ANC does attempt to address the needs of a wide range of the population; the EFF prioritise the marginalised majority, particularly poor and working class black African people; and the DA clearly foreground the middle classes, and private sector. *Despite the manifestos addressing a very wide range of issues, it is possible to discern some level of priority when noticing that some sections and issues seem to be dealt with more carefully than others.*

As much as we have grappled with the issues of local competencies and the role of the national and provincial spheres in our analysis of the manifestos, it is clear that parties have also made decisions in this regard. *The situation at local level is profoundly affected by decisions and political context at national level.* The ANC with its strong footprint as the governing party has, in our view an obligation to attend, in its manifesto to issues that fall within national government decision-making but which directly impact on local level responsibilities. Similarly, the DA and EFF both hold strong place as opposition at national level and as such we've considered how their manifestos engage with these complex issues from that perspective.

### 2.2. Parties' overall performance in relation to the feminist indicators

#### Women's invisible work

Women's invisible, unpaid and or underpaid work in families and communities contributes to everybody's wellbeing but affects women's inequality in many different ways. Women and girls absorb most of the care work and domestic work without recognition for how that work contributes to the country's economy. The unequal distribution of care and housework between women and men is rooted in pervasive and entrenched patriarchal norms and will require strong leadership and systemic and consistent interventions to shift. Acknowledging that this work exists, at the very least, will signal a basic understanding of the role that women play and begin to reflect an understanding of how that role affects their position in society. *All parties have failed to address the issue of women's invisible and free labour.* In the context of local government competencies, this means that they have not demonstrated any understanding of, or priority, in terms of the way that failures and disruptions in the supply of electricity or water to a home result in the women and girls in that home shouldering additional tasks and stressors, which deeply impacts on their wellbeing and ability to participate in society on equal terms as men. This invisible labour negatively effects on women's ability to take up opportunities that may be provided for education, skills development, building houses and so on. Government's failures to deliver services, increases the stress and risks of violence to women who are in relationships with violent partners who may lash out at women for not performing on their perceived duties.

#### Local democratic participation

Participatory democracy is at the heart of South Africa's constitution. *At all levels there are deep failures of democracy or the envisaged people-driven decision making.* These failures are strongly connected to failures in transparency and public access to information. Participation and information rights lie at the heart of a social justice and redistribution agenda. At the local level this relates for example, to participation in the development of IDPs and spatial plans, to democratising housing delivery processes, and environmental reforms. This is also critical to the question of accessibility of local council meetings, information from these and including ensuring mechanisms for ongoing public engagement with the issues

addressed at this level. Only the EFF's manifesto provides any mention of strengthening the local measures in this regard. Both the DA and the ANC rely in their manifestos on the assumption that the current mechanisms are sufficient. As with all levels of government, to achieve social justice reforms, these 'participation exercises' must grapple with the range of issues faced by different groups of people to ensure that there is meaningful participation of the people who are most marginalised and excluded. They must also expressly consider how political affiliation and social power may favour or prevent participation in any local context.

### 2.2.1. The African National Congress

The ANC is the ruling party and has been for the past 27 years, their manifesto is thus from the position of being in charge of the executive arm of government responsible for implementing legislation and policy on national level and in eight provinces. In the 2016 local government election the ANC won just under 54% of the vote.<sup>1</sup> The internal factionalism battles that have plagued the party have increased in recent years and create an adverse political climate within the party that has a huge impact on society as a whole.<sup>2</sup> While not always visible on the national stage, this factionalism plays out significantly on municipal level and has deep implications in the lives of the people living in those areas, yet the manifesto doesn't acknowledge this 'elephant in the room' or give any assurance to the public on how they intend to deal with its impacts at that level.

Given their role in national government the ANC do a relatively good job of engaging with the line of how they'd use national strategies to complement their local government strategies. At the same time some of their proposals underscore a tendency of creeping centralisation. While we are mindful that many failures at local level do need urgent interventions from other spheres, the manifesto doesn't demonstrate to the public the level of caution and public engagement that would be critical to develop longer term strategies to protect and strengthen decentralised government.

Overall, the ANC manifesto doesn't offer much that is new, in particular they have not grappled with why their previous approaches have failed or demonstrated new strategies for these. For example, they commit to 'reaffirm' the principles of the equitable share formula, rather than address the need for it to be overhauled and updated. They have not managed to convey to the public why, this time, it will be different. Their commitments, while some are quite concrete in content, are vague in terms of their targets and implementation strategies. We did note that of the three parties, the ANC alone recognises a number of its challenges and failures, the DA and EFF as opposition have had the luxury of only focusing on their successes and the ANCs failures.

On the whole, the ANC is very weak on how it deals with gender and intersectionality. Firstly, the ANC's section on gender is tacked on, and it offers one 'catch all' line in one section promising that the specific needs of various groups of people namely, women, people with disabilities, the elderly and children will be addressed in infrastructure development, basic services, housing and local economic development. The ANC have missed the opportunity to demonstrate a more integrated thinking on gender by being specific on issues linked to women and other groups of people who are marginalised in different ways within each sectoral consideration such as basic services or proposals for women's involvement in the economy. That said, the catch all line is definitely an improvement on the ANC's previous treatments of *womenand youth* or *womenandchildren*. Hence, we are surprised that the lessons of specificity and intersectionality that the ANC has been learning in its process of developing the National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence & Femicide (NSP-GBVF) are not demonstrated in the manifesto.

### 2.2.2. The Democratic Alliance

The DA is the official opposition party and is the ruling party in the Western Cape Province. They have some provincial experience of running the executive arm of government in the Western Cape. In the 2016 local government election the DA won just under 27% of the vote. The DA, like most political parties, are affected by internal power struggles however their battles often play out less publicly than the ANC. The DA, similarly to their 2019 election manifesto, presented their manifesto like a governing party in waiting - again missing the opportunity to address the voter of what they can offer as the opposition. For example, although the DAs manifesto, more so than the ANC and EFF, focus consistently on local government competencies, in the role as the official opposition it would have made sense for them to make some appropriate links to national level.

The DA does not, deliberately we think, identify women or gender in their manifesto, pointing to a genderblind position with no recognition of structural and intersectional contexts for women. On that basis, they don't begin to address the issues that

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<sup>1</sup> IEC Local Government Election Report 2016. available at file:///C:/Users/Admin/Downloads/2016%20Municipal%20Elections%20Report.pdf accessed on 26 October 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Reiersgord D Factionalism and the ANC: Are we missing something? 14 March 2021 *Daily Maverick* available at <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2021-03-14-factionalism-and-the-anc-are-we-missing-something/> accessed on 26 October 2021.

maintain the status quo of the entrenched inequalities experienced by women or other groups on the margins, and this manifesto is unlikely to significantly change the lives of those women.

Overall, from its position of privilege, the DA chooses to present their manifesto as if everyone is on a level playing field resulting in a manifesto that speaks to better resourced middle-class people in South Africa. The manifesto speaks about 'hardworking South Africans' paying rates, having to go off the grid, installing solar energy and boreholes while continuing to use language of land invasions and requiring that people who may benefit from the DA's 'offer' of housing have a duty to be patient and well-behaved. The DA wants to make it easy to do business and commits to reduce bureaucracy in the formal economy, but for the informal sector their commitment to regulation and policing remains. In this way the DA don't demonstrate any serious attempts to improve the conditions for those working in the informal sector, and a number of their approaches would maintain inequalities rather than pursue a social justice agenda.

### 2.2.3. The Economic Freedom Fighters

The EFF contested its first local government elections in 2016 and is the second largest opposition party in South Africa. They have no executive government experience on national or provincial level but did win just over 8% in the 2016 local government elections. The EFF's manifesto is written both from the perspective of a governing party in waiting and from an opposition perspective. The EFF have at times relied on violent approaches where they are in opposition, using intimidation tactics and violence to achieve their ends - for example the violence towards the acting Speaker of Tshwane Council - this approach to their power constitutes an attack on constitutional democracy.<sup>3</sup>

In terms of addressing the complex terrain of multi-level government in its local government election manifesto the EFF manifesto is a mixed bag. It provides a relatively grounded assessment of a number of the problems faced at municipal level and how these are impacted by other spheres of government. On the whole, the manifesto is well targeted to the local sphere. However, there are also numerous times when they emphasise commitments that are national/provincial responsibility, or that of all three spheres. They do so as if these can be delivered by EFF municipalities, but they don't make commitments to cooperate with other spheres of government, i.e. spheres that are led by other parties.

The EFF foreground that their manifesto is developed through consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, including representatives of groups of people who face serious discriminations, the positive impact of these consultations comes through in the different sections of their manifesto, although sometimes it is in isolated or disjointed ways. It is evident that many of the EFF's proposals are well-grounded in research and make some considered proposals, for example those proposing reforms on access to free-basic services. *Most of the more grounded proposals include target setting and clear deadlines which make it very possible to monitor.*

The most striking feature of the EFF's manifesto though is that they make excessive and unrealistic commitments on important issues. They have not demonstrated a strategic approach or priority for many. This poses a serious challenge to the credibility of these commitments. At times the endless and over grand promises lean towards insulting the intelligence of the public.

*Of the parties, the EFF's statements on patriarchy and their intersectional approach is strong. Their proposals in terms of GBV are mostly unspecific, and those that are more specific lean strongly towards popular appeal rather than being achievable at local level.*

*Another potentially useful contribution from the EFF, is their commitment to hold their councillors accountable, they take an unusual approach by including the party's expectations of its councillors and making this list of 33 'principles' available to the public. However here again the party has not exercised any restraint and thus runs a high risk of overpromise and under-deliver.*

### 2.3.4. Ikhwezi People's Movement

IPMs footprint is restricted to Bitou Local municipality in the Western Cape and this is the first time they are contesting any elections in South Africa. IPM produced a short but succinct two-page manifesto targeting their specific municipality in Plettenberg Bay. In an interview the leader of IPM revealed that it was through an organic process that all their ward candidates ended up being women - this explains the lack of gendered content in the content of the proposals from a political party that is women led.<sup>4</sup> *Knowing how hard it is for women to be selected as ward candidates in local government elections, this is a strong statement in favour of women's leadership notwithstanding the lack of gendered content in their manifesto.*

<sup>3</sup> Democratic Alliance v City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality and Others (91569/19; 92212/2019) [2019] ZAGPPHC 1094 (27 December 2019) para 100.

<sup>4</sup> Weekend Argus AOL. Accessed at <https://www.iol.co.za/weekend-argus/news/a-new-political-party-has-an-all-women-candidates-list-for-the-upcoming-local-elections-51faf7e8-821d-4285-9fcb-cd8b54be9dce> on 20 October 2021.



While the manifesto does not cover many of the issues that we monitored through the indicators, we understood that IPM is a newly formed and small party, which also has limited resources when compared to the resources of the other three we assessed. In addition IPM is only contesting the election in one municipality. As such we'd expect that their manifesto would address the issues most relevant to the people in that municipality, while the others would need to address local issues from a broader perspective.

### 2.3. Patriarchy, structural discrimination and gender

#### Main Messages: Patriarchy, structural discrimination and gender

- Both the ANC and EFF have some good language: toxic patriarchy, triple oppression of women sexism.
- EFF links women's emancipation to economic emancipation and upliftment of all.
- Both the ANC and EFF fail to meaningfully integrate women's lived experiences into the content across the different sectors in their manifestos.
- The ANC fails to link its manifesto commitments to the GBVF NSP except for the proposed law reform measures that are out of the scope of the local sphere, but doesn't address aspects of the NSP-GBVF that are the responsibility of local level.
- The DA's manifesto is conspicuously silent on women and gender signaling to us that the DA don't prioritise women's inequality in their strategies.

In this section of our analysis, we looked at whether the political parties **name patriarchy** as a system that oppresses women and whether they recognise this must be dismantled. We looked to see if manifestos demonstrate an understanding of **how women are specifically affected in the different sectoral contexts** and issues and whether strategies to address this are incorporated throughout the manifestos. We also checked to see if they **understand intersectionality** and how women and gender non conforming people in different contexts, and facing multiple layers of discrimination, are affected and should be prioritised.

Both the ANC and the EFF have specific sections in their manifestos that address gender and/or women. Although this does not necessarily need to be viewed as negative, it resulted in missed opportunities to integrate women's contexts throughout the manifestos given that these women-specific sections do not adequately address the complex range of issues women face and the coordinated response required to address it.

We were surprised that women and gender did not make it into the ANC president's foreword or the achievement section given the strides made nationally since the #TotalShutdown in 2018 culminating in the National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence & Femicide (NSP-GBVF) noting that other national competency achievements are mentioned. In addition, the ANC's omission of the local-level commitments of the NSP-GBVF in their manifesto is glaring. It is encouraging to see the ANC's language to defeat the toxic culture of patriarchy and the need to tackle hate crimes against LGBTQIA+. Unfortunately, the ANC does not elaborate how toxic patriarchy will be defeated; hate crimes discouraged; homes, public spaces and workplaces made safer; or on how the root causes of women's disempowerment and GBV will be dealt with. The ANC places a catch all sentence that they will address the specific needs of women, people with disabilities, the elderly and children under the GBV section but fails to integrate this throughout the manifesto.

The EFF is the only political party that we analysed where the leader raises the issue of women in their foreword. They demonstrated an understanding of the intersectional context for Black women by naming the triple oppression of women and the pervasiveness of patriarchy and sexism. The EFF links women's economic emancipation to solving the structural problems of sexism and patriarchy.

They also state that GBV can only be resolved if all people are uplifted, and although this idea has bearing, it results in a gap in naming the specific challenges and solutions in relation to GBV. The EFF further deals with sexual harassment and GBV in the workplace by requiring that everyone who works for or who does business with an EFF municipality must declare if they have been found guilty of GBV, rape and child abuse. While on the one hand the EFF states that one cannot do business if found guilty of GBV, rape and child abuse it does not state someone guilty of these offences will not be employed. The EFF does stipulate that every municipality must develop and enforce strategy that deals with GBV and drug abuse as well as build shelters for 'victims of GBV, rape and child abuse.'

The DA's manifesto is conspicuously silent on women and gender signaling to us that the DA don't prioritise women's inequality in any of their strategies and plans for local government level.

None of the main political parties mention the NSP-GBVF and this oversight is striking as the NSP-GBVF is a key policy document on GBV, it does name interventions on local government level.

The EFF manifesto is the most intersectional of the four, making it clear from the outset that their focus is on poor, black African and working class people. Their list of sectors and people consulted in the development of the manifesto demonstrates a wide range of people's interests which to some extent do then reflect in the content of specific sections - people with autism, the fishing community, rural interests, traditional healers and herbalists for example. Others, such as the LGBTQI+ community however don't receive a second mention.

We found that the ANC, DA, EFF and IPM were all silent on questions of leadership to promote integration and to oppose Xenophobia or prevent exclusions and oppressions of people identifying as LGBTIQ+ at local level.

Despite being women led, the IPM's short manifesto does not make any reference to patriarchy.

## Section Three: Democratic, representative, transparent and accountable government

This section considers various issues relating to big picture offerings of the parties, it includes questioning their commitments to gender parity and intersectionality within local government, to transparent and participatory governance, to cooperation with other spheres of government and between wards and municipalities, and to addressing issues of corruption and capacity at municipal level.

### 3.1. Gender parity and intersectionality within local government

#### Main Messages: Gender parity and intersectionality within local government

- To transform gender discrimination norms we need to see minimum quotas that are backed up by commitments to address patriarchal norms and practices that exclude women and other excluded groups.
- Both the ANC and EFF commit to minimum 50% quotas of women, EFF indicates more than 50%.
- IPM identifies as a women led party but don't make any specific commitments in their manifesto.
- DA do not address quotas, representation of women is just over  $\frac{1}{3}$ .
- None of the parties express plans to address systems and practices that prevent women participating or being elected at ward level.
- The overall approach to intersectionality within government is weak.

People are elected to municipal councils through direct vote at ward level or through being selected by the party and placed on the party's Proportional Representation (PR) list. The Municipal Structures Act requires parties to 'seek to' ensure that 50 percent of their candidates on the party list for the PR seats are women for the various levels of local government. However this does not cover the direct representatives voted for in wards. Michelle Rufaro Maziwisa explains that in 2016 the total percentage of women elected into local government was below the 50 percent mark at 41%.<sup>5</sup> However, the ANC and EFF do commit to and ensure strong numbers of women in their PR lists, but the figures are pulled down due to lower numbers of women being elected directly in wards. She explains that in 2016, the ANC had 61% of women elected from the PR list, and the EFF 50%. The DA's refusal to consider targets for gender (or any other parity) resulted in only 34% of their PR elected candidates being women. Maziwisa notes that the election of women through ward elections decreased in seven provinces between 2011 and 2016, overall there has been a decrease in women elected through wards since 2006.

To begin to transform gendered norms across society, political leadership would need to, as a first step, **commit to achieving minimum of 50% women** elected to local government, both through advancing women on PR lists and through providing stronger leadership for reform of patriarchal norms (attitudes, systems, and practices) that exclude women from participating or being nominated at ward level. At this level we'd also expect parties to demonstrate how they will achieve 50% targets for women mayors and women in senior positions in municipalities. Including how they will provide leadership on patriarchal norms (attitudes, systems, and practices) that exclude women at these levels.

The EFF uses strong language to express their commitment to ensuring *more than 50 percent* representation of women in all spheres, this includes in political participation, managerial and leadership responsibility. While they do not specifically state the words 'councillor', 'mayor' or 'municipal manager', it is implied. In terms of women councillors, the ANC commit to address the gaps in women candidates selected directly at ward level, by increasing the number of women on the PR lists. In the section dealing with improving the functioning of municipalities, the ANC include a number of strong commitments, however they don't take the opportunity here to commit to ensuring gender parity at leadership level in municipalities.

Overall the parties approaches to intersectionality are poor. In terms of **intersectionality**, the question of youth in councils or municipalities receives attention from both the EFF and the ANC. The EFF commit to employing a minimum of 40% youth in the municipalities they run, they don't provide any timeline on this, the ANC indicate an intention to ensure a high number of youth among their candidates, but provide no roadmap or targets in this regard. None of the parties consider the issue of increasing representation and senior employment of people with disabilities or gender non-conforming people.

The DA make no commitments to address gendered or other inequalities in representation at this level.

The IPM interestingly, don't address this question of women and other excluded groups or leadership in their manifesto, however one of the lead features of the Party's public profile is that it is a women-led party.

<sup>5</sup> Rufaro Maziwisa M. 2020. 'Women as candidates in Local Government Elections: What can we learn from the past?' *Local Government Bulletin* Vol 15:4 04 November 2020. accessed at <https://dullahomarinstitute.org.za/multilevel-govt/local-government-bulletin/archives/volume-15-issue-4-december-2020-1/women-as-candidates-in-local-government-elections-what-can-we-learn-from-the-past> on 21 October 2021.

### 3.2. Increasing transparency and ongoing public participation for democratic local government

#### Main Messages: Increasing transparency and ongoing public participation for democratic local government

- Ongoing participation between elections is critical to South Africa's democracy. Transparent and participatory democracy is compromised at all levels - but is foundational for claiming other rights, local level is the most critical to protect and defend the current paper promises.
- None of the parties addressed the barriers to participation of women and other excluded groups
- We saw different commitments to promoting transparency and political engagement from ANC, EFF and DA, with the strongest coming from the EFF and the weakest from DA.
  - ANC's promising offerings for transparency and participation lack strength, are not clearly defined and don't engage with the challenges previously faced.
  - The EFF make strong commitments to consult with all sectors in every locality, and some specific commitments to transparency that can be monitored, but may also fall within the overpromise strategy of the EFF.
  - The DA commitments to consultation are not strong, and promises to 'e-government' may be alienating.
  - IPM commit to strengthening accountability, but the short manifesto doesn't describe how
- Monitoring the quality and accessibility of all of the consultative processes is key.
- All parties avoid the complex terrain of cooperation to ensure constitutional democracy and protection of women's rights in areas that also fall under traditional authority.

On the whole, municipalities are in crisis, the range of struggles include persistent and widening failures of (participatory and representative) democracy at that level, weak leadership and management, poor capacity, corruption, mismanagement, as well as deep challenges to the funding model.

The deep failures of democracy in terms of transparency, people driven decision-making, and accountability at local government level are well documented. Notice of, access to, and records of council and municipal meetings are extremely hard for the majority of people.<sup>6</sup> Local government could and should play the most critical role to ensure that our democracy is people-centred. Political participation does not start and end with voting in elections, the public should and do continue to engage in political priority setting and decision making in different ways in between. For some (often a select few) this is through 'inside' strategies, sitting at the table with leadership and government stakeholders, for others it involves 'outside' strategies of raising issues through public protest and action, or through organising to fill the gaps in government services directly. Turning to the courts to intervene on behalf of sectors of the public is another avenue for political action, frequently favouring those with resources or those who can access support through the few NGOs who offer such services.

We explored the manifestos for indications of what parties' plans are to give meaning to quality democracy at local level. Given the high stakes and deep exclusions that persist, noting inequalities of voice - the predominance of large and small-scale private interests, and noting legal frameworks that foreground municipalities engagement with Traditional Leaders but not the communities they should serve; we asked if manifestos **commit to broad public participation** in all matters linked to the municipality. We also asked if this participation was considered **across wards and municipalities within districts and metros** - particularly if people from poorer communities, informal settlements, rural poor people, and people living under traditional authority were also enabled to participate in decisions relating to better resourced wards and municipalities within the district or Metro? We also looked to see if there are strategies for enabling **ongoing inclusive participation considering the practicalities and norms of engagement to ensure that different groups can participate on more equal terms** such as women, gender non-conforming people, children, youth, people with disabilities, and elderly people. None of the parties addressed the fundamental issue of increasing direct participation in these ways.

More specifically we also asked if parties demonstrated plans to address the significant problems of **transparency and ongoing political participation** in local government - including in terms of the development of IDPs and the general business of municipalities and councils.

The ANC delivers a big message regarding their commitment to strengthen local government, within that they include commitments that would enable transparency and democratic engagement, but they are not clear or strong. The ANC promises community involvement in the selection of their ward candidates, and they indicate that they will 'change the composition and mandates of ward committees' to overcome problems and enable citizens to hold councillors and staff

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<sup>6</sup> As expressed to us by members of Parliament Watch who work at local level.

accountable, as well as committing to developing participatory budget systems. While these sound promising, they're not specific, and don't explain how any of these goals will be achieved, thus running a strong risk, given their track record, of these being promises without backing.

Through different parts of the manifesto, the EFF presents strong commitments to address the quality of participatory democracy in municipalities, following their statement that they consulted widely to develop their manifesto, they indicate that the content will be localised through municipalities taking action for 'thorough consultation' with 'all sectors of society in their respective locality'. They also firmly state that: "The EFF commitments will always be driven by the involvement of ordinary citizens working with committed EFF councillors". Later they provide some specifics to increase transparency - committing to quarterly public meetings to report on Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plans and that the chairperson of Municipal Public Accounts Committees be elected from opposition benches in municipalities they run, this last commitment can be monitored in EFF led municipalities. The measure of the EFF's success in this regard would partly be easy to assess in terms of the institution of these measures or not, but the quality of these, especially the public meetings would require deeper scrutiny. The Manifesto includes a separate section on the commitments of EFF councillors; these are numerous and specific and can provide a valuable tool for communities to hold EFF councillors to account.

They DA state that they will ensure that IDPs are developed consultatively with 'as many stakeholders as possible', while the wording provides an escape clause, the manifesto does indicate a clear goal in that the outcome will be to "allow all residents to have a stake", thus as with the EFF's commitments, monitoring the accessibility of these consultative processes would be key. The DA's undertaking to increase 'e-government' to make it 'pain-free' does not take into account how these measures may increase efficiency for some, but overall they may increase frustration and alienation for others, for a start it requires equal access to reliable internet, airtime and data, overall these measures that replace human engagement can undermine trust.

The IPM's short manifesto indicates that they will strengthen accountability.

In addition, having respect for the fact that this is complex terrain, we had hoped that parties would include commitments to protect constitutional democracy, including through collaboration and cooperation, in areas falling under **traditional authorities**, particularly in terms of collaboration and support, and in terms of promoting and protecting women's rights in this context. None did. However, the EFF alone indicate that Traditional Leaders are among those consulted in the development of their manifesto, and the party commits to providing consulting rooms for free to indigenous and traditional health practitioners, it also makes commitments linked to traditional and indigenous rights to access the ocean for fishing.

### 3.3. Cooperation and financing for social justice and redistribution

#### **Main Messages: Cooperation and financing for social justice and redistribution**

- Despite the critical role that municipalities and metros can play to ensure redistribution of revenue collected at local level, none of the parties took any position on using these funds for equitable redistribution.
- The EFF and ANC address the problem of the national funding model.
- The ANC commit to 'ensure that the existing' progressive nature of equitable share spending is 'reaffirmed' - they don't commit to update or overhaul the formula. This is not the strong approach we'd expect to see from the ruling party and has a high lip-service value.
- The EFF's other broader proposals for redistribution could impact on this issue, but they don't make proposals on the funding model.
- The ANC speak strongly of increased cooperation for national support to districts and metros, mainly drawing on their toothless District Development Model. There are notes of creeping centralisation in the ANC offering that would require deep consultation.
- The EFF don't make proposals for redistribution between spheres specifically but their broader proposals could impact here.
- The ANC make strong commitment to addressing parts of the funding model from national level 'urgently'. This can be monitored.
- The DA, despite its role as official opposition nationally and despite the profound inequalities in DA run metros, is silent on redistribution and on cooperation to address inequality.

The vast inequalities that are lived between communities, sometimes no more than a kilometer apart, across the country are gross. Frequently the deep injustice of this inequality is felt between communities falling under the same municipality as well as across different municipalities in districts and provinces. The responsibility to address this lies at all levels of government, it requires commitment and coordination as well as cooperation and is in the hands of the national government to lead. Major political parties, both the governing party and the opposition must step up.

National government is required to fund local governments fairly. National's decisions take place in two ways: the 'division of revenue' between the national, provincial and local spheres, and the division of revenue across the local sphere - considering factors, including how much money an individual municipality may be able to raise - to decide how much money each municipality receives. Another source of national funding to municipalities is through dedicated conditional grants which are funds allocated by national for specific purposes to municipalities.

Municipalities are also required to raise funds directly through rates, levies, payment for services (electricity, water, waste disposal etc) delivered, fines and so forth. In 1998 the formula that was developed was based on the assumption that local government (taken as a whole across the country) could raise 73 percent of its own revenue, an assumption that is deeply outdated for a number of reasons. These include the crisis caused by the reliance on the 'centralised carbon-based energy production' through Eskom and the imperative to empower municipalities to decentralise the production of renewable energy.<sup>7</sup> Failures in electricity service provision and drought for example have resulted in wealthier households leaving the water and electricity grids, thus affecting revenue to the municipality, and undermining the future subsidisation by those who can well afford it, of services to poorer households, thereby deepening the structural inequalities. Despite factoring the revenue raising capacities of different municipalities into the equitable share formula which should mean that municipalities in poorer areas should receive a larger portion of the equitable share than those in wealthier areas, the model advantages wealthy municipalities and metros further because these resourced municipalities may pursue policy objectives that are out of reach of the smaller municipalities serving rural and indigent populations.<sup>8</sup> Given that financing of a sphere of government should follow its designated functions, Tania Ajam argues that the functional framework of local government must be urgently reviewed, she goes further to stress that this must include consultation with municipalities.

These are issues that cannot be fixed by municipalities and fall within the scope of national government to address. However, the fact of these failures is felt at municipal level and by the people who live within those municipalities with the fewest resources; the obvious interlinked and multi-level government nature of the issue and because we are analysing the three top political parties who all act on national and provincial levels, **we opted to take note if these three parties named and addressed the problem of the inequalities of the overarching funding model.** Specifically, do they commit to revise the functions of local government and the equitable share formula to address the deepening inequality.

Both the ANC and the EFF raise the problems, the ANC go further to commit to addressing the national funding model. The ANC manifesto states their commitment to ensure that the existing progressive nature of equitable share spending is 'reaffirmed' to ensure increases to the allocations to poorer communities for the allocation of free basic services and capital spending. This shies away from a commitment to update or fix the formula. Their 'commitment' to do the same thing better this time begs the question - what will make it different now? The ANC do make a strong commitment to reduce unfunded mandates in municipalities - recognising that this is urgent.

The ANC manifesto relies on its plans to 'accelerate' the implementation of the District Development Model (announced and adopted by Cabinet in 2019) in all district councils and metros.<sup>9</sup> Notably, this model does not create much new content and it doesn't include policy commitments to address division of powers and revenue - as such it doesn't offer additional money. In line with the DDM, the ANC proposes improved cooperation between national, provincial and local government for planning, budgeting, monitoring and implementation at district level, emphasising improving the monitoring capacities of provincial and national government for quicker intervention by these when problems occur at local level. This model requires one plan and one budget per district and commits to integrate with municipal IDPs. It aims to address 'inequality particularly amongst women, youth and people living with disabilities,' this model could be used to address income and resource inequalities between wards and municipalities, but it does not expressly state that goal or describe commitments in this regard.

Overall, while strongly using the language of collaboration, it appears that the ANC is proposing a stronger role for the national sphere in supporting district municipalities and metros, while this may be necessary in times and areas of crisis, increased centralisation in the long term would require deep consultation.

In their diagnoses of the problems, the EFF recognise underfunding of local government from the National level as core to the problems faced at local level, and name the problem of inequity inherent in the assumption that municipalities will be able to collect the full cost for services or generate their own revenue but they don't make direct commitments to address these in their local government manifesto.

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<sup>7</sup> Ajam T. 2021. 'A radical reconfiguration of the local government fiscal framework is required, not incremental tinkering' *Local Government Bulletin* Vol 16 Issue 4 November/December 2021. accessed at <https://dullahomarinate.org.za/multilevel-govt/local-government-bulletin/archives/volume-16-issue-4-november-december-2021/a-radical-reconfiguration-of-the-local-government-fiscal-framework-is-required-not-incremental-tinkering> on 26 October 2021.

<sup>8</sup> Steytler and Ayele 2018. in DeVisser J. 2021. 'Food Security, Urban Governance and Multilevel Government in Africa' in Home R (ED) *Land Issues for Urban Governance in Sub-Saharan Africa, Local and urban governance.* p272.

<sup>9</sup> District Development Model. Available at <https://www.cogta.gov.za/ddm/> accessed on 21 October 2021.

The DA is silent on redistribution; in fact, at one point in their manifesto they describe the key problem that *hardworking South Africans* who must go off grid by installing boreholes, solar panels, to fix their 'own roads' and so forth. Thus, they problematise the experience of those South Africans who have the resources to more than fill the gaps in failures of service delivery. The DA also don't address the issue of cooperation and support between spheres of government in a central way, however the manifesto addresses it in three areas - delivery of water, waste to landfill, and providing mental health support and combating alcohol and drug abuse. Unlike the ANC's centralisation tendencies, the DA manifesto tends to err towards further devolution of national competencies, most notably in respect of policing.

Despite the big decisions of redistribution sitting in the national sphere; municipalities have the role to use their powers to set and collect rates and service fees and use this to cross-subsidise between wards and communities to ensure that informal settlements and other disadvantaged areas are prioritised. Considering the absolute persistence of gross inequality of living conditions, resources and services across communities around the country this is critical. We asked if the parties gave more meaning to the constitutional commitments to redistribution and social justice by **including commitments for improved cooperation between wards in municipalities and within districts and metros**. Specifically, we asked if they committed to **strong action to ensure equitable distribution of resources and revenue raised** through service delivery, rates collection and fines in well and better resourced communities to those in informal settlements and low income communities as a matter of urgency.

None did.

Surprisingly the EFF don't tackle moving resources from well resourced areas towards less resourced areas directly in their commitments, that said their broader proposals such as those for expropriation of land close to urban centres without compensation and nationalisation of banks and mines, would have impact.

Despite the extreme inequalities in DA run municipalities and metros, the DA opt for silence on the issue of redistribution within local government.

### 3.4. Corruption and capacities

#### Main Messages: Corruption and capacities

- ANC, EFF and DA make multiple and strong commitments to stop corruption, IPM include uprooting corruption as a key issue in their short manifesto. None are convincing that their measures will address it.
- None reflect on the ways that women and other excluded groups are affected
- EFF take strong stance against privatisation, outsourcing and tenders.
- DA and IPM commit to engaging in private partnerships to achieve goals. DA strongly committed to outsourcing and PPPs.
- ANC will strengthen selection, lifestyle audits and performance agreements of Mayors which can be monitored, but don't make proposals to strengthen other scarce skills and capacity.

We looked to establish if parties included concrete plans and approaches to **address corruption and effective management and implementation** at municipal level, including if they expressed commitments to policy reform, and new practices for transparency and accountability. We were also curious to see if parties would reflect **how corruption impacts on women's lives** in various ways, including how it adding to the unpaid and invisible care and household work that women carry responsibilities for, and the additional stressors, which in turn increase risks of violence.

Unsurprisingly, with the profound attention to corruption over the past few years and the increased attention to the impacts of corruption linked to delivery of C19 services - attention to these questions is the order of the day. The ANC, EFF and DA all make very strong and specific detailed commitments to addressing corruption at local level. The IPM's short manifesto touches on putting systems in place to 'uproot' corruption, but given the succinct nature of the document doesn't provide detail. None of the parties showed any understanding of the specific ways that corruption may affect women.

The EFF take the strongest stance against privatisation, outsourcing, and tendering making commitments to increase insourcing and capacities within municipalities; the ANC addresses some of the related issues without the same strength of articulation. The DA and IPM state that they will engage in private partnerships. The DA don't explain how they will demonstrate they can end 'cadre deployment' suggesting it's more of a jab at the ANC than a commitment to the public. The DA specifically commits to opening tender processes up for scrutiny at the adjudication stage.

Due to the significant weaknesses in capacity in government and especially at local level, we looked for the extent to which manifestos demonstrate plans to address **capacity, competence, and skills** shortages, including filling vacant posts.

The ANC take a strong stance to strengthen the quality of mayors by improving selection processes, undertaking lifestyle audits, and putting performance agreements in place, these are strong proposals that can be monitored. Notably, in 2016 the ANC only committed to putting performance agreements in place for councillors. Other than this point on managers, there is little to indicate what the ANC will do differently to achieve its promise to ensure that other municipal staff are appointed with necessary competencies and so forth. The EFF firmly commits to filling vacant posts; to capacitate existing units (such as audit capacity, engineering and spatial planning) within two years; and they undertake throughout the manifesto to create new units and create new posts internally in municipalities. The specificity of the plans means they can be easily monitored. The DA emphasis is on outsourcing, indeed they undertake to 'keep staff costs down' which could be enabled by increased outsourcing and reducing the number of municipal staff; they don't focus on strengthening capacity within municipalities, beyond providing the assurance that officials will be appointed fairly, based on value that they add, and that in respect of their transport department they will fill posts with skilled people.



## Section Four: Sectoral Analysis

This section deals with a wide range of various issues, we selected to group issues into the following themes as Women in the economy; Land, spatial justice, and homes; Food justice and agriculture; Basic services; Safety and Justice; Child care and education; and health. We analysed the content of the different parties' manifestos against our feminist indicators that we have developed. We have highlighted the text of the indicators that we used in the section in purple before engaging with the question of how each party has dealt with those issues. As noted previously we have taken the very different context of IPM into account in our analysis, as to engage with the newly formed party's two-page manifesto on the same terms as the lengthy ANC, DA and EFF documents is not fair comparison. Given the density of the text we have also provided a short list of the main messages at the top of each section. In our attempts to group different sectoral issues together, given the interconnectedness of many of these our exercise was at times imperfect. For example, issues dealt with regarding women and the economy, relate also to issues raised in terms of women and food justice or ECD.

### 4.1. Women in the economy

#### Main Messages: Women in the economy

- The DA make no mention of any excluded or marginalised groups in relation to the economy (or anywhere else for that matter), their offerings favour those who have some level of resourcing.
- Positively, the EFF link economic emancipation to solving sexism and patriarchy.
- ANC lump 'womenand youth' together.
- All parties make strong statements about unemployment and job creation but none name women overall, urban poor and rural women facing higher levels of unemployment.
- All parties deal with informal traders/vendors but none identify that women dominate in the informal economy. The EFF promisingly, include that women(and youth) will have 50% access to their food markets.
- None of the political parties address the unpaid and underpaid care work of women.
- ANC say nothing about EPWP.
- They all name (even if briefly) waste reclaimers.
- It is surprising that none address the local government competency for accessible and safe grant collection points and local transport to those points.

Before the C19 pandemic South Africa's economy was already in a recession with weak economic performance, deep-rooted inequality, and high levels of unemployment. The pandemic worsened this situation with the condition for poor Black women especially dire. Although big picture economic reforms are mainly the work of national government, local government have a critical role to play. Section 152 of the Constitution names one of the 'Objects of local government' to promote social and economic development. Local Economic Development (LED) is named in policy documents and legislation as the economic approach on local level. For example, the role of local government to promote social and economic development is further expanded in the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 stipulating that integrated development plans (IDP) must reflect local economic development aims.

'LED is an approach towards economic development that allows and encourages local people to work together to achieve sustainable economic growth and development, thereby bringing economic benefits and improved quality of life to all residents in a local municipal area'.<sup>10</sup> In other words LED is meant to boost the local economy, improve poverty and reduce unemployment and inequality. Therefore, in our opinion, LED policy and plans must take into account the role of women in communities and the barriers they face to full participation in governance and decision-making.

We analysed 2021 manifestos for economic reforms on local government level specifically looking for plans that acknowledge and **address economic exclusions and hardships faced by poor and working class Black women**; we looked for recognition of the higher levels of **unemployment** faced by women; and the predominance of **women in the informal economy**. We asked if **insecure employment and the unpaid and underpaid labour of women** in their homes and communities were acknowledged and addressed. In addition, we looked for **women's inclusion in economic reform** proposals and plans. Because economic reform will require cooperative governance and intergovernmental cooperation, we were expecting to see this articulated in manifestos.

<sup>10</sup>Local Economic Development. Accessed at [https://www.gov.za/about-government/government-system/local-government#Local%20Economic%20Development%20\(LED\)](https://www.gov.za/about-government/government-system/local-government#Local%20Economic%20Development%20(LED)) on 18 October 2021.

### 4.1.1. Economic reform

Economic reform is a multi-level responsibility, the overall direction for economic reform comes from the national level. As such we expect the big parties in government and opposition at national and provincial levels to engage with the question at a top level.

All the political parties analysed addressed the issue of economic reform, poverty and unemployment but did not address in any coherent way the economic exclusions and hardships faced by women. The EFF however does link women's economic emancipation to solving structural problems of patriarchy and sexism. The ANC named young women and men together as targets for economic growth, increased jobs and poverty alleviation. A generic 'vulnerable groups' are named but not identified. The EFF manifesto deals with the issue of women under a specific heading for women and gender and promises that the EFF will prioritise women's economic emancipation and sets a target of more than 50% if women 'all spheres representing economic benefit'. While in many parts of the EFFs manifesto clearer plans are articulated in this instance it is not clear what 'all spheres representing economic benefit' means or how this target will be met and by when. The DA's central message around economic reform is to get the basics right and to make it easier to do business. The DA does not identify women, or any other marginalised group for that matter, for specific economic reform plans or targets, their proposals seem to favour people with some level of resources.

### 4.1.2. Unemployment and job creation

Although job creation is not necessarily considered a local government responsibility it is undeniable that municipalities play a role in creating conditions that facilitate economic growth on local level and therefore directly contribute to poverty alleviation and job creation in communities. Responding to unemployment is inextricably tied to economic reform and growth and manifestos mostly address unemployment accordingly as part of economic strategies.

The ANC, DA and EFF all make strong statements about unemployment and job creation. For the ANC, the message from the ANC president states that: 'Our key task is to create jobs and reduce poverty as a matter of urgency', while the leader of the DA states that: 'As a nation, our number one priority must be to get South Africans into jobs'. In the foreword by the EFF president, unemployment and poverty is identified as a critical challenge; one of the EFFs non-negotiable cardinal pillars is 'to create millions of sustainable jobs'; and their manifesto ends with: 'Our people cannot wait forever for Land and Jobs!'. IPM as a smaller party contesting in one municipality also foregrounds job creation in their manifesto. They point out that local government cannot solve joblessness and propose partnerships with other spheres of government and the private sector. They specifically name capacitating tourism and establishing a Local Development Fund Agency to create jobs.

None of the political parties' manifestos we analysed, specifically identified the higher levels of unemployment faced by women. The ANC lists many plans to address unemployment but regrettably most are vague without any measurable targets or even brief implementation descriptions. For example, statements like 'revitalise cooperatives'; remodel the Community Works Programme; develop the night-time economy provides no information for concrete or measurable plans.

### 4.1.3. Women in informal and insecure employment

Because women face barriers to accessing the formal economy it is no surprise that they turn to the informal economy to make a living. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates that more than 60% of the world's employed population are in the informal economy and women are more exposed to informal employment. The C19 pandemic had a severe impact on informal workers, especially women. The informal economy, informal traders and street vendors are named in the various manifestos we analysed. The ANC will reduce red tape for informal businesses and place stalls on busy streets. While the DA promises to reduce bureaucracy to set up a business, for the informal economy they promise 'effective enabling regulation'. This is concerning because 'enabling regulation' is not defined and while the DA will reduce bureaucracy for businesses it sounds like they will either be maintaining or increasing the bureaucracy for informal traders. Like the ANC, the DA also promise well located trading areas. Noting the policing of poor informal traders, and the particular vulnerability of women and undocumented migrants in this regard we considered if parties addressed this issue as well. None specifically mentioned these groups but the EFF makes a clear commitment to prohibit the confiscation of street vendors' goods, addressing countless complaints from informal traders across the country of unfair treatment by police including municipal police. Unsurprisingly, given their track record, the DA is not prepared to go that far and promises that impounding the property of informal traders will be a last resort. The political parties do not make the link to women and the informal economy or make specific recommendations to improve the situation for women informal workers and traders.

Linked to women in the informal economy is the insecure nature of the work that women do in this sector and we wanted to establish if any of the political parties **address insecure employment for women**. The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) currently in phase four, is implemented across all spheres of government and provides temporary employment and income support to the unemployed. The EPWP 2020/2021 annual report records that 74% of people employed were

women- well above the quota of 55%. The DA notes that EPWP should be a launchpad to full employment but does not elaborate on whose responsibility this is or how it can be achieved. EFF makes a bold statement that municipalities will absorb EPWP workers into full employment. This will be significant for women given the high numbers of women in temporary employment via the EPWP, however the EFF does not elaborate on how this will be achieved and there are no targets for implementation. The ANC's manifesto does not address EPWP at all.

Although no official data exists, some estimate that as many as 60 000 - 90 000 people make a living as waste pickers or waste reclaimers. It is also not known how many women earn a living this way but one can safely assume that significant amounts of women are working as waste reclaimers. The ANC acknowledges that waste pickers have not been integrated into solid waste management but does not propose any plans to address this. The DA makes a concrete statement that all DA municipalities will have guidelines on the integration of waste pickers, but does not mention implementation. EFF will provide training, processing facilities and access to markets for waste reclaimers but no targets are set.

The EFF names additional measures for those in the informal economy in general that will also impact on women even when not explicitly named by them. They propose zoning that will permit home-based industries; formalise home-based caregivers and appoint them full time; fresh produce market with minimum 50% access by women and youth; 50% of statues commissioned will be done by women and youth.

#### 4.1.4. Unpaid and underpaid care work

Unpaid care work, also called the invisible work of women, is a global phenomenon and the heavy and unequal responsibility for care work on women perpetuates economic inequality between women and men. The consequences of C19 placed additional burdens on women to absorb more care work in their families and communities. The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimated that before C19 women were responsible for more than 75% of unpaid care work globally. Care work includes daily household tasks such as cooking, cleaning, washing clothes and caring for children. Underpaid care workers like community health workers and early childhood development workers are underpaid, insecurely employed and are mostly women. According to a UN Women article: 'Unpaid and underpaid care work, a driver of inequality, has always left women with precarious jobs, insecure incomes, and no social safety – marginalized to the informal economy'.<sup>11</sup>

None of the political parties address the unpaid and underpaid care work of women although it is worth mentioning that the EFF states that they will employ community health care workers as municipal workers.

#### 4.1.5. Women in the formal economy

Even when in the formal economy women face discrimination and inequalities. The wage gap; women's ownership of businesses; and women's seniority, influence and control in businesses remain issues that require political and policy interventions. The EFF promises to establish a special unit to enforce gender parity in economic matters - what those economic matters are is not stated and no targets are set. The ANC will use procurement to promote the development of Black- and women-owned businesses and cooperatives but also sets no targets for implementation. The EFF raises the wage gap as inequality between the rich and poor but not between men and women. The DA is silent on women in the formal economy.

#### 4.1.6. Social security

Social security, along with the provision of free-basic services, and measures to address food justice, is an important government intervention to provide a safety net for South Africans and although the South Africa government spends a considerable amount of its fiscus on social grants such as pension, foster care, disability grants, and care dependency grants, there is no social security that specifically targets the unemployed. Civil society's campaign for a Universal Basic Income Grant has gained impetus in the aftermath of the C19 pandemic. Since the C19 pandemic the government introduced and then extended the social relief and distress (SRD) grant. **Although social security is a national competency, local government can play a role in supporting systems for delivering grants.**

The ANC and the EFF mention social security and grants while the DA is totally silent on this issue. The ANC makes broad promises to strengthen social security measures to vulnerable groups and to continue to provide special COVID-19 grants and various support measures for workers as well as tax relief for businesses. It would have been helpful if the ANC had been more specific regarding the various support measures for workers. The EFF makes considerable commitments regarding social security and grants including fighting for the increase of social grants; free basic services for households who depend

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<sup>11</sup> Women's Unpaid and Underpaid Work in the Times of COVID-19. Accessed at <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/news-and-events/stories/2020/06/womens-unpaid-and-underpaid-work-in-the-times-of-covid-19> on 25 October 2021.

on social grants and places a duty on EFF councillors to assist indigent families to access grants. None of the political parties address the issues of accessible and safe collection points for grants or local transport to paypoints.

## 4.2. Land, spatial justice, and homes

The discussion on issues of housing, land restitution, land allocation, and spatial planning are interlinked, covering the complex ground of various national, provincial and local competencies, laws and policies.

### 4.2.1 Land, spatial justice and planning

#### Main Messages: Land, spatial justice and planning

- Land ownership and reform is a national competency, local government must allocate land for housing development by other spheres.
- ANC don't use the manifesto to speak to land reform, EFF as it's their key issue take it up strongly.
- None of the parties make reference to women's ownership of land, EFF do lead with land justice in general. No other excluded groups of people are specifically mentioned by parties.
- IPM given the smaller context to which it applies and the national competency, does not speak to land.
- ANC don't make commitments on utilising unused municipal/state land but DA and EFF do. EFF is particularly strong by including audits but doesn't address the need for cooperation, and DA's lip service value is high.
- The DA's orientation is opposite to social justice principles - towards 'land invasion' not occupation or justice and they commit to taking 'principled' legal action against in contrast, EFF will make evictions from private property illegal.
- All parties include commitments to address spatial injustice and inequalities, the EFF makes strong commitments but some go too far, and they lack prioritisation, the ANC's undertaking to re-zone to improve integration lacks conviction given their track record. The DA offer is fair, but also questionable given their track record.
- None of the parties directly address gentrification that results from high rates and rents.
- Save for one mention by the EFF, the parties are silent on prioritising women and other specific groups that are often excluded (such as documented or undocumented migrants) in terms of land use policies and spatial planning frameworks.
- Despite high stakes and dominance of private interests, political elites and traditional authorities, none of the parties commit to addressing democratic participation, especially of more marginalised groups including women, in local level processes relating to planning and land use.

We asked the question of targets to support women's ownership and tenure of land. From a municipal perspective, this is a more complex area, given that land administration - and tenure - falls within the competency for national government. However local government is empowered to 'plan and manage' the use of land; municipalities' roles in this regard are given more direction under the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (2013). Municipalities must follow public participation processes to adopt, or amend Municipal Spatial Development Frameworks (SDF) and Land Use Schemes. Both should be reviewed every five years - typically after elections. The SDFs must provide a roadmap that includes priorities, to achieve the long term vision to address the inclusion and integration of disadvantaged areas, former homelands, rural areas, informal settlements, slums and land holdings of SOEs and government agencies; address historical spatial imbalances. These requirements extend to all land, including privately owned land and communal land.

Municipalities must allocate land for housing development by other spheres of government, and thus have a critical role to play, linked to ensuring land for housing is earmarked with a view to ensure spatial justice in the first place. To ensure that any forced removals from municipal and private land do not result in homelessness, they must identify alternative land for people evicted. Municipalities are also empowered to pass by-laws, which may not violate the constitution, to enforce land use, this includes the right to confiscate property and demolish structures - that is, people's homes.

Considering local government's limited role on **land ownership and tenure**, we examined if parties commit to **cooperation** with all spheres of government and entities responsible for land development, restitution, tenure and ownership specifically to address that of **women or any other groups that face structural exclusions to land ownership**. We also asked if parties articulated immediate, short term, and long term plans for **repurposing underused and unused municipal owned land for affordable housing**, agriculture and/or economic activity that would serve the interests of the most excluded groups.

The three large parties don't make reference to women's land ownership or tenure. The EFF's overall position on land justice is that land must be redistributed to African people and for equal distribution. No other excluded groups of people are specifically mentioned by parties however the ANC and EFF make some reference to land in the rural context.

IPM's manifesto, given that it relates to one municipality only, does not speak directly to the question of land.

Noting that land reform overall is a national function, municipalities are empowered to expropriate privately owned land to serve social justice goals, in addition municipalities need to strengthen practices of ensuring that state owned land falling in their jurisdiction, including land owned by the municipality, by other spheres of government, and by SOEs is used to serve social justice agenda.

The ANC from their national vantage point, commit to fast tracking 'land reform and rural development', but opt not to go into the specifics or use this local manifesto as a platform for addressing questions of restitution and expropriation. The ANC manifesto does not refer directly to the issue of unused state or municipal land, nor to ensuring that municipalities have the finance to expropriate land if needed. Addressing landlessness is at the core of EFF manifesto, and expropriation without compensation for equal redistribution is at the their top of their list, they localise these plans indicating that EFF municipalities will conduct land audits to assess land use, and expropriate abandoned and unused land for the landless, for housing, agriculture, black-led industrial activities and burial sites. They also indicate that they will repossess all municipal stolen land. The EFF clearly state that it will be illegal for residents to be evicted from private property unless suitable alternatives are found. While some of the EFF's commitments are within the scope of local government, they don't make reference to cooperation with national or provincial governments on those issues that require this. Expropriating land for agricultural use, which is a concurrent provincial/national competency would need cooperation with those spheres, or housing which municipalities fund, along with informal settlement upgrades through national grants and thus requires cooperation with national government, it is therefore not clear how they plan to realise these promises at municipal level.

The DA indicate that they will release unutilised state-owned land for housing, they include the caveat that they will consider the land's potential for other economic and social purposes. The inclusion of the statement that 'state land should not lie unused while people are not living in decent settlements, has a high lip service rating given the DA's track record on this issue in the City of Cape Town. Further in the opposite orientation to the EFF, the DA do not speak of occupation or redistribution, rather they commit to taking legal action against 'illegal land invasion'.

Taking note of the fact of persistent apartheid exclusions linked to land and spatial planning, and recognising the profound trauma, violation of various other rights, and fragmentation that forced removals (evictions) and destruction of structures cause,<sup>12</sup> and also noting that municipalities are empowered to raise revenue through service charges, rates, levies, and fines. In wealthier wards and municipalities setting these high, serves the status quo of keeping poor and working class people out of urban centres and enables gentrification of areas close to the urban centres we asked: [do manifestos commit to priority, short term and long term plans to spatial development frameworks and land use plans that ensure redress, access, and tenure for people and communities previously excluded. Linked to this we asked if manifestos include strategies to address gentrification and unaffordable rates, property prices, rents and monopolies in metros and urban centres that exclude poor and working class people.](#)

The EFF make strong commitments to address spatial injustice including through expropriation without compensation of land closer to city centres, they commit to municipal land reform plans that set targets for resolving 'urban land hunger' in urban and peri-urban municipalities. They include commitments to establish land and agricultural directorates and to set targets for land for agricultural production and housing in rural areas. The ANC's undertakings name the need to address land use zoning to improve integration and ensure that communities are located on 'well-suited' land - but no further detail is provided on this well suited land, and overall the offering lacks conviction; the ANC do commit to link rural areas to urban markets. Besides their commitment to release unused state land, possibly for housing, the DA indicate they will seek to enable densification in 'existing, well-located neighbourhoods through zoning and investment', they choose to make a stronger statement in terms of creating safe and clean public places where people can come together.

IPM don't tackle issues of spatial integration in Plettenberg Bay.

None of the parties directly addressed the question of gentrification, rents, or rates for the affordable housing that would be provided close to urban centres, although it is implied in some of the offerings.

Informal settlements are tied into questions of spatial planning and land use, the ANC commit to 'continue to upgrade these and 'counter urban sprawl' without providing any convincing information on how their progress on this area will be improved. The EFF not only commit to re-zoning all informal settlements in their jurisdiction as formal settlements, but also to provide all with water, electricity and sanitation, typically based on their solid understanding of the issue, they overpromise with no priority setting. Unlike their extensive promises to in this regard in 2016, The DA only make one headline promise that they will ensure in-situ upgrading of informal settlements and provide residents 'of previously informal settlements' with

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<sup>12</sup> The urban land question *The People's Law Journal* Issue 2. 2014. pp8-9.

tenure security but tone it down considerably with the phrase 'where viable', but what determines if it is 'viable' is left open, they choose not to provide any specifics of what factors will be considered. This obviously leaves them the room to not deliver but also to determine viability based more on politics than on justice.

In addition, we asked if the **spatial and land use plans prioritised women for economic activity, agricultural and farming activity, transport and safety**, we also considered if the exclusions faced by documented and undocumented migrants were **addressed**. Manifestos were silent or extremely limited in this regard, however the EFF include in one point that they will include access to food markets to 50 percent *women and youth*.

As noted in the section on democracy above, there is a lot at stake in terms of land planning, allocation, tenure, use, and housing. Deep exclusions that are experienced differently by various groups of people persist, this is partly powered by the predominance of large (mining companies, farmers) and small-scale private interests, government or Traditional Authorities at the expense of the people in the communities. These issues have deep lived relevance. *We therefore asked if manifestos commit to **inclusive public participation** across wards and local municipalities within districts and metros in the development and five-year review of MSDF and land use schemes. Here we were also curious to see how parties grappled with the participation needs requirements of different groups and if they considering the practicalities for different groups to ensure the participation of women, gender non conforming people, children, youth, people with disabilities, people from poorer communities, informal settlements, rural poor people, and people living under traditional authority in decisions relating to better resourced wards and municipalities?* None of the parties addressed broad public participation by the people worst affected on these questions.

#### 4.2.2 Safe, affordable homes

##### **Main Messages: Safe, affordable homes**

- Safe, affordable and functional homes are foundational to dignity
- Women, people with disabilities and migrants face additional violence and trauma linked to housing insecurity and dependence on others.
- This is a complex multi-level area for delivery
- Manifestos sections on housing are gender-blind
- The ANC addition of women, and people with disabilities in their catchall list is a small step forward but not good enough.
- The EFFs expansive promises on housing have a high popular appeal and lip service quality.
- Housing demand and allocation systems have been fraught with controversy
  - ANC opted not to address questions of transparency and democracy in this regard.
  - EFF promise to make the 'list' public.
  - DA start off well, offering transparency and fair process, before they undo that with an indication that their 'offer' relies on residents fulfilling certain duties, they ignore the structural factors that underpin some of the actions people take. This is patronising and leans to discrimination.
  - IPM undertake to review Pletternberg Bay's housing allocation implementation with prudence and integrity.
  - None grapple with involving housing beneficiaries in the project design and implementation processes. The DA 'self-built' strategies don't address this orientation to deep involvement.

Along with healthy food, prioritising tenure and stability for safe, affordable, and functional homes is foundational and critical to wellbeing. The Constitution establishes housing as a concurrent national and provincial function and the roles of municipalities in this regard is established in part 4 of the National Housing Act (2007), thus housing delivery falls in the complex zone of multi level government. Importantly, amongst other provisions, the 2007 Act requires municipalities to set housing delivery goals, and designate land for housing development by other spheres. In addition to these layers of government, the private sector plays a role in achieving housing development goals. For decades, government has articulated the goal for 'Breaking New Ground' and developing inclusive housing and human settlements policies to address the spatial segregation of the past.

While we can obtain information on housing delivery generally, It is extremely difficult to obtain accurate information on the rate at which women own (hold the title deeds) and control the houses in which they live. This second is important because given patriarchal norms, many women-headed households are not owned by women, and in cases where a woman owns or pays rent for a house, they may not have authority over decision-making regarding how the house is used. Housing insecurity is a significant factor increasing risks of gender based violence and femicide. The provision of safe, adequate housing close to economic and transport hubs for people living with disabilities is another important priority, as dependence on others also increases risks of violence and abuse experienced by people with disabilities. Given the role that women play in caregiving, this must be applied to women with disabilities, and also to women who care for people with disabilities.

C19 measures had a significant impact on people's ability to pay rents or their bank loans, this hit poor and working class people and people who survive through the informal economy the hardest. People who did not have access to other financial buffers available to those in the middle classes. The National Department of Human Settlements reported that the 'affordable market was severely affected' by C19, with people not able to pay the rents for shared and backyard dwellings.<sup>13</sup>

Our first indicators consider not only what manifestos offer in terms of delivering affordable housing, but importantly if they recognise the problem of women's low ownership and control rates and **set clear targets to prioritise tenure and transfer of ownership to women in their housing delivery goals** and allocation policies. In addition to this we have asked if the manifestos commit to housing allocation policies that prioritise women who are exposed to GBV or have been in domestic violence shelters, as well as for women with disabilities, or women who care for people with disabilities.

Overall, the manifesto's offerings on housing are gender blind. None of the parties, expressly indicate that they grapple with or prioritise women's or people with disability or migrant and refugees' access to, tenure, and control over safe, affordable homes.

However the ANC do provide a catch-all list in the section dedicated to women, this list includes reference to ensuring that housing (amongst a list of other programmes) address the 'specific needs of women, people with disabilities, the elderly, and children' on women and not integrated into the relevant sections of the manifesto. So while it's better than before, on its own it is too small a step forward, and not strong enough, demonstrating the same tacked-on approach and lack of integration as we've seen to 'womenand youth' in previous manifestos. The EFF is the only party that mentions disability, while they do not expressly prioritise delivery to people living with disabilities or women caring for them, they commit that the houses built by EFF municipalities will be accessible for people with disabilities. In terms of prioritising other groups who experience discrimination and exclusion, the EFF prioritise municipal workers for housing and student accommodation, making the gap in not prioritising any other groups more noticeable. While the DA refer to homeless people, their strategy is not to provide housing but rather, quite worryingly, to ensure there is a database of homelessness and where possible to provide social services.

The EFF make a range of promises to address housing delivery, many of these are broad, unspecific and untargeted - for example, EFF municipalities to build quality and spacious houses with flushing toilets, to establish municipal construction companies to provide housing on 99-year lease basis, and to subsidise finance for middle-income people - and thus they appear to have high popular appeal and 'lip service' value, for example they don't indicate how a municipality would subsidise finance from its own revenue, something that could only be achieved if funded by national government. The EFF plans to convert unused municipal buildings into affordable housing, including offering security of tenure, and to regulate rent on municipal-owned land also come without specificity but are probably more achievable.

The DA's offering on housing for those who've been most excluded are weak and not targeted either, they emphasise self-built strategies, which would require some level of time and resources that may be out of reach of most women in poor and working-class contexts, they suggest that new state subsidised housing options will be limited, but do indicate that transfer of title deeds to increase ownership of previously build subsidised housing will be done.

Municipal **housing demand and allocation** databases have been the cause of significant concern, controversy, and conflict over the years.<sup>14</sup> We looked for indications in the manifestos that the parties commit that structures formed for **decision-making on housing allocation operate with high levels of transparency** to the community and include women and people from other excluded groups, especially including people with disabilities, from the affected community on the decision making structure. The ANC are silent on the issue, however the EFF indicate that they will make the 'list of people due to receive' housing public; the DA start off relatively strongly, they indicate that they will manage lists transparently and use a fair process for selecting beneficiaries, but the details of this are not provided. The DA also make it clear their 'offer' relies on residents fulfilling certain duties i.e. 'not invading land illegally, double-dipping, or queue jumping' as such its tone dismisses the levels of anger and desperation people face, ignores the structural reasons for some of these actions which to some degree is caused and exacerbated by political leadership including the DA. Thus the condition is patronising and leans to discrimination. IPM states that they will review the implementation of housing allocation in Plettenberg Bay 'with prudence and integrity'.

In addition to transparency and participation in the process of identifying beneficiaries of housing, and noting the years that pass before houses are built, we considered if parties indicated plans to identify the beneficiaries early, and to increase participatory approaches from the outset. These could assist in ensuring that the projects are more sustainable, and reduce rates of occupation of land that is earmarked for low cost housing development, instead of the current approach of increasing security and the use of 'Red Ants' to evict people who occupy the land.<sup>15</sup> None of the parties grapple with the issue of

<sup>13</sup> Department of Human Settlements Annual Report 2020-2021. p29.

<sup>14</sup> Tissington K, Munshi N, Mirugi-Mukundi G and Durojaye E. 2013. *Jumping the Queue, Waiting Lists and other Myths: Perceptions and Practice around Housing Demand and Allocation in South Africa*. Socio Economic Rights Institute and Community Law Centre, UWC. pp6-7.

<sup>15</sup> Prof Jaap de Visser. Personal communication with researchers. 26 October 2021.

involvement of housing beneficiaries in the project design and implementation processes. The 'self-built' strategies suggested by the DA, may be a start, but they don't address this orientation to deep involvement.

### 4.3. Food justice and agriculture

#### Main Messages: Food justice and agriculture

- Delivering food justice is a multi-level function, municipalities often disregard their roles.
- C19 increased hunger in SA disturbingly, there is increased public pressure to address food justice
- None recognise women's additional work to provide food, or that women experience hunger more.
- None acknowledge women as informal food traders, but the EFF, promisingly, include that women (and youth) will have 50% access to their food markets.
- ANC, EFF and IPM all address hunger or food security but DA ignore the issue.
- However the offerings are weak. ANC and IPMs commitments regarding food are low, taking a more welfarist approach, the EFFs are grounded in the structural inequality of land, but are typically multiplied to the point of being unrealistic.
- ANC recognises that C19 increased hunger but they don't state that their shockingly slow and woefully inadequate measures to address C19 fuelled that increase.
- Encouragingly, ANC and EFF both address the municipal role to enable food markets and street trading.
- DA, gender-blind, show understanding of issues of food, markets, and informal trade but proposals are unspecific and include 'regulations' and measures that will favour people with some resources.
- ANC commitments on urban food production seem sound, achievable and the plan is clear.
- EFF address urban food production, starting well and then ramping up the range of individually good commitments which collectively are unrealistic.
- EFF is the only party that grapples with supporting emerging farmers with resources.
- In terms of offerings on farming and rural areas the DA opt to deal with farmers only in terms of security measures.

The right to nutritious food is fundamental to life, wellbeing and dignity. Despite being able to produce sufficient food to feed the population, the profound income inequality in South Africa directly affects access to food for a large proportion of the population. South Africa's previously significant levels of hunger and food insecurity and child malnutrition,<sup>16</sup> has been shown to increase drastically and to have reached disturbing new, higher equilibrium level as a result of C19 lock-down measures and failures to ensure access to income, social security and food.<sup>17</sup> Rural, poor, Black women and people who rely on informal income were most affected.

To a large extent, women carry the responsibility for providing food - growing, buying, and cooking food. The NIDS-CRAM study also clearly shows that women-headed households and adult women face higher levels of hunger, in attempts to shield children from hunger. In addition to hunger, 41 percent of people in rural areas, and 59 percent of people in urban areas have *inadequate* access to food.<sup>18</sup> The unrest and 'food riots' in July 2021, regardless of the questions of political instigation, demonstrate the levels of desperation that people are faced with.

The right to food (and nutrition for children) is protected through different sections in the Constitution, however it is one of the few Constitutional rights that is not given further meaning through central legislation or a clear governance structure, as such delivery on food rights is fragmented across numerous National and Provincial departments.<sup>19</sup> The tendency for policy and programmes to focus on food production through agriculture, and the dominance of food systems by large private entities does not absolve local government, indeed municipalities are 'indispensable' to ensuring access to healthy food, especially for people in lower income communities.<sup>20</sup> Their duty to provide water and electricity directly impacts on the provision, storage and cooking of healthy food, food trade regulation (zoning and by laws) and support to co-ops, informal,

<sup>16</sup> StatsSA. 2020. *Loss of income resulting from the COVID-19 Pandemic may lead to higher levels of food insecurity* accessed at <http://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=13327> accessed on 22 October 2021.

<sup>17</sup> Van der Berg S, Patel L, Bridgman G. 2021. *Food insecurity in South Africa: Evidence from NIDS-CRAM Wave 5*.

<sup>18</sup> Final Report of the Presidential Advisory Panel on Land Reform and Agriculture. May 2019. accessed at [https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis\\_document/201907/panelreportlandreform\\_0.pdf](https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201907/panelreportlandreform_0.pdf) on 22 October 2021.

<sup>19</sup> Moyo B. 2019. *The right to food in South Africa: We need a manifesto for food justice*. 05 March 2019 Daily Maverick <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2019-03-05-the-right-to-food-in-south-africa-we-need-a-manifesto-for-food-justice/>.

<sup>20</sup> Chonco T. 2015. *An analysis of municipal regulation and management of markets as an instrument to facilitate access to food and enhance food security*. pp20-22.



micro and small business (facilities, infrastructure, storage),<sup>21</sup> can be critical to ensuring access to food through local food systems.

We thus looked at the manifestos to see if parties expressed an understanding of the situation and **role for local government to promote food justice in cooperation** with other spheres of government, and if they articulated plans to promote nutrition, food justice and sovereignty taking into account issues of **zoning, permits, facilities to ensure food safety and general security, and services to enable local markets and street trading** which fall within the authority of local government.<sup>22</sup>

None of the manifestos deal with the issue of women's role in food provision and women's increased hunger. The ANC recognises the need to fight hunger, describing that C19 has impacted food prices and affected poorer people, they don't critique, acknowledge or problematise, that their sluggish and inadequate measures to address C19 and weak implementation of covid relief measures affected this status quo. They commit to 'continue' to support school feeding and soup kitchens, but they don't describe any more specifics in this regard. They promise to monitor food prices and affordability 'for the majority of the people', this last is not a municipal role. The EFF don't refer to the high levels of hunger that people are facing, however they commit to ensuring that every household is food secure, and address food security in a number of ways through their manifesto, mainly within the banner of the call for land and their offerings linked to agriculture. IPM's manifesto doesn't name hunger, however their commitment in the two page document, to provide food banks for the most vulnerable indicates it is at the core of their consideration. The DA manifesto ignores hunger and food justice.

Only the ANC and EFF deal directly with the issues of **food markets or street trading**; the ANC commit to develop fresh produce markets and promote selling food in townships and community-owned stores, and include the promise to repeal restrictive municipal by-laws on trading. The EFF indicate that they will 'build and support' fresh produce markets for small scale producers, the EFF is the only party that makes reference to women in their section, committing to ensure that 50 percent of people who access fresh produce markets will be 'womenand youth'.

The DA makes scant reference to food markets. They demonstrate an understanding of the issues linked to trade in the informal food economy as part of their problem analysis, but are silent on women's dominance in this sector and don't follow this up with any commitments specifically linked to food markets and trading. They do note that informal trade and economic activity will be important in a post pandemic context and then suggest proactive and effective regulation of the sector with an unexplained 'enabling' approach. The opacity of their 'regulation' proposals, linked to their clear position for private sector investment is concerning as it suggests more, not fewer, hoops for people trying to eke out an existence in this sector to jump through. Furthermore, their assertion that hygiene standards will need to be met, including by traders who may not be able to afford permits, but no offerings to provide the infrastructure to support people meeting these standards for healthy food trade is problematic, and will favour those with some resources, and may further exclude people already struggling on the margins.

Both the EFF and the ANC commit to ensuring any procurement of food by the municipality will be linked to local, small-scale, and emerging farmers.

The questions of land, agriculture and food are linked, noting that agricultural land does not have the financial incentives of levies, rates and other income potential as residential or commercial land, **we considered if parties set targets for land to be zoned for agricultural use, including encouraging small urban food gardening**. Linked to this we also asked if the manifestos expressed specific support for **women farmers** in terms of providing land, technologies and services.

None of the other parties make any reference to women or support for women in terms of land and agriculture. In terms of other specific groups mentioned, the EFF make reference to all EFF councillors working with young people to grow food as a source of income, and to providing some specific support to indigent households, and the ANC emphasise supporting 'the impoverished' and school programmes in this regard. We note that the ANC led department of agriculture does have targets for women farmers, and so were interested to note they did not claim this.

The ANC and EFF make commitments linked to urban food gardens, whereas the DA and IPM do not.

In addition to linking rural areas to urban markets, the ANC manifesto promises to provide land for co-operative communal food gardens in rural areas and to provide 'support where possible' to these, no further clarity of the nature of the support is given, and the promise of support is clearly weak. As covered in the land section above, the EFF promise to provide land in rural areas to increase agricultural production.

On urban farming and food production, overall the ANC commitments seem achievable, they commit to make land available for community and co-operative food gardens, they also undertake to amend or repeal restrictive by-laws on land-use and urban production of crops to ensure that urban and pavement gardens are unrestricted in their bid to increase food security.

<sup>21</sup> DeVisser J. 2021. 'Food Security, Urban Governance and Multilevel Government in Africa' in Home R (ED) *Land Issues for Urban Governance in Sub-Saharan Africa, Local and urban governance*. p270.

<sup>22</sup> De Visser J. 2021. *ibid*. P273.

Finally, the ANC also offer to integrate food garden projects in community works programmes. The EFF undertake to ensure municipal land is made available for urban agriculture, and go so far as to promise the development of land protection by-laws to ensure that suitable land for agriculture may not be used for any other activities, this is a bold promise in the face of the incentives for municipalities no prioritise commercial or residential use.

The EFF commitments keep coming, they go on to commit to a land and agricultural development directorate in every municipality, this is an interesting proposal specifically for rural municipalities, it would however require a commitment to cooperation with the spheres of government that are responsible for agriculture – national and provincial - which is not addressed. Besides the ANC's vague promise of 'support where possible' to rural farmers, the EFF is the only party to express more detail on support to emerging farmers or indigent households, this includes that they will assist with business planning, production support, and marketing assistance, as well as to make tractors available in every municipality, and provide seeds and implements to indigent households.

The DA is silent on food gardens both urban or rural, they are also silent on any form of agricultural support or other support to women farmers - they only deal with questions of farms in terms of offerings of security and policing in farm areas.

#### 4.4. Basic Services

##### Main Messages: Basic Services

- The ANC and DA do not address the problems people face to register as indigent households in order to receive the free basic services.
- The EFF propose considered and strong measures to ensure that indigent households receive free basic services - to remove red tape so that everyone receiving social grants will automatically qualify for free basic services, and for social workers to undertake home visits to profile indigent households to ensure that they receive all free basic services by June 2022. However the scope of this and the timeframe of June 2022 are idealistic.
- The ANC, DA, EFF and IPM have some understanding of issues relating to accessing water however there are no concrete plans in place to provide water in the short term especially to areas facing water shortages other than in areas where they may already govern.
- None of the parties propose plans to regularly review and increase the range of basic services offered by municipalities from 50kWh of electricity and 6000L water.
- None of the parties address the disproportionate impact that failures of water, electricity and sanitation delivery have on women's lives, the ANC has regressed in mentioning the impact that this may have on women specifically since 2016.
- The 2021 manifestos fail to clearly address targets to abolish pit latrines or unsafe toilets.

Municipalities are mandated and constitutionally obligated to provide basic services, namely water, sanitation and electricity to communities as provided for in Schedule 4B of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. Schedule 4B provides that the local government is in charge of electricity and gas reticulation as well as water and sanitation services (including potable water supply systems, domestic waste-water and sewage disposal systems). In addition to the local level, provinces have a duty to provide support and monitor local municipalities (section 155(6)(a)-(b) and the White Paper on Local Government (1998) explains that the national government is required to intervene 'on behalf of communities' in cases where municipalities fail to provide affordable services.

Local government therefore has a direct role to play in delivering and providing for these services, municipalities do so through funds provided by national government through the equitable share. Municipalities in more resourced areas must also raise funds through the sale of these services, this means that municipalities in poorer areas are less able to raise funds, but also receive a relatively larger portion of the equitable share, as the potential revenue they can raise is taken into account.

Our feminist indicators on basic services aim to determine whether parties are able to recognise **consequences of failures in delivering on water, electricity and sanitation on women's roles** in families and in their communities. According to our analysis and criteria, the manifesto's provided by parties should provide plans in coordination with other spheres of government in addressing service delivery delays, disruptions and corruption. The indicators also examine whether barriers faced by households in registering indigent households are adequately addressed.

Delivery of basic services is deeply tied in to issues of environmental justice, municipalities rely on centralised fossil fuel based electricity systems, noting recent moves to empower them to source private renewable energy to deliver, the provision of water is affected by drought and it raises the questions of sustainable water supply management and municipalities must

grapple with issues of recycling and limited land-fill space. These have impacts on people's health and wellbeing and the parties' economic proposals.

#### 4.4.1. Indigent Households

There are different types of approaches used by municipalities in determining the indigent status of households. According to a 2019 StatsSA survey the majority of municipalities had made use of the self-targeting approach as a mechanism for providing free basic services to indigent households in the 2019 period. The self-targeting approach is a system whereby only indigent households, that apply, receive the free basic services, the extent of the services made available is determined by the service provider and the municipality. People face significant barriers in applying for indigent status, and the processes lack uniformity across municipalities, in addition municipalities use different approaches to categorise households as indigent. Furthermore, in addition to the red tape and barriers that people are required to jump through, another fundamental challenge is that people are often not aware of if and how they can receive free basic services.<sup>23</sup>

These barriers to people applying for indigent status, and lack of uniformity across municipalities in how they categorise households as indigent are not adequately dealt with by the parties' manifestos. However, the ANC attempted to address the challenges in its 2016 manifesto by aiming to enhance the system to protect indigent households whilst the DA made reference to a monthly basket of free basic services to qualifying (indigent) households. Manifestos analysed during this election fail to provide for policy changes to increase the number of households that qualify for free services, deal with the barriers to registration, or to address the role of service providers in deciding who qualifies as indigent households.

The EFF's suggestion to provide all indigent households with free basic services and allocate social workers who will conduct home visits and profile indigent households to ensure that they receive all free basic services by June 2022 is a step in the right direction for improving delays to women and households in receiving services, however the problems with current practises of registering households used by municipalities cannot be so easily removed. Clearer policies should be provided on steps that will be taken to change the current status quo. Part of IPM's action plan is to create an indigent programme that would offer discounted basic services to poor households in Plettenberg Bay. IPM's short manifesto does not elaborate on how this programme would benefit households led by unemployed, poor women that should be receiving free basic services from municipalities.

The ANC, from the vantage point of being in power in national government, has stipulated in the current manifesto that they will ensure that communities receive higher allocations in terms of basic services, this would need to be monitored at national, not local level. Lastly, in instances where the EFF, DA and ANC made reference to employment opportunities when providing basic services to communities they were largely centered around male dominated sectors (engineering, process controllers) and did not provide input on how women would benefit from this employment.

Other than the EFF and ANC, the DA does not provide concrete mechanisms to provide indigent households, which are predominantly women-headed households, with the necessary support to apply for assistance.<sup>24</sup> The IPM does not address this in their short manifesto. Parties are once more failing women in their lack of full understanding of the existing red tape and loopholes in accessing basic services. The EFF undertake to overhaul the systems, making access automatic to any people who already qualify for social grants. Manifestos lack realistic policy proposals for how more rather than fewer households can receive basic services. They don't adequately address the problems that arise (including the decrease in households receiving basic services) due to individual municipalities having the discretion to decide which approach they will use to determine which households receive free basic services.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, despite the duty on municipalities to review the allocations, none propose plans in place to increase the range of basic services offered by municipalities from 50kWh of electricity and 6000L water to amounts aligned with people's direct needs whilst considering the size of households.<sup>26</sup>

Communication to households on how they can access free basic services is a crucial layer in the realisation of basic rights. The EFF makes commitments to communicate proactively to households that receive social grants on their access to free basic services. The IPM suggests that it will create an indigent programme that will offer discounted basic services to the poor however the party does not provide input on how this will be communicated to households. The ANC and DA do not provide information on how they will communicate with households in this regard.

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<sup>23</sup> Ledger T. 2021. Access to basic services: Enabling Progressive Transformation or entrenching poverty and inequality? Public Affairs Research Institute.

<sup>24</sup> StatsSA. 2019 General Household Survey 2019 available at <http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0318/P03182019.pdf> accessed 26 October 2021.

<sup>25</sup> Ledger T. 2021. Access to basic services: Enabling Progressive Transformation or entrenching poverty and inequality? Public Affairs Research Institute p9-10.

<sup>26</sup> Ledger T. 2021. Access to basic services: Enabling Progressive Transformation or entrenching poverty and inequality? Public Affairs Research Institute.

#### 4.4.2. Water

In its manifesto the DA reflects on issues relating to water crises in communities and makes proposals to provide water tanks to improve water plants in collaboration with other spheres of government. An analysis of the effects that a lack of safe, clean and reliable sources of water has on women is lacking.

The parties did not provide alternatives for providing water scarce areas with alternatives for water nor do they have alternative plans in place to undertake collaborative work to address increasing levels of water scarcity with other spheres of government (local and national departments of water and sanitation).

The ANC, DA and EFF admit that there is poor basic service delivery and that water facilities are at best outdated however, in most instances proposals do not speak to the effect this has on women specifically. The IPM aims to maintain and strengthen basic services (including water) in its local municipality. Women who fetch water and do not have access to proper sanitation facilities in rural areas or informal settlements are not mentioned by all parties. 2016 manifestos were more localised in their approach with concrete examples, timeframes and statistics and focused largely on women and persons in rural areas and informal settlements.

In addition, the ANC acknowledges that the current basic services do not meet the standards required by communities, and makes proposals to create more mechanisms for providing water to communities including providing employment opportunities in the provision of the services.

#### 4.4.3. Electricity

We looked to see if parties recognise that lack of access to **electricity and the effects of load shedding negatively impacts on the unpaid labour of women, small businesses and women's economic activity.**

Local government (with Eskom) are responsible for delivering electricity. A large part of the manifestos were fixated on fixing the electricity provider due to the economic impacts. The manifestos did not grapple with the issue in terms of the effects of load shedding on women and their livelihoods. Although parties made reference to alternative energy solutions there was limited input on effective, efficient and rapid solutions to provide electricity to households.

As much as municipalities should continue with delivery of electricity in the current model in the immediate term, along with all spheres of government, they have a major responsibility to grapple with the environmental, health and societal effects of coal use for electricity on communities and make alternative suggestions for use of renewable energy sources. The DA, ANC and EFF address plans to prioritise the delivery of other forms of energy with the EFF proposing that municipalities install solar power in all houses built by the municipality. The ANC promises to 'invest in public renewable and cleaner power-generating capacity, and electricity transmission infrastructure to expand and strengthen the grid' while the DA will fight for the government to, amongst other suggestions, 'implement zero-rating VAT on LED light bulbs and energy-efficient appliances'. IPM does not mention more sustainable energy sources that can be used by community members.

Although there are proposals made by the ANC to decrease the waiting period for applications from 6 months to 90 days for electricity, there is limited reflection on how households can be provided with alternative services in the interim or how the escalating cost of electricity affects households. Furthermore, the ANC's move to invest in solar energy and simultaneously create employment to strengthen the current grid are crucial. What is absent is how many jobs will be created and whether these jobs will be used as part of efforts to employ women in more technical sectors.

Some of the suggestions made by the EFF are idealistic in nature and are not achievable within the set timeframes especially in instances where the main focus and proposals are on upgrading outdated water facilities and creating jobs in a sector that is predominantly occupied by men. Opposition parties have opted to largely focus on areas where they already had a footprint in providing services instead of increasing their reach.

#### 4.4.4. Sanitation

In terms of sanitation, we expect parties to be cognisant of the violence and health consequences caused by poor sanitation and provide for **safe, hygienic public toilets.**

Lack of proper sanitation has a negative effect on all persons but more so women and girls. The 2021 manifestos fail to identify tangible targets over the 5 year period in abolishing pit latrine or unsafe toilets in communities. The elimination of

pit latrines has been an ongoing and unfulfilled promise made by parties in every election that pose health and safety concerns for women and girls in overcrowded and informal settlements.<sup>27</sup>

Overall parties appear to have regressed in their understanding and prioritisation of the burden of care faced by women, particularly women in rural or township areas who are unable to receive basic services as expeditiously. In the 2021 manifesto's there is no indication of parties understanding of the violence faced by women in accessing basic services.

## 4.5. Safety and Justice

### Main Messages: Safety and Justice

- Municipalities have a responsibility to ensure safety and crime prevention through safe communities and other social development and local law enforcement and policing.
- None of the parties demonstrate local government GBV response and coordination with other spheres named.
- The ANC makes broad promises about safety and defeating toxic patriarchy but no targets, it fails to link its manifesto commitments to the GBVF NSP.
- The EFF address big picture issues but are thin on actual plans for responding to GBV.
- the EFF does not name community safety or ensuring safe public spaces.
- The DA is silent on patriarchy, and clearly ignore key opportunities to address GBV at local level.
- None of the parties consider improving local law enforcement and municipal police's capacities protect women, gender non-conforming people, sex workers, migrant women and women with disability's safety.

A booklet for councillors on community safety published by SALGA states that crime prevention and community safety is the cornerstone of local development. The booklet emphasises that safety is not only about the absence of crime but refers to an environment where 'economic growth can occur; where poverty and social exclusion can be reduced; where individuals and families can live free of crime, intimidation or violence'. Various legislation and policies provide the legal framework for local government's role in community safety and crime prevention. Section 152 of the Constitution names one of the 'Objects of local government' to promote a safe and healthy environment while the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 stipulates that municipal councils have a duty to promote a safe and healthy environment in the municipality.

All levels of government have a responsibility for safety in general and community safety specifically. The roles and duties of the different spheres of government are complex, not always well understood, not consistently applied, and evolving. SaferSpaces, an online knowledge hub on community safety, defined four broad overlapping functions for local government in relation to safety. Firstly, the enforcement of by-laws and the provision of traffic policing. Secondly, providing crime prevention through visible policing and providing services like lighting and crime prevention projects. Thirdly, guarding of municipal infrastructure and the protection of personnel and councillors for the purposes of crime prevention. Fourthly, lead in establishing systems of coordination for local stakeholders in respect of crime prevention.

Additional policy documents address the issue of safety and community safety for women. The National Development Plan 2012 states: 'In 2030, people living in South Africa feel safe at home, at school and at work, and they enjoy a community life free of fear. Women walk freely in the streets and children play safely outside'. The National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence & Femicide 2020 (NSP-GBVF) states that implementation of the NSP-GBVF at local government level must be integrated into the IDP and that local government should drive the safety of public spaces. It also proposed that the organogram for the yet to be established National Council on Gender-Based Violence & Femicide (NCCGBVF) include local GBV working groups. In addition to these roles municipalities have law enforcement units (responsible for traffic, fines etc) and large municipalities and Metros have municipal police services. Metro police have duties to implement parts of the DVA.

We developed feminist indicators to help us assess the extent to which the manifestos consider women and **women's context in relation to safety and justice on local level** as well as track if strategies and plans are developed that improve women, gender non-conforming people, sex workers, people with disabilities and migrant women's safety. Governmental responsibility for justice and safety crosses all spheres of government and it would be important for political parties to **articulate plans for cooperative governance and intergovernmental cooperation** in relation to addressing safety and crime prevention for women. We would expect manifestos to recognise the high levels of gender-based violence and to address the local government responsibilities expressed in various laws and policies. With metro police's specific duties regarding parts of the DVA we would expect to at least see **training for metro police on GBV** and the DVA. Because of

<sup>27</sup> Saleem M, Burdett T & Heaslip V. 2019. 'Health and social impacts of open defecation on women: a systematic review' *BMC Public Health* 19: 158 available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6364430/> accessed on 26 October 2021.

the high probability that GBV occurs in communities where women live we would expect to see training of **all municipal law enforcement to increase their capacity to identify**, support, respond and refer women and gender non conforming people to appropriate services. Local government in collaboration with other spheres of government and civil society should provide comprehensive psychosocial services to survivors of GBV in municipalities.

#### 4.5.1 Gender-based violence (GBV)

It is encouraging to see the language to defeat the toxic culture of patriarchy and the need to tackle hate crimes against LGBTQIA+ in the ANC's manifesto. Unfortunately, the ANC does not elaborate how toxic patriarchy will be defeated; hate crimes discouraged; homes, public spaces and workplaces made safer; or the root causes of women's disempowerment and GBV dealt with. The promise to implement three pieces of GBV legislation is out of place in a local government election manifesto, as it is a national competency. The EFF links women's economic emancipation to solving the structural problems of sexism and patriarchy and states that GBV can only be resolved if all people are uplifted. The EFF does stipulate that every municipality must develop and enforce strategy that deals with GBV and drug abuse as well as build shelters for 'victims of GBV, rape and child abuse. IPM indicates that they will address GBV at municipal level through establishing a Social Service Division that incorporates a gender desk.

The DA's manifesto is unacceptably silent on GBV. None of the main political parties mention the NSP-GBVF and this oversight is striking as the NSP-GBVF is a key policy document on GBV and it does name interventions on local community level.

#### 4.5.2 Policing, community safety and safe spaces

The ANC makes general promises on making communities safer and that they will revitalise arts and culture facilities especially for women and youth and revitalise safety committees to accompany 'womenandchildren'. Unfortunately, how this will be achieved is not made clear.

On public spaces the DA wants to address the root causes of decay but does not name what those root causes are, how they will address it and they do not mention women, gender nonconforming people, people with disabilities or migrant women. The DA raises the problem of crime and problems in law enforcement. The DA raise the socioeconomic roots of crime as a symptom of social and economic dysfunction rather than social and economic inequality, demonstrating their punitive rather than development approach. DA will implement watching briefs for low prosecuted crimes such as rape but it is not stipulated how these watching briefs will be leveraged to increase prosecution given that prosecution is a national competency. The DA raises the possibility of localised specialised units such as marine poaching, metal theft and gang and drug units but misses the opportunity to identify a GBV unit.

Noting the EFF's appreciation of structural violence and its impact on women, the EFF does not name community safety or ensuring safe public spaces. They will fight the transportation of drugs and illegal firearms and strengthen law enforcement to fight corruption, gangs and drug lords, and don't use this opportunity to also talk about GBV.

None of the political parties we analysed addressed the issue of municipal law enforcement and police and their roles on GBV. This inability to articulate plans for a local government level law enforcement response to GBV is a huge oversight that will impact on women's safety in their homes and communities. Cooperative governance and intergovernmental cooperation required to tackle the issue of justice and safety for women is not engaged with in the manifestos.

### 4.6. Child care and education

#### **Main Messages: Child care and education**

- Local government has the responsibility for child care facilities, including ECD and after school facilities.
- These are critical to children's development and have benefits to the whole society.
- None of the parties recognise that Providing child care services frees women and older girls from child care roles which prevent engagement in other economic activity, education, leisure.
- None of the parties recognise the dominance of women workers in the ECD, nor job insecurity and low wages, in municipal run or private facilities.
- ANC and IPM are silent on ECD and DA might as well be. EFF are on the opposite end of the spectrum with grand promises. We note the EFF do not refer to 'free' ECD as was the case in 2019.
- None of the parties deal with after-school facilities.
- Basic education is not a municipal function but they need to fulfil important functions that support basic

- education (infrastructure for water and sanitation, safety for girls and children too and from school etc).
- ANC and DA barely address the issues, but EFF offer some thoughtful and some overly grand promises in this regard.

The Constitution tasks local government with providing 'child care facilities' this is largely interpreted to mean Early Childhood Development (ECD), however we consider this responsibility to apply to all children, i.e. people under the age of 18 not only for children up to school going age. These are concurrent functions - Chapters 5 and 6 of the Children's Act (2005 as amended) provides that provinces can assign partial care and ECD functions to municipalities, in addition municipalities may implement ECD programmes and provide partial care facilities directly. Partial-care facilities generally run ECD programmes, but they may also provide for after-school activities such as homework support, sports, and arts for older children - from a long term perspective thinking beyond the value of developing children and youths' performance in arts and sports, these provide also opportunity for municipalities to support the science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) goals for children and youth living in those areas.

Childcare and ECD is, first and foremost, critical to serve children's development and best interests, ECD is well documented as improving numerous other health, educational and social development outcomes, these services also release women, girls and older children from some of the additional roles of childcare that affects their ability to be active in generating income, seek employment, leisure time, or in terms of older children, themselves focus on school, or pursue higher education. So, we asked if the manifestos recognise the value of **ECD and after-school childcare in terms of women and older girls' additional unpaid child-care roles**. None of the established parties recognise this issue.

The ECD workforce is estimated at between 117 000 up to 180 000 workers, these are predominantly Black women and programmes are mainly provided by smaller 'subsistence entrepreneurs or micro-social enterprises'.<sup>28</sup> Sectoral experts note that these women are further marginalised by the low status and pay of the work. The already extremely under-resourced sector tasked with taking care of the nation's children was hard hit by C19 measures and the failures of government relief.<sup>29</sup>

We asked if the manifestos recognise the **predominance of women working in the ECD sector**, and if they demonstrate plans to support materials, skills development, feeding programmes and services to support facilities for ECD, especially smaller less secure facilities, and rural and urban poor or working-class communities. We asked if they articulate **plans to introduce free ECD**, with targets, budgets and monitorable plans – in coordination with other spheres of government. Finally, we asked if they commit to providing a living wage for workers in municipal-run ECD centres.

None of the manifestos recognise the dominance of women workers in this sector, nor is the issue of job insecurity and low wages, in municipal run or private facilities, addressed.

In fact of the four parties we looked at, two mention ECD at all, of those only one deals with it in any detail. The ANC are silent, and the IPM also don't address ECD in their short manifesto for Plettenberg Bay. The DA raise ECD vaguely as one of their many offerings towards crime prevention, but this is without any specificity or detail, their problem statement on health mentions the harmful effects of inadequate housing on childhood development. The EFF however make grand promises committing to establishing ECD centres with adequate infrastructure in every municipality (we note that in 2019 they were clear that their ECD offerings would be free, in this manifesto the word 'free' has been dropped). They also include one very specific reference to ensuring that municipal ECD centres are supported by municipal clinics to 'pay attention to' and 'respond to' autism.

There are numerous developmental, educational and social benefits to older children having access to safe after school programmes, so we asked if the manifestos articulated plans for **after school centres** for school-going children (both primary and high school). We also questioned if the manifestos included plans to collaborate with other spheres of government in order to **support out-of-school children and children heading child headed households**. No parties took the opportunity to consider other after-school support for children, although the DA do suggest youth camps, and issues of recreation, drugs and alcohol use prevention for youth were raised by the ANC and DA.

While municipalities are **not responsible for providing basic education or school infrastructure**, municipalities should support other spheres of government on the **range of additional barriers to basic education faced by girls** such as unsafe routes, transport hubs, or no transport to school, caring for younger children or sick family members, infrastructure to address unsafe and unhygienic school toilets, and no access to sanitary products. We considered if manifestos recognised these roles and if they included plans to support the relevant spheres of government address these are in place.

<sup>28</sup> The Plight of the ECD Workforce. An urgent call for relief in the wake fo covid-19. April 2020. Page 4. Accessed at <https://www.bridge.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Final-report-The-plight-of-the-ECD-workforce-1.pdf> on 22 October 2021.

<sup>29</sup> C-19 People's Coalition Media release by the ECD & Basic Education Working Group. 3 February 2021 accessed at <https://c19peoplescoalition.org.za/save-our-ecd-workforce-we-are-running-out-of-time/> on 22 October 2021.

The ANC is mostly silent on supporting the provision of basic education at municipal level, however they address the issue of children's safety 'when walking from one area to another' which would apply to children walking to and from school. Despite the high court declaring sanitation in schools a 'national emergency',<sup>30</sup> and despite various ANC commitments and programmes in other spheres in this regard, they do not address questions of ensuring necessary municipal infrastructure is in place to ensure school toilets. The DA only deal with basic education in terms of their crime prevention efforts with a commitment to providing 'uniformed school resource officers in high-risk schools', they are silent on school toilets. The EFF provide a list of detailed commitments that all EFF municipalities will undertake to fulfil in respect of schools, including ensuring schools have access to clean water, dustbins, WIFI (the language of this promise is grand, that EFF municipalities will build libraries, schools and community halls with reliable WIFI), septic tanks and sewage systems for schools that don't have these, finally they indicate that they will work with artists to paint and beautify schools amongst other public facilities.

## 4.7. Health

### Main Messages: Health

- Health care is mainly a national and provincial competency, municipalities have a key role to play in creating safe and healthy environments, including pollution control, waste management and prevention. There are also municipal clinics in some districts and metros.
- A large focus of the manifestos appears to be more appropriate for national and provincial interventions as opposed to municipal services which should focus largely on food safety, environment and waste management.
- Parties don't make reference to districts and their roles in providing primary healthcare services.
- Although CHWs are not mainly under the competency of local government, none of the four parties other than the EFF explicitly mentioned CHWs in both their 2016 and 2021 manifestos. However none of the parties recognised the role that women CHWs play in society and safe, secure employment of CHWs was not mentioned in any of the manifestos.
- There are no plans in place to monitor the implementation of projects by all parties which poses challenges in effectively holding parties accountable.
- There are no plans by the EFF to resource the proposed increases in staff (health workers, social workers) and upgrades to facilities even though health has become an urgent consideration in all spheres of government since the C19 pandemic.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals which are meant to be achieved by 2030 by all UN member states include a sustainable development goal on healthcare (SDG 3) with an aim to amongst others, achieve universal health coverage and reduce deaths and illnesses associated with air, water and other types of pollution.

Although national health insurance has been a big discussion for several years in South Africa and as recently as this year in Parliament, manifestos did not in any way address and reflect on the proposed bill which has implications, duties and responsibilities for health care provision at local government level. The ANC merely mentioned national health insurance and did not appear to reflect on its national policy and its implications on a local government level.

Primary health care services are a national and provincial competency according to Schedule 4B of the Constitution. However, local government is specifically mandated to provide municipal health services in accordance with the National Health Act, 2003 which include: water quality monitoring, food, vector and environmental pollution control, waste management, health surveillance of premises, surveillance and prevention of communicable diseases (excluding immunisations), disposal of the dead and chemical safety. Issues surrounding the provisioning of health services by different spheres of government are often layered and complex with many stakeholders involved.

Our feminist indicators are focused on monitoring whether parties are able to identify weaknesses in **providing municipal health services** insofar as they relate to monitoring for and prevention measures to prevent the spread of communicable diseases (excluding immunisations), water quality monitoring, waste management, pollution control, and food control.

The manifestos deal with municipal health services in less detail, all parties acknowledge the structural issues such as pollution and waste as causes of health issues amongst communities. It is evident that parties that previously provided detailed plans for the 2016 elections, such as the ANC and DA have provided less concrete plans on how they will provide these services in 2021. Furthermore, the ANC, DA, EFF don't adequately grapple with the complexities of C19 pandemic and the roles for municipalities, nor its effects on women's access to health care. IPM does not address health care in its manifesto.

<sup>30</sup> Section 27. September 2021. High Court declares sanitation in schools a 'national emergency' accessed at <https://section27.org.za/2021/09/high-court-declares-sanitation-in-schools-a-national-emergency/> on 26 October 2021.



Parties do not indicate proposals for resourcing in areas where they commit to making changes. The EFF for example aims to 'prioritise health care and home visits, and municipal disease profiling through municipal clinical facilities and deliver chronic medication to the elderly at home' whilst the DA proposes that it will work with civil society organisations to 'promote public health and outcomes'.

Parties are predominantly focused on previous achievements made in providing healthcare services. There is no specific reference to districts who would play a significant role in provisioning services as outlined in the current version of the National Health Insurance Bill. Parties have not fully recognised the long-term effects that C19 will have on predominantly poor Black families that are headed by women. In addition, there are limited plans for the prevention of communicable diseases that go beyond the scope of health content for distribution to communities through the use of media and community platforms.

It has been argued that the use of paraffin poses a health, safety risk to families and slows the implementation of the SDG goals on ending poverty and providing for gender equality.<sup>31</sup> According to recent statistics more than 5000 households succumb to shack fires<sup>32</sup>. In a country with a large number of persons living in shacks only one party (the DA) made reference to passing and enforcing by-laws to prevent pollution which may affect people's health care, although there is no reflection on how this pollution affects the respiratory system and communities who are left without shelter due to shack or household fires. **The recognition and explicit phasing out of paraffin which is a health and safety hazard for women headed households is much needed**, however there are no plans as to how more cost effective and safe alternatives will be provided to poor families in the coming years which is futile for women faced with having to provide warmth, cooked food and warm water for themselves and their families.

Policy considerations on **providing access to sanitary products for girls and women** over the long term after the abolishment of value added tax on sanitary products is largely lacking. There are no plans in place by parties to subsidise and or provide for the distribution of these products to women and girls who cannot afford them.

Although the EFF makes reference to and expands in much greater detail than the 2016 manifesto, that it will upgrade clinics, establish secure digital databases, replace old hospital equipment and employ additional staff there is no proposal for the implementation of these additional services and how they aim to curtail challenges relating to procurement. A large focus of all manifestos appears to be more appropriate for national and provincial interventions as opposed to municipal services which focus largely on food safety, environment and waste management.

There DA recognise the link between providing adequate basic services to communities and good health. However what is fundamentally lacking are policies to close the gap in providing service at both levels.

In addition, our indicators aim to interrogate whether **community health workers (CHWs)** have safe and secure employment and that all spheres of government support the distribution of information on sexual health(including the distribution of condoms).

Wages of community health workers are under the responsibility of provincial government and under local government in some different provinces. CHWs who are mainly women play a direct role in providing direct health services to communities which entails travel that poses safety and financial challenges to them. Only the EFF makes reference to CHWs, however, the manifesto lacked much consideration in providing more permanent and long-term employment opportunities for many CHWs who are employed on a contractual basis. The safety of CHWs who have to travel to areas that are often far in order to provide much needed healthcare is not specifically mentioned. Manifestos do not take cognisance of the struggle that CHWs encounter at all levels.

In 2016, the ANC manifesto largely focused on preventative health services for curbing the HIV/AIDS pandemic in South Africa. In current times the ANC have steered clear of mentioning providing free condoms or other sexual health services in collaboration with provincial and national government departments in its manifesto even though it is largely known that HIV/AIDS is largely prevalent amongst girls and women in rural communities. Ideally all spheres of government should provide support to each other and coordinate its work as part of its cooperative governance mandate.

Surprisingly, there are no conducive propositions for the monitoring of proposed plans mentioned in manifestos nor are there mechanisms for ensuring transparency and accountability by those implementing and providing for municipal health services.

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<sup>31</sup> Kimemia D, Van Niekerk A & Seedat M. 2021. Paraffin dangers and health and socioeconomic consequences: Urgent need for policy action available at [http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S0256-95742021000100008](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0256-95742021000100008) SAMJ Vol 111 (1) accessed on 24 October 2021.

<sup>32</sup>Kimemia D, Van Niekerk A & Seedat M.2021. Paraffin dangers and health and socioeconomic consequences: Urgent need for policy action available at [http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S0256-95742021000100008](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0256-95742021000100008) SAMJ Vol 111 (1) accessed on 24 October 2021.