



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS MANIFESTO 2026

PARTNER WITH US TO BUILD STRONGER MUNICIPALITIES

WE WORK FOR YOU







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FOREWORD BY THE

HONOURABLE VELENKOSINI HLABISA, MP

**PRESIDENT
OF THE INKATHA FREEDOM PARTY (IFP)**

**MINISTER
OF COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS
(COGTA)**

Dear South Africans,

We are listening, and we hear you. South Africa must work for all her people.

From Pongola to Pofadder, every street, village, big town, small dorpie and metro must deliver services that protect families, create jobs and restore dignity.

Every South African deserves to live in a community where water flows from the tap, the lights stay on, refuse is collected and the streets are safe.

Municipalities, large and small, must become engines of development that deliver basic services, fight crime and corruption, protect livelihoods and create employment.

The IFP has a proven record of delivery at local level, and we are building on it.

Crime flourishes when streetlights do not work. Illegal migration and unlawful business activity thrive when municipalities do not enforce by-laws. When basic services such as water and refuse collection fail, your family suffers. When your elected councillor disappears, you have nowhere to turn.

We know you are fed up with empty promises.



The IFP does not promise what we cannot deliver. Ours is a track record of service delivery, care and putting people first.

You, the people, must come first.

As we approach the all-important 4 November 2026 elections, I ask you to partner with us as we work to strengthen local government.

The IFP believes that we must build a partnership of trust for stronger municipalities. IFP municipalities will work with communities, traditional and Khoi-San leaders, the national and provincial spheres of government, business, civil society and professional bodies to deliver sustainable services and rebuild public trust.

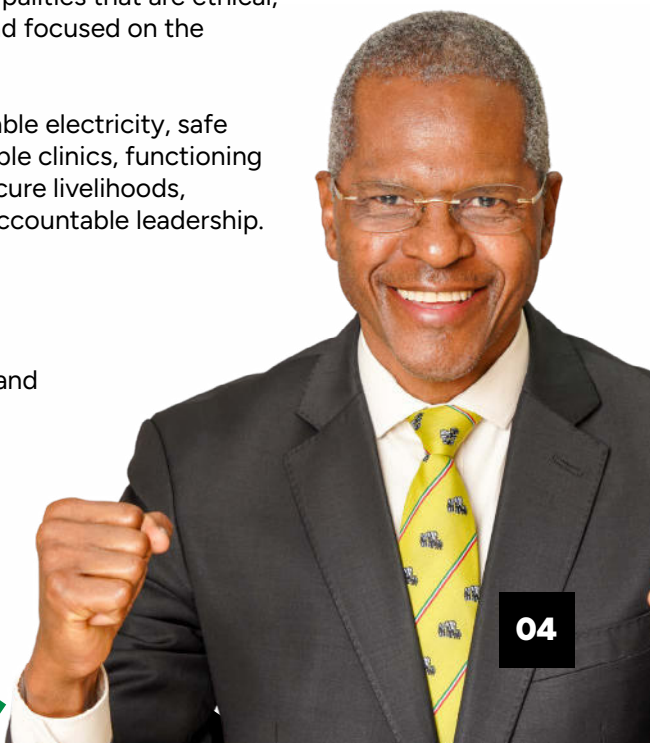
Building a strong South Africa requires a local-government overhaul, professionalised, capable political leadership, professional administration, sound financial management and coordinated action across government and society.

I therefore ask you to partner with the IFP on 4 November. We want to build stronger municipalities that are ethical, capable, financially disciplined and focused on the daily needs of residents.

We will work for clean water, reliable electricity, safe roads, repaired potholes, accessible clinics, functioning streetlights, refuse collection, secure livelihoods, protected local businesses and accountable leadership.

Trust us to work for you.
Trust us to put communities first.
Trust us to protect livelihoods.
Trust us for ethical, accountable and decisive leadership.
Trust us to deliver.

Vote IFP!





TRUST US FOR JOBS

Local employment, spaza shops for locals and protected livelihoods.

Economic growth succeeds or fails at the municipal level. Local governments must become dynamic economic hubs that prioritise local employment, support local businesses and protect the livelihoods of South African residents.

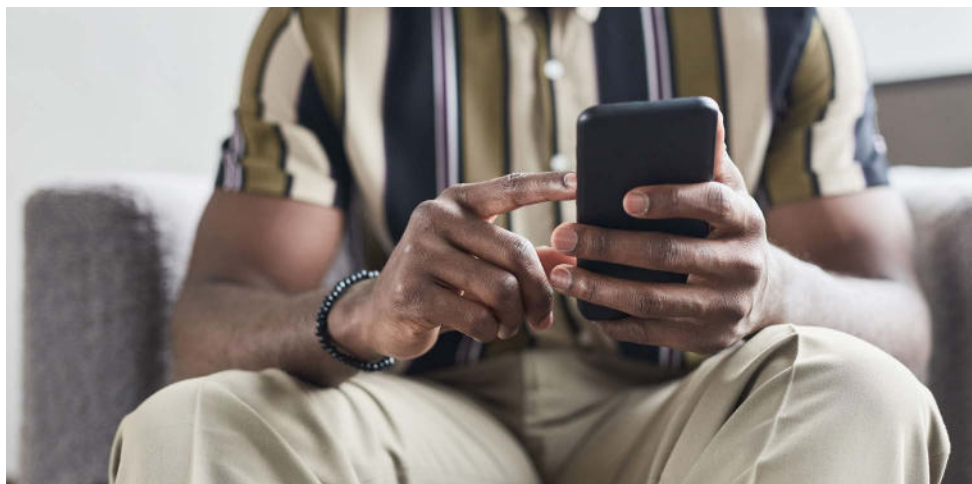
The IFP maintains that unchecked illegal migration continues to place unsustainable pressure on municipal services, healthcare and local labour markets. Municipalities must enforce the law fairly, protect lawful businesses and ensure that South Africans are prioritised for economic opportunities.

We must protect and expand livelihoods, with a special focus on supporting informal traders, small farmers, local service providers and community-based enterprises.



To unlock real opportunities and protect livelihoods, the IFP will champion:

- **Streamlined business operations:** To attract development and investment, cut red tape and improve the ease of doing business, IFP municipalities will implement efficient and simplified permitting and registration systems, with both physical and online applications, for local entrepreneurs.
- **Funding support:** IFP municipalities will continue to prioritise small-business funding and support, strengthen local entrepreneurship and improve market access for resident-owned businesses.
- **Designated business zones:** IFP municipalities will continue to make market stalls available to local vendors by mapping specific zones for retail, light-industrial and mixed-use enterprises, creating organised spaces for business growth.
- **Capacity-building workshops:** IFP municipalities will actively facilitate training, mentorship, business support and practical workshops for entrepreneurs.
- **Economic development and agriculture:** The IFP will continue to support and promote heritage, sport and local tourism initiatives, as well as subsistence and small-scale farmers, through technical assistance, equipment, farming inputs and other resources.



While municipalities do not directly regulate national immigration, local government has constitutional responsibilities for land use, public health, and business licensing. The IFP believes that the spaza-shop industry must be reserved for South Africans in every municipality – large or small.

The IFP will therefore support:

- **Strict spaza-shop and outlet compliance:** IFP municipalities will halt the operations of spaza shops and food-handling facilities that fail to meet health, safety and business-registration requirements.
- **Cracking down on fronting:** IFP municipalities, working through a coordinated whole-of-government response with law-enforcement agencies, will monitor and seek the prosecution of property owners, landlords or South Africans who commit offences by fronting for, or registering businesses on behalf of, undocumented foreign nationals.
- **Aggressive compliance operations:** IFP municipalities will conduct multidisciplinary enforcement operations. These operations will include inspections, closing non-compliant enterprises, and seeking the arrest of individuals trading outside the law.





TRUST US TO DELIVER BASIC SERVICES AND WORKING INFRASTRUCTURE

Water, sanitation, housing, electricity, roads, street lighting, refuse collection and accessible clinics.

The people harmed most by the failure to provide basic services are the most vulnerable members of our communities. The collapse of local government is not only a failure of policy or capacity: it defers hopes, destroys livelihoods, undermines prosperity and robs people of their dignity.

Failing water systems, unreliable electricity, dirty streets and neighbourhoods where crime flourishes are hallmarks of many municipalities today. When basic services collapse, businesses fail, jobs are lost, and municipal finances deteriorate, the decline deepens.

IFP municipalities will adopt a fix-the-basics approach by addressing visible service failures before they become costly crises. By aggressively fixing the basics, councils can free resources for development, housing, sustainable job creation and improved living conditions.





The IFP will prioritise:

- **Maintenance before crisis:** Municipalities will prioritise preventative maintenance and the timely repair of infrastructure instead of waiting for systems to collapse. Water, sanitation, electricity, roads and refuse collection will be prioritised in budgets, operations and maintenance schedules.
- **Internal capacity:** To reduce reliance on external service providers, IFP municipalities will appoint qualified engineers, project managers, financial professionals and technical experts through fair, transparent and merit-based processes, while rebuilding internal municipal capacity.
- **Accessible fault reporting:** IFP municipalities will establish online, telephone and ward-based channels through which residents can report water leaks, burst pipes, refuse-collection failures and broken streetlights, receive reference numbers and track progress.
- **Housing and dignity:** IFP municipalities will identify suitable land and improve municipal planning to continue rolling out housing programmes, to address housing backlogs, support the redevelopment of hostels, and the formalisation of informal settlements, thereby providing much-needed support for quality housing, improved living conditions and restored dignity.
- **Roads and access:** IFP municipalities will repair deteriorating municipal roads, bridges and stormwater systems while ensuring access to municipal roads and upgrading rural roads to improve mobility and connect rural communities to essential services.
- **Timely repair of municipal potholes:** IFP municipalities will establish clear pothole-reporting systems and commit to repairing reported potholes on municipal roads expeditiously. Residents must be able to report potholes through accessible online, telephone and ward-based channels and track the progress of repairs. Repairs will be prioritised based on safety risk, road usage, weather conditions and available resources. Municipalities will invest in training residents to repair potholes.
- **Water security:** IFP municipalities will ensure access to water, reduce water losses, repair leaks and burst pipes, maintain water infrastructure and support upgrades to water treatment systems. Water tankers must be an emergency measure, not a permanent substitute for functioning infrastructure.

- **Access to local clinics:** The IFP will support a whole-of-government approach to ensure that residents have access to functioning local clinics, primary healthcare services, medicines, preventative care and emergency care, including ambulance services.
- **Electricity and street lighting:** IFP municipalities will maintain municipal electricity distribution infrastructure and repair streetlights and high-mast lighting to improve safety and support economic activity.
- **A whole-of-government and whole-of-society response:** Where municipal capacity is insufficient, IFP municipalities will work with other spheres of government, professional bodies, communities, civil society and the private sector to mobilise lawful technical and operational support.
- **Sanitation and clean communities:** IFP municipalities will maintain wastewater treatment systems, provide regular refuse collection and improve the management of public spaces and waste-disposal facilities.





TRUST US TO PROTECT TRADITIONAL AND KHOI-SAN INSTITUTIONS AND LEADERSHIP

Recognition, practical cooperation and a stronger rural voice.

Traditional and Khoi-San leadership and institutions are vital components of South Africa's constitutional democracy. Traditional and Khoi-San leaders are often the first point of contact for residents who need help with disputes, access to land, community safety, social support, and engagement with government.

The voices of traditional and Khoi-San leadership must therefore not be ignored or silenced. Institutions of traditional leadership must be treated as a meaningful partner in governance, rather than being consulted only after decisions have already been taken.

The IFP maintains that the Constitution must be amended to entrench and clarify the powers, functions and status of traditional leaders and traditional institutions.



The IFP will support:

- **Clearly defined roles:** The IFP maintains that the Constitution – Chapters 7 and 12 – must be amended to entrench and clarify the roles, powers, functions and status of traditional leaders and traditional institutions. The IFP supports constitutional, legislative and policy reform in this regard.
- **Structured municipal partnerships:** IFP municipalities will pursue formal cooperation arrangements with legally recognised traditional and Khoi-San institutions, consistent with the Constitution and applicable legislation.
- **Joint development initiatives:** IFP municipalities will directly engage traditional leadership as equal partners in co-designing, co-signing and co-driving socioeconomic development programmes. Traditional institutions must become engines of community development, cultural preservation and local empowerment.
- **Adequate resources and institutional support:** Traditional leadership has been deprived of adequate administrative, financial and technical support for decades. IFP municipalities will support measures that promote the dignity, safety, health and wellbeing of traditional leaders and their households. Traditional leaders must be able to perform their public responsibilities with the resources and support required to serve their communities.
- **Traditional leadership as a voice for rural communities:** Traditional leaders must be recognised as an important voice for rural and historically marginalised communities. Their participation will help ensure that government policies are grounded in local realities and that rural communities are not excluded from economic development, infrastructure investment and public services.







TRUST US TO END CORRUPTION AND MAKE EVERY RAND COUNT

Financial discipline and consequences for failure.

Instead of a service-oriented, accountable and performance-based culture, too many municipalities suffer from a lack of accountability, where failure carries few consequences. This has led to poor financial management, corruption, waste and declining standards.

Fixing municipalities requires fit-for-purpose councillors, competent political and administrative leadership, sound financial management, skilled technical professionals, and councillors committed to serving communities with integrity, accountability, and excellence.

The IFP supports the reform of local government funding arrangements to ensure that municipal responsibilities are matched by realistic, sustainable and appropriately differentiated funding.

IFP municipalities will insist on merit-based appointments and the professional management of municipal finances. Every rand entrusted to a municipality must be used lawfully, efficiently and in the interests of the community.





IFP municipalities will strengthen accountability through:

- **Leadership you can Trust:** IFP councillors will be sufficiently numerate and literate to perform their tasks as servant leaders and will be appropriately prepared, trained and supported to understand municipal budgets, legislation, oversight responsibilities and the needs of the communities they serve.
- **Accessible and accountable leadership:** IFP councillors will remain visible and accessible in their wards and will report regularly to the communities they represent.
- **Merit-based appointments:** Competent people with the required technical skills in planning, finance, infrastructure development and maintenance will fill key administrative roles.
- **Zero tolerance for corruption:** Allegations of corruption, fraud, tender manipulation, theft and misuse of public resources will be referred for prompt investigation and appropriate action.
- **Consequences for wrongdoing:** Councillors, officials and employees found responsible for corruption, financial misconduct, serious maladministration or, in some cases, their failure to act, will face appropriate disciplinary or criminal processes, subject to due process and applicable law.
- **A performance culture and recovery of losses:** Senior management and municipal employees will be accountable for measurable outcomes. IFP municipalities will pursue the lawful recovery of losses caused by misconduct, negligence or unlawful decisions.
- **Transparent procurement:** Municipal procurement must be fair, competitive, cost-effective and transparent. Contracts will be monitored against agreed cost, quality and delivery requirements.
- **Direct accountability to communities:** Budgets, tenders, expenditure reports, service delivery standards and performance results will be published in accessible formats.
- **Protection for whistle-blowers:** Employees, councillors and residents who report corruption in good faith must be protected from intimidation, retaliation and victimisation.





TRUST US TO EMPOWER WOMEN, YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Bursaries, skills and youth programmes, support for small businesses and dignity-focused services

The IFP believes that women, youth and persons with disabilities must not be treated as passive stakeholders or an afterthought. They must be positioned as core architects of change and key drivers of development in local government.

IFP municipalities will aggressively champion the safety and dignity of women, fight gender-based violence and femicide, expand access for persons with disabilities and strengthen opportunities for young people.





The IFP will support:

- **Youth livelihoods and future-ready skills:** The IFP will continue to invest in libraries and youth agricultural cooperatives and expand access to bursaries, higher-education registration assistance, internships and practical training opportunities. They will promote skills in artificial intelligence, coding, robotics, digital entrepreneurship, data analytics and cybersecurity, alongside vocational training, security training and driver's licence programmes.
- **Sport, recreation and early childhood development:** The IFP will continue to build and expand sports complexes, sports fields and community facilities, including community halls and early-childhood-development centres.
- **Digital connectivity:** IFP municipalities will roll out free Wi-Fi zones in communities to ensure access to greater opportunities, particularly for young people and persons with disabilities.
- **Representation in leadership and governance:** IFP municipalities will encourage and support women to stand for management and leadership roles. True local-government transformation requires women to have direct and meaningful influence over decision-making.
- **Targeted resource allocation:** IFP municipalities will deliberately integrate economic and social programmes for women, youth and persons with disabilities into their Integrated Development Plans and budget votes. These initiatives must be properly resourced, not treated as minor compliance exercises. IFP municipalities must have fully functional youth and women's directorates.
- **Sanitary dignity:** IFP municipalities will continue to support sanitary-dignity initiatives and work with relevant government departments and community organisations to ensure that no girl or woman is prevented from attending school, work or participating in community life because she cannot access sanitary products.
- **Economic independence and local procurement:** IFP municipalities will seek opportunities in the sports, arts, and culture sectors for the youth while prioritising financial inclusion and promoting local enterprises owned by women, youth and persons with disabilities.
- **Women's safety in municipal budgets:** Women's safety must be treated as



a primary budgetary priority. The IFP will encourage municipalities to invest in gender-based violence and femicide desks, social workers, shelters, community-safety initiatives and psychosocial services to combat South Africa's national gender-based violence and femicide crisis.

- **Access to services for persons with disabilities:** Municipalities must improve access to public buildings, transport, clinics, community facilities, information and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.





OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

An IFP municipality will be a municipality that:

- **listens to its residents;**
- **communicates honestly;**
- **maintains essential infrastructure;**
- **supports local employment and enterprise;**
- **appoints competent professionals;**
- **respects traditional and Khoi-San leadership;**
- **protects public money;**
- **takes action against corruption;**
- **prioritises vulnerable communities;**
- **reports openly on its performance; and**
- **puts people first.**

We know that stronger municipalities cannot be built by government alone. They require capable leaders, professional administrations, active communities, responsible businesses, committed traditional and Khoi-San institutions and cooperation across all spheres of government.

The IFP asks every South African to partner with us to restore integrity, capability and service to local government.

Together, we can build municipalities that work.
Together, we can protect livelihoods.
Together, we can restore dignity.
Together, we can rebuild trust.

TRUST US, WE WORK FOR YOU

BUILDING STRONGER MUNICIPALITIES TOGETHER

VOTE IFP!



This is your time to exercise your democratic power to hold failing municipalities accountable, demanding better service delivery and taking your protest to the ballot box.

OUR TRACK RECORD SPEAKS FOR ITSELF. WE DON'T PROMISE WHAT WE HAVE NOT DELIVERED ALREADY.

PARTNER WITH US TO

BUILD STRONGER MUNICIPALITIES

THAT WORK FOR YOU.

04 NOVEMBER 2026

VOTE

X



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