

# Election manifesto ...

## 'Will you still need me will you still feed me when I'm 64'

*The ANC released its election manifesto on 8 January 2004 during its 92nd anniversary celebrations. **Cosatu** looks at the key elements of the manifesto which is titled 'A people's contract to create work and fight poverty'.*

**T**he manifesto starts off with a section celebrating freedom and South Africa, which is about to enter its tenth year of democracy. It is in these sections that the scene is set for the concept of working together as a united nation to achieve a people's contract to create work and fight poverty. The manifesto then spends some time outlining what progress has already been achieved since 1994 which 'gives us real hope for the future'. This section covers improvements in social service delivery, the economy and successes in dealing with crime and corruption. An interesting point in the section on the economy is the statement that between 1996 and 2003 the economy created 2m jobs. It would appear that this figure has been obtained from research conducted on behalf of the ten year review initiated by the Presidency, see SALB 27(6). The research commissioned initially stated that employment rose by 1,6m between 1995 and 2002. The implication being

that job losses during this period was not the problem but rather the fact that the number of people looking for jobs has increased.

The rest of this article is taken directly from the manifesto.

### **Learning from experience: We can do more, better**

Our Constitution and laws guarantee equal rights for all South Africans. But discrimination and abuse continue – and they need to be firmly dealt with – in some workplaces including farms, in some schools and in social activities; and the dignity of sustainable livelihoods eludes many families.

The economy has created 2m net new jobs since 1995. But the number of people seeking work has sharply increased; many workers have lost their jobs; and many have been negatively affected by casualisation and outsourcing. As a result many, many South Africans do not have jobs or decent self-employment; poverty is still



a reality for millions, as many do not have appropriate skills, while many cannot get credit to start or improve their own businesses.

The programme to provide housing, electricity, water and health care has been expanded to more South Africans. Free basic services like water and electricity are starting to be provided. Free health care is provided to mothers, children under six and people with disabilities. But the quality of these services needs to be improved; and we need to create more jobs so that people can use these services more effectively and in a sustainable manner.

The police, justice and other security agencies have been changed to serve all South Africans, and they are making progress against crime. But too many attacks occur against citizens; abuse of women and children is too high; and violence against individuals remains a problem.

Women have attained the right to equality, and more and more women are found in leadership structures; land, health and housing programmes have favoured female-headed households. But discrimination and abuse still take place, and women are found in very large numbers among the poorest sections in our society.

Young people have benefited from the environment and programmes of freedom: from the improvements in the education system; from the outlawing of discrimination in access to professions; from the opening up of opportunities in sport and culture and from the provision of electricity, water and other services to millions of households. But too many young people are unemployed, and millions of them come from poor households.

South Africa has become a full and active member of the global family of nations. We have built relations with most countries and our voice is heard across the globe. But Africa remains the least developed and most marginalised

continent. Yes, we have made massive progress. However much, much more still needs to be done. At the heart of our challenges are two linked concerns – we must create work and roll back poverty. These two core objectives are the major focus of our programmes for the second decade of freedom. To achieve this we need stronger partnership among all South Africans, a people's contract for a better South Africa.

#### **Forward to the second decade of freedom**

Guided by the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), our vision is to build a society that is truly united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic. Central to this is a single and integrated economy that benefits all.

The combination of some of the most important targets and objectives making up Vision 2014 are as follows:

- Reduce unemployment by half through new jobs, skills development, assistance to small businesses, opportunities for self-employment and sustainable community livelihoods.
- Reduce poverty by half through economic development, comprehensive social security, land reform and improved household and community assets.
- Provide the skills required by the economy, build capacity and provide resources across society to encourage self-employment with an education system that is geared for productive work, good citizenship and a caring society.
- Ensure that all South Africans, including especially the poor and those at risk – children, youth, women, the aged, and people with disabilities – are fully able to exercise their constitutional rights and enjoy the full dignity of freedom.
- Compassionate government service to the people; national, provincial and

local public representatives who are accessible; and citizens who know their rights and insist on fair treatment and efficient service.

- Massively reduce cases of TB, diabetes, malnutrition and maternal deaths, and turn the tide against HIV and AIDS, and, working with the rest of Southern Africa, strive to eliminate malaria, and improve services to achieve a better national health profile and reduction of preventable causes of death, including violent crime and road accidents.
- Significantly reduce the number of serious and priority crimes as well as cases awaiting trial, with a society that actively challenges crime and corruption, and with programmes that also address the social roots of criminality.
- Position South Africa strategically as an effective force in global relations, with vibrant and balanced trade and other relations with countries of the South and the North, and in an Africa that is growing, prospering and benefiting all Africans, especially the poor.

#### **The next five years: Practical steps**

- Create 1m job opportunities through the Expanded Public Works Programme.
- Ensure that those who wish to start and sustain their small businesses, including youth and women, have access to credit, through dedicated funding to support micro-loan financing, through further reforms to existing support agencies and through changes being introduced in the financial system and institutions.
- Intensify assistance to youth agencies such as the Umsobomvu Youth Fund to provide skills training for employment and self-employment, ensure implementation of the National Youth Service and help unemployed graduates to get work skills.

- Complete the land restitution programme and speed up land reform, with 30% of agricultural land redistributed by 2014, combined with comprehensive assistance to emergent farmers.
- Ensure involvement of communities in local economic development initiatives to provide work, build community infrastructure and ensure access to local opportunities, and encourage the emergence of co-operatives.
- Intensify efforts aimed at building a spirit of community, good citizenship, social activism, moral regeneration and solidarity at the local level.

#### **Access to services**

- Speed up programmes to provide water and sanitation, electricity and telephone services to those who are not yet connected.
- Build more subsidised housing and introduce medium density housing closer to places of work; and provide those who have as yet not received such housing with serviced stands for more decent living.
- Improve services in health facilities staffed by adequate well-trained and caring staff, with new funds added to the budget to recruit and retain health personnel, improve infrastructure, enhance health promotion and nutrition, promote awareness on, and provide comprehensive care, management and treatment of HIV and AIDS.
- Ensure that all children have decent classrooms, further reduce the teacher/pupil ratio, improve spending in favour of children and students from poor households, and expand the school nutrition programme.
- Realise Batho Pele principles and improve services in government offices, through electronic means and by working with citizens to monitor those who work in these offices.

#### **Comprehensive social security**

- Ensure that all who are eligible for social grants, including poor children up to 14 years of age, receive these grants which increase at least at the rate of inflation.
- Improve the functioning of the Unemployment Insurance Fund and ensure that it covers as many workers as practicable.
- Introduce a national health insurance system so that all citizens are covered by both the public and private health system which they can afford.
- Speed up the programme to provide free basic water and electricity so that each family is ensured a basic minimum of these services.
- Speed up the extension of free health services to persons with disabilities.

#### **Constitutional rights and governance**

- Improve interaction between government and the people through accountable public representatives, one-stop government centres, izimbizo and the use of electronic government services.
- Ensure better co-operation among national, provincial and local governments with integrated planning and monitoring of implementation, and a common system of public service.
- Ensure quicker and more effective intervention in local government and other spheres of government where there are problems in implementing programmes agreed upon.
- Fully integrate the institution of traditional leadership into democratic governance and development.
- Improve access to government information so that citizens are aware of their rights and take advantage of opportunities provided by democracy, and ensure progressive realisation of rights of persons with disabilities.
- Strengthen all institutions of



democracy, including the legislatures and bodies such as the Constitutional Court, Human Rights Commission, auditor-general and the public protector so as to improve citizens' exercise of their rights.

#### **Confidence in the future**

Over the past ten years, working together, we have built South Africa into a land of peace and harmony, a land of expanding opportunities. We have built a stable and growing economy. We have created the possibility to release more and more resources for social and economic services, while building a modern and competitive economy.

As we enter the Second Decade of Freedom, at the core of the challenges we face is the task to speed up the creation of work and further to strengthen the fight against poverty.

Our goal is to create a South Africa in which all can experience an improving quality of life, enjoying equal human rights, with access to opportunities that freedom has brought us, and bound together as a nation by our humanity.

The ANC speaks with confidence because it has been at the head of this national effort to change our country for the better. We know that together with you we can do more, better. We commit ourselves to do everything that is necessary and possible to meet these objectives.

Working with you in a people's contract to create work and fight poverty, we are confident of success. ■