JSPS version

SACP Training of Councillors

Socialist transformation through and beyond the current local government model

1. Transformation through and beyond

1.1. Our approach to local government is set out in our SACP Local Government Elections Manifesto. This Manifesto has to be located in the context of our **overall theory, strategy and programme, which is to be found in the 2012 "The South African Road to Socialism" (SARS) and the updated version, the 2022 "South African Struggle for Socialism" (SASS). The reference henceforth will be to "SASS" but it will include aspects of "SARS".**

1.2. To give effect to the Manifesto in the context of SASS we have to take into account:

1.2.1 The progressive potential and spaces for transformation of the current local government model.

1.2.2 Local government is interrelated with provincial and national government and the need to use it to nudge these other spheres of government towards more progressive policies and practices.

1.2.3 National and provincial government also have to be transformed fundamentally, given the limits of local government.

1.2.4 We are unlikely to win the majority of municipalities in the country.

1.2.5 The need to move beyond the current local government model in a more assertive socialist direction.

1.3. So, we have to ensure a socialist transformation both through and beyond the current local government model. **These two aspects are dialectically related. The more we use the progressive spaces in the current model, the more we open up space for moving beyond it. And the more we move beyond it, the more we fundamentally transform the current model.**

2. Transformative potential of the post-1994 model

2.1. The new local government model that came into effect in December 2000 was mainly the outcome of the major struggles waged at local level during the 1980s, mainly through the United Democratic Front (UDF). Many of its key aspects, particularly those set out in the *Municipal Systems Act* flowed from the demands made by progressive civic, residents, ratepayers and political organisations during the 1980s. The model was also, of course, an outcome of the overall national liberation struggle. But it was also shaped by the experiences and negotiation skills of ANC comrades, many of whom came from UDF structures.

2.2. The new model had huge potential to significantly advance the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) and, even more importantly, create the conditions of socialism. In fact, if the ANC and Alliance had given considered attention to local government; adopted an appropriate overall strategy and programme; deployed the necessary comrades to this sphere; and not politically degenerated, we would have considerably advanced the NDR and created the conditions for socialism. And there would have been significant progress on some key aspects of the SACP's Local Government Elections Manifesto.

2.3. Inevitably, there have been changes to the local government model, and a Review of the 1996 White Paper is being processed. Some provisions of the post-1994 model mentioned below have been amended. But the fundamental underlying principles and values of the model and most of its key features remain the same.

2.4. We will first look at the current model and then focus on a socialist approach to local government through considering our Elections Manifesto in the context of SASS.

2.5. So, what are some of the key features of the post-apartheid local government model?

3. Local government a <u>sphere</u> of government, <u>not a level</u> of government

3.1. Rather originally, the model defines local government not as a **level** of government but as a **sphere** of government, with its constitutionally-enshrined functions and powers. So, it's not a third level of government crudely subordinate to provincial and national government. It's not a function or power of provincial or national government. But, on the other hand, it's not completely independent either. It's interrelated with interdependent on provincial and national government in **one overall**

system of co-operative governance, in which the more each sphere co-operates with the other two, the stronger it can become.

4. Developmental Local Government, not just a means of service delivery

4.1. Local government is not just an important site for the delivery of services, but is crucial for the social and economic development of residents. Section 153 of the Constitution sets out the "developmental duties" of municipalities. This is taken further in the 1998 White Paper on Local Government and the legislation. By working effectively with the other two spheres of government and a range civil society organisations and residents, local government also has to contribute to economic growth, job creation, reducing inequalities, and the social development of people.

4.2. Key to fulfilling this developmental role is the requirement for municipalities to adopt Integrated Development Plans (IDPs). An IDP:

4.2.1 has to set out the vision, needs, priorities, goals and strategies of a municipal council to develop the municipality during its term of office, as part of a long-term vision and plan for development;

4.2.2 ensure that the community of a municipality has a say in both the **content** of the IDP and the **process** by which it is drafted;

4.2.3 provide the **framework for determining the budget** of a municipality;

4.2.4 is closely linked to the performance management system of a municipality in terms of which a municipality's progress is assessed, **especially by the residents**;

4.2.5 is not only a plan, but **also a strategic instrument,** a management tool, a method of running a municipality;

4.2.6 provides a framework for **all the activities of a municipality**; and

4.2.7 is over time meant to be an important site of effecting co-operative governance in practice.

5. Community participation <u>legally</u> and <u>politically</u> necessary

5.1. Fundamentally important and very originally (perhaps the only example globally) is that the **legal definition of a municipality is that it comprises not just the councillors and the administration, but the local community as well.** Deriving from this definition, each of these inter-related components has certain specific rights and duties. These are based on the Constitution and set out mainly in the *Municipal Systems Act.* It's a **glorious piece of legislation** and carries the values and demands of the UDF struggles of the 1980s – and indeed the Alliance as a whole.

5.2. Among the objects of local government **in the Constitution** are to:

5.2.1 "provide democratic and accountable government for local communities"; and

5.2.2 "**encourage** the involvement of communities and community organisations in matters of local government"

5.3. In terms of the *Municipal Systems Act* a municipality "**must** develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance".

5.4. The Act makes it clear that residents have the right to:

5.4.1 contribute to the municipality's decision-making processes;

5.4.2 submit recommendations and complaints to the council and are **entitled to prompt responses** to these; and

5.4.3 "**regular disclosure of the state of affairs of the municipality, including its finances"**.

5.5. In order to encourage residents to pay promptly for their services, municipalities are **required to inform** them:

5.5.1 about the **costs** of providing the services;

5.5.2 the **reasons** for the payments of the fees; and

5.5.3 the **uses** to which the monies raised are put.

5.6. Residents also have the right to:

5.6.1 give feedback to the municipality on the **quality and level of services** offered to them;

5.6.2 very importantly, to have **a say on the mechanisms for service delivery**;

5.6.3 if a municipality decides to enter into service delivery agreements with outside agencies, whether public or private, the **views of the residents have to be taken into account and they have to be informed of the contents of any agreement and any subsequent amendments to it**; and

5.6.4 **request a municipality to review its service delivery mechanisms.**

5.7. Residents are encouraged to participate in the:

5.7.1 preparation, implementation and review of IDPs;

5.7.2 establishment, implementation and review of a municipality's performance management system;

5.7.3 monitoring and review of a municipality's performance;

5.7.4 **preparation of a municipality's budget**; and

5.7.5 decisions about the provision of municipal services.

5.8. Municipalities have to **inform residents about their rights and duties**. And have to:

5.8.1 establish "appropriate mechanisms, processes and procedures to enable the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality" and inform the community about these;

5.8.2 take into account the **special needs of women, the disabled, the illiterate and other disadvantaged groups**;

5.8.3 use their resources and **annually allocate funds** in their budget, as appropriate, to develop a culture of community participation;

5.8.4 contribute to **building the capacity of** the local community to participate in municipal affairs and the councillors and staff to foster community participation; and

5.8.5 ensure a municipality's executive gives an **annual report** on the extent to which the **local community has been involved in municipal affairs** and must "ensure that regard is given to public views and report on t**he effect of consultation on the decisions of the council**".

5.9. A ward committee has to be established in each ward to "enhance participatory democracy".

5.10. A ward committee may make representations on any issue affecting a ward to the councillor or through the councillor to the council. It can also exercise any duty or power delegated to it by the council.

5.11. A ward committee comprises the ward councillor as the chairperson and up to 10 other people representing a "diversity of interests in the ward". Women have to be "equitably represented" in a ward committee.

5.12. In terms of the Code of Conduct, councillors are required to have at least four public report-back meetings.

5.13. But if residents have many rights in the new system, they also have duties. They have to:

5.13.1 "take responsibility for ensuring that the municipality functions effectively;

5.13.2 promptly pay the municipality monies owed to it, within the framework of an indigence policy for those who cannot pay;

5.13.3 respect the municipal rights of other residents, comply with by-laws; and

5.13.4 co-operate with councillors and officials who are fulfilling their legitimate roles."

5.14. Overall, the system of community participation seeks to provide a balance between giving residents the fullest space to participate in municipal affairs and ensuring the right of councillors to ultimately govern.

6. Overview of the structure of Local Government

6.1. The structure of the Local Government model is set out mainly in the *Municipal Structures Act.*

6.2. Basically, there are 3 **categories** of municipalities:

6.2.1 Category A municipalities: the Metropolitan municipalities (Metros).

6.2.2 Category B municipalities: Local municipalities

6.2.3 Category C municipalities: District Municipalities.

6.3. A metropolitan is a single municipality that carries out all the functions and powers local government. It provides, for example, water, electricity, municipal roads, waste collection, local transport, primary health care, municipal housing, fire-fighting, cemeteries and many other services. It does not share power with any other municipality.

6.4. To qualify as a metro, an area has to have:

6.4.1 high population density;

6.4.2 intensive movement of people, goods and services;

6.4.3 extensive development;

6.4.4 multiple business districts and industrial areas;

6.4.5 a centre of economic activity, with a complex and diverse economy

6.4.6 a single area for which integrated development planning is necessary;

6.4.7 strong interdependent social and economic linkages; and

6.4.8 a dense, interconnected urban zone where people, goods and economic activity move constantly between different parts of it, and where planning and the delivery of services through one authority is most effective.

6.5. There are 8 metros in South Africa – Johannesburg, Tshwane, Ekurhuleni, eThekwini, Cape Town, Nelson Mandela Bay, Mangaung, and Buffalo City.

6.6. Outside the metros, there is a two-tier system of local and district municipalities in which powers and function are shared between them.

6.7. A local municipality carries out several of the functions of a metro but it does this in a smaller area and has a smaller revenue base and budget, and limited capacity to carry out all the functions and powers of a municipality. So, it shares functions and powers with a District municipality, to ensure that it can more effectively fulfill its responsibilities.

6.8. A district municipality covers an area made up of several local municipalities and seeks to assist local municipalities to carry out some of their functions. A district municipality is meant to provide an IDP for the area as a whole including a framework for the IDPs in the local municipalities in its area. A district's functions and powers include, among other responsibilities, to provide bulk water, electricity and sewage, infrastructure, regional roads, disaster management, municipal

health services, regional airports, fresh produce markets and abattoirs. A district municipality may also distribute grants it receives to local municipalities.

6.9. A key aim of District municipality is to ensure a measure of redistribution from the better-off local municipalities to the poorer, mainly rural municipalities, which lack a revenue base and technical capacity or were not under apartheid serviced by any municipality at all. District municipalities are also meant to avoid local municipalities duplicating infrastructure, reduce costs of service provision by local municipalities and manage cross-boundary issues.

6.10. But in practice, many District municipalities are unable to fulfill their functions and powers. Various attempts have been made to address this – but with limited success.

6.11. This has included the national and provincial government, within the framework of the Constitution and relevant legislation, allocating functions and powers to specific district and local municipalities to take into account their capacities. Where necessary, this is done after consultation with the Municipal Demarcation Board's assessments of municipalities. Legislation, regulations and policies have been passed to strengthen intergovernmental relations between the three spheres of government and also between district and local municipalities.

6.12. More recently, a District Development Model (DDM) is being developed. Basically, it's presented as "government's flagship reform to address fragmentation in planning, budgeting and implementation across the three spheres of government. It establishes a single, integrated planning and delivery framework for each district, anchored by "The One Plan" – "a unified, long term strategic plan that aligns national, provincial, local and private sector priorities." It's a "unified, data driven and partnership based approach to district development.". The "One Plan is the core instrument of the DDM. It is the strategic, operational and accountability framework that guides all district development efforts." But progress on the DDM has been very uneven and it has not fulfilled its potential.

6.13. There are mainly 2 **types** of municipal executive committee structures – a Mayoral Executive and a Collective Executive.

6.13.1 In a **Mayoral Executive** system, the majority party decides on a mayor who appoints members of the executive, usually all from the same party. In the case of the ANC, this would be based on proposals from a provincial or other structure. The executive authority lies with the mayor.

6.13.2 In a **Collective Executive** system, the executive is made up of parties in proportion to the votes they won in the

elections. The executive authority vests in the multi-party Collective Executive, not with the mayor.

6.14. In the case of very small municipalities, there is a **Plenary Executive** system which limits executive authority to the municipal council itself, functioning as a collective body.

6.15. The final decision on which system a municipality can have rests with the provincial government.

7. Progressive model not being implemented progressively

7.1. Unfortunately, the local government model is not being implemented effectively at all for a variety of reasons. This is being dealt with in another document.

7.2. But briefly, this includes:

7.2.1 The failure of provincial and national government to adequately support local government in terms of the system of cooperative governance in the Constitution and relevant legislation.

7.2.2 Not ensuring that municipalities are allocated a share of the national budget that is commensurate with their increased functions and powers.

7.2.3 Not developing IDPs in sufficient consultation with residents, lacking the skills to devise adequate IDPs, not linking the IDPs to other aspects of a municipality's role, not using it as a strategic framework, reducing it to a technical exercise (often drafted by outside consultants) and not implementing it effectively, sometimes almost not at all.

7.2.4 Many of the legal requirements on community participation are not implemented, considerably undermining the capacity of municipalities to be effective.

7.2.5 As explained, not ensuring that the district municipalities are capacitated and funded to play their redistributive and other key roles.

7.2.6 High levels of mismanagement of resources and corruption; factional battles; appointment of unsuitable people to key positions in management; conflation of the roles of politicians and managers; transferring power struggles from the ANC to the municipalities and vice-versa; and much more.

7.3. The current model of local government is progressive overall – but it's being implemented in a very conservative, narrow, counter-productive way. The links between planning, budgeting, community participation, service delivery, and performance management are consistent with a

socialist approach, even if much more is required for a socialist transformation of local government. The provisions in the model for community participation in particular (section 5 above) are extremely advanced and offer huge potential for building People's Power as a basis for implementing the progressive parts of the current model and going beyond it. In short, the current model has the potential, **if** implemented effectively, to significantly advance the NDR and create the conditions for progressing to socialism.

8. Local Government Manifesto must be located in terms of the "South African Road to Socialism"

8.1. As mentioned above, the SACP's theory and strategy are set out in the 2022 "South African Struggle for Socialism" (SASS). It builds on the earlier "South African Road to Socialism" (SARS) and our Medium Term Vision (MTV). As explained above, SASS as used in this document includes aspects of SARS and the MTV. It is within this framework that the Local Government Elections Manifesto and our approach to local government transformation have to be located.

8.2. The SACP sees the NDR as the most direct route to socialism. Through consolidating, deepening and advancing the NDR, and ensuring that the working-class leads the alliance of classes and strata seeking to implement it, the conditions for socialism will be created. The SACP does not accept a mechanical "two-stage" theory of the struggle for socialism – first the NDR; then the next stage will be the struggle for socialism. Rather it is in seeking to advance a radical NDR that the momentum towards, capacity for and elements of socialism are created. This is captured in the slogan, "Socialism is the future, build it now"

8.3. The SACP seeks to build working class hegemony in various spheres of society. We are clear that power does not reside only in the state. It is diffused in various sites in society. In terms of SASS (and our MTV), the SACP strives to build working class hegemony in all key sites of power, including the state, economy, workplace, community, the battle of ideas and the international realm.

8.4. For the SACP, advancing the NDR and moving towards socialism requires organised workers to exercise greater influence over political, economic and social power. The Party sees socialism not simply as a future goal, but as something that requires building working-class organisation and power in the present.

8.5. Some of the elements of socialism that can be pursued through the struggle for a radical NDR, as set out in SASS, include:

8.5.1 Strengthening worker-led popular power through a national democratic, developmental state;

8.5.2 Rolling back the capitalist market through the decommodification of basic needs. Water, electricity, health-care, housing, transport, culture and information should primarily not be commodities and all of us turned into simple buyers and sellers;

8.5.3 Developing an active labour market through strengthening the power of trade unions, skills training and adult basic education;

8.5.4 Establishing effective consumer negotiating forums and ombud bodies;

8.5.5 Socialising the ownership function through various means, including fostering an extensive co-operative sector and more effective strategic worker control over social capital, like pension and provident funds; and

8.5.6 Ensuring a moral renewal of our society based on solidarity, with and for the workers.

8.6. To build enough organised strength to influence the major sites of power, there have to be stronger trade unions, a larger SACP, workplace structures, cooperatives and broader working-class movements. The different mass campaigns and organisations have to be linked to a wider movement led by working people.

8.7. As the SACP notes, we need to strive to be "the vanguard of South Africa's working class", and "should seek to lead the overall struggle to build working class hegemony in society. It is not enough to simply wage a multiplicity of working class struggles hoping that they, on their own, will cumulatively lead to building working class hegemony in society. We should seek to weld these struggles together with an ideological clarity and concrete objectives, and these should be understood by the overwhelming majority of the working class. In short, working class hegemony is conscious organized power of the working class guided by our overall objectives of deepening, advancing and consolidating the national democratic revolution towards a transition to socialism. It is power and influence of the working class to drive a developmental agenda beneficial to the workers and the poor of our country. It is also the increasing influence and power of working class ideas in society. Whilst this struggle will be fought on a number of terrains and with the involvement of a variety of working class formations, a political party of the working class is indispensable in leading this effort."

8.8. SASS focuses on "People, Solidarity and the Environment over Profits".

8.9. There are 4 reinforcing crises defining capitalism:

8.9.1 environmental;

8.9.2 economic;

8.9.3 social reproduction; and

8.9.4 hegemonic and political.

8.10. "21st-century socialism must discard the archaic 20th-century obsession with rapid, unconstrained industrial catch-up. Modern socialism must place an absolute premium on environmental sustainability, food security, and protecting the ecological baseline of working-class communities."

8.11. Neo-liberalism has severely undermined the NDR and has failed to grow the economy and create jobs and has increased inequalities. The "core mission of the NDR is to uproot the systemic features reproducing racial, class, and patriarchal oppression—specifically transforming South Africa's colonial-era, dependent-development accumulation path." The Party has to oppose neo-liberalism far more actively.

8.12. The SACP calls for a reconfigured Alliance, in which the Party and Cosatu have a much bigger say, and the needs of the workers and the poor are dominant.

8.13. Councillors are urged to read and internalise the SASS.

9. Transforming local government not just the responsibility of SACP councillors but SACP branch and other structures too

9.1. The Manifesto sets out many, many responsibilities and tasks for SACP councillors. Understandably, most municipalities are not likely to have SACP majorities. Our councillors will have to navigate complex multi-party coalitions, in which the majority will be in support of capitalism and be anti-Communist.

9.2. This reinforces the need for SACP branch and other structures to work with our councillors in their efforts to advance fundamental transformation.

9.3. But councillors also have to work with and be answerable to SACP structures.

9.4. However few the SACP councillors in a municipality may be, many of the issues raised in the Manifesto can still be advanced, especially with the support of the SACP and other progressive organisations.

9.5. This reinforces the need for the Party to strengthen our relations with progressive civil society organisations and draw too on those who are part of the Conference of the Left.

10. Deepening the NDR and advancing the conditions for socialism in Local Government

10.1. It is 28 years now since the local government model was introduced and the challenges in its practical implementation have necessitated a "Review of the White Paper" process. While changes are necessary, the SACP needs to ensure that the **basic principles, values and aims of the model are not changed** as they are progressive – what is needed is to implement them in a progressive way, so also creating the space to move beyond it towards a socialist model. The Party made a submission on the White Paper – and this is dealt with in another document.

10.2. Our Manifesto sets out 5 principles

10.2.1 People before profit.

10.2.2 Build public state capacity.

10.2.3 No decision about a community without the community.

10.2.4 Local wealth must circulate locally.

10.2.5 Public representatives remain servants of the people.

10.3. We have 6 priorities:

10.3.1 Reliable public services.

10.3.2 Decent work and livelihoods.

10.3.3 Land, homes and food.

10.3.4 Safe, caring and healthy communities.

10.3.5 Municipalities free from tender capture.

10.3.6 Councillors answerable to the people.

10.4. What are some of the key areas in local government that we need to focus on?

10.5. This paper does not cover all the issues taken up in our Election Manifesto – and comrades are urged to read it as a background to what is focused on here.

11. Ensuring active community participation and building People's Power

11.1. Our manifesto urges us to "Build people's power where we live" We want a municipality "that works. A councillor who answers to you. A community with the power to shape its future… We are not here to add politicians to councils. We are here to build people's power and turn municipalities into instruments that serve workers and the poor. This manifesto is our contract with the working class, and our call to organise. A vote can elect a councillor. **Only an organised people can change the balance of power."**

11.2. Probably the **most fundamental responsibility of our candidates** is to ensure that they become embedded in the residents and facilitate their participation in the municipality, especially the working class and poor.

11.3. The *Municipal Systems Act* – covered in detail in section 5 above – requires this legally – but, unfortunately, usually in practice municipalities meet these needs only in a formal, nominal sense – not in the political and substantive way intended. Our councillors need to ensure that this does in fact happen. The Act creates considerable space to ensure community participation and is explicit, as pointed out, that residents have the right to "contribute to the municipality's decision-making processes."

11.4. While mobilising the residents in general, the focus of the SACP councillors has to be mainly on the working class and the poor.

11.5. Ward Committees are crucial sites of community participation – and we should seek to ensure that those serving in it are mostly representative of the interests of the working class and poor, even if they need to serve the ward as a whole.

11.6. In terms of our Manifesto, SACP councillors have to convene regular ward meetings and support street and section committees. Councillors will also have to give monthly feedbacks to the ward and six-monthly and annual report-backs to the Party.

11.7. The work on ensuring community participation must be linked to the SACP's "Know and Act in Your Neighbourhood" campaign.

11.8. Councillors have to sign a public pledge to "report regularly, disclose interests, reject tender influence, defend workers and insourcing, explain their votes, and **accept recall if they betray the manifesto**".

11.9. Our experiences of the "Peoples Red Caravan" (PRC) have to be drawn on in seeking to build People's Power. This includes the way in which the PRC tackles food insecurity, the use of idle land, inadequacies in the delivery of water and other services, and contributes to a culture of community self-reliance and the collective capacity of residents. It's clear that municipalities need to work with communities in the delivery of services and be answerable to them, and communities need to build their capacity through this process.

11.10. Our Manifesto says that the SACP will "build people's democracy through ward assemblies, street and section committees, participatory budgeting, open information, active trade unions, co-operative forums, women's leadership, youth organisation and community oversight".

11.11. Fundamental to the effectiveness of SACP councillors is to ensure that the provisions of the Act are implemented and that People's Power is built. Municipalities cannot ensure development and delivery without the active participation of the residents and as the SACP we need People's Power to deepen and advance the NDR and create the conditions for socialism.

12. IDPs crucial to service delivery and development

12.1. The IDPs are crucial to the service delivery and developmental responsibilities of a municipality. SACP councillors must seek to shape this as much as possible, based on mobilising community participation, particularly the workers and the poor. By building People's Power, SACP councillors can be far more influential in determining IDPs but also through engaging in the IDP process People's Power can be strengthened.

12.2. The Ward Committees are very important in this process and must involve the residents of a ward. Beyond that, it's crucial that trade unions, co-operatives, small businesses, women, youth, traditional leaders, religious and other organisations are mobilised. Progressive NGOs also have an important role to play in IDPs. SACP councillors need to win credibility among the widest range of social strata, even if our primary constituency is the working class and the poor.

12.3. The IDPs have to focus significantly on the needs of women and youth.

12.4. A key issue that must be addressed in IDPs is spatial integration that ends the marginalisation of the working class and the poor to the periphery of municipalities far too away from places of work and good hospitals, schools, and other key institutions. Spatial integration has to contribute to non-racialism and nation-building.

12.5. As Marxists, we believe in the importance of planning, especially people-centred planning – and so this is a crucial site of struggle for our councillors and Party structures.

13. Active engagement in participatory budgeting

13.1. The annual IDPs and the IDP for the 5-year term of a municipality as part of a longer-term IDP provide the framework within which budgets are meant to prepared. Often this does not happen. Nor do municipalities explain to the residents why this is the case. The SACP, working with residents, needs to ensure that the budgets are consistent with the IDPs and where they are not, the municipality provides reasonable explanations for this.

13.2. SACP councillors and branch and other structures should organise and help to mobilise community structures to be active in the participatory budgeting processes. Residents through the Ward Committees and other community structures need to inform the municipality of their needs that the budget should take account of.

13.3. SACP councillors should also engage with CDWs and EPWP workers on IDPs.

13.4. The budget has to be open and transparent and accessible to people with limited or no literacy.

13.5. SACP councillors should also put pressure on municipalities to provide financial literacy training for residents.

13.6. We have to ensure that the budget provides adequately for the indigent for water, electricity and other basic services. There have to be pro-poor tariffs, a credible billing system and measures to reduce arbitrary cutting off of services to poor households who cannot afford to pay.

13.7. The budgets have to take into account the cost of living crisis, which has been worsened by the war on Iran.

13.8. There has to be a focus on the specific needs and concerns of women and the youth. Gender-budgeting has to be endemic in the budget.

13.9. The SACP and community organisations need to monitor how the budget is being implemented and SACP councillors need to keep them informed of progress as well.

13.10. We also have to ensure that money is spent on what it is budgeted for. Among other issues, this means tackling corruption, mismanagement of

resources and the appointment of unqualified people to posts. "Tender capture converts public power into private wealth," notes our Manifesto.

13.11. The more municipalities spend their budgets effectively and productively the stronger becomes their case for a bigger share of the national budget – known as its "equitable share". This year local government has been allocated 9.4%. SACP councillors must actively support an increase in local government's "equitable share". A part of this "equitable share" has to be allocated for the training of councillors and officials on financial issues.

13.12. SACP councillors should resist "unfunded mandates" – responsibilities of the provincial and national governments that are heaped on municipalities without providing them with the money, staff and technical skills to implement them. So, municipalities have to use their own budgets and staff to carry these responsibilities out, putting a further strain on them.

14. Ensuring service delivery and development

14.1. The IDPs and the budget provide the framework for service delivery and development in a municipality. But this will not automatically happen. It needs to be actively campaigned for.

14.2. So, the focus should be on the issues raised in sections 11 and 12 above, those raised in this section and other issues.

14.3. As explained in section 5.6 above, residents have the right, among other issues, to inform the municipality about the quality of services they get; and have a say on the mechanisms of service delivery and the outsourcing of any service. SACP councillors must insist on this consultation, and campaign against outsourcing. "Privatisation and outsourcing have raised costs, weakened accountability and stripped municipalities of skills," notes our Manifesto.

14.4. The Manifesto calls for "ward-by-ward audits of water and sanitation, public maintenance plans, rapid response teams for leaks and sewer spills, and properly staffed municipal technical units" and "prioritising prevention over permanent crisis management".

14.5. We have to "treat public land as a collective resource held in trust for the people.". It has to be primarily for houses, food production, co-operatives and community facilities – and not land speculation and capture.

14.6. The Manifesto calls for "local food systems, household gardens, Village Agricultural Co-operatives and consumer co-operatives".

14.7. Many traditional leaders have the support of people, especially in the rural areas. They can contribute to service delivery and development and play a progressive role. We need to ensure that we engage with them appropriately, as must the municipalities.

14.8. In cooperation with provincial government, municipalities should provide more housing. "We will fight for well-located social and affordable housing, including for the missing middle of working people who earn too much for subsidies and too little for a bond". Informal settlements need to be upgraded in cooperation with the residents.

14.9. A key focus of the municipalities has to be on the rights and specific needs of women. Together with the other spheres of government, local government has to actively tackle GBV (gender-based violence).

14.10. There has to be support for LGBTQIA+ community.

14.11. We are 32 years into our democracy and it's shameful that the bucket system still exists. We need to wage a major campaign against this.

14.12. There are many other issues that we need to attend to, including getting potholes fixed, bins collected on due dates, grass being cut and the municipality being kept clean.

14.13. Service delivery, the extension of infrastructure and development are seriously undermined by the extortion networks – and this needs to be tackled vigorously, including in cooperation with provincial and national government.

14.14. Stock theft also needs to be tackled far more actively.

15. Decent Work

15.1. We should have close relations with Samwu (South African Municipal Workers's Union), but also work with IMATU (Independent Municipal and Allied Trade Union).

15.2. Our Manifesto says that we need to "defend collective bargaining, safe working conditions and the right to organise, alongside discipline, performance and ethical conduct. Workers must have the tools, training, staffing and leadership to do their work. No worker shall work without remuneration, and no worker shall be kept in temporary employment for longer than six months: continuing work must become permanent work. Where essential work has been outsourced, SACP councillors will demand a transparent assessment of cost, quality,

labour conditions and public capacity, and campaign for insourcing wherever legally and operationally feasible."

15.3. Obviously, municipalities cannot on their own provide jobs; the national and provincial governments have more power to do this and also to facilitate private sector investment to do this. The Local Economic Development (LED) plans of municipalities need to be oriented to creating jobs. Municipalities can also try, as our Manifesto says, to "use public employment, insourcing, procurement, land, infrastructure, municipal enterprises, co-operatives, apprenticeships and training to expand decent work."

15.4. Our Manifesto calls for a "Decent Work Plan" in municipalities based on "infrastructure maintenance, cleaning, greening, food production, recycling, care, early childhood support, community safety and public services, and goods and services that can be sourced from co-operatives and genuine local small businesses. The plan must include persons with disabilities, with reasonable accommodation and equal access to skills development and employment opportunities." There also needs to be a review of CDWs (Community Development Workers) and the EPWP (Expanded Public Works Programme).

15.5. We will "support worker co-operatives, consumer co-operatives, Village Agricultural Co-operatives and community-owned stores." Informal traders and platform workers should be recognised and supported.

15.6. Anyone employed on a temporary contract for more than six months must be offered a permanent job.

15.7. If essential work is outsourced, SACP councillors should demand a "transparent assessment of cost, quality, labour conditions and public capacity, and campaign for insourcing wherever feasible".

15.8. The practice of using municipal entities to evade collective bargaining has to stop, says our Manifesto.

16. Need to strengthen cooperative governance

16.1. The failures of local government are not **just** a reflection of the municipalities. They are a reflection also of the failures of our provincial and national governments to play their part in ensuring that local government is supported to play its role. Ultimately, it is a failure of inter-governmental relations and our system of cooperative governance.

16.2. For local government to work effectively, provincial and national governments have to give more attention to the municipalities. Our

system of cooperative governance enshrined in the Constitution has to be implemented more effectively in practice.

16.3. Municipalities will not be able to implement many of the issues raised in our Manifesto without the support of the provincial and national governments.

16.4. SACP councillors need to campaign for greater support of the provincial and national governments, **without ignoring** the failures that municipalities alone are responsible for.

17. Need to develop a national programme of action as a guide to implement the Manifesto

17.1. The Manifesto provides a vision of a socialist local government model. It will not be possible to achieve its concrete objectives overnight. Understandably, the SACP will not be able to win a majority of the councils. Some of these objectives anyway fall outside the functions and powers of local government and will require fundamental transformation of the national and provincial spheres of government. The majority in most municipalities are likely to be from parties opposed to socialism. For these and other reasons we need a concrete programme of action deriving from the Manifesto that ensures we can achieve the maximum possible.

17.2. Never mind the challenges, this programme must pivot around our slogan, "Socialism is the Future, build it now!"

17.3. We will need a national framework programme of action, within which provinces, districts and branches shape programmes that take into account specific conditions in the municipalities in their areas, including the percentage of councillors we have and the strength of our Party structures.

17.4. We will also need programmes that are related to the specific needs, interests and priorites of a particular ward.

18. SACP is not primarily an electoral party

18.1. The extent to which SACP councillors can contribute to the fundamental transformation of local government depends also on the strength of the SACP in these various sites of power and our organisational capacity, as well as the extent to which we are able to build People's Power.

18.2. But also, by being active in municipal councils and the legislatures, SACP structures can be strengthened.

18.3. It's clear from the SASS and MTV that the SACP is not a narrow "electoralist" party. Taking part in elections independently and having SACP public representatives is merely one site of struggle, among others. Even then, the legislatures and councils are only a part of the state – which includes the executive, public service and judiciary.

18.4. As noted in the MTV, "The SACP does not see elections as the main issue. Elections are only one method of exercising political influence. The deeper question is whether workers can influence political institutions, economic organisations and mass movements."

18.5. Yes, electing public representatives in the local, provincial and national spheres is important – but it has to be subordinate to our overall theory, strategy, policies and programmes. And crucially, our participation must deepen and advance a radical NDR and our struggle for socialism.

19. Making history. Need to live up to this.

19.1. While some individual White Communists stood for election to legislatures before 1960 (including Cdes Hilda Watts who served as a Councillor in Johannesburg, Sam Kahn, Fred Carneson, Brian Bunting and Ray Alexander, who was prevented from taking her seat in Parliament by the Suppression of Communism Act), this is the first time ever that the SACP is standing for elections as an organisation as whole. In this sense we are making history. Our councillors need to internalise the gravity of the moment. So too must all of us.

19.2. We cannot afford to let this 125 year old globally recognised Communist Party down.

19.3. So let us live up to history!