Service Delivery Governance

News Journal

Communities Municipal Budgets Public Participation

This is Planact's second publication of the news journal highlighting some of the work done between May - September 2026 across our partner communities.

Published in October 2026

planact

Towns & Cities Working for People

EST 1985 40 YEARS ENABLING CHANGE

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Who is **Planact**?

Planact is a Johannesburg-based non-profit organisation established in 1985.

The organisation is dedicated to empowering communities in vulnerable conditions to play an active role in local governance.

It amplifies community voices, holds municipalities accountable and promotes meaningful participation of marginalised groups in shaping local government policies, plans, and implementation processes.

Vision

A society where people in vulnerable conditions have equal access to resources, live in habitable environments, and can advance their interests freely.

Mission

To empower communities in vulnerable conditions by facilitating participatory governance, advocating for fair resource allocation, and strengthening local accountability.

About this **News Journal**?

Planact is strengthening governance systems to improve access to sanitation and advance strategic approaches.

This is done through a number of ways which include managing solid waste, and by facilitating training to strengthen social and economic support systems while also contributing to sustainable livelihood opportunities.

Planact's interventions enable citizens' voice and agency to improve and engage effectively in participatory structures and processes through civic engagement.

This is done to bring about neighbourhoods that are safe, sustainable, resilient and equitable.

This publication highlights some of the outcomes from work done in the second quarter of 2026.

2026

planact

Assessment of impact from 2022 - 2026

2 700 000

estimated number of people reached in Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni, Tshwane, Emalahleni, Rustenburg and Steve Tshwete municipalities

8
Projects

20
Project Localities

35
Community Facilitators and Volunteers

675 000
households reached

45
Project Partners

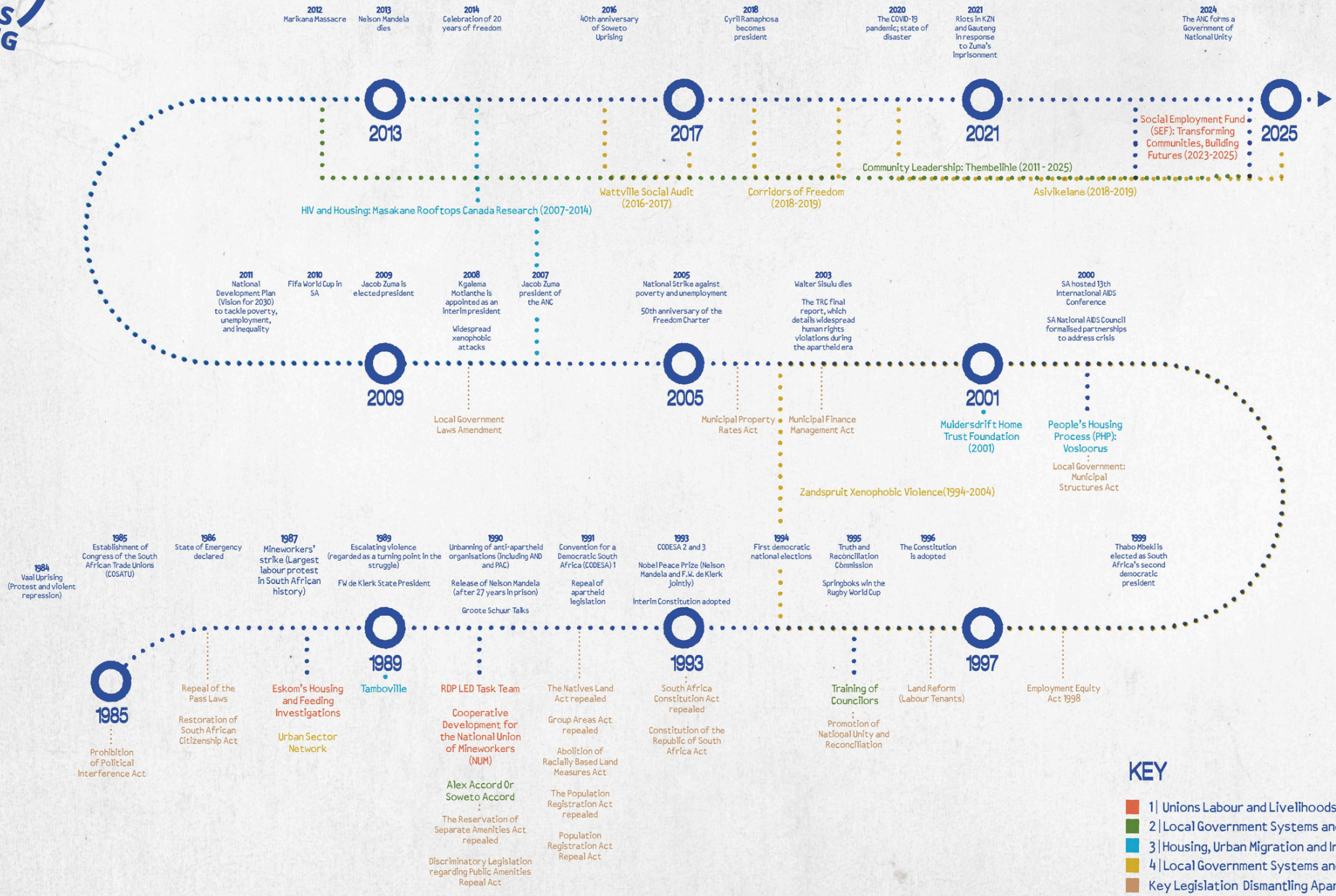
10%
estimated population reached in Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni, Tshwane and Emalahleni municipalities

4
Provinces Covered

1985-2025 TIMELINE

EST 1985 40 YEARS STRONG

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Impact Stories from Project Activities

Voter Education and Democracy

by Siphiwe Segodi

South Africa is a constitutional democracy. Section 19(3)(b) of the Constitution of South Africa, 1996, enshrines every citizen's right to vote. Since the first democratic national and provincial elections on 27 April 1994, there has been a decline in voter turnout.

Voter turnout is considered a crucial indicator of democratic consolidation. In the five consecutive national and provincial elections from 2004 to 2024, voter turnout steadily dropped from 76,23% to 58,64%, respectively.

The local government elections seems not to be immune from this phenomenon. Voter turnout in the last local government elections in 2021 was 46%, down from 58% in 2016. This brings into question the democratic consolidation of the country.
While youth voter registration is considered generally adequate, youth voter turnout has been low in both national and provincial and local government elections as well.

Planact's work includes encouraging active citizenry. While the organisation's work places emphasis on public participation in governance matters, local government in particular, it has also realised that there was a link between voting and public participation in between voting periods.

This resulted in the need to raise awareness about the right to vote and capacity-building sessions to empower communities with voter-related information, over and above ordinary public participation. Participation in voting allows citizens to choose political leaders that they believe will best serve their interests.

It is against this background that Planact conducted democracy and voter capacity development session in July 2026.

Planact partnered with Amnesty International South Africa (AISA), Human Science Research Council (HSRC) and the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) in the project. Planact also carried out solo workshops targeting young people aged 18 to 25.

The training sessions involved young people from informal settlement communities in the City of Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni, Emalahleni, Steve Tshwete and Rustenburg municipalities. These workshops sought to understand perceptions and perspectives of young people concerning elections, while raising awareness and enhancing their information and understanding.

Separately, two-day sessions were conducted for members from the Clusters of Community Agency from the above-mentioned municipalities, including the City of Tshwane. The first day of the workshops was dedicated to Planact, AISA and HSRC, while the second day was dedicated to the IEC. These four partners are non-partisan organisations and do not subscribe to any political party.

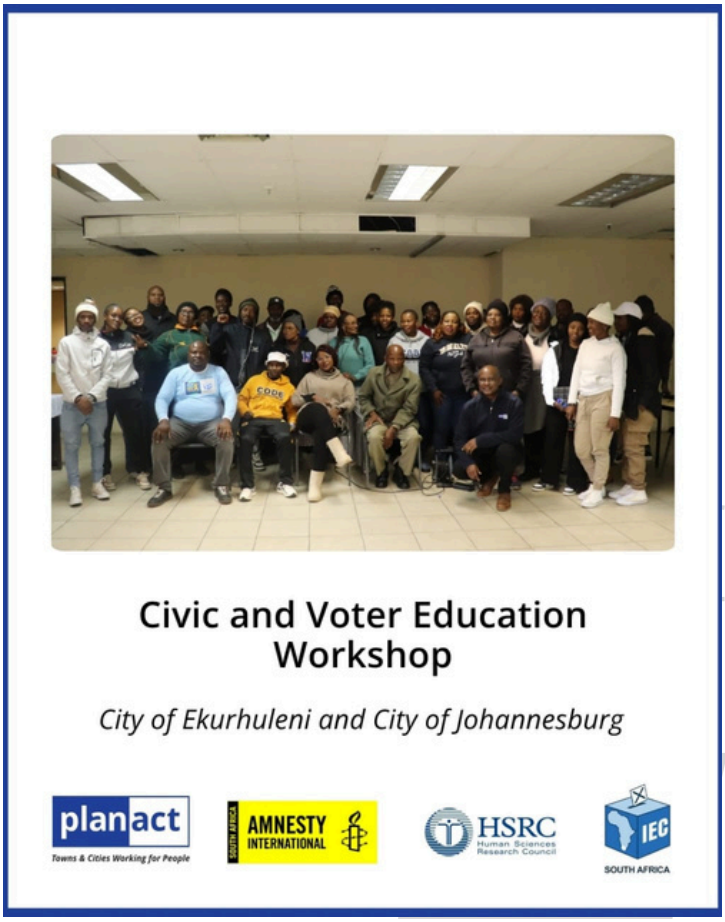
Therefore, the workshop did not seek to influence participants on who to vote for, but rather underscored the importance of the right to vote, the voting process and doing so from an informed point of view.

Planact focused on the importance of the right to vote and the need for careful consideration of the exercise of the right to vote. Planact noted that citizens are offered the right to vote as a form of expressing their voice, public participation, influencing decision-making and holding the government accountable.

The AISA introduced its campaign to encourage the public to consider voting for human rights. Their message was that participants need to consider voting in a way that promotes and protects their human rights. The HSRC shared their research findings that people are slowly losing confidence in the democratic system in South Africa.

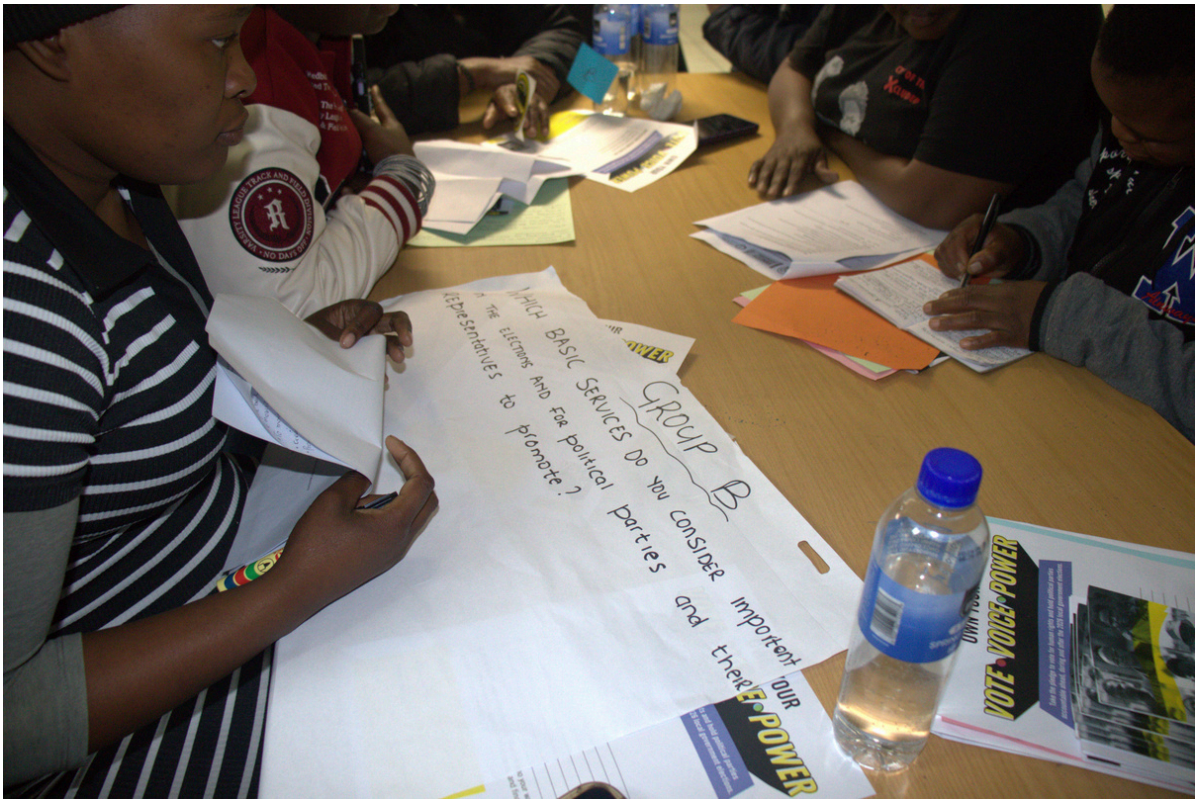
The HSRC reported that 37% of people they engaged said that the type of government does not matter. This is a considerable figure, and if the matter is left unchecked, South Africa might move to more populist form of politics and away from democratic standards and ideals.

This is something that the country may have to begin interrogating. The implications of continued disengagement from the electoral process are significant, as they could result in a governance system that completely neglects people's needs, ultimately threatening democratic representation and stability.



Looking Beyond the Elections

By Tamzin Hudson



Election cycles cast a spotlight on a host of processes, from registration and demarcation to campaigning, voting days themselves, protecting the ballot and ultimately releasing the results.

These processes, especially when elections are declared as free and fair, are regarded as the high-water mark of a democratic system. It is what happens after elections that the rubber hits the road, and when true transparency and accountability can be assessed.

The connection between democratic delivery and democracy itself is inextricably linked. South Africa is experiencing democratic reckoning. Between 2014 and 2023, democracy as the preferred governance system, as opposed to non-democratic forms of government, fell from 57% to 41%.

The delivery of services, including water, sanitation, electricity, and housing, either builds or erodes trust in the public service and, therefore, faith in democracy itself or what is described as democratic legitimacy.

Democracy is judged through services and livelihoods. Professor Steyn-Kotze puts this very well when she speaks of a system of inputs, throughputs and outputs. The inputs are voice and consent, the throughputs are fair, responsive processes, and the outputs are services and lived improvement.

The civic task is to reconnect democratic ideals with everyday accountability and outcomes.

Citizens are central in a democracy, and according to Professor Steyn-Kotze, civic engagement must do two things at once: protect the vote and create organised public power between elections.

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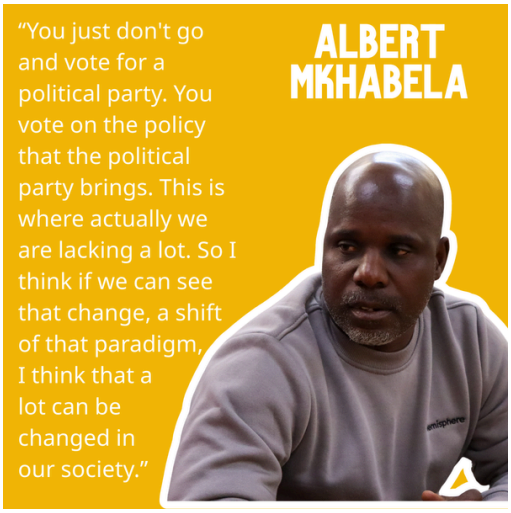
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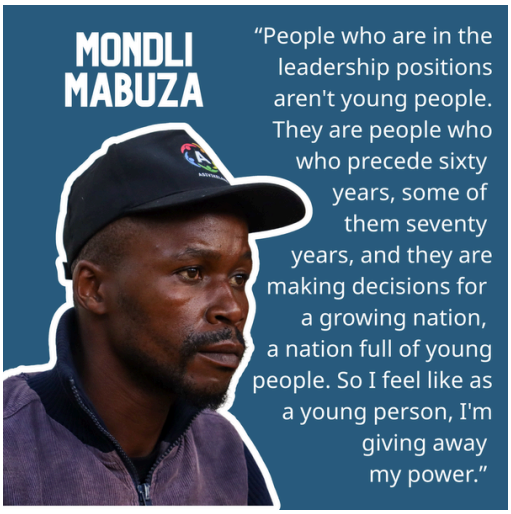
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Strengthening Community Voices through Partnerships







Planact, in partnership with Act Ubumbano and SIVIO Institute, are strengthening community voices through Social Accountability and the Citizens' Perceptions and Expectations project.

In 2025, a Citizens' Perceptions and Expectations Survey was conducted with 3,156 individuals across all nine provinces to better understand how South Africans perceive progress in governance, service delivery, economic management, and social cohesion under the Government of National Unity.

The work did not end there.

It continued with a deeper exploration of community perceptions of accountability, particularly individual accountability and office-bearer accountability.

The discussions sought to understand whether community members recognise their own responsibility and accountability in the actions they take, in the same way that they hold office bearers accountable for service delivery and other responsibilities.

To better understand community perceptions, eight workshops were conducted in Wattville, City of Ekurhuleni, and eight workshops in Lawley Station, City of Johannesburg, under the Social Accountability project. These workshops provided important insights, experiences, lessons, and challenges for both facilitators and focus group participants.

The workshops were conducted across the country. From 21–23 July, all teams convened at the Melrose Boutique Hotel for a three-day workshop to reflect on their experiences and learn from one another about how they approached and addressed challenges encountered during the community workshops.

Following the sense-making workshop, the teams were tasked with conducting report-back sessions with their respective communities. These sessions will provide communities with an opportunity to engage with the findings and collectively develop action plans to address the pressing issues raised during the workshops. This process is designed to promote more transparent and accountable governance systems while strengthening community engagement mechanisms with local government and other key partners.

The community report-back sessions and development of action plans are yet to take place and will form an important next step in ensuring that the voices and experiences of communities translate into meaningful action.

Through this process, the project seeks to strengthen community participation and support communities in identifying solutions to the challenges affecting them.

Democracy and Governance

By Tamzin Hudson







Youth Event Voter's Campaign

Rustenburg Local Municipality, North West

Planact's last quarter focused on the upcoming local government elections, with strong civic and voter education outreach projects. In hosting the workshops, Planact partnered with Amnesty International South Africa, the Human Sciences Research Council and the Electoral Commission.

Workshops were held with participants from the City of Johannesburg, the City of Ekurhuleni, the City of Tshwane, and the Emalahleni and Rustenburg local municipalities. Three workshops focused on engaging youth in conversations about the importance of voting to strengthen democracy and good governance. Four workshops were held for a broader audience.

According to the IEC's data from the registration weekends of June and August, there are 754 332 new voters. South Africa has just over 29 million registered voters. 2,1 million new voters have been added to the voters' roll since the last general elections in 2024. This is despite 884 000 voters being removed due to mortality.

QUESTIONS OF ACCOUNTABILITY

In July 2026, the National Treasury temporarily froze R13.5 billion in Local Government Equitable Share allocations to 69 financially mismanaged municipalities (including Johannesburg) due to severe non-compliance with the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA). This was also to highlight the critical importance of accountability and consequence management, using the law to ensure that money is directed towards effective service delivery.

This drastic step was to put pressure on municipalities to investigate unauthorised, irregular and fruitless expenditure.

Unfunded budgets came under the spotlight, as well as significant delays in paying creditors.

While equitable share allocations were released at the end of July, to protest service delivery, the Minister of Finance made it clear that compliance was required with the MFMA, the Municipal Regulations on Financial Misconduct Procedures and Criminal Proceedings, and other requirements.

FOCUS ON WATER

Water in South Africa is a polycrisis severely impacted by climate change, ageing infrastructure, municipal finance collapse, inequality, inadequate access, pollution, and poor governance. There is no single cause or single solution. In South Africa, less than 50% of citizens have a running tap in their homes. 25% of schools have no running water, while 45% of clinics have no access to water.

There are 12 000 km of water pipes: 120 km need replacing annually, but over the past three years 70 km have been replaced. 14 km were replaced in 2025.

Of the 87 reservoirs in Johannesburg, 42 are leaking, and 20 are critical. 60% of water ecosystems are threatened.

In 2021, it was recorded that 50 000 litres of sewerage were leaking into rivers per second. There is uncertainty about what that number is now. On 23 July, the President released the National Water Action Plan (NWAP). The question is whether it offers the bold solutions or new ideas needed to turn the situation around?

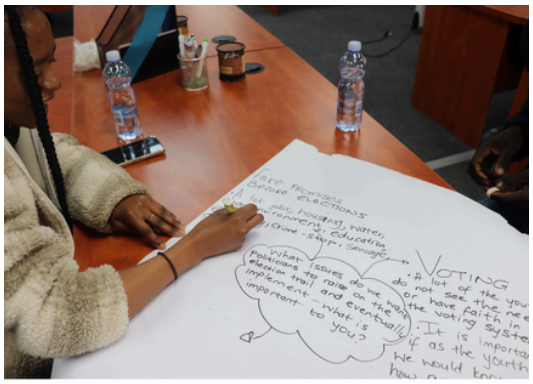
The NWAP is a strategic framework coordinated by the National Water Crisis Committee (WATERCOM) to resolve systemic failures in municipal water and sanitation service delivery, improve infrastructure investment, and stem corruption in the sector.

Half of South Africa's drinking water is not clean/potable and does not comply with microbiological standards.

Climate Change should be front and centre, as water events are climate events, with droughts and floods the most visible and recurrent threats.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS 2026: FOCUS ON THE YOUTH

#YENZAUSHINTSHO #BUILDINGTHRIVINGCOMMUNITIES



Youth reflecting on day-to-day challenges within their communitites







Youth Election Workshop

Emalahleni and Steve Tshwete Local Municipalities

Planact's elections work was centred on the call to action:

Make a Change #YenzaUshintsho #BuildingThrivingCommunities.

The goal of the campaign is to centre the role of communities as change-makers capable of driving transformational development and bringing about thriving neighbourhoods.

Key to the campaign were civic engagement and voter education workshops, which were rolled out in two parts: the first with a specific focus on the youth, specifically those between the ages of 18 and 25, and a broader series of four election workshops.

The youth workshops convened youth from the City of Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni, Emalahleni, Steve Tshwete, and Rustenburg Municipalities.

Planact convened three youth workshops to raise awareness of the importance of elections and to encourage greater youth participation. The first segment of each workshop focused on sharing messages, which highlighted the importance of elections and provided participants with the context in which voting should be considered.

The first, often cited by the Electoral Commission, with whom Planact partnered in its election campaigns, affirms that not voting is giving up one's voice, recognising that elections are decided by those who vote.

According to the Electoral Commission, voting is one of the most important ways citizens participate in a democracy in South Africa. It gives people the power to choose leaders, influence government decisions and shape the future of their communities and the country.

Planact further framed the local elections as integral to service delivery and community development, and essential to furthering transparent, responsive, accountable local governance.

With this, the workshops provided the participants with the opportunity to engage in group work and to reflect on and discuss the following:

- The type of cities young people wish to build.
- Key challenges affecting youth in their communities.
- Issues that should receive greater attention during election campaigns.
- Ways in which young people can remain active citizens beyond the ballot box.

The participants highlighted concerns including unemployment; service delivery, specifically water, sanitation, electricity, roads, safety, crime, and corruption.
They cited education and youth development as priority issues requiring greater political attention.

Participants highlighted the need for good leadership from political members and political parties.

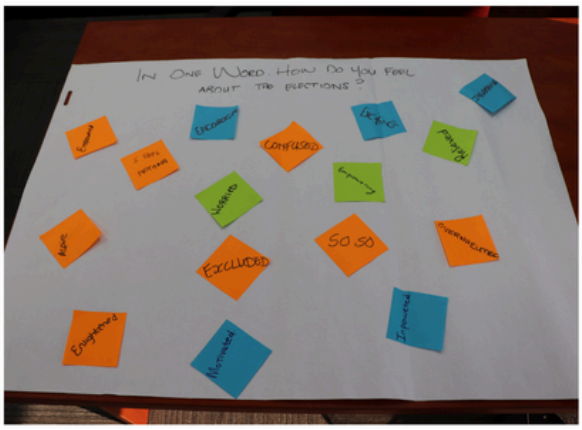
The following recommendations were made by the youth attendees based on the discussions.

- Continue youth civic education programmes beyond election periods.
- Increase awareness of internship, learnership and entrepreneurship opportunities.
- Strengthen partnerships between municipalities, civil society organisations and youth structures.
- Create more dialogue platforms where young people can engage directly with decision-makers.
- Develop follow-up engagements to monitor the issues raised during the dialogue.

Planact will continue engaging young people through civic education programmes, community dialogues, and leadership initiatives.

The organisation will encourage sustained youth participation beyond the election period by supporting community-based initiatives that strengthen democratic participation.





At the end of the event, the youth expressed their feelings on the upcoming elections





ACCELERATING HEAT RESILIENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA (AHRISA)

Project Background

South Africa faces escalating heat-related health risks as climate change drives more frequent, intense and prolonged periods of extreme heat. Southern Africa is a climate-change hotspot, with interior temperatures rising at about twice the global rate and projected to increase by more than 4 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels by 2100. 88% of South Africa's weather stations have, through long-term monitoring, revealed heat stress trends, with 40 monitoring locations registering temperatures exceeding 32 °C.

Exposure to temperatures, particularly heat waves and sustained periods of heat, can be harmful and lead to heat-related illnesses and even accelerate death, especially among the elderly and vulnerable groups, including children and those with underlying health conditions.

The project's overall aim is to help South Africa establish a tested, scalable model for translating heat-risk evidence into practical early warning, preparedness and response action.

The intended impact is improved preparedness, readiness and coordinated response to extreme heat in selected high-risk settings, contributing to reduced exposure to avoidable heat-related health risks among vulnerable populations and stronger institutional capacity to anticipate and manage extreme heat.

In this Project, Planact will be working with the South African Medical Research Council, the South African Weather Service, and the Foundation for Professional Development.

The organisation will establish a scalable model for reducing heat-related health risks among South Africa's most vulnerable populations based on a targeted demonstration initiative in two provinces, namely Hammanskraal in the City of Tshwane and Kakamas in the Northern Cape.

Heat risk is concentrated in the places where vulnerable groups live, work and learn, including informal settlements, outdoor agricultural settings and schools.



Planact's Key Activities

Planact will, therefore, lead community engagement and co-design activities to ensure that heat–health preparedness measures are grounded in the lived realities, priorities, and coping strategies of vulnerable communities.

A vulnerability assessment baseline will explore how heat is experienced in different living, learning, and working environments; current coping strategies; barriers to protective action; trusted communication channels; and priority needs among groups at heightened risk.

Methodologies and tools will be developed to enable standardisation, institutionalisation and scalability.

Heat-risk information and early warnings will be translated into practical, locally relevant actions that can be understood, trusted, and used by those most exposed to extreme heat, including informal settlement residents, outdoor workers, children, older persons, and people with underlying medical conditions.

Project's Vision

Ultimately, the project's vision is to contribute to a climate-resilient health system that anticipates, prevents and responds effectively to extreme heat. This aims to protect South Africa's most vulnerable populations through health-informed early warnings, coordinated preparedness, community-led action, and institutionalised heat-health governance.

MONITORING INDOOR CLIMATE EXTREME (MICE RIOT)

ENABEL KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE KEN INNOVATION SHOWCASE 2026





In June 2026, Planact along with five other fellow Innovation Hub Supported projects funded by Enabel were hosted by the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) in Hatfield, Pretoria for a three-day intensive session to showcase their social innovation projects and progress, to explore lessons, challenges and achievements.

Planact, IWMI, GOAL, Digify, DeltaSense and Practica focused on topics such as business models and innovation systems, demand-driven solutions, pitching skills, improved articulation on the impact and how to adopt a more strategic and confident positioning of organisations and data-driven projects.

The three-day event concluded with a site visit to one of Planact's MICE RIoT project sites, Choba in the City of Tshwane.

The cohort was welcomed to the community by the Choba installation team who then took the cohort on a walk through the community to showcase not only the MICE RIoT project but also the work with urban greening and waste management as part of Planact's SEF and Asivikelane projects.

The cohort visited two homes to view where and how the temperature and humidity sensors were installed and gain a practical understanding of the conditions in which the data is being collected.

This also provided an opportunity for homeowners to elaborate on the conditions experienced during extreme heat events and their involvement in the community-generated data processes.

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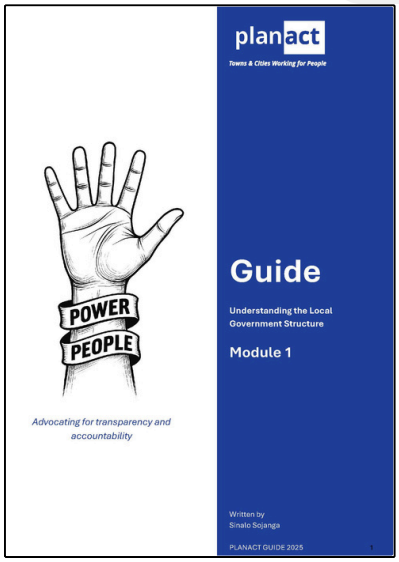


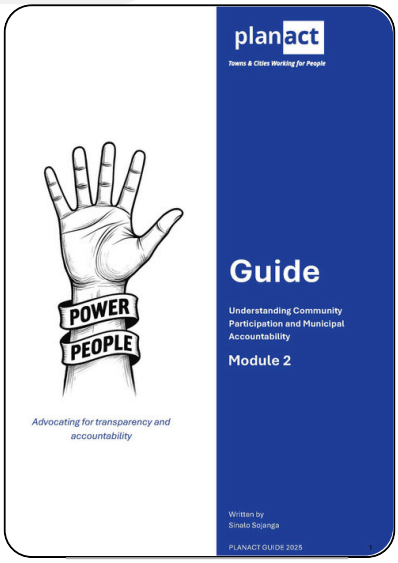
Knowledge exchange and technological innovations drive water solutions

Video by IWMI

GUIDES: UNDERSTANDING LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Download





Planact has developed two modules aimed at providing an understanding of the roles and functions of local government clearly and practically.

The guides are designed to support community members and civil society organisations in understanding how local government is structured and how it operates.

Download copies of the GUIDE on Planact's website or below.

Module 1: Understanding Local Government Structure.

Module 2: Understanding Community Participation & Municipal Accountability

PLANACT SUBMISSION ON DRAFT GENERAL PUBLIC PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, 2026

Public finance accountability begins with informed communities.

When communities understand how government spends taxpayers' money, they are better equipped to identify irregularities, advocate for corrective action, and ensure that public resources are used efficiently, ethically, and equitably.

Empowering citizens with this knowledge strengthens transparency and contributes to better service delivery.

Read Planact's submission made on the Draft General Public Procurement Regulations here - https://www.planact.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/Planact-Submission-on-Draft-Procurement-Regs-2026-15July2026-1.pdf



STAATSKOERANT

VAN DIE REPUBLIEK VAN SUID-AFRIKA

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

GOVERNMENT GAZETTE

KAAPSTAD, 17 MAART 1982

CAPE TOWN, 17 MARCH 1982

KANTOOR VAN DIE EERSTE MINISTER

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

No. 453. 17 March 1982.

No. 31 of 1982: National Supplies Procurement Amendment Act, 1982.

WATCH NOW

3rd Round of Planact's 5-Day Emerging Contractors/Developers Training | May 2026

SMALL SCALE RENTAL HOUSING PROJECT:
BUILDING MORE THAN BUSINESSES

The growth of small-scale rental housing, especially in Gauteng, offers big opportunities, despite its informal and, in many cases, unauthorised character. To address this, seventeen emerging construction entrepreneurs came ready to learn and left with more than certificates.

The May 2026 Planact Construction Hub Emerging Contractors and Developers Training earned an outstanding 4.94 out of 5 satisfaction rating, with 100% of participants saying they would recommend the programme and attend it again.

But perhaps the strongest measure of its impact was what participants did themselves. Determined to get the most from the intensive five-day programme, the 17 business leaders voluntarily rearranged the daily schedule to create more time for learning and exchange.

Facilitated by Dr Amanda Filtane from the Built Environment Clinic, the training was the third round delivered by Planact to support entrepreneurs entering and growing in the construction sector. Across seven practical modules, entrepreneurial emerging developers and contractors explored the building blocks of a sustainable construction business, from business fundamentals to technical and specialised skills.

Emerging developers and contractors address some of the country's biggest development challenges through stimulating local economic development and employment, delivering affordable rental accommodation and promoting social transformation.

They left with certificates, new knowledge and, importantly, a stronger foundation to build businesses that can create livelihoods and contribute to their communities.

The programme covered the following:

Session	Module Title	Key Topics Covered
Session 1	The Construction Industry – PESTELE Overview	Industry overview, markets, sector specialisation, clients, consultants, contractors, suppliers
Session 2	Business Administration & Management	Industry overview, markets, sector specialisation, clients, consultants, contractors, suppliers
Session 3	Branding and Marketing	Introduction to branding, brand strategy development, marketing fundamentals
Session 4	Finance: Business-Construction-Projects	Business finance, construction finance, project finance, cashflow and financing strategies
Session 5	Construction & Project Management	Knowledge areas, project management techniques, contracts, scope, cost, quality management
Session 5b	Application of CM and PM	Pricing guidelines, industry rates (BIBC, BER), production plans, rate build-up, resource scheduling
Module 6	SHEQ	OHS Act, Construction Regulations, NBR application, work method statements, risk assessments
Module 7	Entrepreneur Development	Entrepreneurship, GRIT, competitive strategies, alliancing, joint ventures, personal development

HANDY MAN'S TRAINING FOR ASIVIKELANE, SEF AND SMALL SCALE RENTAL DEVELOPERS/CONTRACTORS

Towns and cities work when people do more than just survive.

That is the thinking behind Planact's sustainable livelihoods programme.

Planact's community facilitators and volunteers in the Asivikelane initiative as well as the Social Employment Fund participants and Small-Scale Rental Project are getting handyman, accredited training in plumbing, glazing, electrical work and carpentry through the partnership with Believers' Care Society. Believers' Care Society is a Turrfontein-based non-profit organisation committed to youth development.

The current Planact cohort includes 14 Social Employment Fund (SEF) participants: six from Rabie Ridge in the City of Ekurhuleni, three from Lawley Station and five from Bertrams in the City of Johannesburg.

To support the sustainability of the SEF Project beyond its limited funding period, some of the SEF participants in the handyman's programme is also part of the Asivikelane initiative.

This prepares participants to apply their newly acquired skills to support the community-led initiatives such as the communal pipes as well as the repairs and maintenance of dilapidated Ventilated Improved Pit (VIP) toilets in informal settlements. This in essence, helps communities address critical sanitation needs.

The Small-Scale Rental Project participants and Asivikelane volunteers are also part of the accredited training programme. The small-scale rental project has 7 emerging business leaders from Ekurhuleni and Johannesburg in the programme and half of them are under the age of 35.

Currently, the Planact cohort has the skills but not the necessary certification to back the skills. Therefore, the training offers more than merely practical skills; these are tools that can open doors to income, enterprise and greater economic self-reliance.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR MUNICIPAL ACCOUNTABILITY

ASIVIKELANE – AMPLIFYING COMMUNITY VOICES

OVERVIEW

The Asivikelane initiative gives a voice to informal settlement residents in South Africa's major cities who face severe basic service shortages. Asivikelane means 'Let's protect one another' in Zulu.

The campaign was born as South Africa entered a national lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020.

The campaign is currently present in four hundred informal settlements across thirteen municipalities/metros.

Planact is currently running two initiatives in the City of Tshwane (CoT) and City of Johannesburg (CoJ).

SANITATION HUB - CITY OF JOHANNESBURG

The aim of the Sanitation Hub in the City of Johannesburg is to eradicate Ventilated Improved Pit Toilets (VIPs) that are dangerous and unusable and to fix and maintain the ones that are usable and fixable.

Some informal settlements in the CoJ use VIPs. These VIPs are seen as a better level of temporary sanitation than chemical toilets in the City of Johannesburg, yet the service has become dangerous to use by residents because toilets are not repaired and maintained or replaced when they get too old.

These challenges have been the highlight of discussions between Planact, the International Budget Partnership South Africa and the Asivikelane partners together with the City of Johannesburg and its relevant entities.

Conversations about new sustainable sanitation technologies that may be provided to CoJ informal settlements culminated to a 2-day Symposium on Water Efficient Sanitation Solutions.





"... Johannesburg currently accounts for an estimated 12 000km of sewer infrastructure network. Much like going from Johannesburg to Durban twenty times...With the current uncontrolled population growth, it means that this infrastructure has to double... in the next 10 years, Johannesburg will probably be sitting at about 7 million people..."

This grim picture was painted by the Mayor of Johannesburg, Councillor Dada Morero, as he opened the Water Efficient Sanitation Solutions (WESS) Symposium on the 30th of July 2026.

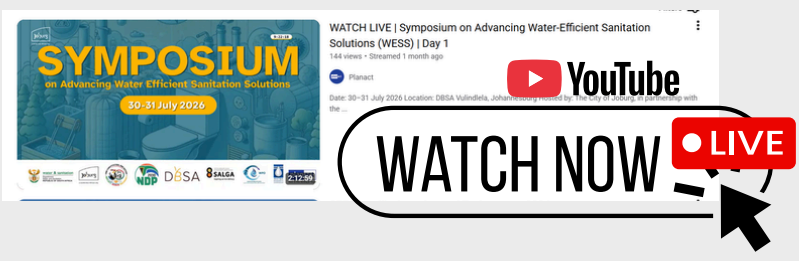
The Symposium, convened by the Member of the Mayoral Committee for Human Settlements in Johannesburg, Councillor Mlungisi Mabaso, marked the beginning of a technical and collective commitment to providing dignified sanitation to Johannesburg residents.

Councillor Mabaso received and led the Asivikelane Community Facilitators through various innovative sanitation exhibitions displayed at the Symposium.

Planact hopes that this symposium is the beginning of a practical solution towards:

- Providing dignified sanitation for informal settlements in Johannesburg.
- Communities to participate in the implementation of the eradication of dangerous VIPs.
- Discussions and agreements for standardized maintenance plans and schedules.
- Adopting sanitation policies that favour restoring dignity to underserved communities

The symposium was held in partnership between Planact and the Department of Water and Sanitation, the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), the SouthAfrican Local Government Association (SALGA), the Water Partnerships Office, the WaterResearch Commission and the City of Johannesburg.



PARTNERSHIPS FOR MUNICIPAL ACCOUNTABILITY

ASIVIKELANE – AMPLIFYING COMMUNITY VOICES



After six years of tracking sanitation delivery challenges in informal settlements across South Africa, Asivikelane has identified six practical, evidence-based recommendations that can fundamentally change how municipalities plan for and manage sanitation:

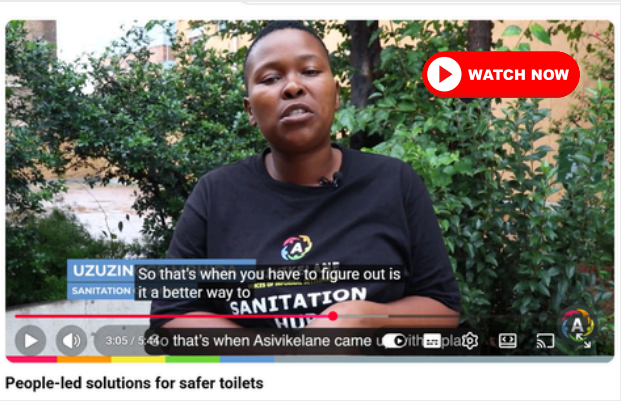
- Consult with communities
- Provide user education
- Undertake lifecycle budgeting
- Plan and fund maintenance of both temporary and permanent solutions
- Build functional fault reporting systems
- Plan the transition from day one

These are not abstract ideals – they are grounded in the evidence and ideas from residents which have guided us toward solutions.

The need to provide safe and dignified sanitation is urgent.
Read the full report on the Asivikelane website.

PEOPLE-LED SOLUTIONS FOR SAFER TOILETS IN LAWLEY STATION, JOHANNESBURG

Residents in Johannesburg created a new backslab design for VIP toilets which are safter and longer lasting. We trained 10 sanitation champions to build these backslabs so they can refurbish toilets in their own communities.



People-led solutions for safer toilets

PARTNERSHIPS FOR MUNICIPAL ACCOUNTABILITY

ASIVIKELANE – AMPLIFYING COMMUNITY VOICES



The guide demonstrates how sorting, recycling, and composting waste can contribute to cleaner and healthier neighborhoods.

It includes step-by-step project plans, examples of waste mapping, and lists of recycling companies. This resource is designed to support anyone
committed to improving their community's environment.

This resource is designed to support anyone committed to improving their community's environment.

Waste Hub

TSHWANE ALLOCATES R5MILLION FOR WASTE COLLECTION INFRASTRUCTURE

The latest step in the partnership between the City of Tshwane, Asivikelane and the Partnership Fund is significant.

Looking back - in July 2025, the City of Tshwane council adopted a community-led Waste Management Strategy for informal settlements crafted through the tireless work of Asivikelane Community Facilitators and volunteers.

In taking this work forward, the City of Tshwane sent a letter of appreciation, in May 2026, to both the Partnership Fund and the Asivikelane Initiative "for the valuable and sustained collaboration in advancing improved waste management services within informal settlements across the City."

In the letter, the City of Tshwane states that it has allocated R5 million in the 2026/2027 financial year and requests technical and implementation support in the development of formalised, centralised waste collection points in selected informal settlements.

The letter acknowledges "Asivikelane's deep and established knowledge of informal settlements within the City" and requests the following:

1. Identification of informal settlements requiring centralised waste collection points.
   The selection must be based on high-impact considerations, including:
   - High waste generation and environmental risk areas.
   - Absence or inconsistency of existing waste collection services.
   - Proximity and accessibility for efficient service delivery etc.

2. Design and Technical Specifications of Centralised Collection Points:
   These designs should:
   - Be appropriate for informal settlement conditions and spatial constraints
   - Include provisions for waste separation and recycling infrastructure
   - Support ease of access for municipal collection vehicles.
   - Promote environmental health, safety, and cleanliness.
   - Be cost-effective and scalable across multiple settlements.

3. Implementation Timeline: In view of the allocated budget of R5 million, the City intends to commence construction and rollout of centralised waste collection points within the 2026/2027 financial year.

This requires urgent collaboration to ensure readiness of designs, site identification, and implementation planning.

Planact, the International Budget Partnership of South Africa and the Asivikelane partners, acknowledge that the next phase of this work is not simply about building collection points. It is about getting the right infrastructure, in the right places, through a process that listens to the people who will use it.

For Planact, this work is also a reminder of why partnerships between communities, civil society and government make towns and cities work!

SOCIAL EMPLOYMENT FUND | WORK FOR THE COMMON GOOD

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HIV - SA Training at Planact



Greening and Environment in Choba, City of Tshwane



Training by PETCO in Wattville, City of Ekurhuleni



HIV - SA Training at Planact







Food Security in Skoonplaas, City of Ekurhuleni







SOCIAL EMPLOYMENT FUND | WORK FOR THE COMMON GOOD

Planact is proud to share a selection of success stories from Social Employment Fund (SEF) Round 4 (2025–2026).

Across our partner communities, the programme has created opportunities for people to earn, learn and contribute to addressing challenges in their communities. These stories offer a glimpse into how social employment can become a pathway to greater economic opportunity, community resilience and local action.

In this section, we spotlight a few of the people and initiatives making a difference through the programme. For more stories and insights, read Planact's 2026 SEF Case Study, available on the Planact website.

"We Want to Join Forces!" Kuvuki Community Safety, City of Ekurhuleni

What initially started as a community meeting to discuss the establishment of an Ekurhuleni New Life (ENL) Disciplinary Camp in Ekurhuleni ultimately developed into an unexpected partnership opportunity for the Social Employment Fund Community Safety Team in Kuvuki.

The team attended the meeting hoping to connect with the ENL Boot Camp team, but their commitment and active participation drew the attention and was recognised by other stakeholders such as Selby Sibanyoni, founder of the Second Chance Recovery Centre.

Selby Sibanyoni, impressed by their dedication, said to Mpumi, the SEF Supervisor for the Community Safety team in Kuvuki:
Mpumi, why not register an NPO I really love working with you guys; you demonstrate so much determination and commitment to what you do - register, and we will work together."

On 16 July, the SEF Community Safety team in Kuvuki hosted a Drug Abuse Awareness Campaign, with a number of stakeholders present, including ENL facilitators, the Department of Social Development, the Ward Committee, and the Second Chance Recovery Centre. The stakeholders shared information about their work and how they assist people struggling with drug addiction. The Second Chance Recovery Centre also supported the event by donating food and posters.

Both ENL and Second Chance Recovery Centre have expressed an interest in partnering with the SEF team and requested assistance to register as an NGO to enable them to work more effectively together.

Through SEF, the team has completed Grade E, C and D, which is the foundational and intermediate training required by the Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority (PSiRA). strengthening their skills and livelihood opportunities, which led them to increase their marketability and this opportunity.

Planact is the Strategic Implementing Partner for the Social Employment Fund (SEF) project.

From one community meeting to new partnerships and opportunities, this is sustainability in support of a stronger SEF in action.

Case Report: Child Protection and Gender-Based Violence Intervention, Tjovitjo, City of Johannesburg

Case Background

The Tjovitjo Community safety Team responded to a child protection case involving an 11-year-old girl who was allegedly sexually assaulted on multiple occasions by her great-uncle. According to the family, the suspect threatened to kill the child if she disclosed the abuse, leaving her fearful and traumatised.

The child's grandmother became concerned after noticing changes in the girl's behaviour, including frequent crying, emotional distress, and fear of going to school. Recognising these as possible signs of abuse, she sought assistance from the Bertrams Wellness Team.

Intervention
The Community safety Team responded immediately by ensuring that the case was reported to the South African Police Service (SAPS). A team member accompanied the grandmother and the child to the police station to open a criminal case and then to the hospital for a medical examination.

The child was subsequently referred to a social worker for counselling and ongoing psychosocial support. The alleged perpetrator was arrested by SAPS and later released on bail while the criminal investigation and court proceedings continue. Case Number: 90/04/2026.
Impact
The intervention ensured that the abuse was reported without delay, enabling the child to access critical medical, legal, and psychosocial support services. The prompt response protected the child from further harm and ensured that the alleged offender was brought into the criminal justice system.

The child is now receiving professional support from a social worker to assist with her emotional recovery and help her cope with the trauma she experienced. The case also empowered the family to seek justice and reinforced the importance of reporting child abuse as soon as it is suspected.

This intervention demonstrates the essential role of the Tjovitjo Safety Team in safeguarding vulnerable children, supporting survivors of gender-based violence, and working collaboratively with SAPS, healthcare providers, and social services to ensure that victims receive comprehensive care and protection.

Conclusion
Although the criminal case is still before the courts, the coordinated response by the Tjovitjo Safety Team ensured that the survivor received immediate protection and access to essential services. The case reflects the importance of community-based interventions in identifying abuse, supporting affected families, and contributing to the protection and well-being of children.

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WATCH SOME OF OUR SEF IMPACT STORIES ON YouTube



SEF health and Wellness team Become Local Champions, Bertrams, City of Johannesburg



Air Quality Workshop in Choba, City of Tshwane



SEF Health & Wellness, Wattville, City of Ekurhuleni



MEET PLANACT'S PROJECT TEAM 2026



Tamzin Hudson
Programme Manager

PROGRAMME MANAGER

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P4MA Project Lead



Bafana M. Tshabalala
P4MA Project Support

SMALL SCALE RENTALS



Mike Makwela
A2AHProject Lead



Nonjabulo Magubane
A2AH Project Support

SOCIAL EMPLOYMENT FUND



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Hlengiwe Mbambo
SEF Project Adminstrator



Thabani Nxumalo
SEF Project Manager



Shuanita Pace
SEF CoJ Site Coordinator



Moeti Rammoneng
SEF CoE Site Coordinator



Queenate Matthysen
SEF Emalahleni Site Coordinator

COMMUNITY BASED SOCIAL MOVEMENTS



Siphiwe Segodi
CBSM Project Lead



Kiara Britton
CBSM Project Support



Sinalo Sojanga
CBSM Project Support

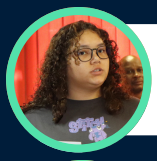
INCLUSIVE & PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY



Wetu Memela
P4I &PD Project Lead



Sinalo Sojanga
P4I & PD Project Support



Kiara Britton
P4I &PD Project Support



Siphiwe Segodi
CBSM Project Lead

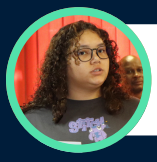
SYSTEMS CHANGE INITIATIVES



Siphiwe Segodi
SCI Project Lead



Sinalo Sojanga
SCI Project Support



Kiara Britton
SCI Project Support



Wetu Memela
SCI Project Support

MEASURING INDDOR CLIMATE EXTREMES



Wetu Memela
MICE RIoT Project Lead



Kiara Britton
MICE RIoT Project Support

PROJECT TEAMS ARE SUPPORTED BY THE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES COORDINATION TEAM

Planact wishes to thank all partners and funders who continue to *make towns and cities work for people*.



1985 - 2025

A celebratory exploration of Planact's contribution to the history and future of development and transformation of under-served communities in South Africa.

A series of articles was co-created through exploratory dialogue on the lessons learned from Planact's experience working in development and transformation in pre- and post-apartheid South Africa.

READ THEM HERE -
https://www.planact.org.za/planacts-40th-anniversary/

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EST 1985 40 YEARS STRONG

EST 1985 40 YEARS SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

EST 1985 40 YEARS HOLDING CITIES ACCOUNTABLE

EST 1985 40 YEARS ENABLING CHANGE

EST 1985 40 YEARS AMPLIFYING VOICES

EST 1985 40 YEARS OF IMPACT