



MANIFESTO OF UNIFIED CIVIC ORGANISATIONS -UCO

"FOR THE COMMUNITY BY THE COMMUNITY "

OUR PREAMBLE

We believe that government must belong to the people and must respond to the real needs, aspirations and challenges of communities. Our Organisation is founded on the principle that the voice of the community must be heard, respected and translated into meaningful action.

We come from communities that have experienced the challenges of inadequate infrastructure, informal settlements, unemployment, limited economic opportunities and delays in development. We therefore commit ourselves to working with communities to build a future based on dignity, security, development, economic opportunity, accountability and inclusive participation. Our manifesto is not simply a list of promises. It is a commitment to work with our communities, monitor government programs and ensure that development reaches the people it is intended to serve.

1. FORMALISATION OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

Number of informal settlements is rising at rapid phase in our area. This comes as a result of failure of government to provide basic human right of having shelter to citizens. As Unified Civic Organisation therefore have a plan to deal with this challenge.

Our Position

The formalization of informal settlements must be treated as a matter of security, dignity and long-term community development. For many years, communities have received promises regarding the formalization and development of informal settlements. People cannot be expected to build stable lives while remaining uncertain about the future of the land on which they live. We will advocate for a clear and transparent program of formalization that gives communities information about:

- The status of their settlement.
- Land ownership and planning processes.
- The responsible government department or municipality.
- Infrastructure requirements.
- Housing and tenure options.
- Clear implementation stages and timeframes.

Our Commitment

Formalization must be accompanied by proper planning for:

- Roads and storm-water systems.
- Electricity.
- Water and sanitation.
- Street lighting.
- Waste management.
- Public facilities.
- Schools, clinics and community facilities where required.
- Secure and lawful tenure arrangements.

Formalization is not merely about houses. It is about creating secure, planned and dignified communities.

2. BASIC SERVICES

Our communities deserve infrastructure that supports safe and productive lives.

We will advocate for:

-PROVISION OF RELIABLE AND CLEAN WATER AND ACCESS PROPER SANITATION.

We will capacitate Emfuleni water & sanitation utility Metsi a Lekoa with necessary resources to provide reliable and clean water. We will also continue to strengthen the relationship between Rand Water and Metsi a Lekoa and assure that collapsed sanitation infrastructure is refurbished and maintained.

- RELIABLE AND AFFORDABLE ELECTRICITY.

We will provide needed infrastructure to supply reliable electricity to our communities. This will include the increase of transformers, upgrading of Sub-Station and construction of sub-stations. We will also assure that electricity is cost effective and has standard market related cost. We will provide free electricity to indigents household.

- PROPER ROADS AND MAINTENANCE OF EXISTING ROADS.

We will allocate a budget annually for construction of new roads until every street of Emfuleni municipality townships has a tarred road like in the urban areas. We will also assure that are roads are properly maintained and eradicate every pothole in our municipality.

- Street lighting to improve safety.

Every community must have adequate street lights. Every section of communities both formal and informal settlement must have proper and functioning street lights to improve security in our communities. The street light must be able to provide proper light at night not to decorate and be dysfunctional, every street light must be maintained and serviced regularly.

- STORM-WATER DRAINAGE.

Every street of our communities both in suburbs and townships must have proper and functioning storm water line to avoid unnecessary flooding during raining seasons. Rain must be

regarded as blessing not a curse as it provides us with water, however in most families or communities it provides problems due to failures of local governments. Unified Civic Organisation will assure that every street of our communities has a proper and functioning storm water lines.

- IMPROVED WASTE COLLECTION.

Waste collection must be collected on weekly basis in every community. This will reduce number of illegal dumping sites surrounding our region. We will also provide sufficient landfills to reduces illegal dumping site.

- MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE.

It is the responsibility of municipality to maintain public infrastructure; we are having a dilapidating infrastructure as a result of lack of maintenance. Every public infrastructure must be maintained regularly to avoid unnecessary dilapidation. This maintenance must include; Roads, Public halls, water and sanitation infrastructure, Electrical infrastructure, Sports and recreational facilities.

3. LOCAL ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Major public infrastructure projects must create opportunities for the communities where those projects are implemented.

The major water-treatment development currently taking place and other mega projects happening in our region represents an important opportunity for local economic participation.

We will advocate for local people and businesses to benefit through:

- Employment opportunities.
- Skills development.
- Apprenticeships and technical training.
- Local procurement.
- Subcontracting opportunities.
- Small-business participation.
- Youth opportunities.
- Development of local suppliers.

Where billions of rand are invested in public infrastructure, our people must not be spectators to development happening in their own communities.

We will also advocate for transparency so that communities can understand the scope, progress and benefits of major public projects.

4. AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

Food security must become a community priority.

We believe that agriculture can provide food, income, skills and opportunities for small businesses.

We will promote:

- Community food gardens.
- Small-scale farming.
- Support for emerging farmers.
- Agricultural training.
- Cooperatives.
- Youth participation in agriculture.
- Access to agricultural markets.
- Local food-production initiatives.
- Partnerships with government, private organisations and agricultural institutions.

Our objective is to move communities from simply being consumers to becoming producers of food and economic value.

5. SMALL BUSINESS AND LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

We believe that communities already have entrepreneurs with skills, ideas and businesses that need support and government enhancement. We also have to instill the culture of entrepreneurship & innovation within our communities for economic development and job creation. There is no economy that will grow without production, we will therefore assure that

our communities participate in business and production. We believe that local economies must be championed and owned by locals.

We will create equilibrium of production and consumption in our communities.

We will establish local public enterprises in partnership with local communities and business for production, employment creation and municipal revenue. We will also reopen closed industrial sites to for production purposes. Our key sectors for public enterprises will be;

1. Retail
2. Manufacturing
3. Agriculture
4. Mining
5. Communications
6. Financial Sector.

For emerging local business municipality will provide;

- Business-development support.
- Training and mentorship.
- Assistance with compliance and registration.
- Access to information about funding opportunities.
- Local procurement.
- Subcontracting opportunities.
- Cooperative development.
- Youth entrepreneurship.
- Support for women-owned and emerging businesses.

Government spending should create opportunities for local economic development wherever legally and practically possible.

We also support community based economic development such as *sinkwa sethu* program. We want such programs expand throughout our region and to various business sectors for the growth of economy and employment creation.

6. EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Unemployment remains one of the greatest challenges facing our communities. We will advocate for stronger links between major projects, businesses, government and local residents so that skills development leads to real economic opportunities.

We support:

- Technical training.
- Apprenticeships.
- Learnerships.
- Workplace experience.
- Entrepreneurship.
- Skills programs linked to actual local projects.
- Career guidance for young people.

Training must not become an end in itself. Skills development must lead to opportunity.

7. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Young people are not merely the future; they are part of the present.

We will promote opportunities for young people in:

- Education and skills development.

We will assure that there is proper and functioning basic services in the institutions of learning, both basic and higher education within our municipality.

We will provide land and necessary support to Early Childhood Development Centers.

We will work with relevant government departments to assure that every ward in Emfuleni has a community development centers that has access to computers and free WIFI.

- Sports and recreation.

We will establish Emfuleni soccer club that will be supported by municipality with all necessities to represent municipality at National Premier league.

We will assure that all Arts, sports and recreational facilities are well maintained serve its purpose. This will include the refurbishment of Mphatlalatsane hall and neglected sports and recreational facilities.

We will also have municipal public media company with provision of Radio, newspaper, podcasts and other modern media program.

We will also build municipal owned record label to provide resources to emerging talent.

- Entrepreneurship.

We will provide training in entrepreneurship for Youth out of school which will be done at ward-based community development centers built by municipality.

We shall also partner with local NGOs and the department of education to provide entrepreneurship lessons for youth in school

- Digital skills.

In ward-based community centers will also provide digital training which will include;

Information Technology

Creating and fixing of cellphones and other electronics

Robotics

- Agriculture.

We will introduce modern agricultural lessons to youth in school and out of school

- Technical trades.

We work with relevant government department and private sector to assure that every community has free skills development centers.

- Community leadership.

We will also provide leadership trainings to young people to assure that the future has quality leadership.

- Employment and work-experience programs.

We have programs that prepare young people for employment and partner with private sector to assure that young people are provided with necessary work experience after studies.

Young people must be given the tools and opportunities to participate meaningfully in the economy.

8. AGE, EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND POLICY REFORM

We believe that South Africa must seriously examine the way age requirements are used across government systems and programs.

Age can be relevant where there is a legitimate reason for a specific program or policy. However, age should not become an unnecessary barrier that prevents capable people from contributing to society and the economy.

We will advocate for a review of government policies, regulations and programme criteria where age restrictions unnecessarily exclude people.



Our approach recognizes that:

- Young people need opportunities to enter the economy.
- Experienced and older people continue to have valuable skills and knowledge.
- Experience should be recognized.
- Government programs should be fair and evidence-based.
- Where age restrictions are no longer appropriate, they should be reviewed and, where necessary, amended through the proper legislative and policy processes.
- Intergenerational cooperation should be encouraged.

Our principle

Opportunity must be based on ability, fairness and genuine programme requirements — not unnecessary exclusion.

We therefore call for meaningful engagement with government and relevant institutions towards appropriate policy, regulatory and legislative reform.

10. TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Our Organisation believes that communities have the right to know how public resources are being used.

We will advocate for:

- Transparent government programs.
- Public communication about major projects.
- Monitoring of project progress.
- Community participation.
- Accountability for delays and failures.
- Proper use of public funds.
- Accessible information for ordinary residents.

Accountability should not only happen during elections. It must be continuous.

11. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Development must not be imposed on communities without meaningful consultation.

We will promote regular engagement between:

Community → Municipality → Government Departments → Business → Civil Society

Community members must have an opportunity to raise concerns, propose solutions and monitor implementation.

Our Organisation will encourage constructive participation rather than division.

12. OUR APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT

We believe development should follow a practical approach:

LISTEN

Hear the concerns and priorities of the community.

PLAN

Develop realistic solutions based on available resources and government responsibilities.

IMPLEMENT

Push for projects and programmes to move from promises to actual delivery.

MONITOR

Track progress and communicate developments to the community.

ACCOUNT

Demand explanations where commitments are not fulfilled.

13. OUR COMMITMENT

We make a commitment to the people of our communities:

We will listen.

We will engage. We will advocate.

We will monitor.

We will report back.

We will support development that creates real opportunities.

We will stand for the dignity and security of people living in informal settlements.

We will promote food security and local economic development.

We will support existing businesses while creating space for new entrepreneurs.

We will fight unnecessary exclusion based on age and advocate for fair policy reform.

Above all, we will remain guided by the voice of the community.

14. CONCLUSION

Our community deserves more than promises.

It deserves planning, development, opportunity, accountability and action.

We believe that meaningful change begins when communities are organized, informed and actively involved in decisions that affect their lives.

Our vision is a community where people have secure places to live, reliable basic services, access to economic opportunities, productive local businesses, food security and a meaningful voice in the development of their future.

OUR MESSAGE

THE VOICE OF THE COMMUNITY FOR CHANGE.

LISTEN. DEVELOP. EMPOWER. ACCOUNT.

TOGETHER, WE BUILD COMMUNITIES OF DIGNITY, OPPORTUNITY AND HOPE.