

PLANACT

ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 2016- MARCH 2017



GRATITUDE TO DONOR PARTNERS

Planact would like to extend its gratitude to: International Budget Partnership; MISEREOR; Open Society Foundation; Ford Foundation; Raith Foundation; and the European Union for the financial support provided during the reporting period that has enabled Planact to continue all its activities, in quest to realising a just society in South Africa.

During the same time, Planact entered into partnerships that has brought synergy to its projects. These partner organisations included: The University of Witswaterand together with the University College of London; Centre for Municipal Research and Advice; and Save the Children SA.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Planact's governance structure has worked tirelessly with the Management Committee in guiding it towards ethical governance and strategy formulation. Gratitude is extended to Board of Directors that served during this period.

The Governance Board comprise: Dr Geci Karuri-Sebina; Ms Jackie Lamola; Professor Marie Huchzermeyer; Mr Michael Kihato; Professor Steven Friedman and Mr Seana Nkhahle (Chairperson).

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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIRPERSON

Once again, I take this opportunity to present Planact's overview reflections from the year 2017 and its future intentions. During the year under review, Planact commemorated the thirty years it has been in existence reaching and supporting the most vulnerable communities in South Africa. In the same year South Africa saw democratic transitions within the local government elections and more expressions of dissatisfaction from the most marginalised communities being relentless. From the communities' dissatisfaction, Planact's intervention processes are vital and also tend to become more strenuous. Nevertheless, Planact has endeavoured to fulfil this gap.

It was for the first time since 1994, that the ruling party registered less than two-thirds of voters overall from the local government election results of August 2016. This caused the ruling party to lose the administration of some of its strongholds in some key metropolitan municipalities. This result could be interpreted in many ways: either from a political, economic, social or a combination of some of these factors or all of them. However, from Planact's perspective, as one of the non-governmental organisations working on issues related to local good governance and sustainable human settlements, it is a combination of all the three aspects. The cause of

this seems to stem from the disillusionment of citizens regarding the ruling party's unfulfilled promises related to development needs, amongst many other reasons.

On the international scene, the change of administration in the United States of America (USA) that took place on 20th January 2017, came with new policy shifts related to development funding from various USA-based institutions that is targeted for developing and middle-income countries, including South Africa. Planact is one of the recipients of grant funding from such organisations based in the USA, and there could be implications to these funding streams in future.

Amidst all this in the environment, it has always been Planact's effort in all its interventions to enable the most vulnerable and previously marginalised citizens to realise their constitutional rights through various applications. Although these communities have shown resilience in enduring the horrible conditions they live in and unjust practices they usually face from their respective local municipalities, their patience is frequently tested and it wanes, leading them to sometimes respond sporadically in threatening ways. Through experience, Planact has learnt that trust between different parties is one of the key elements that brings about constructive interactions. Therefore, Planact has continued to diffuse

the impact of hostile relationships that usually manifest between communities and state, by building capacity within the targeted communities so that they become knowledgeable to be able to assert their needs and rights to their respective local municipalities.

Planact notes that local municipalities continue to work with little recognition of the communities they are supposed to serve. This is evidently reflected in the score card results in some instances, where public participation within local municipalities is clearly low.

Although this has been the case up to now, civil society has always had its voice as one of its assets to apply to hold decision makers accountable. However, civil society's voice still needs to gather strength to be reckoned with. For this reason, Planact is going to embark on enhancing the voices of communities through creating several clusters. Each cluster will be made up of more than three community groupings. Planact will then provide support to these clusters so as to effectively reach their respective local authorities.

Local municipalities are responsible for building cities and these are usually the areas with the most economic activities. With the planning that goes on in cities, local municipalities must ensure that inclusivity happens in cities for all citizens so as to create a fairer society. Planact is gearing up to take a more proactive role in ensuring that all citizens are catered for in this regard through advocacy activities of promoting "right to the city" that it will undertake in some of its network groups.

For the past three years, Planact has been undergoing a process of reviewing its programmes, how they shape the work it does and how they will contribute to its image.

From this process Planact has repositioned its work for better intervention approaches and clear illustration of the intended impact from its programme work. With this outcome the process led to renaming Planact's three programmes as follows below:

- Participatory Governance becomes the "**Strengthened Community Voice**" Programme
- Integrated Human Settlement becomes the "**Responsive Living Environment**" Programme
- Community Economic Development becomes the "**Sustainable Community Livelihoods**" Programme

Planact will continue to be innovative to achieve scale in all its work using intervention methods that have proved positive. As it winds off current contractual obligations, Planact will refer to its programmes as such in the new contractual obligations and anticipates that the new names resonate with the mission of the organisation.

All the work Planact has been able to do this year was as a result of the continued support from the donor partners listed in the Annual report and therefore, on behalf of Planact's Board of Directors, I thank all donor partners for their continued confidence in Planact's work and the support they are giving.

Lastly, I thank the Board Members, Management Committee and Staff Members for yet another successful year! It is because of the continued dedication of Board Members, Management Committee and Staff Members that Planact is continuing to show resilience and record an upward trajectory.

Seana Nkhahle
Chairperson

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It gives me great pleasure once again to report on the work Planact has done during the previous year and to provide a sketch of its intended work for the coming year. The operational year 2016 was the first year after Planact marked thirty years in existence. Due to unforeseen occurrences in the preceding year, the thirty-year anniversary was celebrated in 2016, whereby all communities Planact has supported since its inception thirty years ago, were represented.

Like other NGOs, Planact periodically reflects on its programme activities and their effectiveness to the communities it targets. During the year under review, Planact continued to internally reflect on its programme activities and their effectiveness. In periodic reflections, deliberations reviewed strategies that would contribute to Planact improving its level of influence and contribution to achieving social justice, which is still a major challenge in South Africa.

The questions that were usually pondered during the deliberations considered the role of NGOs in the development climate currently, and the influence of NGOs in the quest to achieve social justice. These are key issues for Planact and other similar organisations in setting their agendas going forward.

Out of this process, Planact reviewed its mission and

objectives to reposition its work so that it maintains relevance in the current development demands. With this in mind and as part of the overall plan in achieving relevance, Planact introduced as one of the interventions quarterly consultative discussions that are conducted with various role players in the sector. These consultative discussions are done to understand current development issues on a continuous basis and plan appropriate further interventions at a project level. The consultative meetings are held to discuss, debate and gather information that will assist Planact in formulating concepts that will enable it to satisfactorily reach its intended objectives and therefore contribute to the development solutions.

The work activities undertaken during the past year were mainly in response to the sub-programmes set in the Participatory Governance and Integrated Human Settlement Programmes. Although there was relatively less work done under the Community Economic Development Programme, much of the work done in the other two programmes indirectly related and contributed to improving the livelihoods of the supported communities, which is one of the objectives under the Community Economic Development Programme.

The two more active programmes mentioned above continued to build on enhancing the concept of 'social

audits' and 'accountability' on municipal basic services. Projects were established from both these two concepts and work activities implemented under the Participatory Local Governance Programme. However as always, Planact endeavoured to keep all its three programmes linked and therefore the targeted communities in this regard are mainly from the informal settlements and this enables some work activities to be done under the Integrated Human Settlement Programme.

In responding to the New Urban Agenda that was sanctioned by the UN at the 2016 World Urban Forum in Quito 2016, Planact plans to be more involved in the thematic activities that contribute to advancing the 'New Urban Agenda' such as promoting and advocating the 'Right to the City' for all citizens in all aspects. Planact has done the groundwork for joining networks with relevant development agendas, with the aim of continuing to build towards acceptable levels of sustainable urban settings.

In all the project activities undertaken in the period under review, Planact acknowledges that as much as noticeable achievements are the ultimate desired outcomes, some processes bring about unpredictable requirements, delaying the attainment of the set objective. For this reason, Planact recognises that incremental achievements in between various milestones along the project process are essential and should always be noted, as they contribute to the bigger outcome.

Furthermore, it has become more apparent to Planact that as South Africa continues to mature in its new democratic dispensation, local government development processes continue to leave citizens outside, especially citizens found in the vulnerable and impoverished settlements.

This contributes to the feeling of despondence among affected citizens. As a result, Planact finds itself not only with the task of supporting such citizens in getting involved in development processes, but also supporting them to increase their self-esteem and ability to act appropriately and as reasonable citizens.

Looking at resource mobilisation during the period under review, it has been noted that funders are increasingly gaining confidence and trust in Planact's programme activities. This has afforded the organisation space to work on other organisational development aspects. Referring to the confidence and trust built towards Planact during the period under review, new partnerships were formed with the Ford Foundation and International Budget Partnership. In general, the funding scenario for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in South Africa remains a major challenge, creating uncertainty in the sector. For this reason, most NGOs have to work twice as hard to broker partnerships with long-term funding relationships. The hard work invested in getting and forming partnerships with funding organisations usually draws on the already strained human capacity of NGOs from getting project work properly carried out.

As Planact goes into another year of work, there will be concerted effort in improving the understanding of local government operations, and finding ways to expand this knowledge and skills within the organisation. Working through new partnerships, Planact ventured into taking the local participatory governance skills to local municipalities situated in small mining towns in Mpumalanga Province, where marginalised and impoverished communities live. In this kind of work, Planact started to link the

local government development processes with the social labour plans made for such communities. This type of work has enriched Planact's outcome towards achieving social justice in these communities. Therefore, intensifying interventions in this area of work is part of the many initiatives Planact plans to undertake in the year ahead.

Lastly, I thank Planact's staff members for their dedication to continue building Planact, and their show of professionalism and resilience during the challenging times in the sector. In addition, I thank the Board of Directors for the continued support they give me through

the various interactions we hold. The quality of work produced by Planact is as a result of both the commitment and conduct of staff members and the Board of Directors and this gives confidence to our current funding partners. It is at this point that I thank all Planact's funding partners for the confidence and trust they have continued to have in Planact. And lastly, gratitude goes to the organisations that Planact collaborates and networks with in all its development efforts.

Frederick Kusambiza-Kiingi
Executive Director

1. AN OVERVIEW OF PLANACT

Planact is a non-governmental organisation established in 1985 by a group of urban development professionals committed to social and political transformation in South Africa and mainly concerned with built-environment issues such as housing and basic services delivery. Its mission is to *facilitate community development processes that enhance participatory governance at the local level, improve people's living conditions and alleviate poverty.*

The organisation works mainly in the areas of Gauteng and Mpumalanga provinces. It empowers people who lack decent living conditions, improves their environment thus contributing to the collective effort of alleviating poverty in South Africa. The organisation has a staff complement of thirteen, which comprises management, programme coordinators, support staff and interns.



Figure 1: Programmes and sub-programmes of Planact

2. PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Planact promotes the development of sustainable cities and communities through its three interrelated programmes: Participatory Governance, Integrated Human Settlements and Community Economic Development. To achieve this broader development goal, Planact prioritises two pillars of governance: community engagements and social accountability. These pillars are necessary to improve inclusion of marginalised groups in post-apartheid South Africa, a context which continues to be characterised by the spatial and economic marginalisation of the black South Africans. Planact's three programmes have spanned a period of three decades and align with its broader mandate to encourage inclusivity in the development of cities.

In an effort to maximise its effectiveness, Planact continuously evaluates and reconfigures its three foundational programmes (shown in Figure 1 on page 9) in accordance with the political landscape and its demands thus ensuring that communities are at the core of each programme. The continuing need for these programmes is driven by the realisation that the transition to democracy does not necessarily translate into inclusivity of all communities in the development process. Instead, marginalisation of certain informal settlements thrives and manifests in lack of basic services such as water, adequate sanitation and electricity. Additionally, a critical characteristic of disadvantaged communities is the lack of security of tenure. Municipalities justify marginalisation of some of the informal settlements' in service delivery on the basis that they settled the land unofficially, thus lack security of tenure.

Planact therefore prioritises enhancing the understanding of communities about their right to land and service delivery through advocacy and engagements with municipalities. In South Africa, communities face challenges as municipalities do not prioritise implementing the progressive Upgrading Informal Settlements Programme introduced by the Department of Human Settlement to improve the living conditions of informal settlement residents. Unfortunately, many disadvantaged communities lack the capacity to engage the municipalities and other state institutions regarding issues affecting their lives. Planact bridges the gap through

implementing the different programmes in communities and adopting a social facilitation methodology. Planact's interventions are based on the assumption that residents of marginalised communities are capable of contributing to local governance processes when capacitated with the necessary knowledge, skills and space.

This year Planact's contribution to local governance has been significant and major achievements include the following:

- Communities improving their participation in local governance processes and engaging effectively with municipalities on service delivery.
- Communities able to make meaningful contributions in municipal budgets through budget submissions.
- Municipalities providing sanitation and water services to some communities, thus improving the health and living conditions of the residents.
- Communities acquiring the skills necessary to monitor basic services and demand accountability from municipalities.

Of Planact's three programmes, the Participatory Governance Programme is a core programme underlying its mandate of improving conditions for the disadvantaged communities. This programme has two sub-programmes: Participatory Budgeting, Performance and Accountability and Active Citizenship.

3. PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME



Participants at a workshop local governance processes



KwaZenzele youth training on IDP.

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP AND COMMUNITY MOBILISATION

The participatory governance programme encourages active citizenship. Central to active citizenship is community mobilisation, along with the organisation of communities, which is critical to sustainable development and good governance. This is based on the premise that communities need to collectively engage municipalities, monitor service delivery and advocate the change they need to live a decent life. Working closely with Planact, communities are able to establish representative structures facilitating the process of promoting active participation of the residents in local governance. This year, Planact trained different communities on Integrated Development Planning and Municipal Budgeting to enhance their understanding about how local governance works.

In addition, Planact intensified mobilisation in nine communities, strengthened existing community structures, established new ones, and provided training in leadership, conflict resolution and budget submissions. Communities which benefited from the community mobilisation and training include Watville, Kwazenzele, Masakhane, Rockdale, Bryten, Thembelihle, Vosloorus and representatives of residents in two inner city buildings (Jossana Court and Bekezela).

Despite the difficulty in assessing immediate contribution of community mobilisation to local governance, changes in the participation of residents were observed in three communities:

Watville, Rockdale and Spring Valley. These communities engaged their local municipalities on service delivery, conducted social audits and demanded social accountability on service delivery. Some members of the Watville community structure who are already capacitated shared their experiences and skills with new communities. This sharing of experiences feeds into the horizontal scale up of Planact initiatives to influence local governance.

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

The relationship between municipal budgets and service delivery is a necessary focus of development. For this reason, since 1994 Planact has prioritised educating communities on municipal budgeting processes. The non-governmental organisation realises that effective municipal budgeting depends on the involvement of communities and effective prioritisation of their needs as opposed to simply addressing technocratic processes.

A majority of the low-income communities do not participate in municipal budgeting processes and lack the necessary knowledge to do so. For this reason, municipal budgets have often been dominated by technocrats who have different priorities, which sometimes conflict with those of the communities. The gap in knowledge of communities regarding budgets manifests in poor participation which results in the provision of services that are not necessarily priorities for the communities. As a result, communities complain about being excluded from the process.



Municipal budget analysis workshop at Thembelihle informal settlement

Municipal budget workshop at Watville

During a workshop on the municipal budgeting process held at Planact offices, residents expressed their discontents regarding the process. A resident from Orange Farm complained:

'ONLY 3.69 OF THE CAPITAL BUDGET IS ALLOCATED TO SEWER PROJECT EVEN THOUGH THIS IS A PRESSING ISSUE FOR THE COMMUNITY' (FOCUS GROUP – ORANGE FARM RESIDENTS)

Other residents from Thembelihle expressed similar complaints:

'THE BUDGET EXCLUDES THEMBELIHLE AND AS SUCH IS MEANINGLESS TO THE COMMUNITY' (FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION – THEMBELIHLE RESIDENTS).

'THE BUDGET FAILS TO PRIORITISE SANITATION INSTEAD IT SEEKS TO BRING A PARK RATHER THAN BASIC SERVICES' (WARD 4 RESIDENT).



Municipal budget workshop held at Orange Farm



Municipal budget workshop at Masakhane

The sentiments of the communities reflect the need to make communities partners in the municipal budgeting process and ensure that their needs and responsibilities are addressed. Training the communities on municipal budgets is therefore a critical factor as it equips them with the necessary knowledge and skills to participate in the spaces provided by the municipalities for budget submissions.

In its pursuit to address this gap, Planact trained ten communities on municipal budgeting: Masakhane, Rockdale, Bryten, Nasaret, Watville informal settlements (Emlotheni, Home-Seekers and Harry Gwala) and Greater Watville Township, Leandra, Springvalley, Thembelihle, KwaZenzele as well as social movements.

The training empowered the communities to understand the municipal budgets and increased their participation in

the 2017 municipal budgeting process. As a result of the training, four communities made budget submissions to the respective municipalities for incorporation into their municipal budgets.

Outcomes of the submissions include the following:

- The Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality included the needs of the Watville community into the 2018/2019 Region A budget.
- The communities continued advocating improved service delivery with the support of Planact. Some of the communities felt the need to embark on aggressive strategies such as blockades and strikes due to the failure of the municipality to address their needs. The critical benefit is their awareness about their constitutional rights to engage municipalities on matters affecting their lives.

4. INTEGRATED HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS UPGRADE

Planact continued to promote a holistic approach towards improving the living conditions and tenure security of the residents in informal settlements and to advocate against involuntary relocations. This pursuit resonates with the Habitat III New Urban Agenda, an international policy framework guiding urbanisation of nation states and cities.

In 2016, South Africa's urban population was approximately 36 million, and more than ten percent of the population reside in informal settlements characterised by inadequate basic services (Statistics South Africa 2016). This percentage cannot be neglected in development because it translates into a high number of people living in the disadvantaged areas. These informal settlements are faced with poor housing and environmental conditions and lack security of tenure.

Contrary to Planact's efforts, municipalities in South Africa have been criticised for threats of eviction, evicting informal settlement residents or involuntarily relocating them to isolated areas with no access to work and services. Resistance by residents of informal settlements to such evictions are well-documented in research. Municipalities have made minimal commitment

in implementing the Upgrading of Informal Settlement Programme (UISP). Instead, involuntary relocations or negligence of the informal settlements are witnessed in the cities, thus defying court decisions instructing them to implement the upgrading policy.

In 2016/2017 Planact made it a priority to advocate the upgrading of informal settlements to improve the lives of the poor. It engaged four municipalities – Emalahleni Local Municipality, Lesedi Local Municipality, Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality and the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality – regarding upgrading some of the informal settlements. A total of seven communities were the subject of the engagements between the municipalities and Planact. The meetings bore positive results in Spring Valley, Emlotheni, Home Seekers, Harry Gwala, Leandra and Thembelihle, where the relevant municipalities made a commitment to upgrade the areas. In some of the areas, the municipalities have already started providing basic services.

A key policy issue that Planact identified was the failure of the South African government to prioritise implementation of the UISP despite pressure from court rulings on Slovo Park and other areas. The court ruled that the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality should implement the UISP as opposed to involuntary

relocation. This court order has positive implications for similar settlements. However, the ongoing delay in implementing the programme impinges on development of other communities that would have also benefited from the UISP. Consequently, they continue to suffer from poor services and lack of tenure security. Planact will continue engaging municipalities and other relevant state institutions regarding implementation of the UISP.

In another effort, Planact participated in national and international fora which discussed policy interventions to the challenges of informal settlements. These included the Habitat III Thematic Meeting on Informal Settlements held in Pretoria, which explored approaches and strategies necessary to improve tenure security and housing provision. Planact also participated in the Regional Advocacy Group which negotiated the adoption of the Right to the City by the United Nations. The Right to the City initiative promotes equal use and enjoyment of cities and human settlements by all inhabitants.

Drawing on these interactions Planact continued to provide support to impoverished communities in acquiring essential services from their respective local municipalities.

IMPROVEMENT IN BASIC SERVICES DELIVERY

Thembelihle informal settlement

Poor service provision in informal settlements hinder the economic development of residents. Basic services are necessary for a healthy and productive family. Despite these findings, many of the informal settlements continue



A signboard demonstrating the aspirations of the community

to be characterised by inadequate basic services. In response, Planact has supported the communities in engaging with municipalities to demand to their basic services needs. As a result of the support, the municipalities provided electricity in Thembelihle. This is a basic service that the community has been advocating for a period of more than ten years.

The availability of electricity in Thembelihle is a positive development which will improve the living conditions of the residents. The residents will be able to use electric equipment such as refrigerators to store and preserve their food, and they will be able to use electricity for lighting and cooking. Residents will be able to start businesses which require energy and thus improve their

economic status. Socially, street lighting will play an important role in reducing crime in the area.

The picture on page 16 shows a sign board posted by a community member and some electricity cables in the area. The sign board suggests that the community has a dream of improving their area to a world class city. Despite being in an informal settlement they envisage an improved settlement and remain positive that they will emerge out of informality. It can be argued that the sign therefore reflects the aspirations of many other communities served by Planact and their discontent with the current conditions of the informal settlements.

Spring Valley informal settlement

This year improved services were also experienced in Springvalley. Due to the engagements and advocacy from the residents, the Emalahleni Local Municipality provided a water supply (standpipes) to the settlement which is a permanent solution to the problem. The achievement is partly attributed to persistent lobbying by the community which occurred after the capacity building workshops offered by Planact. This has improved the living conditions of the residents who now have access to a clean water supply. The picture below shows the community standpipes installed in Spring Valley informal settlements.

Planact played an important role by providing institutional support to the community during the engagements with the municipality.



Water standpipes in Springvalley

Watville informal settlement

The informal settlements in Watville also received improved services as a result of the capacity building and support provided by Planact. Planact supported the community by presenting the report of the social audit on sanitation to the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality demanding improved servicing of the chemical toilet sanitation provided by the city. The municipality responded by closely supervising the contractor hired to provide chemical toilets. Consequently, additional toilets were installed and maintenance of all toilets improved. The community involvement in monitoring improved service provision empowered the informal community.

Inner city of Johannesburg

Planact worked in partnership with the Inner City Resource Centre to improve access to basic services by the disadvantaged residents in the Inner City of Johannesburg, especially those in hijacked buildings popularly known as 'bad buildings'. It engaged the municipality to find mutually beneficial solutions to the housing challenges. It advocated the provision of water and electricity which are the critical basic services for the residents' survival.

During this financial year, as a result of subsequent engagements with the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality and lobbying from the residents of the inner city, the city has indicated its intent to partner with non-governmental organisations and improve community involvement in developing strategies to address the challenge of hijacked buildings with no basic services. This is an achievement given that the residents in hijacked buildings had services cut off by the municipality. Access to basic services will enhance the quality of life of the residents and might lead to tenure security.



Social audit team inspecting chemical toilets



Sample of new chemical toilet provided following social audit

In further pursuit of improved living conditions for the poor in Johannesburg's inner city, Planact advocated for improved services in two hostels. As a result of these engagements, the municipality acknowledged the need to improve the hostels. Planact considers the acknowledgement as an important factor which might lead to adoption of strategies to improve conditions in the hostels. These hostels play an important role in bridging the housing gap in the urban areas that are characterised by inadequate housing for the poor.

Planact can proudly recognise its influence with municipalities as these different interventions evoke responses of increasing community involvement and addressing their basic needs. For this reason, Planact embraces the vertical scaling up of some of its interventions to benefit a wider breadth of society and also to demonstrate to municipalities that the challenge of inadequate basic services does not only affect isolated communities.

PROMOTING SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

A key addition to Planact's programmes and training in 2016/2017 was the adoption of social audits to improve social accountability and strengthen the participation of residents in local governance and service delivery. This was necessitated by the realisation that traditional spaces of participation such as the Integrated Development Planning and Municipal Budgeting have borne minimal results in addressing the basic needs of low income communities. This ineffectiveness, which is partly attributed to the lack of genuine participation, has led to the escalation in protests around service delivery.

Post-apartheid local governance is characterised by ineffective social accountability mechanisms. Yet it can be argued that such accountability underpins improved performance and basic services delivery. This gap in effect undermines the South African Constitution, Section 152 (1996), which instructs local government to be democratic and accountable to local communities and ensure the provision of sustainable services and the promotion of social and economic development. Informal settlements are the low income group most significantly impacted by the lack of effective social accountability mechanisms. They are also frustrated by local government processes and urban planning practices which do not respond to the needs of the poor.

During the past year, Planact used different strategies to improve accountability and engagement between municipalities and communities. These included building the capacity of communities on local government processes, training communities on social audits, providing technical assistance to communities on drafting petitions, making submissions to municipal budgeting and integrated planning, meetings with municipal officials, and forging partnerships with other organisations.

SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES IN SOCIAL AUDITS

Planact introduced social audits to educate communities about their rights and responsibilities concerning holding municipalities and other state institutions accountable in service delivery. As a pilot project in 2016, Planact trained five communities on social audits to understand these rights and improve their engagements with municipalities

on service delivery. Beneficiary communities of the training on social audits included three informal settlements of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality: Emlotheni, Harry Gwala and Home Seekers. It also benefited Orange Farm informal settlement.

The effectiveness of social audits also depends on communities understanding municipal budgeting and

procurement processes, and as such the audits are a logical addition to Planact's existing training. These are necessary processes in monitoring service delivery. Planact therefore trained the five communities on municipal budgeting and procurement system processes to enhance their understanding and promote effective monitoring of service delivery in the areas.



Social audit training in Watville informal settlement



Social audit training in Orange Farm

For the social audit pilot project, a total of one hundred and twenty volunteers were purposefully selected for their level of education, commitment to the work and availability from five informal settlements and one township. The communities established a mandate which was mainly around sanitation, in particular, the provision and maintenance of chemical toilets. Subsequent to the social audit, the communities held meetings with the relevant municipal officials and demanded a response to their priority needs.

The social audits have been an effective mechanism which empowered three informal settlements to engage the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan

Municipality on sanitation issues. The training resulted in the communities holding the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality accountable for inadequate provision of sanitation. The contribution of social audits to local governance are further unpacked in the following table which demonstrates the challenges of the communities and the related interventions linked to the different components of a social audit.

The contribution of social audits to local governance are further unpacked in the following table which demonstrates the challenges of the communities and the related interventions linked to the different components of a social audit.

PROBLEM	VIOLATED LEGISLATION	PLANACT INTERVENTION
<i>Poor provision of sanitation despite the legislation.</i>	National Sanitation Policy 2016	Introduced social audits to the communities.
<i>Poor mechanisms for monitoring of service delivery by the citizens.</i>	The South African Constitution, Section 195 (1) (e) stipulates that people's needs must be responded to ... and (f) that public administration must be accountable.	Trained communities on social audits and their relevance to service delivery.
<i>Communities lack understanding of their rights to access information concerning service delivery:</i> and some municipalities not readily providing information.	Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000: citizens should have access to any information held by the state and any information that is held by another person and that is required for the exercise or protection of any rights.	Trained communities on their constitutional rights pertaining to access to information. Capacitated residents on the use of the PAIA process to source information and budget plans. This promoted rights- based advocacy campaigns for transparency and accountability in both public and private sectors.
<i>Community exclusion from procurement planning process:</i>	General procurement guidelines only stipulates internal processes.	Supported communities in monitoring performance of service providers against tender documents.
<i>The inability of communities to understand the budget process</i> as it relates to sanitation.	Municipal System Act 2000 and Municipal Finance Management Act 2004.	Encouraged fiscal transparency and civic participation through educating the informal settlements on municipal budgeting and IDP processes.

OTHER BENEFITS RELATED TO SOCIAL AUDIT

Local leadership and ward councillors jointly discussing community challenges thus setting a platform for collaboration on future projects and advocacy work.

People trained to be trainers on social audits are able to adapt the skills to other projects.

Improved understanding about municipal processes.

Well-coordinated structure that will follow up engagements in terms of municipal budget monitoring as some of the issues that were submitted during the Integrated Development Plan.

Exchange programme permitting the trained volunteers to share the skills on social audit with other communities.

Figure 2: Other benefits related to social audit

Planact intends to scale up social audits to many communities in Ekurhuleni and Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipalities to promote effective monitoring of service delivery in the Gauteng province.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO INFORMATION BY COMMUNITIES

The Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000, stipulates that citizens should have access to any information held by the State and any information that is held by another person and that is required for the exercise or protection of any rights. However, many residents of disadvantaged communities are not aware of their rights to information. This situation is worsened by restrictions to accessing records of public bodies, publication and manual on functions of, and index of records held by, a public body.

Planact educated five communities on their right to information and provided technical skills to three of these in the process of making PAIA applications to access documents on service delivery. These were the communities of Emlotheni, Home Seekers and Harry Gwala, who needed the information to conduct a social audit on sanitation. As a result of Planact's technical and institutional support the communities successfully obtained the required information.

Planact has therefore extended the education to other communities which are characterised by inadequate basic services. Following the engagements with municipalities through the PAIA process, some of the municipalities have improved the manner in which they respond to communities who require information on basic services.

ESTABLISHING PARTNERSHIPS TO HOLD MUNICIPALITIES ACCOUNTABLE

Planact collaborates with different stakeholders to improve the accountability of municipalities in service delivery. This year Planact secured partnerships with several other non-governmental organisations operating in small mining towns of Mpumalanga and Gauteng provinces. These were:

- Middelburg Environmental Justice Network
- South African Green Revolutionary Council
- Oxfam South Africa
- Benchmarks
- Action Aid

Planact collaborated with these organisations in advocating participation of communities in social labour plans and local governance processes. Planact also made contributions to South Africa's mining dialogues and as a result of the pressure from civil society, the new government under the leadership of President Cyril Ramaphosa has agreed to host a national dialogue on the mining policy.

Planact, supported by other organisations, engaged the Msukuligwa Local Municipality and Steve Tshwete Local Municipalities and demanded the involvement of affected communities in Social Labour Plans. The engagements have resulted in municipalities committing to working jointly with communities and supporting Planact in building the capacity of the communities on municipal processes.

The Social Audit Network is another network that has supported Planact in the process of demanding social accountability of municipalities through social audits. Being part of the network has made it possible for Planact to increase awareness of many communities and other organisations about the role of social audits. Consequently, Planact was invited by the Heinrich Boll Stiftung to share its experience of social audits with other organisations.

Planact is a member of the Good Governance Learning Network which seeks to promote effective local governance and accountability. Planact participated in meetings and contributed to the Newsletter and the State of Local Governance Publication.

COMMUNITIES IN MINING TOWNS AND PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL LABOUR PLANS

Planact promotes the involvement of South Africa's communities in social labour plans (SLPs) to ensure that their basic services needs are met. In theory, the SLP is developed in consultation with the affected mining community, mine workers and the local municipality. Mining corporations also have to work closely with communities to identify Local Economic Development (LED) initiatives. However, in practice, the SLP guidelines are violated by some mining corporations who may even outsource the formulation of SLPs to consultants. Consultation and community participation is minimal and communities increasingly withdraw from this democratic space. Consequently, the youth and women are excluded from economic opportunities and left vulnerable by mining companies.

Planact promoted inclusion of disadvantaged groups from rural towns of Mpumalanga Province in SLPs through training them on SLPs. Four communities (Bryten, Rockdale, Nasaret and Mhluze) were structured and empowered

to negotiate their democratic voices in local government systems through the training. Following the training, the communities have articulated their own basic needs to the relevant local municipality. Furthermore, Planact received support from the municipalities in the form of workshop venues and equipment.

Due to the support from Planact, two of the communities have been able to develop their constitutions, a vision and a mandate, which they have presented to various government departments. This strategy resulted in the municipalities awarding small works related to upgrading to the communities.

Another equally important achievement has been the establishment of partnerships with other organisations such as Actionaid and Oxfam South Africa focusing on mining affected communities.

Planact has positively influenced the municipal systems in the sense that the Msukuligwa Local Municipality and Steve Tshwete Local Municipality have acknowledged the importance of training communities in integrated development plans and social labour plans.



Rafiqua Mosavel
facilitating a dialogue
on social labour plans.

REFLECTION ON PLANACT'S 30 YEAR'S ANNIVERSARY

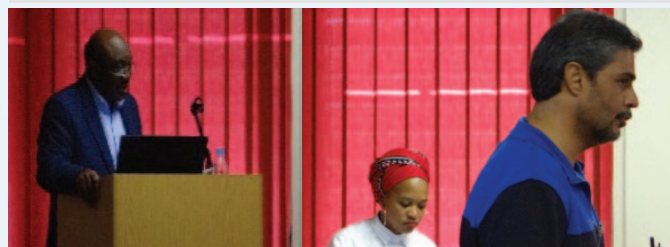
In August 2016, Planact hosted a 30-year anniversary to reflect on the experiences, opportunities and challenges it has faced in the process of providing development intervention over the last three decades. The anniversary also aimed to explore how Planact could improve its services in the next 20 years. The anniversary, which saw communities, community-based organisations, academics, NGOs, current and former Planact staff gathering together to map the development agenda, was a great success. The event was attended by 150 participants who actively engaged in the deliberation, and these included notable figures such as the co-founder of Planact, Mark Swilling, and board members Sean Nkhole, Professor Steven Friedman, Professor Marie Huchzermeyer and Mohamed Motala. Influential community members included Abbie Nyaluke and Bheki Radebe. The presenters covered the history of Planact, current developments in democracy, politics and communities, the role of the non-governmental sector and the experiences of communities with regard to the interventions of Planact. The picture below shows some of the presenters and the topics they addressed.

Left: Planact Board Member Professor Steven Friedman reflecting on Current developments in democracy

Middle: Abbie Nyaluke, a community member and an activist



Seana Nkhahle, Chairman of the Board, giving the opening remarks



Frederick Kusambiza-Kiingi, the Director of Planact, presenting an overview of Planact

Mohamed Motala, Board Member was the moderator. Behind: Nomcebo Dlamini, Planact employee



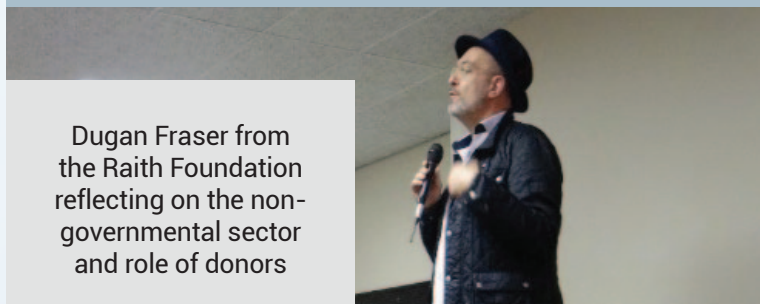
Right: Professor Mark Swilling, a co-founder at Planact presenting on the history of Planact



Participants at the anniversary



Monty Narsoo presenting on Politics and communities post elections



Dugan Fraser from the Raith Foundation reflecting on the non-governmental sector and role of donors

COMMUNICATION

Planact is cognisant of the fact that its success depends on support from different partners and communities, therefore it has to clearly communicate its development agenda to this broad audience. Communities need to have confidence in the interventions provided by Planact before permitting Planact into their space. Likewise partners and donors value being consistently updated

through different social media and other media about their projects' progress. This realisation prompted Planact in April 2016 to establish a resource and communications section to enhance the organisation's voice and visibility. The introduction of the section in 2016 has improved communication about Planact's work, especially through the social media. This is demonstrated by the active website which efficiently shares Planact's work, a newsletter distributed quarterly, and coverage of workshops and dialogues. Coverage of Planact's work is

done through videos, Facebook and Twitter. The section has also kept the audience informed about dialogues taking place in communities and this has attracted much attention. Over the period April 2016 to March 2017 Planact's Facebook page received 167 likes. Planact's

posts had the highest organic reach of 277 people on 27 May 2016. These were people who related to the post without advertising or promotion of the post. During the reporting period, the video showing the struggle of women in hostels at Vosloorus was viewed the most.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF IMPACT

Planact continues to prioritise monitoring of its programme to understand the successes and challenges of its intervention. Planact makes efforts to monitor project progress and evaluate the effects of the programmes on communities. However, the challenge is that the interventions provided by Planact yield fewer concrete and immediate results than programmes such as providing financial assistance to a garden project. In essence, some of the results are abstract, for example knowledge about the integrated development planning process cannot be easily measured. This presents a challenge in terms of demonstrating successes to the wider society and in particular to funders. Many of the funders are easily impressed by concrete and instant results, they all too often underrate the importance of building capacity within communities which has been shown to contribute to their sustainability and improvements. However, some donors understand the complexity of the development process and as such are able to recognise this factor and provide fair indicators of success.

This year Planact received funding from one of the partner donors to conduct an evaluation of its social facilitation methodology implemented in the communities. Due to financial limitations, the evaluation drew on one case study (Spring Valley informal settlement). The evaluation findings illustrate that the execution of the Social Facilitation methodology in Spring Valley informal settlement improved the community's capacity to mobilise and engage with the municipality on service delivery. The findings resonated with a comprehensive external evaluation of the organisation conducted in 2012 by MISEREOR. The reports can be requested from Planact. Some of the quotations extracted from the report:

"The workshops helped us understand our rights" (Committee member C, 2016).

"The workshops taught us to voice our concerns to the municipality" (Committee member B, 2016).

"I learnt that we need to prioritise community issues that we would like to address"

"I know how to monitor if the committee does its work or not"

"I learnt how to analyse tender documents"

REFLECTION ON PROGRAMMES AND DEVELOPMENT

Whilst development is a complex process which requires collaboration, the significant role of communities and commitment of all stakeholders cannot be overemphasised. Communities should not be viewed as victims of development but as powerful partners in the development process. As argued in scholarship, if the assumptions are wrong, the interventions will definitely be inappropriate. It is therefore incumbent upon non-governmental organisations such as Planact and state institutions, in particular municipalities, to realise that they are not solution providers but mere facilitators of solutions to the development challenges. This realisation will enable Planact to invest in building the capacity of communities to engage in developmental processes. Strengthening the capacity of communities therefore has remained central in Planact's work and positive outcomes are witnessed in many of the project areas.

An important achievement in the work of Planact is its collaborative approach to the development work, which has also resulted in some municipalities being willing to support Planact in educating communities on local governance processes. This approach positively influences communities who realise the importance of engaging municipalities from a much more informed perspective. Planact's interventions have motivated the communities to learn about local governance processes and accountability mechanisms.

Partnership with other non-governmental organisations has been pivotal in Planact's work. Consequently, Planact's visibility and contribution to the communities has improved. The organisation will continue to improve its partnerships and strategically engage partners on different developmental issues for the purposes of creating synergies where possible. This involves both local and international partners because our work has shown that globalisation and sustainable development agendas require partnership at local, national and international levels.

Reflections on Planact's history and role in development

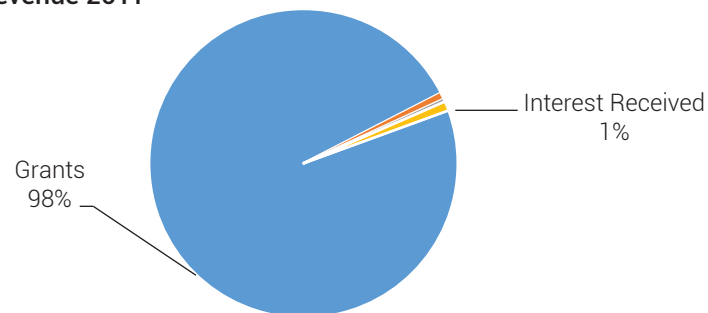
which occurred during the 30-year anniversary bore remarkable outcomes. Planact has revised its programmes and strengthened its reorientation to social movements. Planact will host other events in future to reflect on the organisation's contribution to society, therefore such has been made an integral part of its culture. Planact programmes have significantly improved and this is demonstrated by the responses of different communities to the interventions and the partners' interest in the work of Planact.

INCOME ANALYSIS AND FINANCIAL POSITION

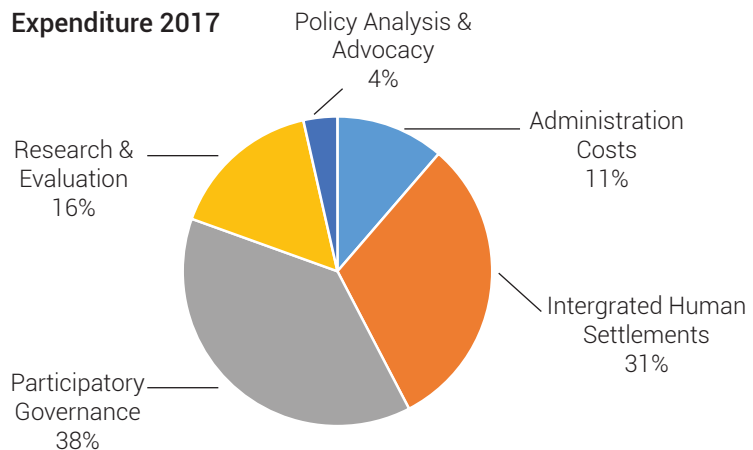
Overall the scale of Planact's financial operations has increased. Ongoing funding support is being received from five major donors.

- The Ford Foundation is once again supporting Planact's work to improve livelihoods of communities living in small mining towns through using integrated development and social labour plans.
- The International Budgeting Partnership (IBP) has been instrumental in promoting monitoring of services through social audits and municipal budgets.
- The Open Society Foundation has provided funding for social audits and access to information.
- The European Union has provided funding for interventions related to emphasising accountability for basic services.
- The Economic Social Research Council in the UK in partnership with the University College of London, provided support to Witwatersrand University and Planact to review the Corridors of Freedom initiative in Johannesburg.
- MISEREOR and The RAITH Foundation have supported the participatory governance and integrated human settlement work activities.
- Planact's total income for the year 2017 financial year amounted to R4.4 million. Expenditure for this period amounted to R5.1 million and resulted in an overall deficit of R702, 000.

Revenue 2017



Expenditure 2017



CONDENSED STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

	2017		2016	
	R		R	
Revenue				
Grants	4 322 119	98%	4 303 548	98.4%
Training & Facilitation Fees	31 000	1%	-	0.0%
Sundry Income	14 045	0.3%	-	0.0%
Interest Received	43 243	1%	71 295	1.6%
Total	4 410 407		4 374 843	
Expenditure				
Administration Costs	579 338	11%	507 656	11%
Intergrated Human Settlements	1 586 711	31%	1 506 364	31%
Participatory Governance	1 949 388	38%	1 936 754	40%
Research & Evaluation	816 023	16%	774 702	16%
Policy Analysis & Advocacy	181 338	4%	86 078	2%
Total	5 112 798		4 811 554	
Profit (loss) for the year	(702 391)		(436 711)	



STAFF MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS

Planact believes that both intrinsic and extrinsic factors are key to sustaining a happy employee who is willing to invest their time and skills in this intense work. The organisation is therefore committed to improving the environment and conditions of employees through creating a hospitable and supportive environment. Planact boasts a staff complement of 12 which works as a team and derives satisfaction from their work. This is seen in the employees' willingness to voluntarily work overtime and on weekends to execute project tasks in communities. These are often meetings and workshops where communities indicate their only availability for meetings as weekends. Despite its financial challenges, the organisation provides professional and emotional support to the employees.

PLANACT STAFF

1ST APRIL 2016 – 31ST MARCH 2017



Frederick Kusambiza-Kiingi
Executive Director



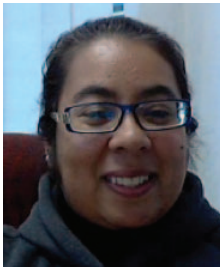
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Mike Makwela
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Nkululeko Ndlovu
Programme Coordinator



Rafiqua Mosavel
Programme Coordinator



Shumani Luruli
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