

## **Pillar 1- Organisational Renewal**

### **Introduction**

“Every organisation engaged in national liberation constantly has to isolate, analyse and search for solutions crucial both to its continued existence and growth, and to the success of the struggle as a whole...In a certain sense, the story of our struggle is a story of problems arising and problems being overcome.” (Walter Sisulu, Reflections in Prison, 1976)

The subjective weaknesses of our movement are not unrelated to the influence of a neo-liberal ideological paradigm. The cumulative impact of all these weaknesses is the silent shift from revolutionary politics to palace politics wherein internal strife and factional battles over power and resources define the political life of the ANC. Our strategic opponents have directed all their efforts at weakening the ANC including funding breakaway groups.

The erosion of the character, organisational values and capacity of the ANC is aimed at hollowing out the capacity of the democratic state to reverse the legacy of apartheid which defines the current property relations and build a national democratic society. As resolved in Mangaung conference we must do everything to strengthen our movement and the developmental state as principal instruments for transformation. **The ANC must remain a People’s movement and Agent for change.**

The Strategy and Tactics document correctly notes that ‘our gains can often be overshadowed by the persistent and stubborn socio-economic legacy of colonialism of a special type expresses itself through the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequalities. The pace and depth of socio-economic change has often been determined by three inter-related factors: a) the policy environment; b) institutional capacity and resources of the democratic state; and c) the purposefulness and cohesion of the governing party’.

The neo-liberal policy influences have impacted on how we have undertaken the tasks of state transformation, socio-economic development and movement-building. Objective conditions of democracy and incumbency have given birth to new subjective weaknesses on the part of the ANC as the leader of the state and society in general. What are main weaknesses?

The organisational renewal documents articulate the three main weaknesses and shortcomings that have persisted in the ANC post-1994 period:

Firstly, Due to the pre- occupation with managing internal conflicts, the movement has not been mitigating the seven dangers that any governing party has to contend with and manage: a. The danger of social distance and isolation of the party from the masses; b. The danger of state bureaucratism and demobilisation of the masses; c. The danger of corruption and neo-patrimonialism; d. The danger of institutionalized factionalism, ill-discipline and disunity fuelled and inspired by the battles over the control of state power and resources; e. The danger of using state institutions to settle inner-party differences; f. The danger of neglecting

cadre policy; g. The danger of lack of capacity and capability to implement policies in order to rapidly improve the standard of living of the masses.

Secondly, the political life of the organisation revolves around permanent internal strife and factional battles for power. This is a silent retreat from the mass line to palace politics of factionalism and perpetual in-fighting. The internal strife revolves around contestation for power and state resources, rather than differences on how to implement the policies of the movement. This situation has shifted the focus of the cadres and members of the movement away from societal concerns and people's aspirations. These circumstances have produced a new type of ANC leader and member who sees ill-discipline, divisions, factionalism and in-fighting as normal practices and necessary forms of political survival. Drastic measures and consistent action against these negative tendencies are necessary to root out anarchy and decay.

Thirdly, the organisational capabilities – structure, systems and processes - do not match the tasks and demands of the current phase of the revolution. Although we have a presence of progressive policies and cadres in virtually all pillars of transformation, we are not deliberately building appropriate capabilities to mobilise, engage and lead the motive and progressive forces in these pillars, and therefore draw the linkages between pillar and sectoral processes and the overall national objective. Unlike in the pre-1990 period, the ANC is not rapidly training and deliberately deploying competent cadres in accordance with the pillars of our current strategy and tactics

The path to power perspective correctly emphasises the importance of organisational renewal and unity of the movement as precondition for successfully winning back Western Cape and its municipalities. The enormous challenge of rebuilding ANC in the Western Cape must be understood against the background of a long period of organisational stagnation with branches only built for conferences. This was characterised by deep divisions, factionalism, weak cadre policy, patronage, rank opportunism etc.

The recent elections have pointed out that without an organisational base we cannot successfully reclaim the Western Cape. The fact that the ANC in the Western Cape has not made progress in attracting the vast majority of the people and built a true non-racial movement that finds presents in every community means winning 51% of the vote will remain a pipe dream. Therefore bringing social justice and economic freedom will be delayed by a generation.

How do we lay a foundation for building a movement for socio-economic freedom? We need to put in place measures and take urgent steps to address our weaknesses. We have to draw lessons from our history but be bold enough to imagine new solutions and new ideas that will endure and survive future storms.

## **2. Back to Basics**

“Always bear in mind that the people are not fighting for ideas, for the things in anyone’s head. They are fighting to win material benefits, to live better and in peace, to see their lives go forward, to guarantee the future of their children” (Amilcar Cabral, Tell no lies, Claim no easy victories, 1965)

The impatience of our people to see change in their lives 20yrs into democracy is largely driven triple challenge of poverty, unemployment and inequality. The lack of access to basic services given the history of apartheid colonialism wherein the majority were denied access to clean water, sanitation, housing, education, health, electricity and other services further worsen the frustration. With increasing urbanization, deep rural and urban poverty, rising cost of living.

During the canvassing period one of the consistent outcries was a great feeling amongst the people of alienation or social distance from political leadership of the movement and government. Perceptions of corruption, ineptitude of local councillors and administration. Whilst community development projects create contestation around who must benefit from the development process and conflicts creates new contradictions and expectations, which we are not managing well by local leadership and councillors. Lack of progress or slow pace of delivery on the plans that have been announced to communities by either national, provincial, local government add to this pandemonium.

The new phenomenon in our province of the emergence social movements that are as a result of divisions and in-fighting among the local leadership of the ANC and Alliance structures wherein vulnerable communities are used as a show of force in the palace politics and factional battles. The adverse socio-economic realities affecting communities are used by disgruntled or opportunistic elements within our ranks to outmanoeuvre sitting councillors.

These issues all point towards the need for ANC grassroots structures that are organically linked to the people and their daily struggles for a better life, as resolved in Mangaung we need ‘the type of ANC branch that contributes to the building of sustainable communities and social cohesion and has a programme of action over the next few decades that decisively deal with the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality’.

‘Therefore going forward, the ANC needs to adopt two-pronged approach to dealing with protests. a. On the one hand, we need to take a critical stance against any violence during protest action or industrial action and call on state agencies to arrest anyone involved in illegal protests, especially those who destroy property. This includes taking drastic action against any ANC members involved in violent protests in order to send a clear message that violence and destruction of property cannot be tolerated in our democracy. Any ANC member who takes part in violent protests and is involved in the destruction of property should not only face the full might of the law, but should be expelled from the ranks of our movement.

b. On the other hand, we need to strengthen the ANC and democratic movement's influence in communities, community-based organisations and civil society groups. Our movement must always be at the centre of civil society groups and social movements that are genuinely taking up issues affecting the motive forces and give political and ideological leadership. It is only the ANC that can use the advantage of incumbency and state power to find sustainable solutions to the problems affecting society which are the underlying sources of protests - unemployment, poverty, inequalities, high cost of living and alienation from the governance and development processes'.

Our theory of organisation speaks to three key features of a progressive movement for national liberation or social emancipation:

a. The first is a core organisation with a progressive political line (mass line) that it continuously refines as the terrain of struggle changes, with disciplined cadres and members, and with organisational capacity to pursue the revolution in the various fronts or pillars required by its strategy and tactics. At the centre of the political line is the role of masses and the needs of ordinary people. The core organisation includes in its ranks the best cadres from among the motive forces who act as custodians of the principles of fundamental social change, winning respect among their peers and society through their exemplary commitment.

b. The second is the activism of this core organisation among the motive forces and in society in general. This core must mobilise, organise and educate the motive forces and have a presence in all of their sectoral formations. It must conscientise and engages with them as to how their sectoral issues and concerns are linked to the broader tasks of transformation. It must build the broadest possible unity of the motive forces in pursuit of the national goal. Its methods of struggle programme and forms of organisation reflect its activism among the motive forces.

c. The third feature is that it goes beyond the core organisation to become a "broad church". It is an embodiment of a wide range of progressive social forces and individuals beyond the core organisation and the motive forces. It is able to accommodate diverse progressive ideological currents among the forces for change. Unlike a tightly knit organisation, a movement promotes united front politics among the "broadly like-minded forces and formations". The principal strength derives from its capacity to give ideological, moral and intellectual leadership to all diverse forces. It relies on the force of ideas and practice rather than bureaucratic control or manipulation. It is able to manage contradictions and the "unity and struggle" among the forces within the movement. A movement is not afraid to engage those who do not agree with its objectives. It seeks to build broad societal consensus on matters of common interest, win more forces over to the revolution and isolate the most reactionary and anti-transformation elements in society.

Therefore our immediate tasks

- Renew organisational culture and values by going Back to Basics of organisation building. By postponing all conferences for a period of two months and give space to the rebuilding of ANC mass character.

- **Building ANC Branches Membership Recruitment and Renewal**, VD branches and street committees to ensure presence of the organisation in every area. Where there are no structures establish BTTs that will work for the formation of ANC. Through painstaking political, ideological and organisational work among the masses and across all social classes and strata, the ANC will become the political nucleus and vanguard movement that gives political, moral and intellectual leadership to a wide range of social forces. Campaign: Know your Neighbourhood- Household visits, meet local community structures i.e. area committees, CPF, NGOs etc, take up local campaigns Crime, health, housing etc
- **Establish Sub regional / Zonal structures** to coordinate ANC work at area level. The ANC needs new organisational capacity and strategic capabilities to play its dual role as a transformative movement and strategic centre of power. It must be compulsory for ANC councillors and public reps deployed at this level to ensure this is realised.
- **Governance:** Public meetings VD and ward level with councillor and BEC/BTT. Chiefwhip convene weekly caucus and monitor implementation and report to REC. Convene strategy workshop with ANC municipal caucus at all levels.
- **Election units** are established to prepare for 2016 focussing on registration and canvassing.
- Build **functioning alliance** relations.
- **Leadership structures** of the ANC must ensure their impact through mass mobilisation of society in general and the motive forces in particular remain an important element of both the movement and developmental state, albeit in a transformative context. Activism in the various sectors of and centres of power such as the state, the economy, the ideological and cultural arena, civil society and communities and in the global affairs – is also another critical element of a transformative movement. The leadership must be judged by its efforts to change power relations in favour of the previously oppressed and exploited masses.
- The distinguishing feature of the ANC is to be an **Agent for Change**, a transformative movement that uses its ruling position or Opposition status to mobilise society for fundamental transformation of the political, social and economic institutions and usher in new social and property relations that empower the masses. This is essentially what it means to be the strategic centre of power – political, economic, social and ideological power.
- The **ANC Cadre policy** is focused on building a contingent of conscious, competent, conscientious and disciplined cadres. We need numbers and quality cadres who are going to be able to fulfil the tasks of the current phase of the NDR. The absence of this is one of the dangers faced by any revolutionary movement.

- The Mangaung conference instructs us to convene Political school urgently and so we shall convene cadres' forums for political education every Friday at Sub regional or zonal level. Taking from Organisational renewal document some of the critical elaboration and emphasis is necessary.
- We shall implement the "Commission on Cadre Policy and Ideological Work" at the 1985 Kabwe "Recruitment: conscious recruitment from amongst all of the motive forces, understand and accept basic ANC policies and programs".
- a. The Mangaung conference resolved the next Decade of Cadre a comprehensive cadre policy framework is being worked on and a ten- year programme of action to build a contingent of new cadres who are politically conscious, professionally competent, conscientious and disciplined. We should also take practical and urgent steps to raise the level of education among ANC members and leaders, as the advanced productive forces and agents for change. In particular, we should invest heavily in the ideological and academic training to produce a new type of ANC members who have the values, skills and competencies necessary for building a national democratic society.
- The political education curriculum should enable us to deliberately produce a new type of an all-round cadre who:
  - Understands ANC history, policies, values, principles and culture and have the attitude, knowledge, skills and discipline to serve the people with distinction;
  - Understands the dynamics of our changing society and is committed to take practical steps in daily life to push the frontiers of fundamental transformation;
  - Understands the dynamics of the international situation and has the basic skills to analyse and interpret events and processes unfolding rapidly in the world;
  - Have a general understanding of all the pillars of the NDR and specific competencies in at least one of the pillars – organisation-building and mass work; state; economy; ideological struggle; civil society and international relations.
- This, in practice, means that all ANC cadres should be equipped with the following knowledge and competencies: Theories and practices of party-building, organisation-building and mass work in the new phase of transformation and governance;
  - Theories and practices of state-building and transformation, clean and ethical governance and the role of the state socio-economic development;
  - Theories and practices of economic development;
  - Theories and practices of social transformation;
  - Theories and practices of ideological struggle and the battle of ideas;
  - Theories and practices of diplomacy and international relations;
  - Theories and practices of popular participation and active citizen participation in governance;
- b. "Political education and training: ideological, moral, academic and (military) training aimed at teaching cadres to exercise political leadership and be organisers; and to inculcate values". Going forward, the focus of our curriculum should be both the soft issues of values and ethics as well as hard skills and competencies required in all the new pillars of NDR. Most of our deployed cadres have been found wanting on

issues of ethics and integrity and proactive interventions have to be made to build a more conscientious cadre.

- c. “Deployment and redeployment: according to specialty, aptitude, qualification & capability of individual cadres; whilst in principle serve in any capacity, in practice capabilities, aptitudes and wishes to apply talents and creativity taken in consideration”.
- d. “Promotion and accountability: Promotions guided by performance, knowledge of cadres work ability and personal life; guiding against favouritism, opportunism, regionalism, ethnic or gender discrimination; those in senior and leadership positions taking a keen interest in cadres they lead, check on their performance, encourage them, and monitor their participation; underperformance confronted to improve”. In the current phase, the movement has no system to closely nurture new cadres, monitor their development, performance and accountability to the organisation. The deployment committees are directionless. We conduct reviews and evaluations mainly at the end of term, only for public representatives. The need to establish monitoring and evaluation units at all levels so that we able to feedback to the political school and deployment committees.
- e. “Cadre preservation: unity, cohesion and spirit of togetherness essential; working conditions and preserving cadres’ skills, health and (security)”. Under current conditions, we should stress the importance of building a shared spirit of comradeship, mutual respect and caring for one another. There is no way our revolution will succeed if we allow the current attitude of “everybody for him/herself” and the “dog-eat-dog mentality” among our members, especially those in leadership. Most experienced cadres end up going into business as the only way to earn an income and keep themselves busy. The ANC will not survive for long unless we consciously preserve cadres and ensure that those who have completed assignments in other pillars and reassigned new tasks, including in the organisation.
- We need to add that discipline, self-discipline and self-cultivation are important attributes of a cadre. The ANC cannot be expected to do everything. Cadres should take initiatives to empower themselves. In today’s conditions, many cadres who serve in parliament and different spheres of government have huge opportunities for training and development. Often, the ANC members do not show enthusiasm in seizing such opportunities for self-development. This is a tragedy that needs to be dealt with urgently to address the pressing need for skilled cadres.
- Preserve the core values of the ANC are as follows: courage, service, self-sacrifice, human solidarity, integrity, temperance, humility, honesty, hard-work, self-discipline and mutual respect. At the same time, it has developed tried and tested principles which guide its operations and processes as a mass-based, multi-class movement and a disciplined force of the left - unity, non-racialism, non-sexism, collective leadership, democratic centralism, internal debates, non-racialism and non-sexism.

- Over the past decade-and-half, new tendencies have emerged that undermine the democratic character of the movement. Leadership elections are fraught with problems such as the manipulation of membership system in order to influence the outcome of conferences; suppression of the views of members through a culture of slates that are developed in secret caucuses and forced down the throats of members in chaotic branch general meetings; and the use of money and mobilisation of other resources as part of lobbying. ANC members and branches should be liberated from the clutches of secret caucuses by ensuring that the leadership question is discussed and decided openly by members on the basis of the tasks, requirements and political line of each phase.
- 138. Before 1994, the pillars of our struggle helped us understand the tasks of leadership collectives – to organise, coordinate, integrate, drive and lead the struggle in all the fronts and pillars. Currently, factionalism and personalization of leadership contests constitute a cancer in the soul of our movement. Factionalism not only undermines the discipline of the core organisation, but also makes it difficult for a movement to lead society in a unified manner. We must therefore take forward the resolutions of the 3rd NGC in order stabilize our approaches to leadership election and transition.
- 139. 'Through the eye of the needle' (ANC 2001: par. 18-24) clearly spells out the principles of ANC organisational democracy including elected and collective leadership, branches as basic units of the ANC, criticism and self-criticism and the applications of democratic centralism. 'Through the Eye of the Needle' (par. 25-32) also reviews the constitutional guidelines for elections, and the critical role of branches and branch members as the electoral college for all elective positions in the ANC. In general, it agrees that these guidelines - the right of any member to stand and be elected subject to qualifications in terms of track record; the nominations process in branch general meetings; the election of delegates to conferences; nominations from the floor at conferences; and voting by secret ballot - are critical to a democratic organisation, and still relevant.
- One of the subcultures that have developed over the last twenty years is that **factionalism** instead of discussions on leadership taking place in branches based on the tasks at hand and the requirements of leadership. Individuals or groups of individuals who aspire towards leadership, and then seek to convince the organisation and members to nominate and elect them by organising parallel to the structures of the movement. It uses all nefarious means: leaking organisational information, positioning themselves in the media, conducting smear campaigns against other comrades, using state resources to discredit others and using money from dubious sources and dirty monies to lobby. Thus means and ends become equally suspect. This tendency is one of the silent and cancerous attempts at transforming the ANC and must be dealt with firmly.



- We should therefore consider discouraging the following specific wrongful lobbying practices, by adding them as acts of misconduct in our electoral rules, including:
  - Raising and using funds and other resources to campaign for election into ANC structures;
  - Production of t-shirts, posters and other paraphernalia to promote any candidature;
  - Promising positions or other incentives or threatening to withhold such, as a means of gaining support;
  - Attacks on the integrity of other candidates, both within structures of the movement and in other forums, save for legitimate critiques related the substance of the contestation which should only be raised in formal meetings of the movement;
  - Suppressing honest and legitimate debate about candidates (on these issues of substance) in formal meetings of the movement;
  - Open and private lobbying or utilization of the media in support of or opposition to a particular candidate;
  - Allowing structures or individuals to condone violation of Constitutional provisions and/or regulations, and/or failing to report such violations when they occur; and
  - Generally, as a candidate, failing to take steps, including interactions and/or statements to stop misconduct in one's name.
- We need to review **administrative processes** at all levels including PCOs and improve **human resource management**: principal mandate is to modernise of all systems and processes and provide optimally and efficient support services to all political offices, departments, regions and branches. This includes the membership system, human resource management, events management, harnessing ICT to revolutionaries and modernise our administration, political communication, campaigns, political education and training.
- Establish **Monitoring and Evaluation unit**: principal mandate is to undertake monitoring, evaluation and tracking of policy implementation and organisational decisions, including the performance of organisational structures on political, ideological, organisational, mass, governance and international work.

## **Conclusion**

Going forward, the ANC organisational machinery needs the capacity to:
 

- Understand the theory of organisation and movement-building, the dynamics within social movements and civil society and be able to organise, mobilise all classes and strata that have an objective interest in the success of transformation process;
- Understand the dynamics within the entire state and political system in our country, the strengths and weaknesses of our state institutions relative to the type of state we seek to build and provide the skilled cadreship capable of propelling state transformation;
- Understand the dynamics in our emerging society and new democracy relative to our vision and values of building participatory democracy, social cohesion, social solidarity, a caring society and an active, skilled, healthy and empowered citizenry;
- Understand the dynamics of the South Africa and global economy and track the progress we are making and provide the skilled cadreship to steer economic transformation in line with its vision, policies and strategies;
- Understand the

dynamics within the battle of ideas and have the skilled cadreship capable of waging a relentless ideological struggle to advance and defend of progressive policies, ideas, value system and culture across all spheres and centre of influence. • Analyse changes in the international balance of forces, understand diplomacy and have the skilled cadreship capable of realising the movement's vision of a better Africa and more humane world.

“A revolution is not a dinner party, a fruit that falls from the tree when it is ripe. But a conscious effort”Mao